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Better Procedures for Fairer Outcomes: Youth Quotas in Parliaments

by Juliana Bidadanure

Abstract: In this article, I put forward an instrumental justification for the introduction of youth quotas in parliaments on grounds of justice between co-existing generations. I provide a two-fold argument drawing on the distinction between "substantive representation" and "symbolic representation". I argue that these jointly provide a good basis for a "politics of youth presence" in parliaments. In the first section, I evaluate the impact that youth quotas can have on enhancing the chances of fair youth policies (substantive representation). In the second section, I show that youth quotas can play an important symbolic role in the promotion of a community of political equals, with potential implications for youth political participation (symbolic representation).

Introduction

The question of the political representation of young people in parliaments is particularly relevant to the topic of intergenerational justice. As the ratio of young to elderly people decreases in most wealthy countries, some are concerned that young people may get sidelined, and that our democracies may become gerontocracies.[1] In European countries, very few MPs are under 40 years old and close to none are under 30 years old. In this context, the option of introducing youth quotas in parliaments seems appealing. And yet, there is very little research available on the topic and politicians have not yet acknowledged it as a relevant reform to consider. How should we explain this lack of critical engagement with a policy that seems fairly relevant at first sight? Whether we believe in representation as the ideal of democracy or as the second best option after participatory democracy, it seems that the possibility of implementing quotas in order to prevent some social groups from being marginalised or excluded is now broadly acknowledged. Gender and ethnic quotas are studied, deliberated, tested or implemented. Why aren't age quotas, in general, and youth quotas, in particular, being discussed, too?

One response to this question is: "because age is special."[2] If women and ethnic minorities are not represented in parliaments, they will have been treated unequally in comparison with other citizens. On the contrary, if you adopt a diachronic perspective, if young people are not represented, they will not have been treated unequally over their complete lives, when compared with other age groups who were young themselves at some point. Inequalities between age groups can be considered as *prima facie* less problematic than inequalities between other social groups. As Axel Gosseries puts it, "a society that heavily discriminates between people on grounds of age can still treat people equally, if we consider their access to given resources over their complete lives. Everyone's turn will come."[3] This specificity of age partly explains why the absence of young people in parliaments is not seen as an injustice like inequalities in representation between other social groups. As Anne Philips argues in a brief paragraph on the underrepresentation of young people in politics: "The situation of women looks more obviously unfair [than that of young people] in that women will be under-represented throughout their entire lives."[4]

> It is your own convictions which compels you; that is, choice compels choice.
> / Epictetus /

There is another relevant distinction to be made between the justification of gender or ethnic quotas and the discussion on the need for youth quotas. If women are not represented in parliament, then it is likely to mean that they do not stand a fair chance in the competition for these social positions. The history of gender domination and exclusion substantiates the suspicion.[5] Gender and ethnicity are not relevant grounds for exclusion from such positions. On grounds of fair equality of opportunity therefore, and against unfair discriminations, one may support the introduction of quotas in parliament for these groups to restore equality of opportunity. However, this argument is unlikely to work for young people. Indeed, the main explanation and justification for the absence of young people in parliament is likely to be their lack of experience. Experience, unlike gender or ethnicity, is a relevant feature of the position of being an MP. In other words, it is not the case that the exclusionary criterion in the case of young people is irrelevant to the position of being an MP.

For these two reasons at least, it is likely that the best defences of youth quotas will rely on an instrumental justification. Rather than arguing, as for gender, that the inequality in representation is *prima facie* unfair, one may want to insist on both the negative consequences that the absence of young people in parliaments causes and the positive outcomes that introducing youth quotas could bring about. This article provides this instrumental justification and claims that youth quotas, insofar as they can indeed help in bringing about intergenerationally fairer outcomes, deserve to be seriously considered. I will thus not consider more direct justifications for quotas so as to exclusively focus on instrumental justifications.

