

POLITICAL REPRESENTATION OF YOUTH IN
BRAZIL: YOUNG CANDIDATES AND ELECTED
TO THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES 2014 – 2022

*REPRESENTAÇÃO POLÍTICA DAS JUVENTUDES NO
BRASIL: JOVENS CANDIDATOS/AS E ELEITOS/AS
PARA A CÂMARA DOS DEPUTADOS 2014 – 2022*

*REPRESENTACIÓN POLÍTICA DE LA JUVENTUD
EN BRASIL: JÓVENES CANDIDATOS Y ELECTOS
A LA CÁMARA DE DIPUTADOS 2014 - 2022*

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ABSTRACT: The analysis of “traditional” forms of political representation is a window to understand youth participation in its multiple belongings and agencies. We observed young candidates and elected officials for the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies between 2014 and 2022. We identified low youth representation, less than 4% aged up to 29, and a wide spectrum of political affiliations, including the so-called far right. We analyzed Superior Electoral Court data as a methodology, treating the profile and electoral performance. We followed websites of social movements and organizations, social networks, and the Chamber of Deputies Portal to access trajectories, political agendas, and parliamentary performance. The daily and individualized monitoring of social networks made it possible to identify profiles and posts of young people. The research demonstrated that there is an important diversity of candidacies and that young elected parliamentarians are voting champions, which points to a renewed interest in participation in this arid space for youth presence.

KEYWORDS: Political representation. Youth. Political participation. Parliamentary participation. Diversity.

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RESUMO: *Analisar formas “tradicionalis” de representação política são uma janela para compreender a participação juvenil em seus múltiplos pertencimentos e agências. Observamos jovens candidatas/os e eleitas/os para a Câmara dos Deputados brasileira entre os anos de 2014 e 2022. Identificamos baixa representação juvenil, menos de 4% com até 29 anos, e amplo espectro de filiação política, incluindo a denominada extrema-direita. Como metodologia analisamos os dados do TSE, tratando o perfil e desempenho eleitoral. Acompanhamos sites de movimentos e organizações sociais, as redes sociais, o Portal da Câmara dos Deputados, para acesso a trajetórias, agendas políticas e atuação parlamentar. O acompanhamento cotidiano e individualizado das redes sociais permitiu identificar perfis e postagens do e das jovens. A pesquisa demonstrou que há uma importante diversidade de candidaturas e que parlamentares jovens eleitos são campeões de votação, o que aponta um interesse renovado na participação desse espaço árido para a presença juvenil.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Representação política. Juventude. Participação política. Participação parlamentar. Diversidade.*

RESUMEN: *Analizar las formas “tradicionales” de representación política es una ventana para comprender la participación juvenil en sus múltiples pertenencias y agencias. Observamos a candidatos jóvenes y funcionarios electos para la Cámara de Diputados de Brasil entre 2014 y 2022. Identificamos una baja representación juvenil, menos del 4% de hasta 29 años, y un amplio espectro de afiliaciones políticas, incluida la llamada extrema derecha. Como metodología se analizaron los datos del Tribunal Superior Electoral, tratando el perfil y desempeño electoral. Seguimos sitios web de movimientos y organizaciones sociales, redes sociales, Portal de la Cámara de Diputados, para acceder a trayectorias, agendas políticas y actividades parlamentarias. El seguimiento diario e individualizado de las redes sociales permitió identificar perfiles y publicaciones de los jóvenes. La investigación demostró que existe una importante diversidad de candidaturas y que los jóvenes parlamentarios electos son campeones de votación, lo que apunta a un renovado interés en la participación en este árido espacio de presencia juvenil.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Representación política. Juventud. Participación política. Participación parlamentaria. Diversidade.*

Introduction

The intense changes in the recent political scenario in Latin American countries point to old and new concerns. With alternations between progressive and

authoritarian governments, one of the most observed elements is the rise of the far right (Messenberg, 2019; Pignataro; Tremínio; Chavarría-Mora, 2021; Semán, 2023)¹. This scenario is further complicated by studies showing a growing disinterest in political party affiliation, which is particularly evident among the youth in countries across the region (Araújo; Perez, 2021). In Brazil, political turbulence has been especially intense over the past 12 years. In just over a decade, the country has experienced major street protests, such as the June 2013 demonstrations, the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff, the election of President Bolsonaro, the election of President Lula, and the attempted coup on January 8, 2023. Youth participation was notable in all of these events.

The challenge of analyzing young parliamentarians emerges within this context. This study focuses on the profiles of young candidates and elected representatives in Brazil's Chamber of Deputies from 2014 to 2022, as well as on the trajectories of these individuals, among whom there is a broad spectrum of "political affiliation," including recent youth expressions of the so-called extreme-right.

One of the primary factors discussed is the low representation of youth in the National Congress; less than 4% of federal deputies are under 29, and this figure only expands to 11.7% for those up to 35 in 2022. This pattern is reproduced election after election. Nevertheless, we observe young parliamentarians who receive a high number of votes, as well as a significant diversity in candidate profiles, indicating a renewed interest in participating in this space that has traditionally been challenging for youth representation. We consider that analyzing this "traditional" form of political representation provides a window into understanding youth participation from the perspective of their multiple affiliations and challenges.

The contribution presented here is based on the research project *A Juventude no olho do furacão: identidades, ação política e organizações de juventude no Brasil*² (Youth in the Eye of the Storm: Identities, Political Action, and Youth Organizations in Brazil), which has mapped the forms of organization, representation, and political action among Brazilian youth from the 2000s onwards³. This research is part of the Working Group on Childhood and Youth within the Latin American Council of Social Sciences (CLACSO) and the *Observatorio en Infancias y Juventudes*. The results show that political representation constructs span formal

¹ The ideological definition of left and far-right has been the subject of interpretative efforts. Here, we point out some of these references. We take into account in particular the alignment with themes that mobilize opposition to the expansion of human and social rights, as well as the recognition of diversity as elements that today reflect far-right positions in the world.

