



Bringing you snippets of youth trends and issues compiled from diverse sources such as news reports, journals and press releases. Y+ is a bi-monthly e-newsletter that aims to help you stay in touch with the constantly evolving youth scene.

YOUTH & POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Globally, organisations are asking themselves how they can tap on the potential of youth and enhance their political participation in today's digital society. Voter participation of young Canadians is on a downward trend ([Epoch Times, 2015](#)); and political disengagement, lack of political knowledge and having little trust in politicians, have been offered as possible reasons for this. One writer suggests that declining voter turnout in UK could be addressed through the use of social media, better education about the political system, and engaging youth with inspiring and responsive politicians ([Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, 2015](#)).

In Singapore, survey results conducted by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) found that there was a great shift in support towards the PAP in 2015 from voters aged 21-29 years ([Post-Election Conference 2015, Institute of Policy Studies](#)). Despite growing social media utilisation, the mainstream media (TV, radio, newspapers) remains the most trusted source of election-related information. This issue of Y+ highlights the trends in young people's political participation, and what politicians can do to engage the generation.

In this issue:

1. IPS Post-Election Conference 2015 [Singapore]

- **The IPS GE2015 Surveys**

*Institute of Policy Studies
4 November 2015*

- **GE2015: PAP Saw Swing in Support from Middle-High-Income Earners, IPS Survey Finds**

*Chong Zi Liang, Politics
The Straits Times Online, 4 November 2015*

- **GE2015: Media Use and its Impact**

*Institute of Policy Studies
4 November 2015*

2. The Millennial Dialogue Report: Canada

*Foundation for European Progressive Studies and Global Progress
Broadbent Institute, July 2015*

Matthew Little
Epoch Times, 9 September 2015

Michael Adams and Maryantonett Flumian
The Globe and Mail, 26 January 2015

YouTube
The Huffington Post, 2 February 2015

Filippos Letsas, Junior Year Abroad Network 2014/2015
Berkeley Center, Georgetown University, 31 March 2015

Ana Swanson
The Washington Post, 17 June 2015

Amy Mitchell, Jeffrey Gottfried and Katerina Eva Matsa
Pew Research Center, 1 June 2015

Veronike Collazo
Missourian, 30 October 2015

Associate Professor Ali Salman and Associate Professor Suhana Saad, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, National University of Malaysia
Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, MCSER Publishing, August 2015

- The IPS GE2015 Surveys
- GE2015: PAP Saw Swing in Support from Middle-High-Income Earners, IPS Survey Finds
- GE2015: Media Use and its Impact



The recent Post-GE Conference 2015 hosted by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) discussed the findings of [three surveys](#) on GE2015. One of the surveys found that voters aged 21-29 years and those aged 65 years and above, showed the greatest shift in support towards the PAP in 2015. Compared to other age groups, a larger proportion of those aged 21-29 years were pluralists. Contrary to popular belief regarding the influential role of social media, survey results showed that mainstream media was still the most trusted source of election-related information. Read the full [report](#).

Sources:

(Institute of Policy Studies, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore. Accessed on 3 December 2015.)

http://lkyspp.nus.edu.sg/ips/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2015/10/POPS-8_GE2015_061115_web-Final.pdf

http://lkyspp.nus.edu.sg/ips/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2015/10/S2_Zhang-Weiyu_Media-panel-swing-voters_041115.pdf

(Politics, The Straits Times Online. Accessed on 3 December 2015.)

<http://www.straitstimes.com/politics/ge2015-pap-saw-swing-in-support-from-middle-high-income-earners-ips-survey-finds>

2. The Millennial Dialogue Report: Canada

Though most young people in Canada are happy and optimistic, their interest in politics is low, and they do not view it as an important interest. This pioneering survey also found that 70% of Canadian Millennials believe their views are largely ignored by most politicians, and 45% of them believe that most politicians want to control and restrict the young. Only 28% are confident that they, as well as their peers, can make themselves heard. The [international study](#) suggests two key factors that might encourage an interest in voting amongst the young – 1) political awareness and knowledge and 2) trust in politicians.



(Source: Cloudfront. Accessed on 27 November 2015)

https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/broadbent/pages/4439/attachments/original/1436994774/The_Millennium_Dialogue_Report.pdf?1436994774

http://millennialdialogue.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/FEPS-report_PRINT_FINAL_web-MILLENNIAL.pdf

3. Youth are Politically Engaged, Just Not Voting, Report Finds [Canada]

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People 18 to 29 make up a significant portion of the Canadian population and hold a major stake in the future of the country.