In the literature on quotas, two kinds of grounds for quotas are often emphasised: on the one hand, the policy level or "substantive representation" and, on the other hand, the symbolic level or "symbolic representation".[6] The first is about the impact that quotas can have for the policies that will be discussed and implemented. The second is about the impact that the implementation of quotas could have, beyond the parliamentary room, for social cohesion. In this paper, I put forward two instrumental arguments for the introduction of youth quotas and argue that they jointly provide a good basis for a "politics of youth presence" in parliaments.

Substantive representation: What can youth quotas do for deliberations?

Jane Mansbridge argues that one key ground for supporting the introduction of "descriptive representatives" – that is, representatives from selected marginalised groups – is that it enhances "the substantive representation of the group's interests by improving the quality of deliberation."[7] In this section, I evaluate the kind of impact the introduction of youth quotas can have on parliamentary deliberations – that is, on the ideas discussed and ultimately on the policies implemented. I argue that a correlation between a youth presence in parliament and fairer intergenerational outcomes is likely.

> Knowledge which is divorced from justice, may be called cunning rather than wisdom.
> / Cicero /

In *The Politics of Presence*, Anne Philips puts forward a justification for gender and ethnic quotas based on "the need to tackle those exclusions inherent in the party packaging of political ideas, the need for more vigorous advocacy on behalf of disadvantaged groups, and the importance of a politics of transformation in opening up a fuller range of policy options."[8] My defence of youth quotas formulates two arguments which draw on Philips' first two arguments. Mitigating the underrepresentation of young people, I argue, is desirable: to prevent the exclusion of some age-related concerns from "the party packaging of political ideas" – for instance concerns related to affordable housing and education, and unemployment; and to increase the chance of "more vigorous advocacy" on behalf of the young – for instance through speaking out against misrepresentations of the young as lazy and self-deserving (both will be discussed in the following sections). But I will briefly start with two important limitations of the substantive argument for quotas.

Narrowing the scope of the substantive representation argument

The idea of "substantive representation" presupposes that there are such things as "group interests", such as "women interests". In my case, assessing the potential impact of youth quotas on the substantive representation of "youth interests" presupposes such a group-based conception of interests. However, this approach risks unduly essentialising groups: "Essentialism involves assuming a single or essential trait, or nature, that binds every member of a descriptive group together, giving them common interests that, in the most extreme versions of the idea, transcend the interests that divide them."[9] In the case of young people, we may too quickly assume that they have common substantive interests. We may also presuppose that older MPs cannot represent young people's interests adequately. We may disregard more important differences, such as those stemming from class membership.

Appealing to such an overly essentialist understanding of the category of young people in order to justify quotas is likely to be farfetched. The impact of age on political ideas is not prevalent. In the UK, in the 2010 General Election, for instance, young people voted equally for the three dominant parties: 30% of young people between 18 and 24 years old voted for the Conservative Party, 31% Labour and 30% Lib Dem.[10,11] As attested by the solidarity demonstrations in France in 2010, young people often support the pension claims of the elderly.[12] Promoting an essentialist conception of age groups is also potentially counterproductive because, given that society is ageing anyway, the last thing we want is for institutions to reinforce the view that one should only vote for what is best for one's own age group. This would in fact ensure that institutions would be age-biased because the majority age group would be encouraged to shape institutions in a way that meets their own temporal interests as they age.

However, one does not have to be in the grips of an overly essentialist view of age to make a successful argument for youth quotas. One merely has to assume that there are *some* age or cohort-related interests, concerns or goals that have *some* impact on people's voting behaviours. Age seems to have at least some impact on people's views on which policies should be implemented: "voting at referenda on long-term ecological issues such as whether or not a country should abandon nuclear energy has been shown to be strongly related to age."[13] For instance, Van Parijs uses the example of a 1990 referendum in Switzerland organised for a phase-out on nuclear energy: 64% of the 18–29 age range and 57% of the 30–39s supported the proposal, but it was rejected since only 47% of the overall population supported it – the favorable votes of the youngest were outweighed by the negative votes of older voters. More recently, Craig Berry showed that age has some impact on how people vote, too. For instance, drawing on Andy Furlong and Fred Cartmel's research based on the British Election Survey 2009/10, he showed that "unemployment" was an issue that concerned the members of Generation Y (15–30 years old) substantially more than members of the baby-boomers generation. The topic of "health care" was seen as a priority over unemployment by both the baby-boomers and the "silent generation".[14] One simply needs to recognise that age groups, because of their position in the lifespan and their cohort membership, share a series of common concerns, goals and experiences. I will only appeal to this weak understanding of youth interests in the remainder of this section.

