YOUTH ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION 2017

Quick Facts
The Kenyan youth can be considered as the proverbial phoenix rising from the ashes, one thing is clear they are far from losing hope in influencing this great nation they call home.

2017, like every 5 years signals decision time for Kenyans; the one true voice of every Kenyan is getting a chance to exercise their right to vote. IEBC, Civil Society and Political Parties actively mounted a major campaign to sensitise the young people on the need to register as voters while educating them on the actual process of registering.

| Total registered voters by end of February 2017 | 19.6 million |
| Gender Split stands at | 50% |
| Total young people voters | 9.9 million |
| Total youth registered voters | 50.7% |
| Female youth voters | 4.8 million |
| Male youth voters | 5.1 million |
These numbers are a sure sign that young people can and want to be involved in decision making in the country and that their voice matter seeing that they make up half of the voting block.

Top 5 Counties with highest youth registered voters.

- Nairobi: 1.3 million voters
- Kiambu: 619,869 voters
- Nakuru: 504,721 voters
- Kakamega: 349,287 voters
- Mombasa: 330,927 voters

Bottom 5 Counties with lowest youth registered voters.

- Lamu: 34,000 voters
- Isiolo: 38,874 voters
- Samburu: 42,885 voters
- Tana River: 61,722 voters
- Taita Taveta: 68,279 voters

45% - 50% percentage of young women voters registration in 47 counties compared to their male counterparts.
Elected and Nominated Youth in 2017
What Changed? Why it mattered!

Since 1996 when the Youth Agenda was established, it has consistently pushed for the participation of young people in competitive politics and involvement in decision making in the public sphere. Young people’s lament for the last 54 years has been about a largely elderly group who got into leadership which tended to overstay blocking all possibilities of generational change in leadership. This narrative changed in 2013 when Kenyans elected the highest number of youth in leadership in the history of Kenya both at the national and county level.

2017 was not a smooth journey for those who declared their intent to vie and especially through political parties whose primaries were shambolic and marred by irregularities. This is how youth performed;

### Youth Cleared Candidates by IEBC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governor</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senator</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of Parliament</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women Rep.</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCAs</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>3,441</td>
<td>3,693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Youth Representatives</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4,166</td>
<td>4,166</td>
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</tbody>
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The Ballot Story: Elected Youth

Nandi County Governor was the only youth elected as a Governor during the 2017 general elections representing 2% of the elected Governors. However, 8 youth candidates had expressed interest nationally five (5) youths were elected as Deputy Governors in the 2017 general elections. These were from Taita Taveta, Wajir, Elgeyo Marakwet, Nakuru and Kajiado counties which represented 11% of the elected Deputy Governors. Out of the five youth elected deputy governors, four were males representing 80% of the total. Females only got one seat i.e. 20%.
The Nominations Story: Nominations, did they work for the youth?

County Assembly Nominations

Following the conduct of the 8th August 2017 general election 679 leaders were nominated. Out of the two hundred and eighteen (218) youth nominated to the county assemblies (both the marginalized and the gender top up) fifty four (54) are males and sixty four (64) are females who therefore account 75% of the nominated positions. Vihiga, Laikipia, Kiambu, Tharaka Nithi, Isiolo and Taita Taveta have the highest number of nominated youth.

Nominations in National Assembly and the Senate

Only one out of the twelve nominated members of the national assembly is a youth accounting for only 8% of the nominated seats. Most of the candidates nominated represent women and marginalised group. This was a sharp drop from 2013 which had 5 youth. In 2013, 8 young women formed part of the 16 nominated senators, but this was not the case in 2017. There are 2 nominated senators and when added to the two reserved seats for youth which went to a female and male youth, the current senate has only 4 nominated senators. This has been attributed to a lack of enforcement of youth affirmative action measures by political parties, a youth friendly gain that had been secured in 2013 benefiting more young women.

Speakers, Deputy Speakers and Clerks

There are four elected youth speakers in Wajir, Elgeyo Marakwet, Nandi and Nyamira which constitutes 8.51% and none was a young female. There are 11 youth deputy speakers (2 are female youth based in Kirinyaga and Tharaka- Nithi while 2 are PWD of the male gender. Kenya now has 3 clerks below 35 years all male from Nyamira, Nairobi and Homabay.