— Samara Canada report

While young Canadians aged 18-29 years are more likely to be politically active than older Canadians, a recent [report](#) by Samara Canada found that they are less likely to cast a ballot in any federal election compared to older age groups. In the 2011 federal election, only 41% of those aged 18-29 years casted their votes, compared to 57% of those aged 30-55 years and 67% of those aged 56 years and above who did so. The report highlighted that the

main reason for the low voting rate among younger Canadians was likely to be little or no contact with a political party or politician.

(Source: Epoch Times. Accessed on 29 November 2015)

<http://www.theepochtimes.com/n3/1749004-youth-are-politically-engaged-just-not-voting-report-finds/>

4. Many Canadians aren't Voting. Have They Stopped Caring about Democracy?



One reason for the declining voting turnout may be a fundamental shift in social values, away from an unquestioning deference to institutional authority. Younger Canadians are less likely to view voting as a duty, and more likely to consider if voting is worth their efforts. This [article](#) examines the factors and implications associated with declining voter participation in Canada.

(Source: The Globe and Mail. Accessed on 29 November 2015)

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/the-young-are-quitting-politics-and-thats-a-danger-to-our-democracy/article22633913/>

5. The British Future Survey Shows Youth Apathy Before the 2015 General Election

The British Future Survey revealed the apathy of the younger generation towards British senior politicians, whom many perceive to be elitists and only look out for the interests of businesses in the 2015 General Election. This [video](#) shows what young people in Britain were looking for in the 2015 general election.

Here's what young voices think of politicians today

(Source: Huffington Post. Accessed on 29 November 2015)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZUfrFhZvy0>

6. Political Apathy among Youth in the United Kingdom

UK youth appear politically apathetic, whether in terms of disengagement from civic activities or low voter turnout. Regardless of whether they are voters or non-voters, young people in UK share similar concerns; in particular salaries, ability to pay bills, and the possibility of being unemployed. They also share the same sentiments on the types of issues which politicians should prioritise. In this [article](#), the author highlights the policy areas that are of concern to young people in UK, as well as factors which would influence their political engagement.



(Source: Berkley Center, Georgetown University. Accessed on 29 November 2015)

<http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/letters/political-apathy-among-youth-in-the-united-kingdom>

7. Social Media & Political Participation

- **Millennials are Disillusioned with Politics. Here's a Way that Might Change.** [United States]
- **Millennials and Political News: Social Media – the Local TV for the Next Generation?** [United States]
- **Peers, Social Media Play Increasingly Large Role in Youth Political Socialisation** [Columbia]
- **Online Political Participation: A Study of Youth Usage of New Media** [Malaysia]

Social media has become a prominent part of life for young people today. This younger generation is increasingly turning to social media platforms to follow election news and developments. For instance, 61% of Millennials report using Facebook to get political information ([Pew Research Centre, 2015](#)). Beyond consumption of news, social media has the potential to encourage youth political activism – from liking and sharing posts, to posting opinions and providing a safe place for peers to do the same ([The Columbia Missourian, 2015](#)). A new app known as [Brigade](#) has emerged recently, and has the potential to enhance political participation among young people by allowing users to build working political alliances via social networking tools. Meanwhile, a [study](#) among youths aged 18-25 years in Peninsula and East Malaysia suggests that youths are more likely to use new media for entertainment and social networking purposes instead of political participation.



Sources:

(The Washington Post. Accessed on 29 November 2015)

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2015/06/17/millennials-are-disillusioned-with-politics-heres-a-way-that-might-change/>

(Pew Research Center. Accessed on 29 November 2015)

<http://www.journalism.org/2015/06/01/millennials-political-news/>

(The Columbia Missourian. Accessed on 29 November 2015)

http://www.columbiamissourian.com/news/local/peers-social-media-play-increasingly-large-role-in-youth-political/article_ff969934-7ea9-11e5-8bf4-fb73f63c5057.html

(Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences. Accessed on 29 November 2015)

<http://www.mcser.org/journal/index.php/mjss/article/view/7264/6954>

8. Further Readings

- ✚ [International Youth Day: We Need to Give Young People a Voice in Decision-Making](#)
 - ✚ [What of Youth's New Forms of Political Participation?](#)
 - ✚ [Where are All the Young Voters?](#)
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