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Youth Political Participation and Political Attitudes

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ABSTRACT:

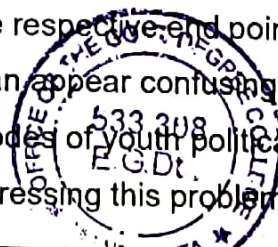
A Looking at political participation behavior of young adults in contemporary Europe, this paper provides the reader with a map of different terminologies and logics that are used to discuss youth political participation. The existing literature is examined through the lens of five guiding questions: what defines youth political participation? How does youth political participation differ from adult political participation? How do young adults develop political attitudes? How does youth political participation differ across Europe? What methods are being used to analyse youth political participation? For those researching youth political participation for the first time, this paper offers a useful overview of the topic. At the same time, it gives researchers who are already well-informed the opportunity to reflect on the current state of research in this field. Finally, this paper indicates where future research is needed.

Keywords: terminologies, contradiction, comprehensive picture, Political Participation (PP).

Introduction

Looking at the political participation behavior of young adults in contemporary Europe, one is faced with a contradiction. Representatives of the disengagement paradigm within the literature underpin their argument with empirical findings, such as young adults being the least likely to vote in national elections, the drop of youth membership in political parties, and generally low levels of political interest., which are more appealing to and are used more frequently by young adults.

Both perspectives raise questions about the role of young adults in European democracies. The two mentioned positions represent the respective end points of a much more nuanced line of research on this topic. Research in this area can appear confusing, but overall it is clear that a comprehensive picture of both the degree and the modes of youth political participation is lacking. This paper tries to take a first step in the direction of addressing this problem. on the following



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