² Ethics Committee – The Project under process 23083.040349/2020-69 was approved by the UFRRJ RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE / CEP (OPINION No. 1124/2020 - PROPPG (12.28.01.18) and complies with Resolution 466/12, which regulates research procedures involving human beings.

³ Developed by the Research Group Youth, Political Participation and Social Representation (UFRRJ). The research team is composed of undergraduate students.

configurations, such as parliamentary spaces, and incorporate new technologies through the intense use of social media (Ramos, 2015; Gomes, 2017). This convergence of agendas and repertoires produces new political identities, merging “new” and “traditional” forms of organization and mobilization, positioned within dynamics of multiple affiliations.

As theoretical frameworks, we consider youth as a socially and politically constructed category (Castro, 2013, 2022), reflecting its plurality with encompassing multiple identifications and affiliations (Novaes, 1998; Perez, Vommaro, 2023) and emerging from historical, cultural, and identity-based constructions that mobilize subjectivities and collective formations (Brah, 2006). Drawing from these approaches, an analysis of the context of youth political participation in Brazil reveals the interrelationship between political organization and action and governmental processes of institutionalizing rights and public policies.

The Lula (2003-2006/2007-2010) and Dilma (2011-2014/2015-2016) administrations brought visibility to the theme of “youth” by establishing regulatory frameworks, public policies, and institutionalizing youth representation through agencies executing the so-called Youth Public Policies (PPJs). It is worth noting that these state actions took place amidst an intense academic debate involving experts in generational and youth studies, further articulated by young researchers and youth leaders from numerous social movements (Dulci; Macedo, 2019). From this milieu emerged an unprecedented activation of the youth category as a political identity.

It is noteworthy that opportunities for inclusion in public spaces and intersections with other political issues gain complexity when viewed through markers of difference that convey forms of domination: class, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality. Consequently, intersectionality (Stolcke, 2006; Brah, 2006) imbues the political actions of those identifying as youth with a profound array of meanings, materializing in expressions of their multiple affiliations and agendas. These topics are also contested among different political projects embraced by youth.

There is also a growing and tense dialogue between forms of political participation seen as “traditional”, political parties, social movements, unions, associations, and cooperatives – and the so-called “new” youth organizational forms, which are “more horizontal” and interwoven with multiple affiliations. This study emphasizes how young people’s political practices surpass and even challenge dichotomies between “new” and “old.” Their varied trajectories demonstrate how political identity construction combines individual processes with collective struggles, associating forms of sociability, family histories, work experiences, and spatial mobility, among others.

The emphasis on these dichotomies – new/old; horizontal/hierarchical – is not novel within social science studies. Since at least the mid-20th century, these catego-

ries have been mobilized to explain phenomena of social effervescence. Since 2013, and particularly from 2014 onward, Brazil has undergone transformative processes involving significant participation from the so-called new organized actors. In this context, there has been a shift from a focus on recognition, resource distribution, and access to rights (Fraser, 2001; 2007) toward a struggle over the *temporalities of politics* (Palmeira, 1996) – that is, an electoral contest stretching across this period and involving utopian visions of societal models.

From 2011 to 2013, we witnessed both national and international mass mobilizations with a strong *youth* presence. One defining characteristic was the use of the Internet as a tool for mobilization, complementing mass mobilization in public spaces with an anti-neoliberal agenda (Harvey *et al.*, 2012). In Brazil, a turning point was the 2013 Protests. Over a decade since this significant mass movement, different perceptions and interpretations have emerged regarding its impact on youth participation (Gohn, 2016; Altman; Carlotto, 2023; Perez, 2021; Castro, 2023). This powerful street movement has since yielded engaged youth who self-identify as progressive and left-leaning, organizing in collectives and political parties, as well as conservative, self-identified right-wing, liberal, and even far-right groups.

In 2014, two key moments marked the emergence of new actors: the *Não Vai Ter Copa* (No World Cup)⁴, movement in the first half of the year, with mobilizations against mega-events; and the second half, during the electoral period, with groups like *Vem Pra Rua* (Come to the Street, VPR), *Revoltados Online*, and *Movimento Brasil Livre* (Free Brazil Movement, MBL) (Barbosa, 2017), among others, opposing President Dilma's re-election⁵. We also observed a realignment of agendas among organizations shaped in earlier contexts, such as the *Levante Popular da Juventude* (Popular Youth Uprising)⁶, and the growth of antifascist movements like *Movimento Antifascista Brasil* (ANTIFA), which gained traction in Brazilian states with the emergence of local and national movements, such as *Periferia Antifascista* (Antifascist Periphery) within soccer fan clubs⁷.

The recent period, which is still ongoing, represents an intense period of direct political engagement beginning in the electoral arena, specifically with the 2014 elections (Palmeira, 1996). Milestones include the impeachment of President Dilma

⁴ For the debate on the 2014 World Cup as a mega-event and its impacts, see Jennings *et al.* (2014).

⁵ The El Pais article from 03/15/2015 presents a summary based on statements by representatives of the three organizations, demonstrating what brings them together: anti-PT sentiment and opposition to the Dilma Rousseff government and its members (Bendelli; Martín, 2015).

⁶ The Levante Popular da Juventude emerged as a regional movement in Rio Grande do Sul. In 2011, it took on the human rights agenda. In 2014, it was one of the movements that positioned itself in favor of Dilma's reelection and, later, against the impeachment process, denouncing it as a coup.

⁷ See: SUBVERSE FRAGMENT. Why create and support local Antifas and antifascist networks in Brazil? Published on November 30, 2014. Available at: <https://fragmentosubverso.wordpress.com/2014/11/30/por-que-criar-e-apoiar-antifas-locais-e-redes-antifascistas-no-brasil/>. Accessed on: September 20, 2024.

in 2016⁸, the Temer administration, the Bolsonaro administration, and President Lula's election in 2022.

