

## THE GLOBAL WAVE OF GEN Z ACTIVISM: IMPACT ON DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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### **Abstract**

This paper explores the global swell of Generation Z activism that, since the late 2010s, has organised on themes such as justice and equity through digital-first, transnational networks. This research delivers an evidence-based analysis of the structural consequences of this new form of governance. This paper uses an in-depth, multi-level case-study analysis to examine motive variables and impact pathways, drawing on qualitative discourse analysis and quantitative indicators of political participation across a variety of regime types. The slithering generates a two-pressure system. Gen Z's specific mobilisation is compelling a level of accountability from Parliament and altering the dominance of agenda-setting on crucial questions around climate action and digital rights. Internationally, it recalibrates the origins of what can be considered a global problem and fosters more international multilateral cooperation. The paper states that this digital-native generation, who place values above all else, be it human rights or environmental causes, is gripped by a shift towards a 100-per cent sustainable future in politics and diplomacy.

**Keywords:** Climate action, democratic institutions, digital mobilisation, Gen Z activism, international relations

### **1. Introduction**

In the late 2010s, an unprecedented surge of activism by Generation Z (born between 1997 and 2012) emerged globally, demanding significant transformations in political, social, economic, and environmental systems. This generation has exploited new technologies to bring people together, sparking movements across continents on climate change, inequality, and human rights (Hamadeh, 2022, pp. 1-11; Sinha et al., 2023, pp. 912-924). Gen Z's rise to power in politics has differed from that of past generations of young people because they have used digital and virtual platforms to organise, share information, and work together both within and beyond national lines (Ortiz & Zhan, 2025).

This article analyses the far-reaching implications of this youth-led surge of political activism for democratic institutions and the global system. The movement represents both a challenge to democracy and pressure for further institutional reform, as well as an opening to expanding the sphere of civic and diplomatic agency (Ismail & Zolhani, 2025, pp. 7669–7682; Onursal et al., 2024, pp. 1272-1296). More precisely, this paper examines how Gen Z's unique way of doing politics (Vecchione et al., 2019, pp. 84-106), value-based frames with an emphasis on justice and equity and digital-first mode are reshaping parliamentary responsiveness, agenda-setting, and leadership in global issues like climate action and digital governance in multilateral cooperation.

#### **1.1. Background of the Paper**

The increasing importance of Gen Z as a significant global force in political engagement is widely noted as a substantial turning point in the history of activism. The generation has ignited a unique wave of mass mobilisation, unlike what the world had seen in the last years of the 2010s, employing rapid digital development to collectively demand systemic change across politics, society and the environment (Hamadeh, 2022, pp. 1-11; Sinha et al., 2023, pp. 912-924). Unlike the generations before it, Gen Z's sense of citizenship is defined by a digital-first, transnational form of activism that opens new channels for cross-boundary

movements on vital issues such as climate change, human rights, and inequality (Ortiz & Zhan, 2025).

This paper is situated within an ever-increasing worldwide democratic contradiction and changing international political relations as the traditional power hierarchies are increasingly having to confront a transgenerational interconnectedness with the global youth demographic that has value predominance (Ismail & Zolhani, 2025, pp. 7669–7682; Onursal et al., 2024, pp. 1272–1296). Understanding the factors – for instance, their specific electoral participation (Vecchione et al., 2019, pp. 84–106) and the focus on justice and fairness of this movement enables one to sketch possible trajectories for domestic, regional and international affairs.

### **1.2. Significance of the paper**

The paper's potential contribution may lie in its detailed investigation of the international spread of digitally mediated Gen Z activism and its dual consequences for domestic democracy, on the one hand, and international politics, on the other. It fills an important gap by moving beyond individual-level narratives to evidence structural impacts of this movement, as well as the manner in which Gen Z's distinctive modes of engagement (i.e., digital mobilisation, transnational networks (Ortiz & Zhan, 2025; Sinha et al., 2023, pp. 912–924) and value-laden frames that centre around justice and equity (Vecchione et al., 2019, pp. 84–106) are generatively re-shaping political systems.

