

"Gen Z" in Georgia: Perceptions, Values, Attitudes and Interests

Key Findings of the 2025 Research

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UG Youth and Social Research Center

The Center studies the values, attitudes, and experiences of various social groups and promotes the development of evidence-based policies.

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"Gen Z" in Georgia: Perceptions, Values, Attitudes and Interests

🎯 Objective

The main objective of the Research is "Gen Z" a comprehensive study of the values, perceptions and attitudes of the generation (ages 18–28).

📖 Key Topics



Gen Z Value Orientations



Attitudes Toward Governments and
the Role of Citizens



Interest in Politics and Sense of
Political Competence



Participation in Civic Activities:
Motivators and Barriers

Research Methodology

Qualitative Research

- **Method:** Focus Groups
- **Format:** 4 online focus groups (ZOOM).
- **Participants:** Representatives of "Gen Z" (ages 18–28), 6 participants per group.
- **Sampling:** Quota-based
 - by age (18–23 vs. 24–28)
 - and by settlement type – urban vs. rural.
- **Field period:** May 2–4, 2025.
- **Duration:** approximately 90 minutes.

Quantitative Research

- **Method:** Telephone survey
- **Format:** 1,000 telephone interviews (CATI).
- **Target group:** Young people aged 18–28 in Georgia.
- **Sampling:** Simple random sampling – Random Digit Dialing (RDD).
- **Field period:** June 4 – July 1, 2025.
- **Margin of error:** $\pm 2\%$;
- **Response rate:** 15%.
- **Duration:** approximately 15 minutes.

Theoretical framework: Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB); Civic Voluntarism Model (CVM); Social Cognitive Theory (SCT); Evolutionary Emancipation Theory (EET).

Gen Z Value Orientations

Issues That Matter to Young People

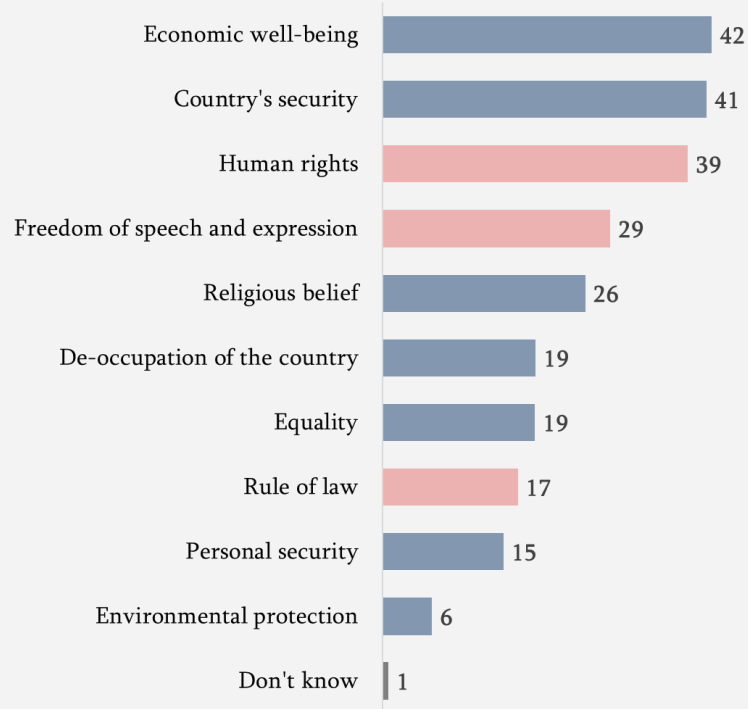
Chart #1. From the following list, what do you value most? Please choose up to three answers (%)

67% choose among their top three at least one justice-related issue.

Demographic Trends:

Gender: Women cite justice-related issues more frequently (75%) than men (59%);

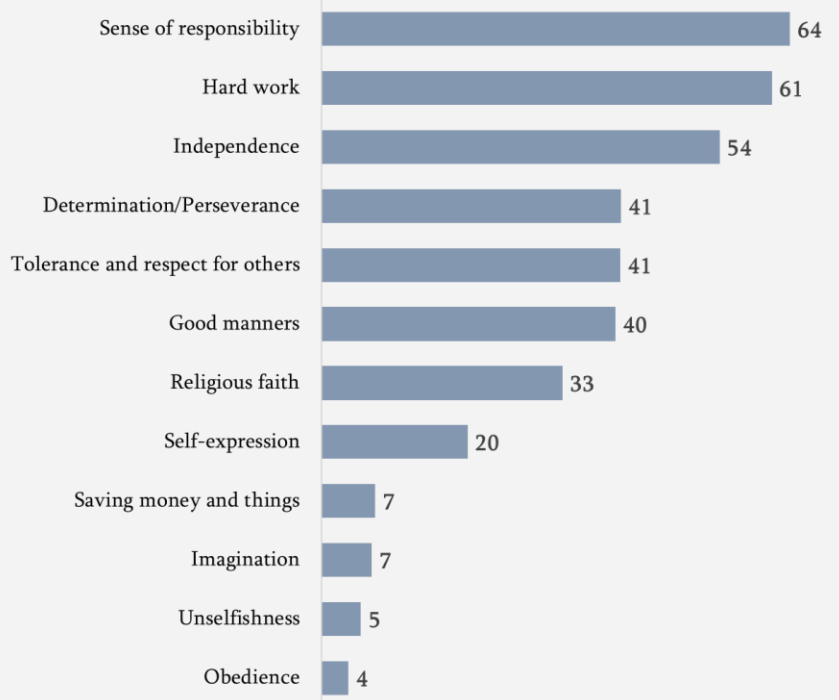
Settlement type: More prevalent in the capital (74%) than in other cities (64%) and villages (62%).



Value Priorities for Young People

Compared to conformist values (obedience, religious faith), **young people prioritize autonomous values** (independence, determination).

Chart #2. Which five qualities from the following list should children be taught at home? (%)



Autonomous Values

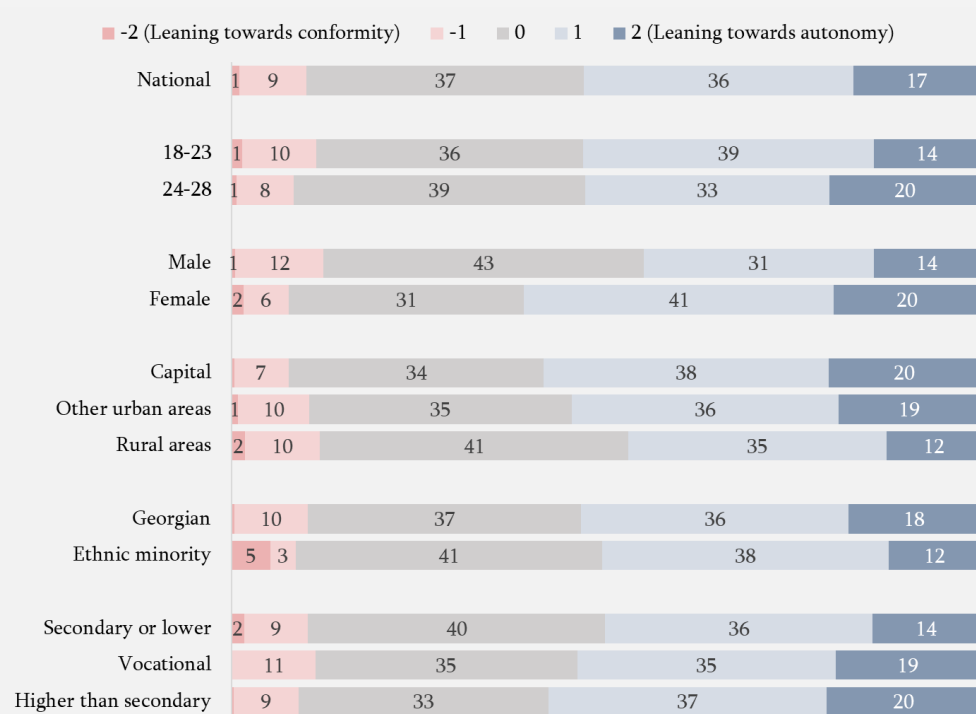
Demographic Trends:

Autonomous values are most characteristic of:

- Women (61%)
- Young people with higher education (57%)
- The capital city youth (58%)

The average autonomy index score is +0.59 – young people's value system leans toward personal autonomy.