This new landscape has prompted us to examine how youth construct political identities and the motivations behind their mobilization. The results presented here relate to an analysis of the 2018 elections, compared to 2014, and offer preliminary insights regarding the 2022 elections. Youth are present across the entire Brazilian and Latin American political-electoral spectrum; however, one notable development is their pronounced presence in far-right movements. Understanding the reasons for this is one of the primary objectives of the ongoing research.

The methodology adopted involved analyzing data from the Open Data platform of the Superior Electoral Court⁹, focusing on the profiles and electoral performance of candidates and those elected, comparing 2014 and 2018 while noting 2022. The analysis took into account the following categories and cross-references: i) race/ethnicity, gender, up to 29 years old, 30 to 35 years old, youth, and "non-youth"; ii) education level, occupation/profession of those elected; iii) party affiliation; young candidates/elected individuals; iv) total youth voting data, total votes with various demographic filters concerning the Chamber; v) renewal movements and re-elections; vi) total votes for elected candidates, national electoral ranking/weight, and their weighted representativeness in their respective states. We also used websites of movements and social organizations, candidates and elected representatives' social media accounts, and the Chamber of Deputies Portal¹⁰, to access candidates' backgrounds, political agendas, and parliamentary actions.

The method for gathering data from social networks was individualized, through daily monitoring of profiles and posts made by the observed young candidates and representatives. Through screenshots and analysis of the collected statements, we examined how they described themselves, the language used, the agendas presented, and whether or not they invoked youth identity. Another source was the *Congresso em Foco* on the UOL portal, which was used in conjunction with the National Congress website to observe their mandates.

Following this Introduction, with special attention to 2018, we present the data and analyses of the profiles of young candidates and elected representatives. Next, in the third section, we discuss the pillars of youth identities as well as youth agendas and public policies. Finally, the fourth and last section offers concluding remarks and an agenda for future research.

⁸ The construction of the impeachment process and its outcome, with strong participation from the media and the political bloc that formed after his reelection in 2014, can be defined as a political coup. The impeachment was finalized without the alleged crimes of responsibility having been confirmed (Benevides *et al.*, 2018).

⁹ BRAZIL. TSE Open Data Portal. Superior Electoral Court. Available at: <https://dadosabertos.tse.jus.br/>. Accessed on: September 20, 2024b.

¹⁰ BRAZIL. Chamber of Deputies. Available at: <https://www.camara.leg.br/>. Accessed on: September 20, 2024a.

1. Youth in Politics: National Elections for the Chamber of Deputies

The representation of youth, defined as those up to 29 years of age, in Brazil's National Congress has remained low. In the Chamber of Deputies, there were 20 elected in 2014, 19 in 2018, and 18 in 2022, representing an average of less than 4%. However, these electoral victories do not reflect the number of candidacies, as evidenced in the cases of 2014 and 2018. Considering that 23% (approximately 48.5 million people) of the Brazilian population is young, youth are significantly underrepresented among total parliamentary candidacies (Brasil, 2024b).

The analysis of the 19 young individuals elected to the Federal Chamber in 2018 revealed greater plurality among candidacies than among those elected. Following their trajectories led us to a process of de-essentializing representations that reinforce the image of youth as the “new,” associated with an expectation of transformation, especially in left-wing environments. Many young individuals reproduce mechanisms, political practices, and the formation of political capital (Bourdieu, 1989), with the goal of maintaining their place in formal representation, which can be interpreted as established or traditional forms of mandate reproduction.

Analyzing the political profiles of the elected youth allows us to identify two common trajectories: the reproduction of familial political capital, by “inheritance”; and the projection achieved through renewal, stemming from young individuals' participation in mobilizations, social organizations, and/or social networks. Data from the Superior Electoral Court (TSE)¹¹, on the 2014 and 2018¹², elections enable us to outline and classify youth profiles. The proportion of young candidates relative to the total number of candidates did not vary significantly between the 2014 and 2018 elections. In 2014, 5.91% (1,305) of the candidacies were young people—936 for state and district representatives, and 369 for federal representatives. In 2018, 5.34% (1,395) of candidates were under 29 years old, with 1,020 running for the Federal Chamber, 364 for State or District Assemblies, and 1 for the Federal Senate.

Table 1 below shows the distribution of youth candidacies by party and allows us to visualize the growth or reduction of these candidacies in the 2014 and 2018 elections. The data are organized in descending order, with parties having the highest number of young candidates in 2018 positioned at the top of the table.

¹¹ Data organized by Luiza Dulci and Daniel Andrade. In this first part, we aggregated state and district data (Brasil, 2024b).

¹² We chose to disregard candidacies classified as “unfit” by the TSE.

Table 1 – Candidates under 30 eligible for federal and state/district elections - number (n) of candidates and percentage (%) relative to each party's total

Partidos	2014		2018		Δ 2014-2018	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
PSOL	10,78%	121	9,26%	117	-3,3%	-4
PSL	4,12%	28	6,52%	90	221,4%	62
REDE	0,00%	0	8,54%	69	-	69
PATRIOTAS	8,51%	67	6,12%	66	-1,5%	-1
PROS	6,83%	28	6,37%	64	128,6%	36
PcdoB	6,71%	51	7,79%	59	15,7%	8
AVANTE	6,56%	43	5,43%	51	18,6%	8
PSDB	5,66%	56	5,59%	49	-12,5%	-7
PRTB	6,63%	40	5,19%	44	10,0%	4
PHS	6,25%	51	4,81%	43	-15,7%	-8
PT	4,49%	55	3,60%	42	-23,6%	-13
PRP	4,65%	36	4,63%	40	11,1%	4
SOLIDARIEDADE	6,95%	33	5,42%	39	18,2%	6
PDT	4,88%	45	4,33%	38	-15,6%	-7
DC	5,80%	37	5,86%	38	2,7%	1
PPS	5,86%	33	6,17%	37	12,1%	4
PTC	5,62%	37	5,13%	35	-5,4%	-2
PMN	7,29%	35	5,33%	35	0,0%	0
PP	4,20%	29	4,94%	35	20,7%	6
PV	4,92%	46	4,12%	34	-26,1%	-12
MDB	3,45%	39	3,34%	34	-12,8%	-5
PODEMOS	5,79%	31	4,02%	34	9,7%	3
PR	3,95%	28	5,03%	34	21,4%	6
DEMOCRATAS	3,66%	20	5,08%	33	65,0%	13
PSB	6,02%	71	3,68%	32	-54,9%	-39
PSD	5,36%	33	4,63%	30	-9,1%	-3
PSC	5,63%	47	3,60%	29	-38,3%	-18
PPL	7,21%	29	5,33%	28	-3,4%	-1
PRB	4,40%	29	3,47%	28	-3,4%	-1
PTB	4,49%	37	4,52%	27	-27,0%	-10
PCB	10,85%	14	13,58%	11	-21,4%	-3
PSTU	18,21%	53	4,23%	8	-84,9%	-45
PCO	9,09%	3	20,59%	7	133,3%	4
Total	5,91%	1305	5,34%	1395	6,90%	90