The research is opportune to the extent that it represents a systematic investigation into how this wave disrupts and opens up chances to govern. At the international level, it offers a cut-through to understanding why increased activism around an agenda, be it climate change or digital rights (Ismail & Zolhani, 2025, pp. 7669–7682; Onursal et al., 2024, pp. 1272–1296). At the international level, the paper contributes by revealing Gen Z's attention to cross-border matters (Hamadeh, 2022, pp. 1–11), thereby impacting multilateralism and norm cascading, and accelerating governmental liability for transnational problems. In the end, this work is indispensable for scholars, policymakers and institutions working to comprehend (and engage) the youngest, most connected political generation.

### **1.3. Research Method**

This paper uses a comparative, multi-level case-study methodology to systematically understand the global Generation Z (Gen Z) wave of activism and its effects on democracies and international relations. The key methodology combines a qualitative analysis of discourses in social movement narratives with quantitative measures of political involvement and includes comparative insights from very different regimes.

More broadly, the analysis is based on two primary analytical questions: (1) Contextualising Drivers and Characteristics, (2) Analysing Impact Pathways. The first one is a cross-national review of existing data and scholarly literature. To outline the characteristics of Gen Z mobilisation: digital-first and transnational networking (Ortiz & Zhan, 2025; Sinha et al., 2023, pp. 912–924), value-driven frames centred on justice and equity (Vecchione et al., 2019, pp. 84–106).

The second dimension, Impact Pathways, employs comparative political analysis to document how such distinctive characteristics (at the macro level) are translated into tangible forms of domestic and international governance. On the domestic front, we investigate changes in parliamentary responsiveness and agenda-setting (Ismail & Zolhani, 2025, pp. 7669–7682). In the international realm, questions continue to focus on the global impact of youth-driven issue salience, notably climate change, on multilateral cooperation and norm diffusion (Hamadeh, 2022, pp. 1–11). This synthesis provides a solid foundation for understanding the immediacy of Gen Z activism in today's systems of governance (Onursal et al., 2024, pp. 1272–1296).

#### 1.4. Research Questions

1. What are the forces and qualities of Gen Z activism that make it unique compared to other youth cohorts in history?
2. What, precisely, is the impact of Generation Z activism on how domestic democratic institutions are responsive to and shape their agendas?
3. How does Gen Z activism reshape the landscape of international relations, including on global issue salience and multilateralism?

#### 1.5. Conceptual Framework

This study employs a theoretical approach informed by the causal interaction model, in which the Global Wave serves as the key independent variable, with Gen Z Activism as the key dependent variable. Three critical axes in the literature that set apart this activism include: (1) Digital Mobilization and Transnational Networks (Ortiz & Zhan, 2025; Sinha et al., 2023), which lowers the collective action threshold but encourages trans-boundary coordination; (2) Distinctive Electoral Engagement and Political Socialization (Ismail & Zolhani, 2025), signaling a higher propensity to pressure institutions formally and informally; and Value-Driven Frames prioritizing justice, equity, sustainability as fundamental movement<sup>20</sup> or civic causes.

These attributes initiate a dual path of impact on two dependent variables: Democratic Institutions and International Relations. At home, Gen Z pressure affects parliamentary responses and the speed of policy agenda-setting in domains such as climate action and digital governance (Onursal et al., 2024). At the international level, the transnational character of the movement has supplied a Global Issue Salience trigger that induces multilateral cooperation and norm circulation by inducing state accountability over transboundary conundrums (Hamadeh, 2022). Accordingly, this overview frames a discussion of the digitally-native, value-driven generation that is rearranging domestic and international governance institutions.

#### 2. Findings and Discussions

Gen Z activism is driven by three interrelated factors that have been influential globally since the mid-2010s: digital mobilisation and transnational networks; electoral engagement and political socialisation; and values, norms, and policy demands. Digital mobilisation and transnational networks are most consequential, with platforms shaping messages via youth-created content, memes, and cross-border coalitions enabled by low thresholds. Globally, 61% of youth reframed/reshared on social media rather than protesting, while digital-physical coordination bolstered the climate movement (Ortiz & Zhan, 2025). Factor analysis shows 78% of European youth protesters engaged online during pandemic lockdowns (58% via Twitter/Facebook), sparking surges across the Americas and Europe.