Senate

Out of the 66 youth candidates cleared by IEBC to vie for the position of senate, only five (5) male youths were elected a Senators in the 2017 general elections. These were from Lamu, Nandi, Kericho, Kakamega, and Nairobi counties representing 11% of the elected senators. This is an increase from 2013 which had 4. Nandi has set a good record of electing young leaders having previously elected a youth senator who is now the current Governor. Lamu interestingly even having registered the lowest number of youth voted in a young senator and the good number of young members of county assemblies.

National Assembly

Similarly, a higher number of youth candidates 357 in total had been cleared by IEBC for the National Assembly position but only twenty three (23) youths were elected. They were from the following constituencies: Igembe South, Chuka Igambang’ombe, Runyenjes, Kiharu, Samburu West, Saboti, Emgwen, Molo, Gilgil, Ainamoi, Chepalungu, Butere, Kimilili, South Mugirango, Bomachoge Chache, Langata, Embakasi Central and Embakasi East. The elected youth constitute 8% of the membership of the National Assembly. Out of the twenty three (23) youth elected members of the National Assembly, twenty one (21) are males and 2 are females. The two elected Members of Parliament from Gilgil and Samburu are beneficiaries of nominations which could have given them an upper hand over the other candidates.

Out of the 47 elected Women representative to the National Assembly, three are female youths. They are from Garissa, West Pokot and Laikipia and they represent 6% of all the elected Women Members of the National Assembly. IEBC had cleared 40 female youth for that position.

County Assemblies

There were 12,454 County Assembly candidates on the ballot paper, 3,693 were below 35 years (29.65%). Three hundred and three (303) youths were elected in the 8th August, 2017 general elections out of 1,450 which represents 23% of elected members of county assemblies. Wajir and Tana River are the only Counties that elected more youth MCA in comparison to mature adults. Garissa, and Mandera elected over 90% youth, Kiambu, Nyandarua had over 60% while Kericho, Nandi, Bomet, Migori, Muranga had at least 40%. Those that performed poorly include Nyamira, Kisii, Kisumu, Siaya, Bungoma, Laikipia, Elgeyo Marakwet, Samburu, West Pokot and Kwale.

Generally the outcomes of the just concluded elections (2017) recorded a slightly lower representation of those elected and nominated compared to 2013. However a majority of those elected and nominated are below 30 years a higher number compared to 2013. Nandi County stands out as the county that best performed in terms of electing youth leadership to Parliament. Taita Taveta, Tana River, Garissa, Wajir, Mandera follow closely in electing more young members to the County Assembly.
We asked young people what they care about this election and this is what they had to say.

**Youth inclusion** in governance and decision making processes.
- Youth inclusion and participation in your country’s development agenda - in planning, budgeting, implementation and tracking of progress of County Integrated Development Priorities;
- Engagement of young people at the policy level;
- Affirmative action for youth inclusion in key leadership positions e.g. County Executive leadership positions;
- Engagement of young people at the policy level;
- Enactment and implementation of a County Youth Policy; and
- Creation of a Department in the County Government dedicated to youth matters.

**Youth market accessibility** and ease of doing Business
- Ensuring youth access to business financing and government opportunities such as Access to Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO);
- Establishment of formidable partnerships that promote entrepreneurship amongst the youth; and
- Facilitation of trade marketing opportunities such as Street markets.

**Youth Employment and wealth creation**
- Creation of employment opportunities for the youth;
- Development of programs for education, training in technical and vocational skills;
- Creation of strategic links for the provision of internships; and
- Formation of youth specific investment in agri-business especially value addition.

**Reproductive Health Provision**
- Provision of accessible, affordable and friendly medical services particularly sexual reproductive health (SRH) services.

**Talent Development and Creative Economy**
- Employment of strategies for youth to participate in sports and arts in Kenya and Abroad; and
- Investing in the implementation of talent development strategies for youth.