Source: Data compiled from TSE by the research Project *Pesquisa Juventude no Olho do Furacão* – UFRRJ (*Youth in the Eye of the Storm* – UFRRJ), by Luiza Dulci.

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Considering the total of 33 parties that fielded parliamentary candidates in 2018, there was an increase of 90 candidates under 29 years old, representing a 6.9% proportion. While half of the parties (17) reduced their number of young candidates, the other half (16) increased them. Among those with a reduction between the 2014 and 2018 elections, the largest decreases were observed in PSTU (-45), PSB (-39), PSC (-18), PT (-13), and PV (-12). Rede recorded the highest increase in youth candidacies; however, it should be excluded from the analysis, as it did not exist in 2014. Following Rede, PSL saw its young candidates rise from 28 to 90, partly due to Jair Bolsonaro’s presidential candidacy. The third-largest increase was by Pros, which rose from 28 to 64 young candidates, likely due to its relatively recent founding in 2010. The fourth was DEM, with a net gain of 13 young candidates, bolstered by members from MBL. Changes in other parties were less significant.

PSOL’s numbers are particularly notable; despite a slight decrease (-4) between 2014 and 2018, it maintained the highest number of youth candidates in both elections, with 121 and 117 respectively. Youth candidacies in PSOL accounted for over 10% of all youth candidates in 2014, and in 2018, they remained markedly higher than other parties. PSOL also elected the most young members to the Chamber of Deputies in 2018. Another party traditionally linked to youth, particularly in secondary, university, and graduate student movements, PCdoB, increased its youth candidacies from 51 to 59 across the two elections. Three major Brazilian political parties, PT (-13), PSDB (-7), and MDB (-5), reduced the number of youth candidates on their electoral lists.

Social markers of gender, race, and sexuality are significant when comparing young and over-30 candidacies. Gender parity is observed among young candidates, whereas among older candidates, there is a considerable disparity, with men predominating. While 49.8% and 47.5% of youth candidates in 2014 and 2018, respectively, were women, the proportion of older female candidates was 27.4% and 30% in the two elections.

Table 2 – Candidates under 30 eligible for federal and state elections, by race and gender.

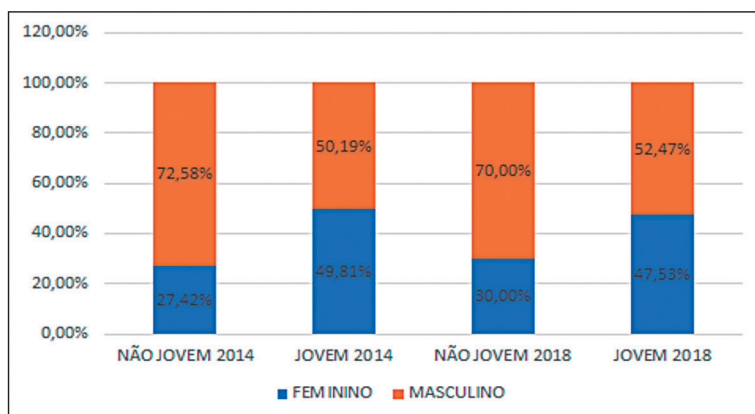
Sexo/Raça	2014	2018	Δ 2014-2018
Woman	650	663	2%
White	325	306	-6%
Brown	248	275	11%
Black	69	77	12%
Indigenous	3	3	0%
Yellow	5	2	-60%
Men	655	732	12%

Sexo/Raça	2014	2018	Δ 2014-2018
White	368	398	8%
Brown	217	250	15%
Black	65	77	18%
Indigenous	3	4	33%
Yellow	2	3	50%
Total	1305	1395	7%

Source: Data compiled from TSE by the research Project *Pesquisa Juventude no Olho do Furacão* – UFRRJ (Youth in the Eye of the Storm – UFRRJ), by Luiza Dulci.

Chart 1 illustrates the difference between young and older candidates by gender.

Chart 1 – Young and Non-Young Candidates by Gender (2014-2018)¹³



Source: Data compiled from TSE by the research Project *Pesquisa Juventude no Olho do Furacão* – UFRRJ (Youth in the Eye of the Storm – UFRRJ), by Luiza Dulci.

Regarding the variable of color/race, there is also a notable disparity, especially among young young women, the majority of whom are non-white. There is greater equality between young white and non-white women than among those aged 30 or older. The proportion of young Black, Brown, Indigenous, and Asian women in 2014 and 2018 was 50% and 53.9%, respectively, considering the total number of young candidates. Among female candidates over 30, this proportion was 46% and 48%, respectively. For men, young Black, Brown, Indigenous, and Asian candidates made up 43.8% and 45.6% in 2014 and 2018, while among those over 30, the figures were 43.5% and 46.4%.

¹³ Translation: blue color: Female; orange color: Male.