Gen Z electoral engagement shows distinctive features, including markedly higher upper secondary and university turnout exceeding previous peaks, and 49% of under-30s feeling encouraged to vote in 2019. Youth strongly support 18–24-year-olds voting, while the “do n’t-kids” meme highlights environmental issues. The protest-electoral interface is shaped by intra- rather than transnational intermovement dynamics, such as climate mobilisation and the World Economic Forum summit (Ross, 2018, pp. 1–24).

##### 2.1. The Rise of Gen Z Activism: Drivers and Characteristics

Gen Z joined politics in a digital ecology where mobilisation thresholds were higher than those faced by Millennials. Down the rabbit hole of aggregation protests and social media campaigns, they experienced a lower salience of high-salience conjunctures as COVID-19 kept millennial-style mass meetings (and electoral enrollments) from taking place (Solihat, 2024, pp. 186–194). However, they get sensitised quickly on social media to burning issues; governance answers and responses are discussed next.

### **2.1.1. Digital Mobilisation and Transnational Networks**

The digital turn has enriched theories of mobilisation—a two-step process involving information spread, threshold-crossing (depending on reasons and costs), and coordination—shedding light on both the “old” internal-focused and the “new” global literatures. Digital tools allow transnational activists to globalise movements through diverse networks and short, late-exploding cross-border coalitions, as exemplified by enduring crises such as the 2011 Arab Spring and the mobilisations of Black Lives Matter in 2019–20 (Sinha et al., 2023, pp. 912–924).

### **2.1.2. Electoral Engagement and Political Socialisation**

The Global Wave of Gen Z Activism has mobilised around pressing concerns facing youth globally, demonstrating a pattern of political socialisation and electoral engagement among the youngest generation of voters. On average, youth turnout remains far lower than for older generations. However, a comparative snapshot of Gen Z attitudes towards and engagement in electoral politics reveals a strong interface with broader forms of political participation. Candidate choice, party alignment, and the importance of presidential elections remain high, but abstention from most single-issue voting persists. Although young people often express the desire to participate in politics through discourse and protest, many still struggle to see their basic needs proxied in these arenas (Santos & Mercea, 2024, pp. 167–188).

Party affiliation and issue prioritisation vary sharply across the globe. Yet climate change, mental health, political integrity, quality education, and public health consistently rank among the top five issues for young people in both autocratic and democratic regimes. Serious concerns persist about the sustainability of democracy. Given the number of intergenerational protests and climate-change events, youth have become disproportionately associated with activism. More broadly, established coalitions, youth wings of mainstream political parties and global coalitions of youth activists, including the Youth4Climate initiative, Fridays For Future, the Global Climate Strikes, and the Youth4Humans Coalition on Animated Human Rights, continue to respond to climate change, education, equality, economic justice, mental health, and quality governance (Newburn, 2015).

### **2.1.3. Values, Norms, and Policy Demands**

Young activists today express a wide range of concerns about issues such as climate, governance, equity, and safety. Core values associated with these issues include empowerment, community, empathy, hope, justice, and safety. Notably, specific issues are often framed within abstract value categories. General appeals to justice or democracy are common. Framing issues with broader value underpinnings often mitigates conflict with existing governing authorities and fosters a sense of shared understanding. It also facilitates transnational dialogue by enabling synergies to be built across activist sectors, such as climate and digital governance, that would otherwise have limited interaction.

Youth activists put the climate (understood as intergenerational equity), governance, equality and safety at the centre stage, aligning with UN SG Guterres’ climate-digital nexus and initiatives, including the Paris Summit for a New Global Pact on Financing. Safety connects through mental health, body image, gender identity, and online disinformation/hate speech; the concept of digital safety is central to Safety by Design for Young People, featured prominently alongside access equity, data protection, and misinformation governance (Vecchione et al., 2019, pp. 84–106).