Another important limitation of descriptive representation as substantive representation must be raised here. There is a fundamental distinction to be made between the underrepresentation of young people on the electors' side, on the one hand, and on the representatives' side, on the other. The possible correlation between age, cohort, and voting power does not seem to provide evident reasons to consider modifying the composition of representative bodies. All Van Parijs, Longman and Berry seem to claim is that there is a correlation between "voting" and age. The problem would then be the ageing of the electorate, not the age of parliamentarians per se. Young MPs may find themselves victim of the problem of having to meet the short-term interests of their electorates too, just like older MPs. If anything, population ageing may give us reasons to consider a number of voting reforms, but not directly to bring more young people into parliaments. This is an important limitation to establishing what quotas alone can do if the young remain relatively disenfranchised. The aim of this section is precisely to establish the special significance and hopes of descriptive representation itself, in isolation from what voting can do.

> The Youth of a Nation are the trustees of posterity.
> / Benjamin Disraeli /

Preventing the exclusion of youth interests from the party packaging of political ideas

Regardless of the party young MPs may be from, they may contribute in expanding the party policy package available through pushing for a better inclusion of youth concerns in political agendas. Anne Philips identifies such party packaging as a fundamental ar-

gument for quotas.[15] It does not rely on too substantive a conception of what youth interests consist of. Some groups may have common concerns but its members may interpret them in different ways based on their goals, values, party lines or social class. Quotas can help in making sure that political parties include those concerns, whatever their responses may be. They may therefore promote more complete deliberations in parliaments on these issues. This seems particularly relevant when studies show that the young do feel that politicians do not take their concerns seriously. In a survey on young people's attitudes towards political parties, for instance, Hen and Foard showed that only 7% of 18 year olds thought that political parties were interested in the same issues that concern young people.[16]

> No man is good enough to govern another man without that other's consent.
> / Abraham Lincoln /

Older MPs were once young too and can thus relate to such concerns. However, they are not young "now" and may thus miss some cohort-related concerns. Indeed, there is an important difference between period effects on the one hand and age effects on the other hand.[17] The period effect designates the impact of an event at a given time: for instance, the effects of a financial crisis can be described as period effects. Arguably, many people suffer its consequences, regardless of their age. However, there are also age effects, which designate the impact of age and membership in a generation on given outcomes. Poverty or unemployment as a result of the same financial crisis will be experienced very differently if experienced at a young age or towards the end of one's career, for instance. For young people, youth unemployment and poverty can lead to dependency on one's parents, including for accommodation and income. Youth unemployment may also lead to the postponement of projects young people might value, such as starting a family or buying a home.
In parliaments, younger MPs may thus pick on specific problems relating to housing, education and unemployment in a different way than older MPs would. The 28-year-old MP Jo Swinson, in 2009, complained about the lack of age diversity within the UK parliament:
"There are a huge number of Oxbridge-educated lawyers elected as MPs when they are middle-aged. There is not a single MP who has paid tuition fees. We have a large part of the population with debts from these or who face working well into old age because of pension changes, but there is no person in Parliament who shares, or will share, their experience."[18]
The absence of age diversity, Swinson suggested, has an impact on the kinds of social experiences represented. One may thus hope that a more age-diverse parliament could better account for the age and cohort-related plurality of experiences. The virtue of shared experience thus offers an important ground for descriptive representation, as Mansbridge argues. One first argument for youth quotas, therefore, is that more age-diverse parliaments will be better able to represent the range of concerns that constituents may have. Youth quotas would introduce more experiential diversity into deliberations.