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Transgender candidates can be identified through their use of a social name. In 2014, no candidate of any age used a social name. By 2018, there were four young transgender female candidates—two for federal positions and two for state positions, and 23 transgender female candidates over 29 years old, seven of whom ran for the Federal Chamber and 17 for state assemblies. In 2022, the first transgender individuals were elected to the Federal Chamber: Erika Hilton (PSOL-SP) and Duda Salabert (PDT-MG), both city councilors in São Paulo and Belo Horizonte, respectively.

The 2018 elections brought 19 young members to the Federal Chamber, accounting for 3.7% of the 513 available seats. Of these, four were women and fifteen were men, elected across 11 states: Bahia, Espírito Santo, Maranhão, Mato Grosso, Minas Gerais, Paraíba, Paraná, Pernambuco, Piauí, Rio de Janeiro, and São Paulo. São Paulo elected five young representatives; Paraná elected four; Maranhão, two; and the remaining states, one each.

Table 3 – Young Representatives Elected to the Federal Chamber in 2018

Name/State	Birth	Political party	Sex	Color/Race	Education	Occupation
Uldurico Júnior/BA	01/30/1992	PPL*	M	Brown	Superior Comp.	Deputy
Felipe Rigoni/ES	06/13/1991	PSB	M	White	Superior Comp.	Others
André Fufuca/MA	08/27/1989	PP	M	Brown	Superior Comp.	Deputy
Júnior Marreca Filho/MA	04/25/1992	PATRI	M	White	Superior Incomp.	Others
Emanuelzinho/MT	01/05/1995	PTB	M	White	Superior Incomp.	Businessman
Pinheirinho/MG	05/30/1991	PP	M	White	Superior Incomp.	Businessman
Hugo/PB	09/11/1989	PRB	M	White	Superior Comp.	Doctor
Aliel Machado/PR	02/26/1989	PSB	M	White	Superior Incomp.	Deputy
Filipe Barros/PR	05/29/1991	PSL	M	White	Superior Comp.	Councilman
Felipe Francischini/PR	10/02/1991	PSL	M	White	Superior Comp.	Deputy
Luisa Canziani/PR	04/11/1996	PTB	F	White	Superior Incomp.	Student**
João Campos/PE	11/26/1993	PSB	M	White	Superior Comp.	Engineer
Marcos A. Sampaio/PI	09/19/1991	MDB	M	White	Superior Comp.	Lawyer
Chris Tonietto/RJ	05/14/1991	PSL	F	Brown	Superior Comp.	Lawyer
Alexandre Leite/SP	04/18/1989	DEM	M	White	Superior Comp.	Deputy
Tabata Amaral/SP	11/14/1993	PDT	F	White	Superior Comp.	Political Scientist
Sâmia Bomfim/SP	08/22/1989	PSOL	F	White	Superior Comp.	Others
Enrico Misasi/SP	08/06/1994	PV	M	White	Superior Comp.	Lawyer
Kim Kataguirí/SP	01/28/1996	DEM	M	Yellow	Superior Incomp.	Writer and critic

Source: Data compiled from TSE by the research Project *Pesquisa Juventude no Olho do Furacão* – UFRRJ (Youth in the Eye of the Storm – UFRRJ), by Luiza Dulci.

* In 2019, following the merger of PPL and PCdoB, Uldurico joined PROS.

** The full category designation is “student, scholarship holder, intern, and the like.”

Regarding the racial/ethnic marker, the majority of elected candidates (15) self-identified as “white”; 3 identified as “brown,” and 1 as “Asian.” Educational data indicates that all had completed high school and pursued higher education, with most (13) holding a higher education degree. The occupational data aligns with the educational background: the youngest elected representative, Luisa Canziani, was the only one to identify as a “student.” Notably, five parliamentarians reported “deputy” as their occupation, and one listed “councilor.” Of the 19 young representatives, five were re-elected. Regarding party distribution, there is significant diversity. The two parties with the highest number of young representatives are PSL and PSB, each with three young elected members; PTB, DEM, and PP each elected two young members, and the remaining parties elected one each.

The electoral performance of each of the 19 young representatives elected to the Federal Chamber in 2018 can be seen in Table 4 below.

Table 4 – Vote Counts of Young Representatives Elected to the Federal Chamber in 2018, Up to 29 Years Old

Name/State	Vote (n)	Position in state
Uldurico Júnior/BA	66343	34
Felipe Rigoni/ES	84405	2
André Fufuca/MA	105583	9
Júnior Marreca Filho/MA	79674	13
Emanuelzinho/MT	76781	3
Pinheirinho/MG	98404	25
Hugo/PB	92468	5
Aliel Machado/PR	95386	14
Filipe Barros/PR	75344	24
Felipe Francischini/PR	241537	2
Luisa Canziani/PR	90249	18
João Campos/PE	460387	1
Marcos Aurélio Sampaio/PI	73302	8
Chris Tonietto/RJ	38525	37
Alexandre Leite/SP	116416	34
Tabata Amaral/SP	264450	6
Sâmia Bomfim/SP	249887	8
Enrico Misasi/SP	108038	36
Kim Kataguiiri/SP	465855	4

Source: Data compiled from TSE by the research Project *Pesquisa Juventude no Olho do Furacão* – UFRRJ (Youth in the Eye of the Storm – UFRRJ), by Luiza Dulci.

The top vote-getter, proportionally, was Representative João Campos, elected by Pernambuco's PSB, with 460,387 votes, accounting for 10.63% of the electorate in his state. Kim Kataguiiri, elected by DEM, secured the highest absolute number of votes (465,855), representing 2.21% of São Paulo's electorate. Data on the placement of parliamentarians in each state indicates that many young elected officials received significant votes, ranking among the highest in their states. João Campos was the only young candidate who led in votes in his state and was elected mayor of Recife in 2020. Among the top five most voted are Felipe Rigoni, 2nd in Espírito Santo; Felipe Francischini, also 2nd in Paraná; Emanuelzinho, 3rd in Mato Grosso; Kim Kataguiiri, 4th in São Paulo; and Hugo, 5th in Paraíba. Additionally, André Fufuca, Tábata Amaral, Marco Aurélio Sampaio, and Sâmia Bomfim ranked within the top ten in their respective states. The phenomenon of "super voting" repeated in 2022 with 26-year-old Nikolas Ferreira (PL), a Bolsonaro supporter, as the most-voted deputy in the country, receiving over 1.4 million votes. Ferreira's agenda includes stances on homophobia, misogyny, pro-gun rights, and transphobia, and he currently chairs the Education Committee in the Chamber of Deputies.