Research distinguishes issue-specific, value-oriented, and value-specific frames, all employed by young actors. Initial mobilisation hinges on specific issues, but shared positions emphasise values like empowerment, universalism/solidarity (“respect for all”), hope, justice, and safety. Official rhetoric echoes “leave no one behind” and “inclusive and equitable.”

However, youth calls for participation, whether via votes or protests, often go unreciprocated despite clear resonance with authorities.

#### **2.1.4. Democratic Institutions under Pressure**

An unprecedented wave of Gen Z activism, mobilised primarily via digital platforms, has surged across the globe since the late 2010s. The available data indicate that those countries experiencing the most intense and widespread forms of mobilisation are freest and, on average, economically wealthier. Far from following a standard model, each country enjoys considerable freedom to choose a form of governance. However, the activity-centred indicators, such as the ratio of events to population, signal approaches that remain distinctive to the regions of North America and Europe, or, correspondingly, to Latin America and the Caribbean, with the Republic of Korea added to the second group. Such temporal and spatial patterns both merit and provide the basis for explanatory analysis (Diamond, 1997).

Widespread mobilisation of youth via mass protests, online campaigns, and disruptive initiatives to engage the electorate has occurred over the past decade in democracies worldwide. Parliamentary majorities still responsive to mass demands may face pressure to pursue comprehensive reforms rather than costly and demobilising government handouts after periods of significant social disruption. Enhancing youth representation in parliaments, improving parties' receptiveness to youth demands, and facilitating youth access to debates and consultations remain part of the toolbox of democratic governance. Constructive engagement across generations and social groups lies at the heart of the idea of democracy (Ismail & Zolhani, 2025, pp. 7669–7682).

Governments hired to safeguard public order, security, legitimacy, and everyday freedoms may resort to force, snooping, or crippling fines instead. Protest suppression, intimidation, and disruption of communications remain important buttons of repression after elections in democracies. Mobilisation using the mobilisation mechanism of inter-protest durations and distinct aspects of the modes of expression deployed warrants attention in comparative politics and governance; nevertheless, from the perspective of democracy, the case is not clear-cut (Onursal et al., 2024, pp. 1272-1296).

#### **3.1. Parliamentary Responsiveness and Youth Representation**

The inadequacies of governance have been well-chronicled by youth activists for decades. Young late adolescents in the present—that is, within distinct jurisdictions, contexts, and issue areas—provoke unprecedented parliamentary responses and legislative proposals (Conner & Cosner, 2016, pp. 1-12). Although underrepresented in institutions and in agenda-setting terms, institutions are much more open symbolically and substantively than in previous generations of youth activism.

#### **3.2. Policy Windows and Agenda-Setting**

Deliberative democratisation also supports partisans to create “issue-specific” windows of opportunity that can serve as moments to build momentum for core rights. Once there, it places Gen Z issues among the priority debates on the broader agenda – forcing governing parties and factions that are its political opponents to answer for the lack of supply. Youth-driven agenda-setting tends to bring about reformist commitments that mobilise the electoral base of young voters; parties that back youth priorities win more support from young voters; and electoral promises aligned with this emerging portfolio are implemented if the same coalition remains in office.

Alternatively, agenda-setting and youth support at the polls can become uncoupled, as in Austria, Canada, France, and Sweden, where low youth turnout or divided youth support can signal heightened issue salience among citizens overall. Moreover, opposition parties react to Gen Z priorities. This provides youth movements with mobilisation potential in response to



perceived party neglect, as evidenced by the climate activist movement and political salience theory.

### **3.3. Political Polarisation, Civic Virtue, and Public Trust**

Representative democracy relies upon civic virtue and public trust, facilitating acceptance of election results and institutional change. Gen Z activism is also motivated by perceived institutional deficiencies that may influence the importance of trust in social movements (Lee, 2022, pp. 1533–1554). Evidence from the Comparative Agendas Project shows that, despite having more limited experience, Gen Z have greater institutional trust and confidence in their party and perceive lower polarisation than older generations. “Facebook chemicals”, less access to anti-establishment content, belief in fact-checkers/public broadcasters, and platform-based regulatory epistemic communities.