Chart #3. Personal Autonomy Index by Demographic Characteristics (%)

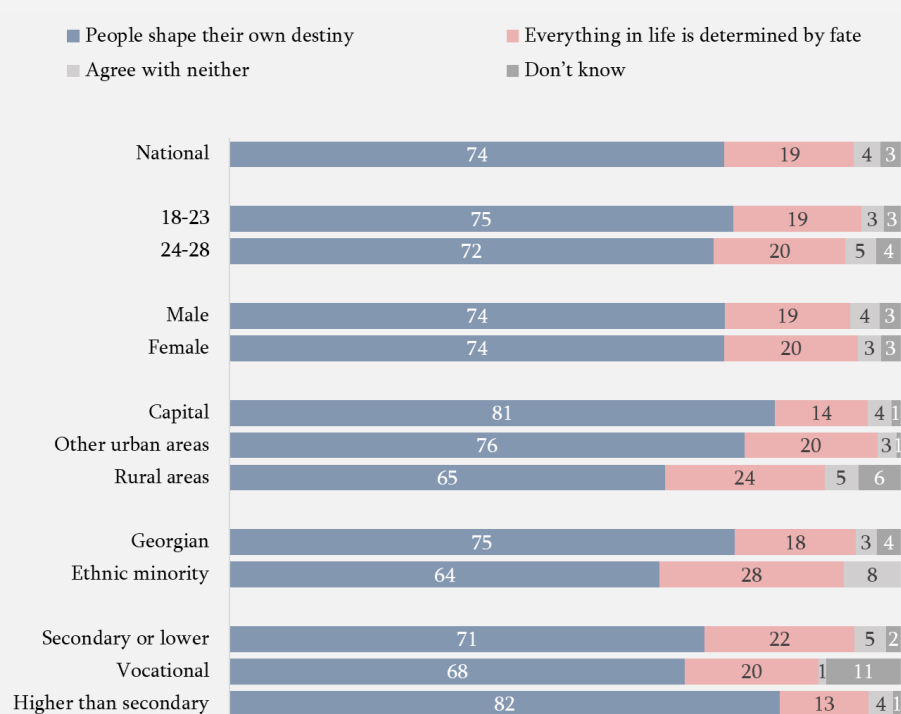


Perceptions of Fatalism Among Youth

Chart #4. Which view do you agree with: everything in life is determined by fate, or do people shape their own destiny? (%)

The belief that people control their own lives is more prevalent:

- In urban areas, more youth believe people control their own fate than in rural areas – capital (81%) vs. rural (65%).
- Other demographic differences are not statistically significant.



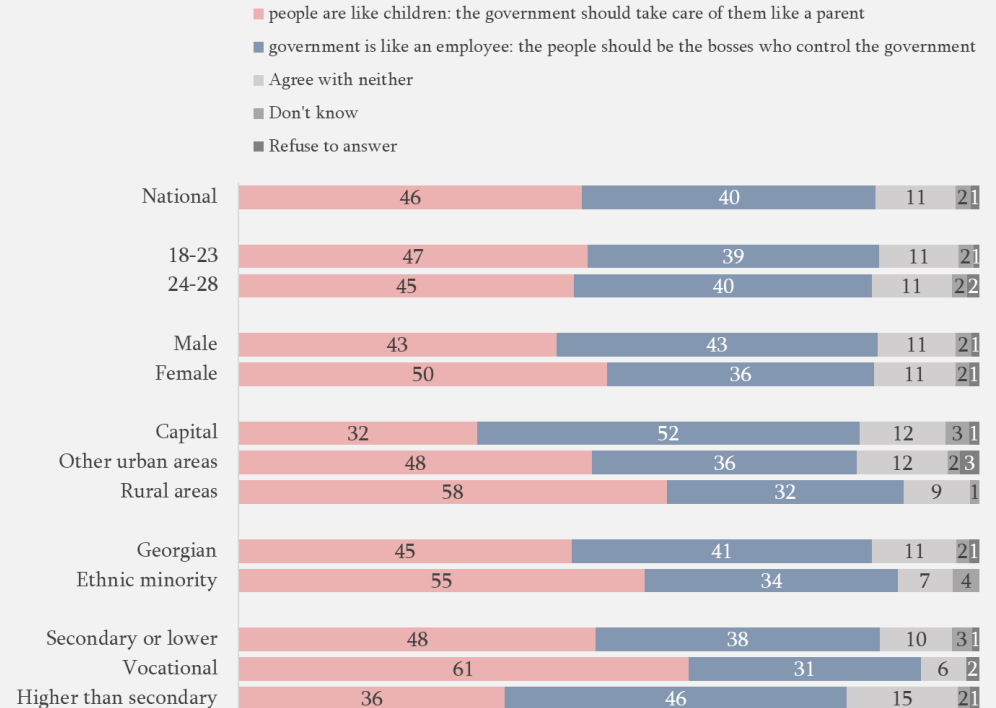
Attitudes Toward Governments and the Role of Citizens

Youth Perceptions of the Role of Government

Chart #5. Which view do you agree with: “people are like children: the government should take care of them like a parent” or “The government is like an employee: the people should be the bosses who control the government” (%)

Demographic Trends:

- Perception of government as a “caring parent” is most common among rural youth (58%) and least common among youth in the capital (32%).
- Other demographic differences are not statistically significant.

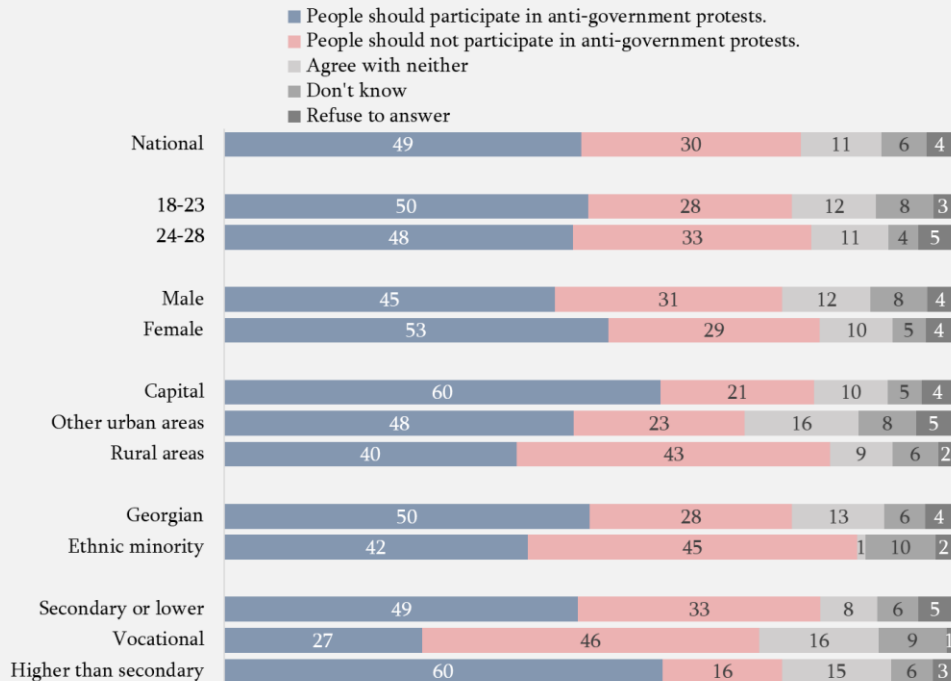


Youth Attitudes Toward Protest

Chart #6. Which view do you agree with: “People should participate in protests against the government to show that the people are the governing force,” or “People should not participate in protests against the government, as this threatens the country's stability.” (%)

Demographic Trends:

- In urban areas, support for protest participation is higher (60%);
- Young people with higher than secondary education show higher support for protest participation (60%)
- Other demographic differences are not statistically significant.