Increasing the chance of more vigorous advocacy on behalf of the young

We may also defend the introduction of youth quotas on the ground that there is an important risk that policies and debates will be driven by misrepresentations if conducted solely within some age groups and to the exclusion of others. If an age group is absent from the debates, its aspirations and problems may become distorted. French and British youth policies, for instance, can be said to have been driven, to a large extent, on false representations and often unfair prejudices.[19] There is a tendency in the media and amongst politicians alike to emphasise personal desert and render young people responsible for their own situation. Discourses on youth tend to revolve around their alleged laziness, bad attitude, and strong sense of entitlement.[20] As the writers of the *Jilted Generation* argue, there seems to be a resurgence of a Victorian ideology that sees laziness where there is poverty and disadvantage, and lack of personal commitment where there are structural and systemic issues: "More than anything we're vulnerable and yet the attitude of much of the society towards us is that we're lazy and undeserving."[21]
The Intergenerational Foundation recently published a report on the perception of young people in European countries. The results are quite compelling and account for the poor perception of younger people in the UK: "British people in their 20s achieved the lowest scores of any country in relation to being viewed with respect. […] In terms of contempt, British people in their 20s came first."[22] Because of these misrepresentations, as Furlong and Cartmel argue, "when issues emerge that have a core relevance for young people, they are often tackled from a paternalistic and condescending 'we know what's best for you' perspective." An example they put forward is unemployment policy: politicians "tend to focus not so much on creating opportunities, but on tackling a perceived skill deficit and motivating young people who are presented as feckless and even as 'inadequate citizens'."[23]
An example of the impact such misrepresentations may have would be the denial of a means-tested minimum income guarantee to French citizens under 25 years old. Since its introduction in 1988, the access to a minimum income guarantee in France has been restricted to citizens over the age of 25 years old. In 2009, the scheme was finally reformed to include young people under 25 years old, but with much more restrictive requirements: to be entitled to benefits, they must have already worked for at least two full time years in the past three. As a result, only a few thousand young persons have access to a minimum income when they need it, while over 20% of French youth live in poverty. In fact, most arguments that were provided were either infantilising or paternalistic: young people do not deserve it, they will be idle and lazy if they receive it, they do not really need it and they should not be given something for nothing.[24] If young persons had had a stronger voice, including stronger representatives, when this age-based discrimination[25] pertained, it would possibly have found more resistance. We may hope that bringing more young persons into parliaments can have the modest impact of not leaving the misrepresentations unchallenged.

> A young man idle, an old man needy.
> / English proverb /

Youth quotas can thus have the second important benefit of increasing the chance of "more vigorous advocacy" on behalf of the young, for instance by speaking out against misrepresentations of the young as lazy and self-deserving. We may hope that the young will be fiercer challengers of some misrepresentations and can act as watchdogs for age-based discriminations.
If representatives underestimate, at best, and misrepresent as laziness, at worse, the challenges that young people are facing, then

policies are likely to be inadequate. Norman Daniels imagined a procedure, the prudential lifespan account, where planners are placed behind a veil of ignorance, so that they ignore their age. They are then asked to distribute a given bundle of resources throughout their lives so as to maximise lifespan efficiency: "How should that lifetime expectation of enjoying a certain level of primary social goods be distributed over each stage of life so that lifetime well-being is maximised?"[26] The outcomes of this procedure tell us what investments and distributions are fair, and eventually which inequalities between age groups are acceptable. As Daniels suggests, the best way to establish the requirements of justice between age groups would be to appeal to a veiled representative body, as this would preserve impartiality and prevent age bias. In practice, it is of course impossible to reproduce the age-neutrality of the prudent planners. However, in non-ideal circumstances, it seems that the least we can do is to make sure that deliberative bodies do include representatives from all age groups to limit the risk of age bias. Drawing on previous discussions, we may therefore argue that, in non-ideal circumstances, the "politics of prudence" requires a "politics of presence", defined by Anne Philips as the need to increase the political representation of disadvantaged groups through quotas.