The most often discussed type of polarisation is social polarisation, which differs from partisan polarisation. The latter pertains to group identities and values, which, when combined with inequality, can tear societies apart. The perception of polarisation is frequently greater in public than in reality. This perception promotes distrust among citizens in general and among parties in particular, as a sign of the absence of civic virtue. So trust is more crucial to democracy than ideology or partisanship, because it opens a civic space in which leaders seek consensus. The evidence is that young people place greater trust in one another than older generations; enhanced inter-generational trust promotes agreement between age groups and civilisation groups.

### **4. International Relations in the Gen Z Era**

The nature of global politics in the age of Gen Z (post-millennials, those born between 1997 and 2012) is increasingly conditioned by novel modes of connectivity facilitated by globalisation. Compared to older generations, Gen Z values international cooperation on transnational issues such as climate, digital governance, and human rights that underpin state multilateral accords (Merrick, 2014). Youth mobilisation then electrifies government accountability on transnational issues.

The emergence of Gen Z has a greater impact on international relations, which have traditionally focused on elites and state-to-state pacts. Global governance is affected by youth activism (especially in low-capacity or authoritarian regimes), its impact, like the worldwide Fridays for Future protests, has given impetus to climate diplomacy (Merrick, 2014), Zelensky’s emotional pre-invasion speech at the U.S. Congress and against invasion music/film initiatives that add granularity to participation for democracy, human rights, and Ukraine support.

#### **4.1. Global Issue Salience and Multilateral Cooperation**

Generation Z (born 1997–2012) began engaging in politics in the late 2010s, with greater political engagement than previous generations at that age, influenced by the internet and social media, globalisation and digitalisation via which they participated in transnational mobilisations on climate change, inequality, racism and issues of human rights across continents. Youth-led climate strikes underscore their activism as an active demographic. Despite below-average global youth turnout, it has grown since the mid-2010s through socialisation, motivation, pandemic-adapted coordination, and social media shaping salience and framing (Hamadeh, 2022, pp. 1–11). Gen Z’s progressive party alignment further sustains engagement.

Global Generation Z political activism has been gathering momentum since 2018 and gaining salience among scholars and decision-makers. Political engagement in political processes signals commitment to democracy; thus, parliamentary systems face intensified scrutiny. Democratic and non-democratic regimes strive to accommodate aspirations while remaining

in power. After profound systemic shifts, RoW nations, led by Argentina, Cape Verde and Sierra Leone, experience increased political mobilisation from Gen Z.

#### **4.2. Soft Power, Norm Diffusion, and Human Rights Advocacy**

Countries where the Gen Z wave of activism (or more broadly, youth-led mobilisation) surges are likely to further this bidding up of international, regional, and transnational issues as being on and winning the Gen Z radar screen (Merrick, 2014). In other words, the value of global issues such as climate change, human rights and digital governance to domestic political actors is an important determinant of both whether states collaborate in multilateral meetings and debates around joining international treaties or organisations and how close they are prepared to position themselves to the opinions of others on specific issues. The Gen Z flood puts pressure to increase interest in those global issues, but national specifics differ far more. Countries with extensive youth participation in Gen Z movements tend to display more attention toward transnational and regional advocacy for democracy, anti-authoritarianism, and related topics; however, countries where the primary youth agenda is local (covering matters such as crime, corruption, inflation and urban living conditions) experience a decrease of interest in helping popular rebellions elsewhere.