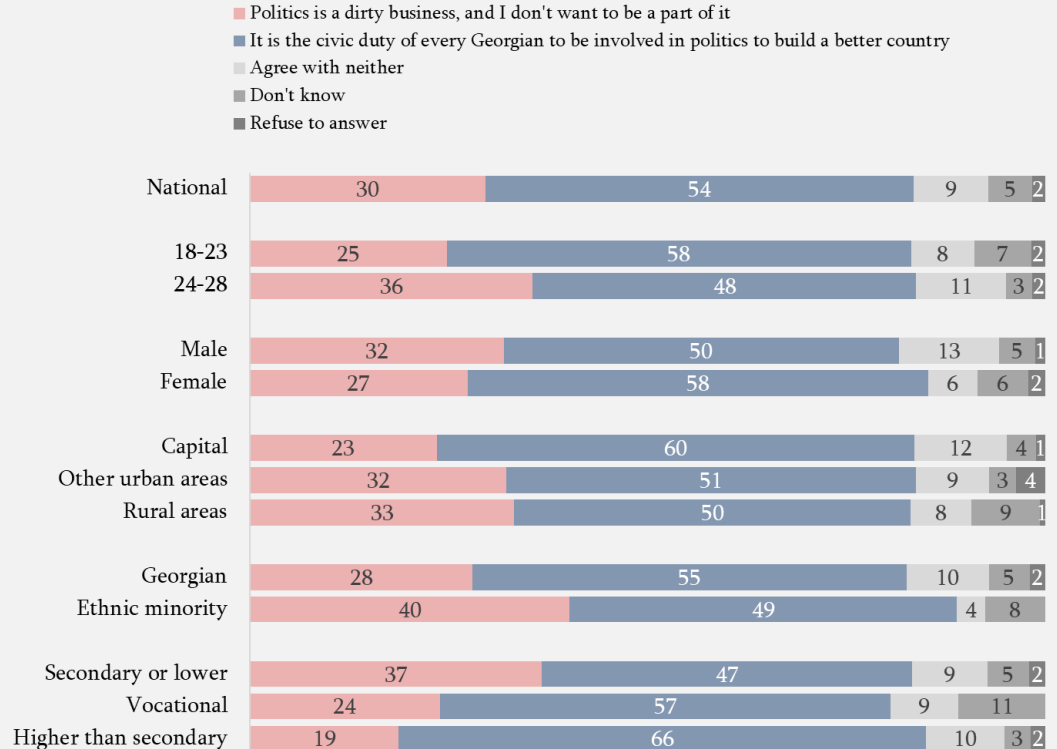


Youth Perceptions of Political Engagement

Chart #7. Which view do you agree with: “Politics is a dirty business and I do not want to be a part of it.” or “It is a civic duty of every Georgian to be involved in politics to build a better country.” (%)

Demographic Trends:

- Older youth (aged 24–28) are significantly more likely to view politics as “dirty business” (36%) than younger respondents (18–23) (25%);
- Political apathy is associated with a lower level of education (37%);
- Other demographic differences are not statistically significant.

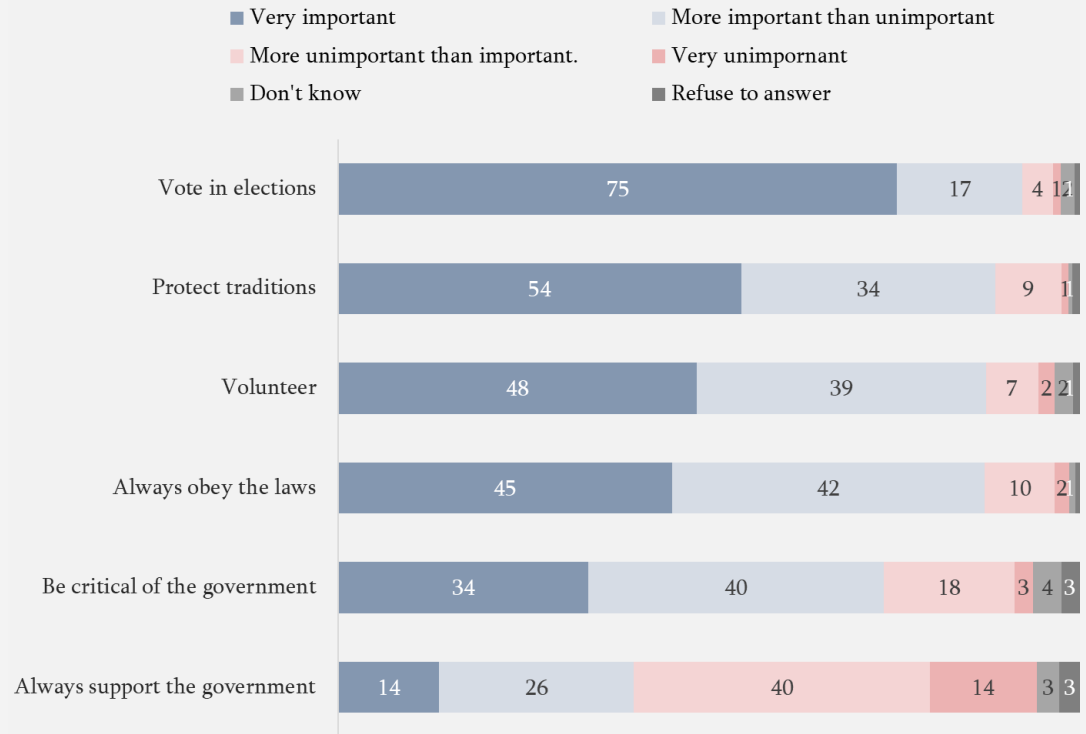


Characteristics of a “Good Citizen” According to Young People

Chart #8. How important or unimportant is it for a good citizen to... (%)

The qualitative research (focus groups) shows that young people find it difficult to name whom they consider a “good citizen”:

“Unfortunately, I cannot recall someone who is exceptionally exemplary in this way.” – Woman, 28, Tbilisi

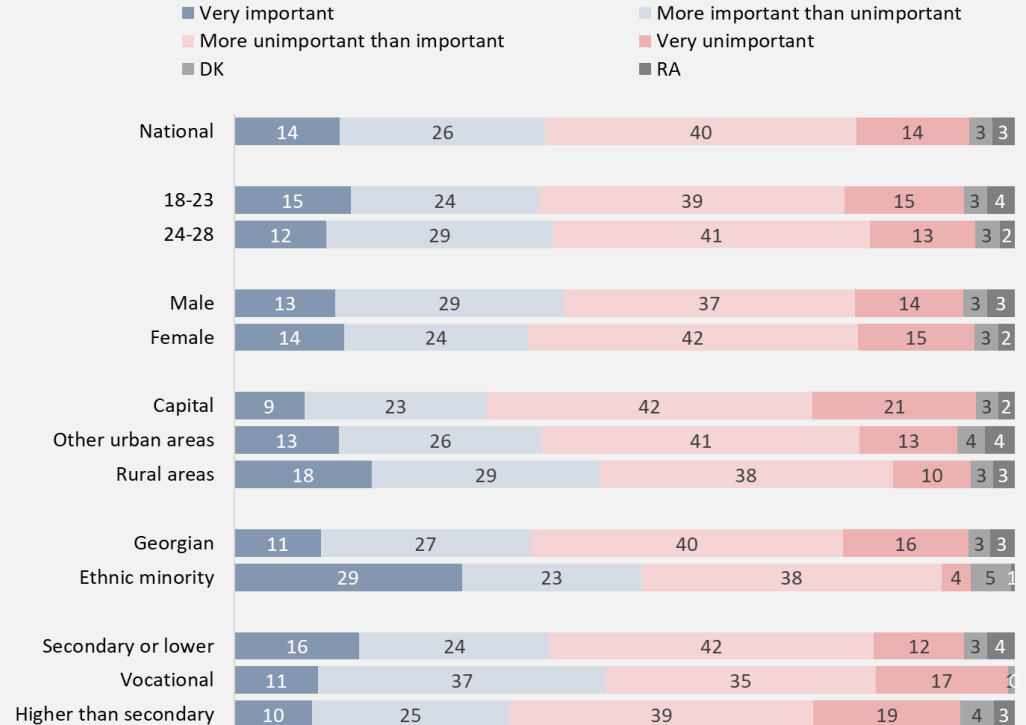


Characteristics of a “Good Citizen” – Supporting the Government

Chart #9. How important or unimportant is it for a good citizen to always support the government? (%)

Demographic Trends:

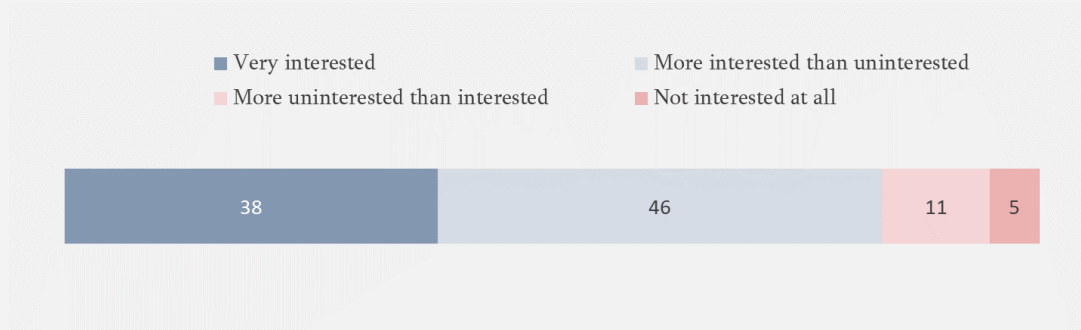
- The idea of unconditional government support is most shared by **rural youth (47%)** and least by youth in the capital (32%);
- Other demographic differences are not statistically significant.