> The only free people are those who cultivate their own thoughts... and strive without fear to do justice to them.
> / Berthold Auerbach /

A certain kind of presence is no "guarantee" as such of certain kinds of ideas being expressed and of certain policies being implemented. I have started this discussion with two limitations of descriptive representation: we cannot over-essentialise the young and assume that young MPs will be radically better at promoting youth concerns; and even if they do, it will not directly affect imbalances in power at the voting level. The impact of quotas on substantive representation is thus potentially not as radical as one may hope. This does not mean that youth quotas will have no impact on intergenerational fairness. As I have shown, there are several reasons to believe that the introduction of quotas will have a positive impact on deliberations. However, this limitation shows that the substantive case for quotas may not provide a sufficient basis for youth quotas in parliaments on its own. This leads us to another important argument in favour of youth quotas. I will now show that, regardless of the impact that descriptive representation can have on the quality of deliberations, youth quotas can also be defended on symbolic grounds.

Symbolic representation: promoting a community of equals

The symbolic value of representation is, in Philips' account, one of four legitimate grounds for a politics of presence. "If subsequent scrutiny established that an under-participation of women […] had no observable consequences (an unlikely outcome, but still in principle possible)," Philips argues, "this would not significantly alter the judgment that such inequality is undesirable."[27] The symbolic value of descriptive representation is such that, even if there were only little evidence that quotas affect the substantive representation of the marginalised group's interests, there would still be independent reasons to advocate a politics of presence. Jointly, the substantive and symbolic arguments provide a good basis for the introduction of youth quotas in parliament.

The demonstrative symbolic value of youth quotas

In his 1986 Tanner lectures on the significance of choice, Tim Scanlon distinguishes three reasons why we have to value individual choice: choice has "predictive" value, "demonstrative" value, and "symbolic" value.[28] If I order my own food at the restaurant, instead of letting someone else choose for me, then the order is likely to match my preferences better than it would otherwise.[29] This way, choice has predictive value – in many circumstances, the fact that I choose for myself predicts that the results of my choices will accurately match my preferences. However, Scanlon argues, the predictive value of choice is relative and conditional: I may not know much about the cuisine in this given restaurant or I may be drunk. In this case, someone else may be better than I am at ordering the right thing for me. This often justifies paternalistic policies. The predictive value of choice, however, is not the only value of choice. In other words, it may be valuable for me as a person to choose for myself even if I am not the best judge of what my own interest is. Indeed, Scanlon argues, choice also has demonstrative and symbolic value.

Scanlon illustrates the demonstrative value of choice by appealing to the following example:[30] when you buy a gift for someone, the best way to make sure that they get what they prefer is often to let them pick what they want or to give them money. However, getting them exactly what they prefer is partly beside the point. Gift giving is an opportunity to demonstrate care, affection and knowledge. Likewise, the symbolic value of choice is unrelated to the predictive value. In a situation where people are normally allowed to make their own choices, Scanlon argues, "I may value having a choice because my not having it would reflect a judgement on my own or someone else's part that I fall below the expected standard of competence."[31] In some circumstances, if I am not allowed to make a choice, it may mean that I am considered as "inferior". This matters all the more, Scanlon argues, if the members of my group are systematically questioned in their capacity to choose for themselves. The demonstrative and symbolic values of choice are both unrelated to the "predictive" value of choice precisely because they are non-instrumental. Regardless of whether I may get the results wrong, my choice may have demonstrative and symbolic value.

How do these distinctions relate to the symbolic value of descriptive representation? Scanlon is primarily concerned with individual choices, not with the representation of these choices by suitable people. There is a big stretch between saying that my individual choice matters for demonstrative and symbolic reasons, on the one hand, and saying that my being politically represented by people who look like me has demonstrative and symbolic value, on the other hand. In fact, Scanlon's discussion of the symbolic value of choice already makes some claims about groups, categories and norms.