#### **4.3. Strategic Narratives and International Image**

A key element in international relations is how national identity narratives are constructed to impact perceptions of international legitimacy. They are both sources of the type of international actor a state would like to be and of the normative values it wants to spread – and they tell us about concrete national policies that some desire. Strategic narratives – constructed by political elites who utilised and combined pre-existing national identity frames in adept rhetoric – mould dimensions of international action which further define legitimacy. Moreover, countries can promote domestic policy aims through a combination of international efforts, from medical aid to pandemic-related media outreach to vaccine distribution. Geographic proximity, scale of action (local or global), and ethical principles (fairness, reciprocity, need) are frameworks through which comparable engagement extends to the extra-laboratory world.

Counterarguments contend that, by addressing national interests through international behaviour, one actually weakens the signalling of potential legitimate action, thereby generating an adulterated global image. However, such policy-instrumental operations continue to be important as arenas of national identification and legitimacy and legitimation. In today's information era, packaging internationalism as a symbol of reach under the aegis of a greater good can be used to boost a state's reputation as a provider and source for internationally significant issues. Messages that promote these narratives of national self can be delivered via domestic and/or external channels, or, ideally, through both. Gen Z membership in groups driven by values and identity may lead youth to serve as ambassadors who seek to strengthen desired elements of their countries' global reputation, or they can become critics of state legitimacy (Hamadeh, 2022, pp. 1-11).

#### **5. Case Studies Across Regions**

North America and Europe's high issue salience, electoral engagement, institutional responses, and policy experiments among youth contrast sharply between the two regions. Caribbean Gen Z mobilise around a range of issues in a governance vacuum, sparking fragmented movements. Generic youth governance demands are considered across sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East, including climate change, human rights, and digital mobilisation. Asia-Pacific Activism is shaped by digital ecologies, media, control tolerance, and cross-border frames that are conducive to transnational action (Tanaid & Wright, 2019, pp. 105-114).

### **5.1. North America and Europe**

Gen Z activism emerges as a global phenomenon across democratic regimes. Two patterns are evident in North America and Europe.

The younger generation is leading the fight against climate change. It is youth activists, mobilising under the slogan “Fridays for Future,” who organise climate strikes across borders. Its roots lie in a lone act of protest by Greta Thunberg, the Swedish teenager who began skipping school to hold solitary lunchtime vigils outside her nation’s parliament. Her call to action went international after a single tweet from Thunberg inspired 4 million students in 135 countries to strike for climate justice.

Youth movements have explored diverse means of effecting change, including traditional pathways such as political party involvement and international mechanisms like the UN special envoy for youth, youth ambassadors, and intergenerational youth consultations. Multilateral avenues appeal to Gen Z activists already frustrated with domestic governing institutions. In many countries, youth programs that promise politically related internship pipelines and party offers carry less weight than previously (Tanaid & Wright, 2019, pp. 105-114).

Similar issues are prevalent in areas characterised by fragile democracies. Social movements mobilise youth not through international collective action but rather around national developmental grievances, yearning for a brighter future. Nevertheless, opportunities and constraints differ significantly in that realm.

### **5.2. Latin America and the Caribbean**

Since 2019, Gen Z has been central to resurgent social movements in Latin America and the Caribbean, advocating for environmental protection, gender equity, education/work rights, and feminist/LGBTQ+ human rights, as well as sex education to combat violence. These youth-led environmental, gender, and anti-harassment mobilisations leverage partial digitalisation of public governance to align demands with policy processes, enhancing agenda salience.

The prevailing mode of mobilisation across Latin America and the Caribbean leads to two distinctive features of youth activism. First, youth engagement occurs predominantly in fragile democratic regimes that are undergoing at least partial backsliding, suggesting that its character differs from regional patterns in North America and Europe. Second, young activists usually gravitate towards distinct social movements rather than forming autonomous youth movements (Kwak et al., 2020, pp. 1366-1390).

### **5.3. Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East**

The 2010–2011 Arab Spring and the 2019–present #EndSARS and #WeRiseIn protests demonstrated the use of social media, among other platforms, to mobilise large segments of youth in sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. Unlike earlier youth efforts that were centred solely in the domestic arena, the movements became broader in scope when they began to transcend territorial national borders (Ezeibe & Ogbodo, 2015, pp. 112-123).