Interest in Politics and Sense of Political Competence

Youth Interest in Politics

Chart #10. In general, how interested or uninterested are you in current events in Georgia? (%)



Low Engagement:

More than half of young people (58%) rarely or never discuss socio-political issues with family and friends. Only a quarter (25%) discuss such topics frequently.

Nature of Interest (Qualitative Analysis):

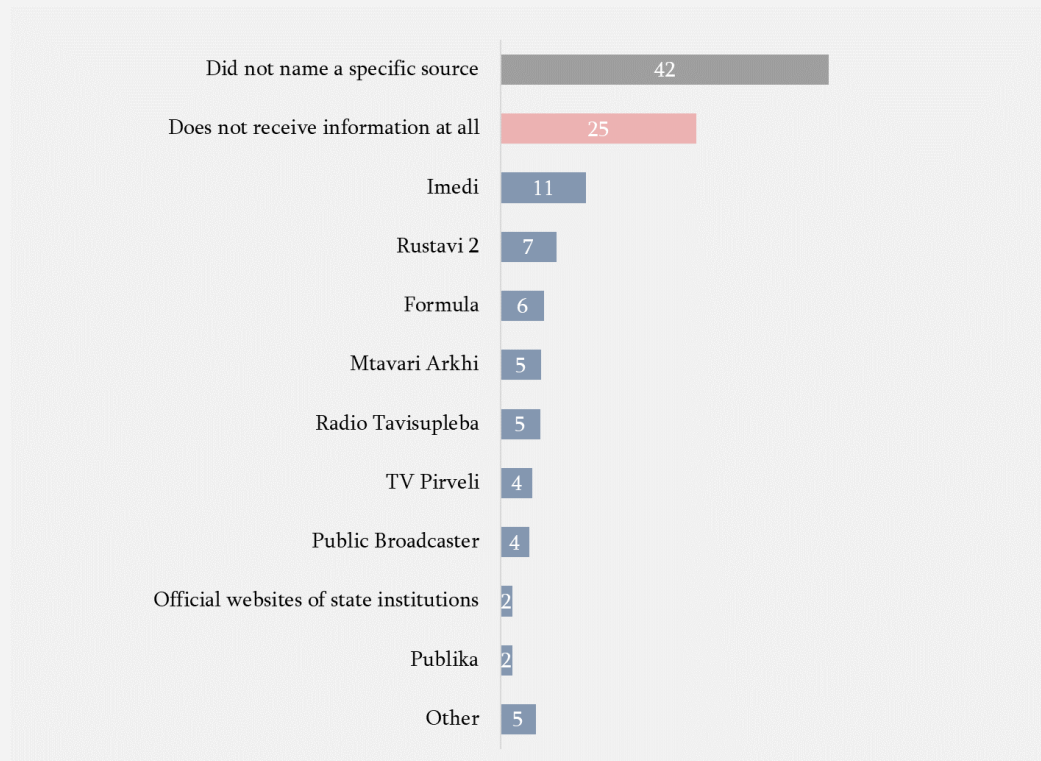
Interest stems from the perception that politics affects their personal lives and the country's future.

Awareness and Information Sources

According to the qualitative research, young people do not trust the views of any public figure as a source of information on political and social issues.

Other: “Tabula”, “Palitra TV”, “Batumelebi”, “Maestro”, “Pos TV”, “Netgazeti”, Adjara TV “Obieqtivi”, “Misminet”, “Kavkasia”.

Chart #11. From which sources do you usually get information on current social and political issues? (%)

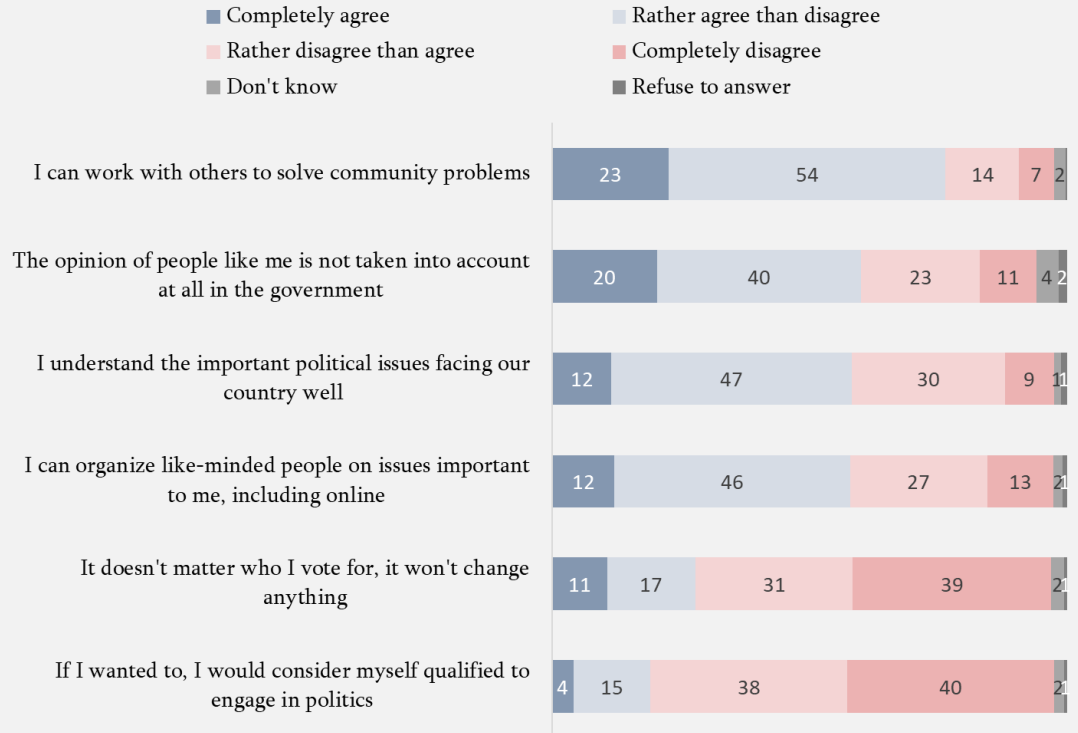


Sense of Political Competence

Chart #12. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (%)

Average Political Competence
Index = 2.5

Only 24% of young people have
a high sense of political
competence (scores of 3 and 4).