> All the citizens of a state cannot be equally powerful, but they may be equally free.
> / Voltaire /

Scanlon is partly concerned that paternalistic policies respect the multiple ways in which choice matters: "even when people are not able to decide what is best for themselves, part of what must be taken into consideration is whether some particular groups are 'being held inferior in the argument for legal regulation'."[32]

In many circumstances, group identity has

a meaning for whether given individuals are acknowledged as equals or not. In this way, descriptive representation may be considered as contributing to the self-image of marginalised groups. If there are no women in parliaments, this has negative value for women's self-image as political equals. If there are women in parliaments, this has positive demonstrative value for women's self-image. Scanlon's two non-instrumental concepts thus seem to work together in the case of descriptive representation. I will thus keep the distinction between predictive value on the one hand and symbolic and demonstrative values on the other hand, but collapse the two latter non-instrumental values into one.[33] Descriptive quotas may thus be said to have what I henceforth refer to as "demonstrative symbolic" value – they attest that the relevant groups are political equals, regardless of their potential substantive contributions to parliamentary deliberations.

Robert Goodin draws a parallel distinction between self-interests and self-image. Irrespective of the substantive impact quotas can have for the representation of the interests of marginalised groups, political representation matters for self-image as well: "people's self-images are, at least in places and in part, tied up with politics."[34] Goodin highlights this distinction between self-interest and self-image to contradict studies that quotas have no value if they have no impact on substantive representation. Against social scientists who object to quotas on the ground of its having little impact on the substantive representation of the group's interests, Goodin argues that demonstrating the inapplicability of one argument (self-interest) does not dismiss the other (self-image).[35]

Similarly, Anne Philips emphasises the importance of the composition of parliaments for attesting the political equality of women.[36] Some men may be better at advancing the cause of women than some women will, for ideological reasons. But this is unlikely to exhaust our reasons for thinking that the absence of women in parliaments is a problem for political equality. We need women in parliaments regardless of whether they will advance the cause of women. We need ethnic minorities regardless of whether they will in fact have a concrete positive impact on anti-racism.

We hope that it will be the case and this gives us extra reasons for implementing quotas in general, but the justification based on the politics of ideas is not the only reason. Diversity of geographical origins, ethnic backgrounds, genders, sexual orientations, and occupation likewise have an important symbolic value. As Mansbridge argues, descriptive representation is likely to play a key role in creating "a social meaning of ability to rule" for groups that are not considered as fit for politics.[37]

> How people keep correcting us when we are young! There is always some bad habit or other they tell us we ought to get over. Yet most bad habits are tools to help us through life.
> / Friedrich Nietzsche /

Drawing on this demonstrative symbolic value of quotas, one may argue that youth quotas would consist in a "public acknowledgment of equal value",[38] to borrow Charles Taylor's expression. It would signal to society and young people that their contribution is valued and that they are considered with equal respect. Their status of equal citizens would be attested, recognised and emphasised. The absence of young people in parliaments, on the contrary, may signal the opposite and creates a social meaning of inability to rule.

It may contribute to an apolitical self-image of young adults and generate a sense that the young are of lower social, or at least political, status, and reinforce the sense that older people are more fit to rule.

If we care about the goal of a community of equals, in which people relate to each other as equals throughout their adult life, and regardless of their age, then the existence of such social meaning of political inferiority is problematic and must be undermined. Representation is significant symbolically because it attests political equality. Youth quotas could thus participate in a redefinition of young adulthood. They could contribute to the construction of a social understanding of the young as able to rule and reinforce their image of equal citizens. Gender and ethnic quotas contribute to undermining the view that only white men are able to be in parliaments. Youth quotas have the potential to undermine the age norm that young citizens under 30 years old, or in some countries people under the age of 40, are not fit to rule and thus contribute to the political equalisation of young people.