Despite a slowdown in large street protests and rallies, significant youth- and digital-led efforts to influence governance persist. Young people in the petroleum-rich Middle East seek enhanced governance standards, with campaigns addressing literacy, corruption, infrastructure, transparency, accountability, security, human rights, and service delivery.

### **5.4. Asia-Pacific**

Digital technologies provide societies with unprecedented opportunities for political mobilisation. Youth activism from across the globe in 2021 exemplifies this phenomenon. Many young people utilised the online platform TikTok to comment on national elections in several countries, including Canada, South Africa, and the United States; many of them were not eligible to vote. Mobilisation by young voters can be observed both during national



elections in numerous democracies and in support of civil rights in locations where authorities do not respect fundamental freedoms. Political parties, government institutions, and policies are supported or opposed based on memes concerning social issues (Tanaid & Wright, 2019, pp. 105-114).

The primary subject of the mobile action under consideration is climate change. Young people repeatedly say previous generations' inaction has jeopardised their future. The situation experienced by youth amid the coronavirus pandemic intensified Gen Z activists' concern about climate change. Such mobilisation by today's youth has been boosted by incidents that typecast government institutions as incapable of ensuring well-being (i.e. climate change, racism, economy, etc.) and consequently intoxicated a large number of young people with a taste of civil actions.

## **6. Policy Implications for Democracies**

Scholarly literature identifies multiple channels through which Gen Z activism impacts democratic institutions and international relations. In democracies, youth-led movements exert direct pressure on parliaments and party systems by articulating divergent values and governance priorities. Transnational youth movements elevate local DA issues to national and international levels (Ezeibe & Ogbodo, 2015, pp. 112-123).

A study of young Gen Z activists indicates potential effects on democracy and the global order. They mobilise online both through their actions and through formal electoral channels, with direct effects on global connections (e.g., climate change or human rights) as well as indirect local changes in law (Ezeibe & Ogbodo, 2015, pp. 112-123). This section summarises the main policy implications across three domestic and one international domains.

First, Gen Z activism underscores the importance of expanding civic education on minority-voting procedures and of creating youth advisory councils, such as Ecuador's Youth Consultative Processes. Teachers are also advised to incorporate civic subjects, such as civil society organisations, multiculturalism, and the duties of a citizen, or the political effects of digital platforms/social networks, into school curricula. Debate initiatives that promote the discussion of democracy-related topics may serve as an open-minded vehicle to foster deliberation among those aged 16 to 29 while avoiding a top-down approach. Among formal mechanisms, attention to both young citizens' voting and the establishment of youth councils also merits policy consideration.

Second, the actions of Gen Z advocates emphasise the necessity of digital-regulatory arrangements that better protect minors from inappropriate political content and enhance teenagers' rights to personal data and privacy, as well as the need to specify the technical approaches involved. Many active minors observe significant differences in the participatory opportunities available to adult citizens and to minors. Where safe to do so, inclusion of teenage perspectives within policy discourses on digital governance is proving beneficial.

Third, the transnational nature of activism among Generation Z suggests advocacy for bilateral or multilateral agreements that promote youth exchanges and the establishment of Youth Councils similar to the Nordic countries' Capitals of Youth initiative. Parallel fulfilment of national pledges on climate change or human rights, often made by the most senior state leaders, takes on added relevance when these themes also emerge as priorities among local youth.

### **6.1. Inclusive Civic Education and Participation Mechanisms**

Global youth mobilisation occurs predominantly through digital-initiated protest movements that transcend national borders and address universal challenges such as climate change, inclusiveness, education, freedom, human rights, and sustainability, without discriminating among nations. Gen Z activists channel agitation into governance engagement, fostering

policy reorientation through innovative techniques such as data visualisation, multichannel diffusion, and emotional reinvestment (Kwak et al., 2020, pp. 1366-1390).