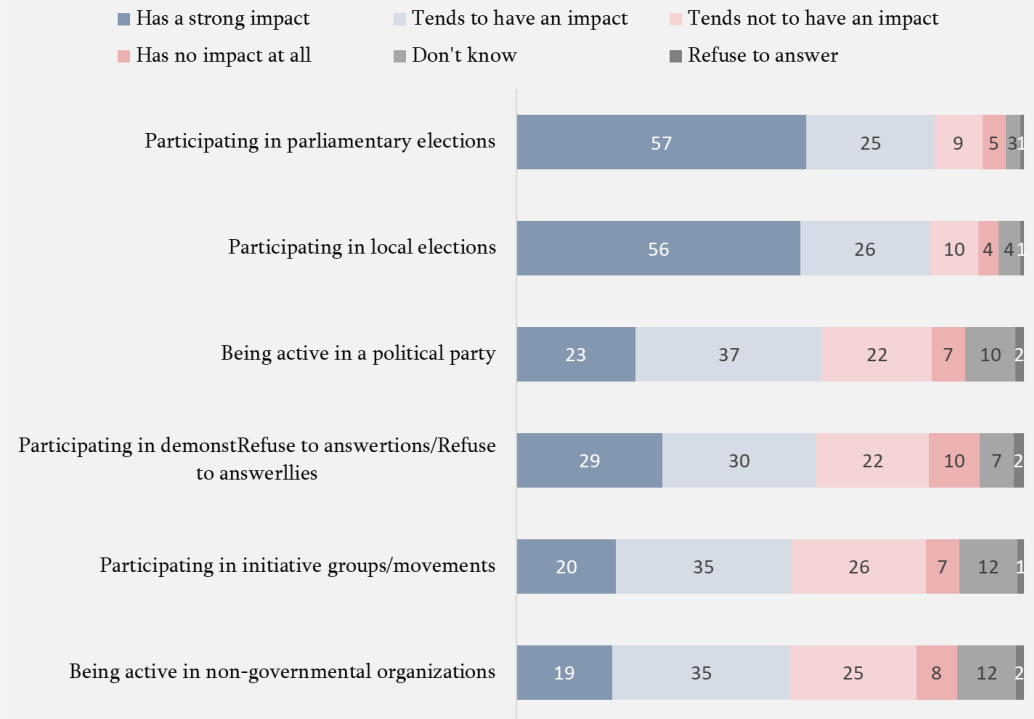
Perceptions of Political Competence – Citizens' Influence on Political Processes

On average, young people believe civic actions have more influence on politics than not. (Average score: 3.005).

Most Effective Activities (Qualitative Research):

- **Elections:** because “they determine the country's fate.”
- **Initiative groups:** because “unity has strength.”
- **Protest:** because “it has brought results before.”

Chart #13. Perception of Citizens' Political Efficacy – How much influence do the following civic actions have on Georgian politics? (%)

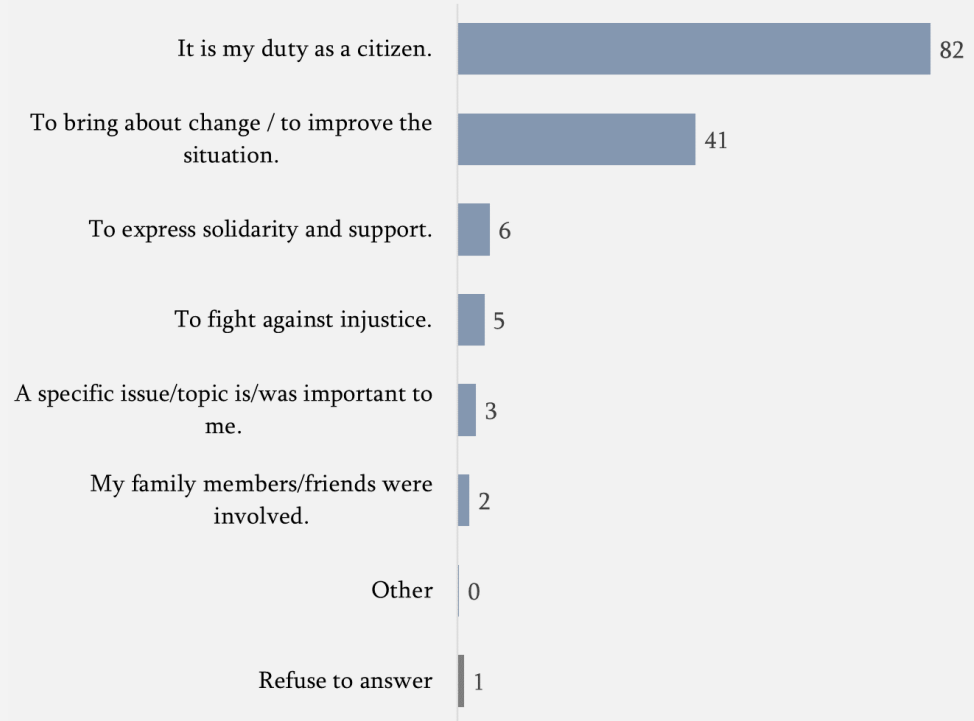


Motivators for Electoral Participation

The qualitative research also shows that participation in elections is viewed as a **civic obligation** with no “justifiable reasons” for non-participation.

In addition, **the desire to bring about change** and in some cases **the need to register one's own position** were cited as key motivating factors.

Chart #14. Motivation for Participation in Elections (%)

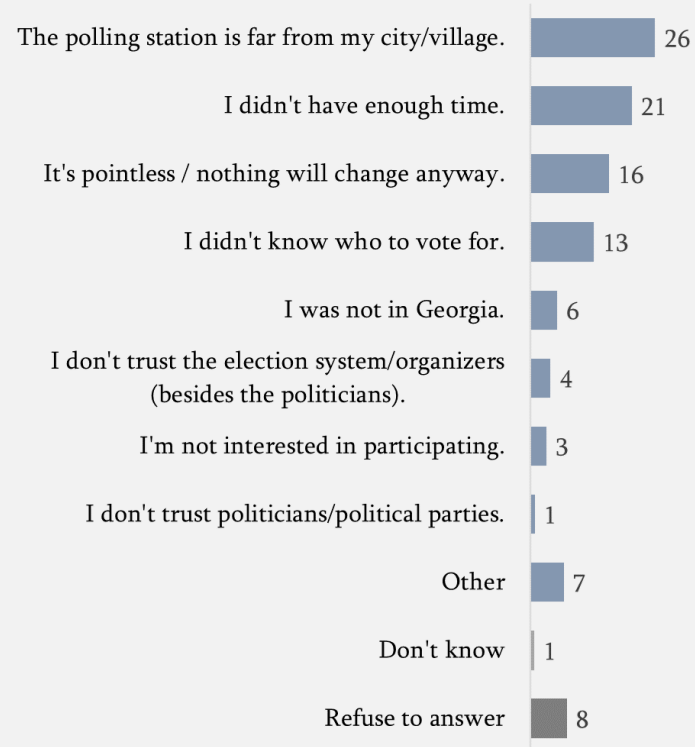


Barriers to Electoral Participation

Some respondents in the qualitative research (focus groups) note that, in general, **distrust of parties** and lack of information about them is a problematic issue.

In a small number of cases, non-participation in elections is linked to anticipated **disappointing** results.

Chart #15. Barriers to Electoral Participation (%)