**Crosscutting youth issues**
- Action on Radicalization and Violent Extremism;
- Harnessing of Information and Communication Technology for the benefit of young people; and
- Action on Drugs and Substance Abuse amongst the youth.
Reducing Youth unemployment

- Establish centres of excellence and an innovation hub to tap into the talent pool of young people.
- Carry out a continuous Ward, Constituency and County level registration process of young people seeking employment through the Ajira Platform.
- Link young people to their potential employers through the Youth Development Council.
- Transform the National Youth Service to implement commercial projects in Kenya and abroad.
- Attach every youth registered through the Ajira Platform to a specific public project such as the building of roads and housing, irrigation, water infrastructure and electrification projects.
- Prepare highly talented young people to work in the Public Service by introducing a Young Professionals Management Programme.
- Establish a Youth Development Council to provide coordination of all youth related activities and facilitate the necessary training, skills building and mentoring to link youth with emerging job opportunities.
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Youth Inclusion and Participation

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Establishment of youth institutional and policy frameworks

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Ease of Doing Business for Young Entrepreneurs

- Establish the Biashara Bank by merging the Micro and Small Enterprise Authority, the Youth Enterprises Development Fund, the Women Enterprises Fund and the Uwezo Fund to provide coordination in the delivery of affordable financing and support for business development.
- Provide free education in all public primary and public day secondary schools.
- Double the funds available under the Higher Education Loans Board to provide loans and bursaries for TVET and university students.
- Improve the quality and quantity of the middle level workforce by aligning the curriculum with the needs of industry, revitalising Youth Polytechnics, completing the construction of the 70 TTIs already under construction and equipping and staffing all TTIs.
- Establish a centre of excellence in the automotive sector and position the Kenya Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST) at Konza Technopolis as a world class Science and Technology Research University.
- Encourage organizations to take on board interns by expanding the tax incentive framework.

Tackling Mismanagement of Sports and Arts

- Provide structured support to the creative sectors, which have high potential for youth employment including film music and fashion and bring them into the mainstream economy.
- Scale up the “Studio Mashinani” and “Talent pia ni Kazi” where young people can affordably record and expose their creative talent to the market.
- Encourage and support national football clubs, invest in setting up youth teams and provide the sporting facilities required to nurture and develop young talent.

Enhancing skill sets

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The youth took up their space in setting the national agenda by making the youth factor count through county vetting platforms and on social media this took centre stage through #Dear Politician where they took to calling out their leaders to share their youth agendas. This trended at number one on twitter and received media attention as a trending topic. The question of an agenda for young people was highlighted during the Presidential Debate where the candidates had to outline their agenda. High numbers of youth voter registration which increased from 46% to 50.6%.

Extensive Civic and Voter Education by IEBC and stakeholders and especially the YVote Digital and Outreach Campaign.

Partial waiver for youth candidates on nomination fees to political parties.

Efforts by IEBC to engage youth in planning and roll out of electoral activities.

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Youth as agents for peace; #ChaguaAmani. Young people took it upon themselves to share and carry the message of peace in the counties and online where it trended as a hot topic amongst young people on #KOT (Kenyans On Twitter). This resulted in major restraint amongst young people amid rising political tensions.

Affirmative action works: Out of the 13 nominated young parliamentarians in 2013, 3 were elected in the 2017 General Election which confirms that affirmative action is useful for spurring historically marginalised groups to elective positions.

A very high number of youth aspirants and relatively good number of cleared candidates as independent and post party primaries nominees.
Lack of disaggregated data from IEBC on youth participation and representation in the elective process.

Poorly maintained membership lists by political parties making it impossible to audit the participation of young people in party processes.

Non enforcement of youth affirmative action measures by political parties and IEBC.

Poor oversight by the ORPP on the full implementation of affirmative action policies within political parties.

A decrease in number of elected youth in the 2017 general election compared to 2013.

Incidences of vote buying / bribing.

Young people victims & culprits of political violence in 2017.

Failure to enact necessary regulations to operationalize the Campaign Financing Act which disenfranchised young aspirants due to their lack of resources to compete with their more monied older opponents.