The backgrounds and political trajectories of the elected parliamentarians are highly diverse. In line with a longstanding Brazilian political tradition, many are children, grandchildren, or relatives of politicians with local or national influence. This was the case for 11 of the 19 elected officials. Among them, some ran for the first time in the 2018 elections (e.g., Júnior Marreca Filho, Emanuelzinho, Luisa Canziani, João Campos, and Marcos Aurélio Sampaio). Others were re-elected to the Federal Chamber (Uldurico Júnior, André Fufuca, Hugo, and Alexandre Leite), while one served as a state deputy (Felipe Francischini). In 2012, Pinheirinho was elected mayor of Ibitiré, a municipality in the Belo Horizonte metropolitan area. Among those from politically connected families who had held office before 2018 were Aiel Machado (elected councilor in Ponta Grossa, PR, in 2012 and federal deputy in 2014), Felipe Barros (elected councilor in Londrina, PR, in 2016), and Sâmia Bomfim (elected councilor in São Paulo, SP, in 2016).

A political arena that has historically fostered young leadership is the student movement (Gonçalves, 2001). Among the young representatives elected in 2018, four have backgrounds in organized student activism. Felipe Rigoni was active in the junior enterprise movement, serving as president of the junior enterprise of the Production Engineering program at the Federal University of Ouro Preto (UFOP) and the Brazilian Confederation of Junior Enterprises. Aiel Machado began his activism in secondary school, presiding over the student council and the Ponta Grossa Municipal Union of Students. At the time, Aiel was a member of the Socialist Youth Union (UJS), affiliated with PCdoB, under which he ran for councilor in 2008 and won a seat in the subsequent election in 2012, later serving as the president of the Ponta Grossa City Council. In 2016, he ran for mayor and

was elected to the federal chamber in 2014, also by PCdoB. In 2015, he joined *Rede Sustentabilidade* and in 2018 moved with a faction of the party to PSB. Sâmia Bomfim is the third young leader from organized student activism, having been active in the Academic Center of the School of Humanities and the Central Student Directory at the University of São Paulo (USP). Felipe Barros graduated in Law from the State University of Londrina (UEL), where he served as President of the DCE (Central Student Directory).

In the field of education, Representative Tábata Amaral stands out. As a child, Tábata won several competitions and Olympiads in mathematics and physics, which earned her scholarships to prestigious schools in São Paulo and offers to pursue undergraduate studies at several American universities. She graduated in Political Science and Astrophysics from Harvard and co-founded the movements *Mapa Educação* and *Acredito*, respectively dedicated to education and the slogan of “political renewal.” Another representative linked to the *Acredito* movement is Felipe Rigoni¹⁴.

Some parliamentarians have built their political profiles on conservative platforms connected to right-wing movements or religious affiliations. Kim Kataguirí and Felipe Barros come from the Free Brazil Movement (MBL), with Kim currently serving as its main public figure. He became known for creating a video criticizing then-President Dilma Rousseff and the public policies of PT-led governments. At the time, he was an Economics student at the Federal University of ABC but left the course in his second year, identifying with the ideas of liberal economists like Ludwig Von Mises. Soon after, he connected with traditional politicians, such as Eduardo Cunha, and helped organize the March to Brasília against the Dilma government in early 2015. However, at the start of his term, he distanced himself from moral issues and emphasized a liberal economic agenda¹⁵. Re-elected in 2022 (União Brasil), he is now preparing to run for mayor of São Paulo in 2024.

Felipe Barros combined his involvement in the student movement with participation in right-wing collectives. He was a member of the Direita Paraná Movement and an activist in the pro-life (anti-abortion) and pro-family movements. He joined the MBL until 2018, when he became affiliated with PSL. Chris Tonietto, also elected as a representative by PSL, gained political visibility by opposing the video “Céu Católico,” produced by the YouTube channel Porta dos Fundos. Chris is Catholic, a member of the Dom Bosco Catholic Cultural Collective, and she took a stand against the video, which she argued was critical and mocking of the Catholic faith.

¹⁴ I believe and Renova BR are movements with corporate support, such as the Lemann group, for the political education of young people.

¹⁵ As announced by the deputy, “the main objective of these four years is to approve a pension reform. It will be the focus of my term because it is the main problem in the country.” (Miltão; Ramalho, 2019, n. p.).

Another representative with church ties is Felipe Francischini, who was also elected by PSL, is an evangelical, and is a member of the Assembly of God. Enrico Misasi is not directly affiliated with the church but worked as a parliamentary assistant to São Paulo State Representative Reinaldo Alguz, who has significant involvement in the Catholic Church's charismatic renewal movement.

Thus, while there is a noteworthy diversity among candidacies, there remains a predominantly male, heteronormative, white profile, with the continuation of family political capital and/or institutional paths perceived as “traditional.” We see that political agendas reveal significant variations that reinforce multiple affiliations.

1. Youth as Identity and as a Political Agenda

Since the democratic transition in the late 1980s, Brazil has experienced a continuous, albeit nonlinear, process of institutionalizing rights and public policies created or derived from the 1988 Federal Constitution. The establishment of unified policy systems—health, social assistance, food, and nutrition security—reflects this movement, recognizing the conceptual, practical, and political contributions of various historically marginalized social groups. Youths are among these, formally incorporated into the national public agenda in 2005, and with the Youth Statute of 2013, they reinforced the agenda of the National Youth System, Sinajuve. (Castro; Macedo, 2019). This recent trajectory reflects the emergence of a range of processes and forms of political participation and growing institutional representation in the public sphere (Ribeiro; Romão; Seidel, 2021)

As is well known, the 2018 election represented a political turning point in Brazil. Numerous achievements, rights, and public policies were attacked, abolished, and reconfigured to meet the conservative priorities that emerged in the country. Such changes had a profound impact on the political and cultural agenda of Brazilian youth. On an institutional level, the dismantling of Youth Policy Programs (PPJs) at the national level led to a corresponding weakening of youth policies at the state and municipal levels. Consequently, the advocacy for PPJs, which had slowly been consolidating in the public agenda over the past decades, lost prominence in the discourse and agendas of Brazilian youth.