Participation in Civic Activities

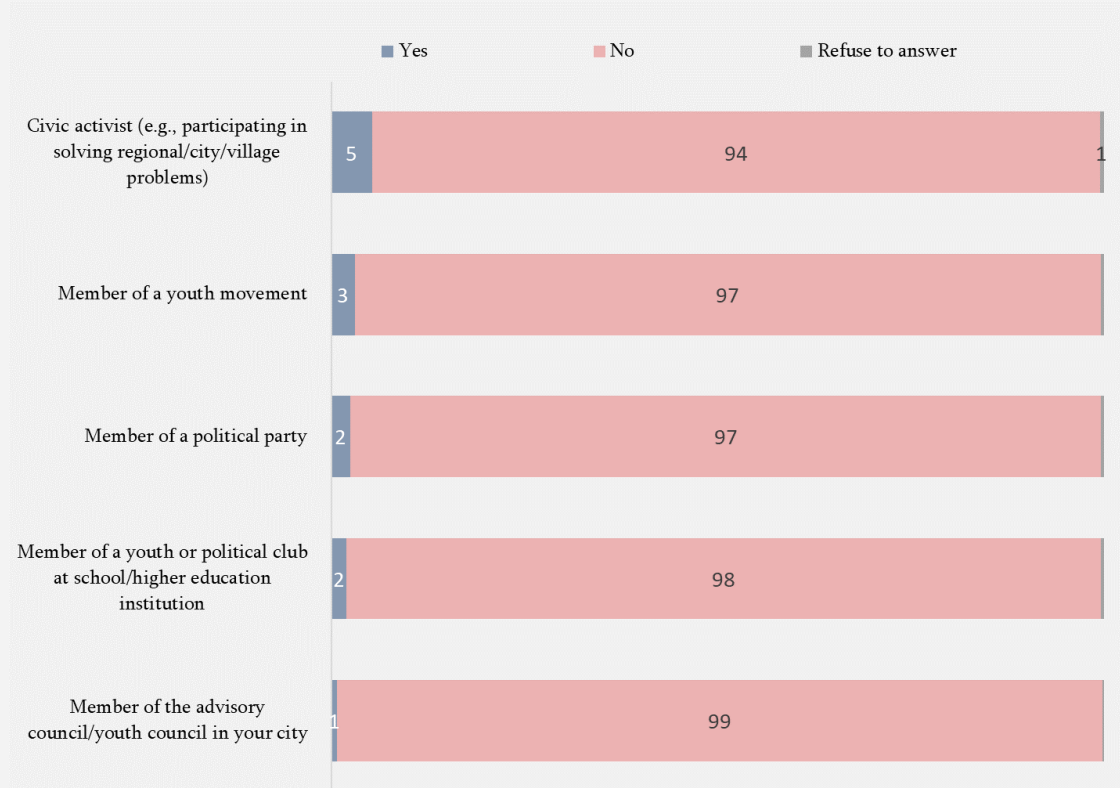
Formal VS Informal Activities

According to qualitative research, young people prefer **informal activities** for several reasons:

- Greater **flexibility**..
- **Being among** like-minded people.
- Simpler **communication**..

“From my personal experience, I prefer informal activities because I've been involved and found it easier. I'm currently part of a club where such topics are often discussed, and I think it will be even easier and create a friendlier environment.” – Man, 19, urban area.

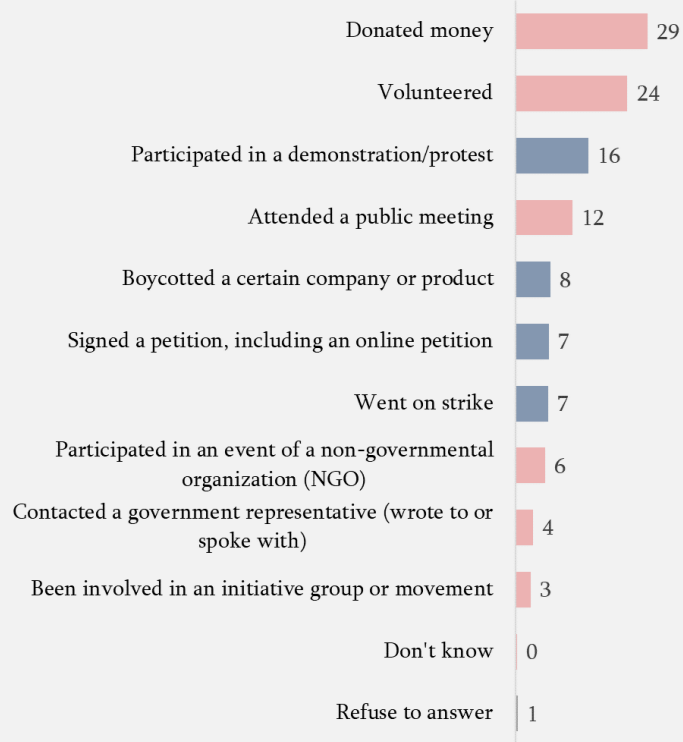
Chart #16. Are you personally a member of... (%)



Forms of Civic Engagement

Every fifth young person (21%) has been involved in some form of protest activity.

Chart #17. Have you done any of the following in the past 12 months? (%)

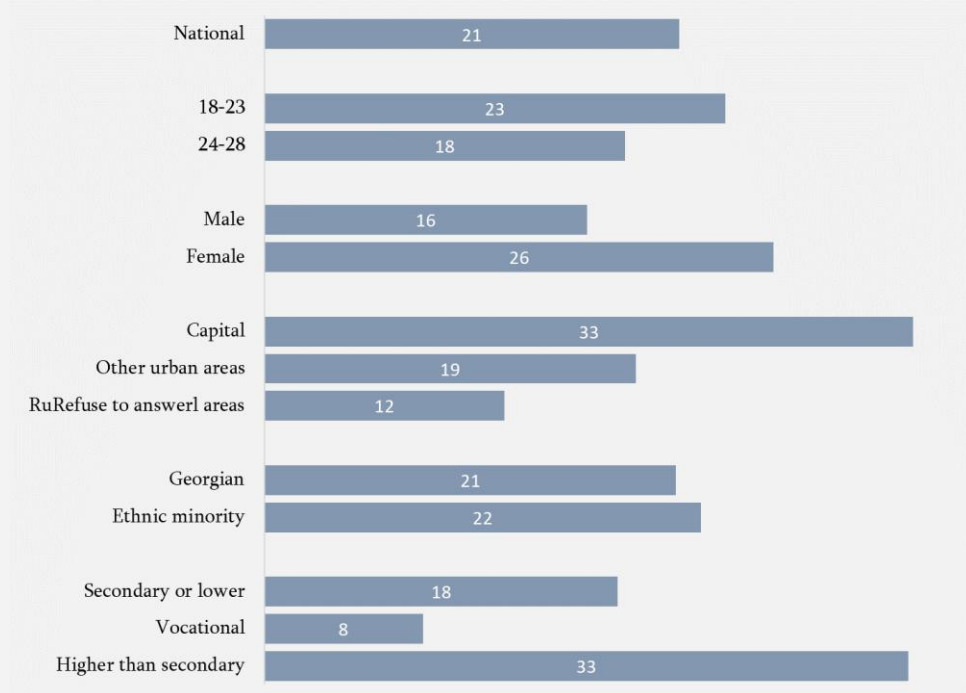


Participation in Protest Activities – Demographic Trends

Chart #18. Frequency of Participation in Protest Activities by Demographic Characteristics (%)

Demographic Analysis:

- **Settlement type:** Protest participation is higher in urban areas than in rural areas.
- **Gender:** Women's participation share is higher than men's.
- **Education:** Participation in protests is more prevalent among youth with above-average education.

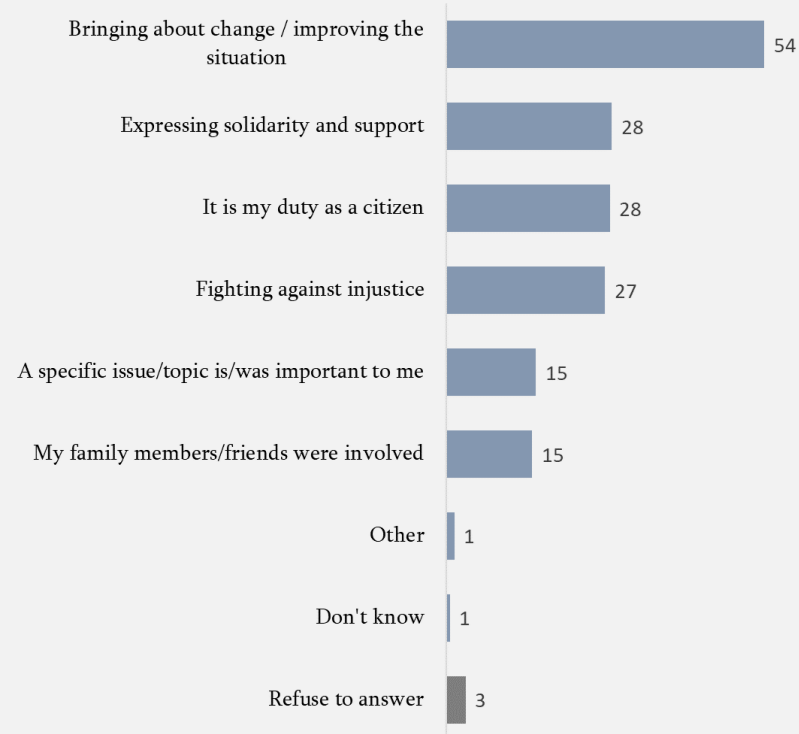


Participation in Protest Activities – Motivators

Chart #19. Motivators for Participation in Protest Activities (%)

Demographic Analysis:

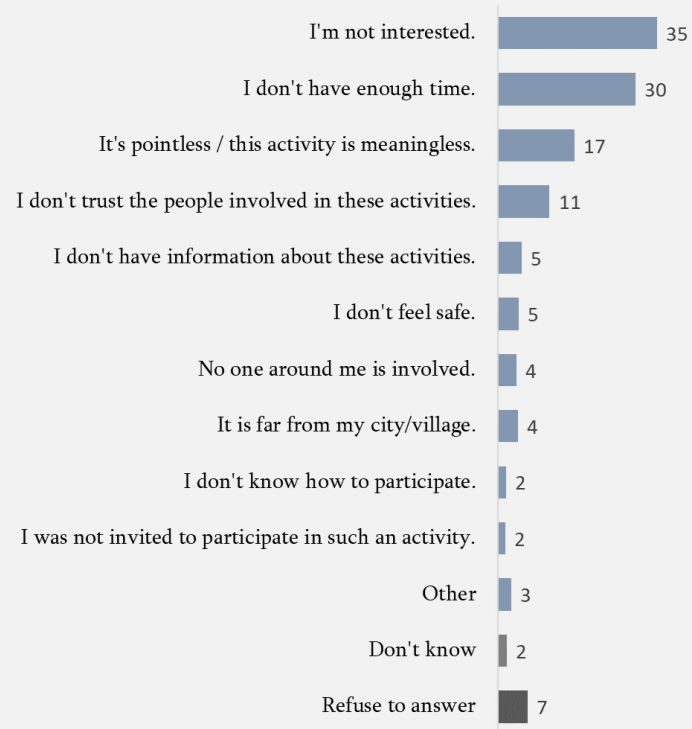
- Ethnic minority representatives (86%) cite the desire for change more frequently than ethnic Georgians (49%).
- Other demographic differences are not statistically significant.



Participation in Protest Activities – Barriers

The qualitative research identifies the main barrier as **an unsafe environment – physical and social (risk of job loss) threats**; particular attention is drawn to safety concerns related to protest participation.

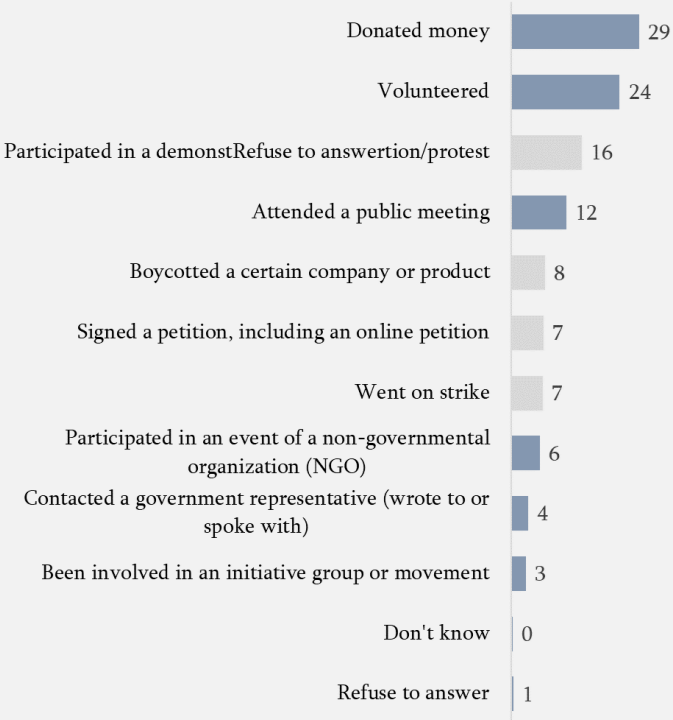
Chart #20. Barriers Related to Participation in Protests (%)



Participation in Social/Community Activities

Chart #21. Participation in Social/Community Activities (Excluding Protests) (%)

40% of young people are involved in at least one of these activities.

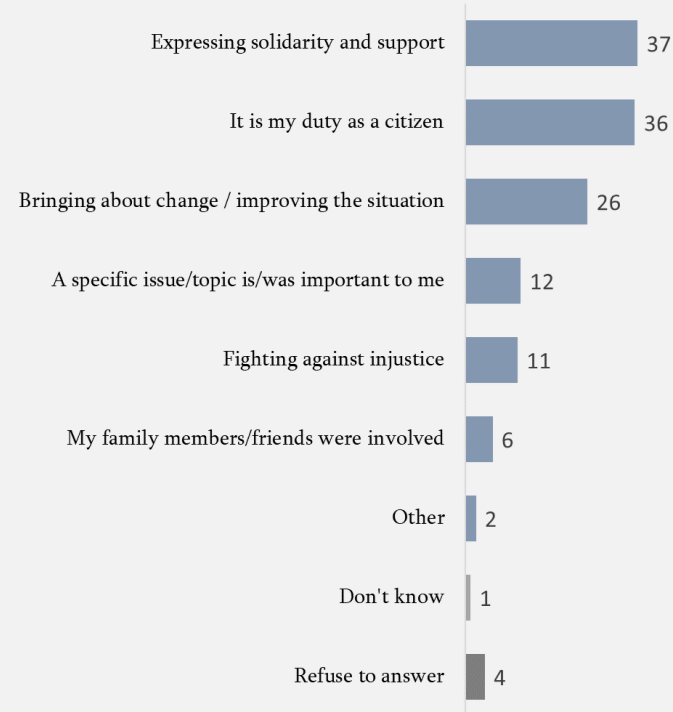


Participation in Social/Community Activities – Motivators

Chart #22. Motivators for Participation in Community Activities (Excluding Protests) (%)

Demographic Analysis:

- Two main motivations are prevalent across different demographic groups (by age, gender, settlement type, ethnicity, and education).
- Percentage differences between groups are **not statistically significant**.



Participation in Social/Community Activities – Barriers

Chart #23. Barriers Related to Participation in Community Activities (Excluding Protests) (%)

Barrier #1: Lack of Interest

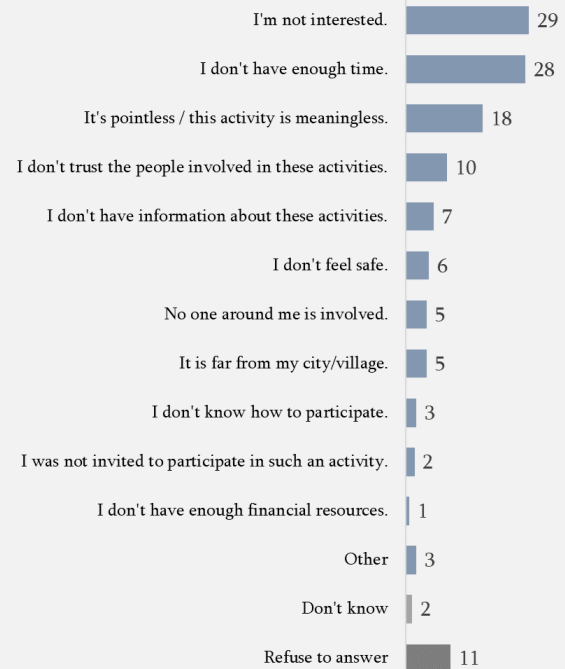
This barrier is cited more frequently by:

- **Age:** Older youth (aged 24–28) (36%) vs. younger youth (18–23) (26%).
- **Gender:** Men (37%) vs. women (24%).

Barrier #2: Lack of Time

This barrier is cited more frequently by:

- **Gender:** Women (33%) vs. men (23%).
- **Ethnicity:** Ethnic Georgians (31%) vs. ethnic minority representatives (11%).