Conducting an in-depth analysis of territorial persecution, exports to, transfers from, taxation, censorship, state-initiated commercial screen time, and total viewing leads to nonrestrictive recommendations. These cover Office 365 licenses, copyright transfers, free distribution, game cancellations, measures to restrict exposure to the works of youth, posters on residential doors, visual and audio artistic freedom instruments, interchange with neighbouring metropolises, lenience towards savage satire spotlighting cultural ostracism and policies separating production and viewing (Ross, 2018, pp. 1–24).

### **6.2. Digital Governance and Platform Accountability**

Young people living through the Covid-19 pandemic are suffering collectively from social isolation, mental health difficulties, boredom, and a disconnect in social interactions dating back to before Covid-19. At the same time, the pandemic has shifted political engagement and action among many youth experiencing the crisis together. Many have turned to platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and Snapchat to express their frustration and desire for change, either as online influencers, through memes, or by exposure to satire and entrepreneurship videos.

In some countries, the media sometimes refers to this activism as a Gen Z movement, and there are claims that Gen Z youth are becoming involved in political and climate change issues that previously engaged young adults. Young adults aged 20-29 became more active on issues of climate change and other important topics during the pandemic. The level of overall political engagement among 20-29-year-olds increased between 2020 and 2021, whereas in the 30-39 age group, attention to political issues generally decreased. In Canada, youth aged 18-24 have indicated that they are more inclined to vote than in previous elections. Discussions about attitudes toward government follow this general pattern (Eckstein et al., 2024, pp. 1–14).

The level of interest in the pandemic indicates that concerns about youth are not unfounded. On average, young people aged 18-29 have consistently reported the highest levels of concern about government performance since 2020. Young people in several regions around the world seem to be facing challenges that do not seem to dissuade their political attention but, in some cases, even encourage it, and in some cases even promote climate- and youth-related actions among young adults. A variety of discussions focused on youth and the pandemic took place at the United Nations level. Some requests linked pandemic and climate concerns, as a few regions' youth delegates could address climate and youth concerns in conjunction with the pandemic (Gorwa & Garton Ash, 2019).

### **6.3. International Collaboration and Youth Engagement**

Today, the world witnesses climate change, armed conflicts, extreme poverty, gender inequality, systematic racism, the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and failed infrastructures, among many critical challenges. National, regional, and global mechanisms across disciplines, professional sectors, stakeholders, and institutions are spurred by a burning urgency to tackle these global issues head-on, driven by a profound understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals (Hamadeh, 2022, pp. 1-11). Thus, investing in future generations of the world while they are still young is urgent. The global movement of Generation Z Young Change-makers remains an opportune approach to tackle these pressing global challenges.

The generation of youths worldwide, termed Generation Z, is a generation of change agents in almost every corner of the world (Conner & Cosner, 2016, pp. 1-12). Generation Z is the most politically engaged generation to date; many are participating in global movements calling for urgent action to save the planet and advocating for the rights of underprivileged groups. Among the myriad concerns, the climate crisis tops the list as the biggest fear and

priority for youths around the globe, and it is shaping how youth engage with political issues. Rapid advances in digital technology fuel another wave of social movements aimed at empowering the next generation, and both interconnected crises, as the basis for the formation of youth movements today.

## 7. Conclusion

The global uprisings of Generation Z are a watershed moment in contemporary statecraft. The contribution of this paper is to demonstrate systematically that this digital-native, values-based generation has shaped a dual-pressure structure that jointly challenges and regenerates national and international regimes. At home, Gen Z's distinctive membership is fueling global digital assemblages and value-laden conceptions of justice and equity, pressuring canny parliaments into uncharted patterns of both substantive output and symbolic response when it comes to agenda-setting on issues as far-flung as climate action and digital rights. Overall, this generation has had a niche issue in the past and has set a new 'baseline' of global issue salience that reflects international cooperation and norm cascades. The grassroots action goes beyond national boundaries as we know them and puts pressure on governments to accept greater responsibility for problems that cross geographic borders. Finally, by giving visual life to these interrelated impact pathways, this paper provides the essential guidebook for charting how the emerging political generation is forever altering the political and diplomatic face of political actors, demanding a re-orientation of policies towards authentic sustainability, both environmentally and socially.

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