An analysis of the role of youth in the laws of the Multi-Year Plan (PPA) highlights the rise in the early 2000s and 2010s and the recent regression. The documents from the administrations of Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995-2002), Lula (2003-2010), Dilma (2011-2016), Temer (2016-2018), and Bolsonaro (2019-2022) depict the intense ongoing dispute, both within each government and with society. We observe a trajectory that is highly sensitive to changes in government. From *being identified as at-risk youth*, lacking a clear definition; to the inclusion

of the youth population in public policies, with defined programs and budgets during Lula's second term; to an expansion of characterization and objectives under Dilma's administration, and ultimately to their disappearance from the PPA under the Bolsonaro government (Castro; Oliveira; Rico, 2024).

Therefore, considering youth participation in parliament also involves observing how young candidates and elected officials identify themselves as youth, and their political agendas, rights, and public policies that can be classified as pertaining to youth or that they themselves designate as such. The young parliamentarians studied in 2018 exhibited various ways of engaging with the specific youth agenda, and upon their arrival in Congress, some who were previously aligned with youth causes distanced themselves from these issues. Understanding how and why this occurred is also one of the objectives of the present investigation.

There are elements suggesting that this stance may represent a way to distance oneself from the youthful condition, which associates youth with transition (Castro, 2013), laden with perceptions of being *politically in formation, inexperienced, and citizens of the future*. Such aspects tend to diminish legitimacy when it comes to expressing and defending ideas and worldviews in parliament (Castro, *et al.*, 2009). The weight of these factors may account for the low representation of young individuals under 29 in Congress, which remains just above 4%.

A recurring interpretation is that youth engagement embodies renewal and opposition to "traditional" forms of political action, leading to the assumption that young people are averse to participating in political parties and parliamentary representation. However, our survey of parliamentarians elected in 2018 revealed significant voting patterns within the spectrum of the right and far-right, as evidenced by the intense parliamentary participation of young individuals such as Kim Kataguirí (DEM/SP) and Chris Tonietto (PL/RJ) in 2018. In 2022, we observed similar movements within the right, with significant votes and active political engagement from candidates and parliamentarians elected, such as Nikolas Ferreira (PL/MG), the most-voted federal deputy in Brazil, and Kim Kataguirí (União Brasil/SP), among others.

Tracking the parliamentarians elected in 2018, their trajectories, and the re-election of some of them in 2022 allowed for the observation of intense party dynamics, as well as their involvement in movements and collectives that participated in the national dispute. For instance, Kim Kataguirí, elected by DEM in 2018, transitioned to União Brasil; Fellipe Barros, who has a longer party history (starting with PSDB), was elected by PSL in 2018, moved through União Brasil, and was re-elected in 2022 by PL; Cris Tonietto also transitioned from PSL to União Brasil and was elected in 2022 by PL. Among the 2022 candidates, one name stands out: Fernando Holiday, elected as a councilor in São Paulo in 2018 by DEM, who moved through Patriotas, Novo, and served as a substitute with the Republicans in 2022.

The party movements of these parliamentarians either distance themselves from or remain loyal to Bolsonaro and/or the agendas of the far-right. However, we observe that they unify around economic agendas. In contrast, representatives Tábata Amaral (PDT) and Sâmia Bonfim (PSOL) maintained their party affiliations between 2018 and their re-elections in 2022.

In 2018, we observed a strong presence of collectives self-identified as *Bolsonaristas*, as well as groups presenting themselves in the political arena advocating for positions characterized as *liberal and conservative*. The period following the 2018 elections was marked by heightened tensions within this sphere, which led to the distancing of the Movimento Brasil Livre (MBL) from its association with Bolsonaro, resulting in a more direct abandonment of value-based agendas and a concentration on opposing the Workers' Party (PT), defending liberal policies, and advocating for a reduction of the state. This rupture became particularly evident in 2019 amidst the accusations and demands for investigation concerning Flávio Bolsonaro:

The deputy stated that he is a “critical” ally of the president. He understands that certain sectors of the *Bolsonarist* movement defend the president’s son, Senator Flávio Bolsonaro (PSL-RJ), who is involved in a civil investigation by the Public Ministry, at all costs. Kim published a photo of a soda machine on his social media, supporting the investigation of both left- and right-wing politicians. “Today, I face significant backlash from Bolsonaro’s supporters,” he recalls. For him, part of the movement perceives the current president of the Republic as a “colonel.” These sectors demanded fewer indications to complain about PT’s corruption compared to what they are now demanding regarding Flávio’s case (Miltão; Ramalho, 2019, n.p., our translation).

This stance generated internal reactions within the movement. An interesting case was the departure of Fernando Holiday, one of the MBL’s most prominent leaders, who justified that the movement’s priorities were increasingly marked by economic themes and less by the issues he wished to dedicate himself to, which we can classify as “values” issues¹⁶.

From a qualitative perspective, the material collected from social media, in a sampling manner during the 2018 electoral period, indicates a language that engages youth as an important electoral segment by candidates who later became federal deputies, although it mobilizes little to no agendas associated with rights and public youth policies (PPJs). Another element to be highlighted is the agendas of these parliamentarians in political disputes, both nationally and regionally, and their rela-

¹⁶ Interview with José Fucs from Estadão (Fucs, 2021)

tionship with the cultural, social, and economic conflicts inherent in the competing visions for the country. Generally, we observe that the majority of young elected officials in 2018 aligned with the Bolsonaro government, albeit with differences, and even presented themselves publicly as opposition, as was the case with Kim Kataguiri, particularly regarding economic issues. There are, therefore, profiles that converge and diverge based on their trajectories, yet navigate and intersect in both “new” and “old” forms of political engagement.