Forms of Online Engagement

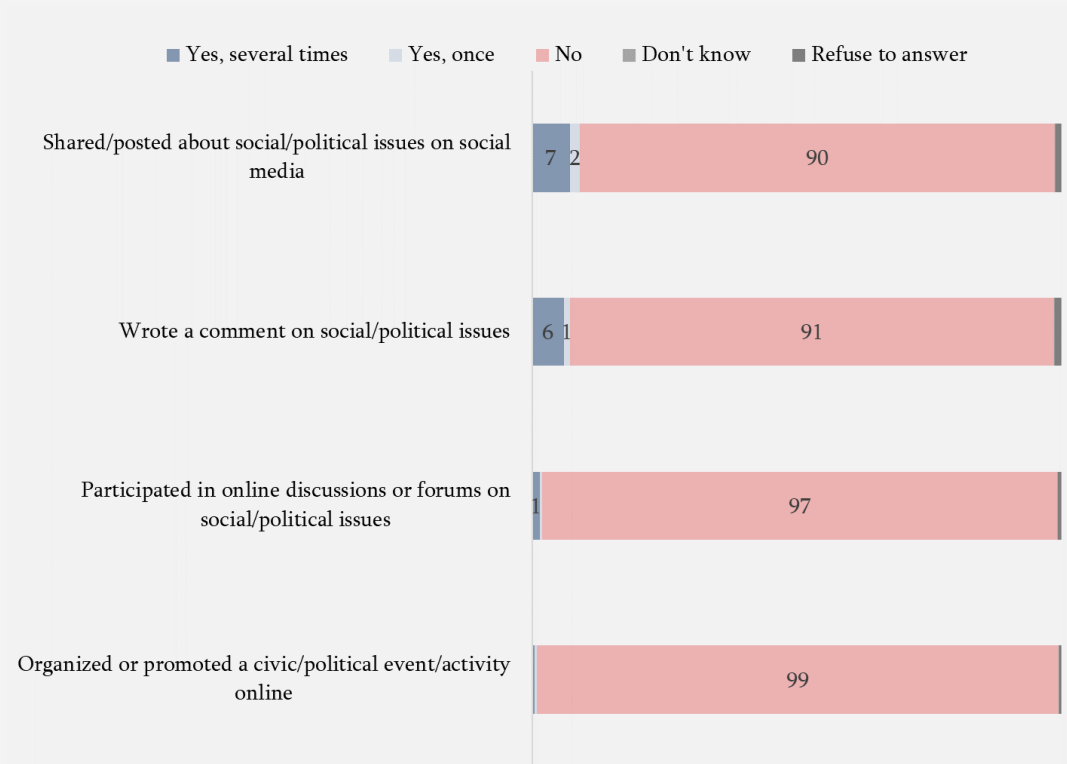
Young people's 11% say they participated in at least one of the listed activities.

Activity in Real vs. Online Space

According to the qualitative research (focus groups), young people perceive real-world activity as more effective and impactful because it is visible.

Online activity, however, is mainly viewed as a useful tool for spreading information.

Chart #24. Have you done any of the following while using social media in the past month? (%)

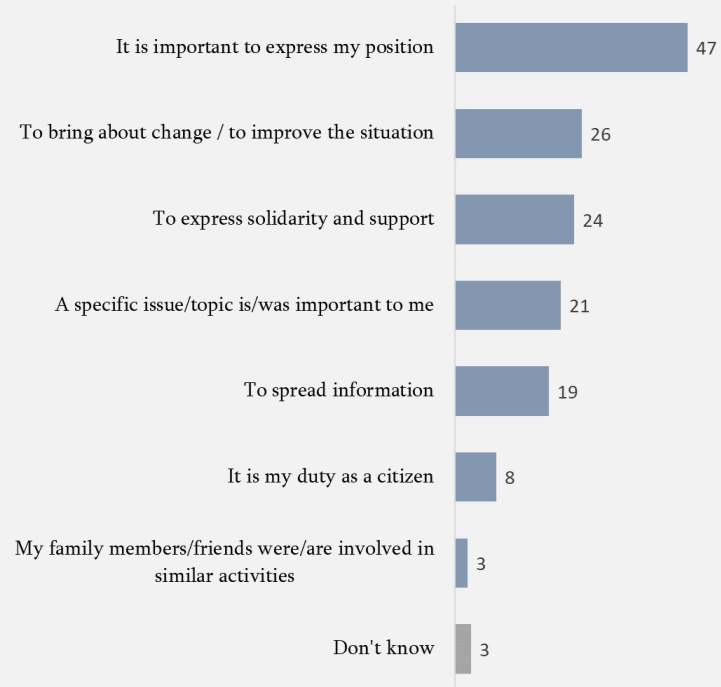


Online Engagement – Motivators

The main motivation for engagement among qualitative research participants – “so I wouldn't regret my silence.”

“At first I was afraid I would lose loved ones, friends... I wouldn't even call it fear, I just held back, but in the end I tried my best to say what I had to say so I wouldn't later regret my silence and inaction.” – Man, 20, rural

Chart #25. Motivators for Participation in Online Activities (%)



Note: N=152

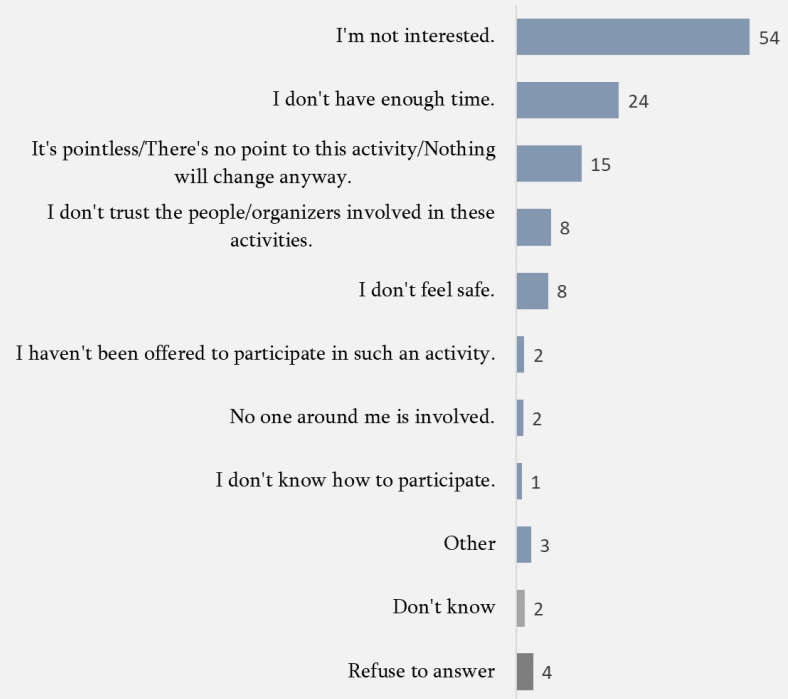
Online Engagement – Barriers

In qualitative research, the following were cited as barriers: **safety** concerns (threatening messages) and online **confrontation** avoidance.

Additionally, a small number note that they “don't like” expressing opinions online or believe this type of activity is insufficient.

“I don't feel safe because about three months ago I made a post about the current situation and some people sent threatening messages saying “delete this post or else.” Today, we are not protected in any way; they try to limit our freedom of speech.” – Woman, 19, urban

Chart #26. Barriers Related to Online Activities (%)



Summary

Priorities and Values

- **Priorities:** The most important issues for young people are justice-related matters (human rights, freedom of speech and expression, rule of law).
 - Justice-related issues are most often a priority for women (75%) and youth living in the capital (74%).
- **Gen Z leans toward personal autonomous values (index = +0.59):**
 - Autonomous values are most characteristic of: women (61%), youth with above-average education (57%), youth living in the capital (58%)
- **Paternalistic perception of government is widespread (46%), particularly among rural youth;**
- **Sense of Political Competence (index = 2.5):** Only 24% of respondents have a high sense of political competence.
 - Young people believe civic actions have more influence on politics than not (index = 3).

Participation in Civic Processes

- **Distancing from formal structures:** The absolute majority of young people (94%–99%) are not members of formal organizations, parties, or clubs.
 - **Need for flexibility:** Informal activities are preferred as they offer greater flexibility and the comfort of being among like-minded peers.
- **Elections as the main instrument:** perceived as a civic duty (82%) and the most effective means of bringing change.
- **Protest participation:** (as of June 2025) 21% of young people nationally, including 33% in Tbilisi, participated in protest activities. Protests are viewed as a legitimate way to demonstrate people's power and achieve results.
- **Online activism is low** (11%).

Motivations and Barriers to Participation in Civic Processes

- **Engagement-related motivations:** bringing about change/improving the situation, fulfilling civic duty, desire to express one's own position, expressing solidarity.
- **Engagement-related barriers:** time, lack of interest, nihilism;
 - **The fear factor (qualitative research finding):** The absence of a physically and socially safe environment was cited (e.g., fear of job loss or fear of bullying and confrontation in online spaces).

Thank You for Your Attention!

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