In observing the elected parliamentarians, without the intention of a detailed analysis of parliamentary action, the issues addressed as legislative proposals in the early months of 2019 were diverse¹⁷. We noted that some reinforced the campaign statements, such as Tabata Amaral, who maintained her focus on education; Felipe Rigoni, who prioritized issues for people with disabilities; Felipe Barros, who focused on anti-corruption and anti-PT agendas; Kim Kataguiri, who advocated for anti-corruption measures and pension reform; and Samia Bomfim, who opposed gun possession while defending women’s rights.

Many of these parliamentarians distanced themselves from the Bolsonaro government; however, we observe that the majority continued to vote in alignment with the Bolsonaro administration, with over 80% of votes aligning with the government coalition, according to Radar Congresso em Foco (UOL). Among those who did not vote with the government, Samia Bomfim (PSOL) was the most distanced, with only 16% alignment, followed by Aliel (PSB) at 35% and Tabata Amaral (PDT) at 55%. The others, including Kim Kataguiri (DEM), despite not aligning publicly on issues with the government, maintained a high degree of alignment in their voting behavior (87%). Additionally, there were those who aligned with nearly 100% consistency, such as Cris Tonieto (PSL), Felipe Barros (PSL), Felipe Francischini (PSL), and Pinheirinho (PP). As seen in the cases of the first two, these individuals engaged in party switching in alignment with Bolsonaro. There are also two parliamentarians, Felipe Rigoni (PSB) and Enrico Misasi (PV), who present a 70% alignment.

This preliminary assessment may reveal more about the Bolsonaro government’s capacity to address neoliberal and value-based agendas simultaneously during its administration than about the specific actions of young parliamentarians. Nonetheless, it also highlights the need to problematize the notions of “new” and “old” in politics, particularly in the process of institutionalization, as interpreted by Bourdieu (1989), in the effort to strengthen political capital that relates to the constructs that led these candidates to election and the processes of reproduction of institutional permanence. For instance, Felipe Barros, who maintained proposals

¹⁷ A base dessa primeira análise são as proposições legislativas dos primeiros meses ordenadas pelo Radar do Congresso e sua classificação “mais ou menos Governista” a partir da votação no congresso (Uol, 2019). Disponível em: <https://radar.congressoemfoco.com.br/parlamentar/1204534/proposicoes>. Acesso em: 20 set. 2024.

characterized by an anti-communist and anti-PT stance and was among the most aligned with the Bolsonaro government, directed the most actions (including funding) in his initial legislative proposals to his home region, thereby bolstering his political base (Bezerra, 1999), which included funding for universities and schools.

The examination of the legislative proposals from certain elected parliamentarians during the 2019-2022 legislative term indicates a persistence among a significant number of young deputies in themes and narratives frequently invoked during electoral periods, such as anti-PT sentiment or *Bolsonarismo*. This persistence leads us to a sense of an elongated political timeline, akin to a temporal loop, as if we were in an eternal second round of elections. This scenario continued into the 2022 elections, intensified by the confrontation between Lula and Bolsonaro¹⁸.

Final considerations

The political, cultural, social, technological, and economic transformations experienced in Brazil and worldwide in recent years have provoked changes in politics in terms of prevailing actors, agendas, and methods of mobilizing and competing for formal representation. Youth are presented as a privileged segment for analyzing such processes, as they are particularly affected by economic changes and social rights issues. Thus, in times of rapid change in the political landscape, focusing on youth and their political engagement helps us observe and understand broader processes experienced by society.

The data collected and analyzed in the present study aim to contribute to understanding Brazilian youth's political engagement in recent years. It indicates the deepening of social conflicts and their relationship with themes frequently identified as cultural, customary, or moral, which reinforces analyses within the field of intersectionality. There are young parliamentarians from working-class backgrounds who align themselves with conservative economic agendas; similarly, there is a notable rejection from a significant portion of the electorate toward youth candidacies, evidenced by the fact that less than 4% of elected deputies are under 29 years of age, while the "old politics" remains a subject of critique.

Understanding the meanings and political practices adopted by youth is the driving force behind this contribution, which extends beyond the legislative space, although it acknowledges the relevance of legislative action to the public agenda. In this sense, it is essential to emphasize that the analysis of elected legislative representations is, in fact, insufficient for comprehending the ongoing and ever-evolving

¹⁸ The research is ongoing and covers the 2022 election and the first year of parliamentary activity. The data is being processed and will be used in future work.

phenomena in contemporary Brazil. That is, there are hundreds of young individuals contesting institutional spaces, and thousands of voters investing in these platforms and candidates, yet due to the available investigative methods, they fade from the research lens.

Nonetheless, this analysis contributes to understanding the possibilities of political representation, with legislative action—often overlooked in research on political participation—serving as an additional locus for understanding the formation of identities, actions, agendas, organizational processes, and the occupation of political spaces by youth. By delving into quantitative data on the profiles and electoral performance of candidates, as well as tracking their agendas and actions from the time of electoral competition, this study allows for a critical examination of recurring perceptions that attribute the low presence of youth in the federal legislature to a disinterest in institutional political representation.

The recurrent instances of “supervoting,” which could be exclusively attributed to engagement on social media, appear in conjunction with competition within political parties of varying ideological shades. We observe that youth public policies have had less presence on the agendas of candidates and elected officials in recent elections. We can assert that youth political engagement manifests in a variety of ways; undoubtedly, parliamentary action is one of them. With a significant number of young candidates presenting themselves for election to this body, the question remains regarding the low youth representation in the Chamber of Deputies—not as an expression of disinterest among young people, but rather as a reflection of their low recognition as eligible candidates. Nevertheless, they continue to engage at the center of national issues and the disputes surrounding their local experiences.

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