Like Philips, Mansbridge does not consider the case of young people. She only mentions young people as needing "role models" as diverse as possible in positions of authority, including parliaments.[39] Goodin, however, elaborates his argument about the importance of self-image in the context of the 1972 Democratic National Convention, where quotas had been introduced for women, blacks and also for young people in each state legislature. Quotas were introduced to remediate the critical underrepresentation of all three groups in previous Conventions. In the context of the Vietnam War, the absence of young people was considered all the more concerning in that their age group was disproportionately affected by the war. The idea that the young would not be included as part of the political deliberators and did not enjoy an equal status of authority thus exacerbated the perceived generational tension. The value of quotas could thus be expressed partly in this symbolic demonstrative vein of symbolically attesting the political equality of marginalised groups. Legislative bodies, as figures of political authority and power, are particularly suitable contexts for the symbolic demonstration of political equality.

In this section, I claimed that descriptive representation in general, and youth quotas in particular, can be said to hold "demonstrative symbolic value". The introduction of youth quotas would explicitly attest young people's political equality thus contributing to a "social meaning of ability to rule".

> The arrogance of age must submit to be taught by youth.
> / Edmund Burke /

The symbolic instrumental value of youth quotas

The presence of descriptive representatives, as Mansbridge argues, is likely to have some positive effects on the feelings of inclusion of politically marginalised groups. "From this perspective, if the costs are not too great, we should promote diversity in positions of authority and excellence."[40] Age diversity may be an important kind of diversity, especially if some age groups, like the young, but maybe the very old as well, are politically marginalised. More age diversity in parliament may be particularly instrumental in bringing about a more cohesive society, e.g. where no one feels set aside.

Youth quotas could thus indirectly play a role in encouraging young people to vote, for instance. As Shiv Malik argues, it would be too simplistic to believe that young people plainly do not want to engage to explain the fact that their voting turnout is so low: "When, before the 2005 general election,

the Electoral Commission launched a campaign to persuade young people to vote with the shout-line: 'If you don't do politics…there's not much you do do', they missed the point entirely. It's not that young people don't do politics, it's that modern politics doesn't do young people."[41]

We may hope that quotas contribute to increasing young voters' turnout. To reply to Shiv Malik's quote, one may hope that youth quotas may send the following explicit message: "Politics does young people now." The presence of some young people in parliaments may thus act as a strong symbolic gesture to reengage young people in political communities, potentially impacting their voting turnouts.

> The worst part of the punishment is that he who refuses to rule is liable to be ruled by one who is worse than himself.
> / Plato /

Youth quotas also have the potential to increase the vertical communication between constituents and their MPs. Increased diversity amongst MPs, Mansbridge argues, can have an impact on people being more likely to visit their MPs if they feel more experiential closeness to them.[42] She draws on studies that suggest that black people in the US are more likely to go see their Congressperson if they, too, are black. Age membership is very different from other identities, but one could speculate that older people may feel more confident in sharing their concerns with an MP from their generation. Similarly, we can imagine cases in which young people may feel more comfortable communicating their concerns to representatives roughly their age instead of people the age of their parents or grandparents. They may fear, for instance, paternalistic or contemptuous responses.

There only need to be a few young MPs for this to work. Mansbridge argues that one of the advantages of descriptive representation is that it can allow communication beyond formal constituencies.[43] Women representatives may act as surrogate representatives for women who share their views across various constituencies. So the vertical communication may be improved, through an increased communication between populations and surrogate descriptive representatives, even if they are not their representatives. This way, age diversity could contribute to enhancing the vertical communication between constituents and MPs. The absence of young representatives, on the contrary, prevents such opportunities for vertical communication between young people throughout constituencies and young surrogate representatives.[44]

Notice that the introduction of youth quotas may also have effects on youth participation in politics that do not result from the symbolic effects of quotas. Quite straightforwardly, the introduction of youth quotas would have to be followed and supported by the introduction of other pre-required measures. Upstream, the young will have to be trained earlier and this may involve better civic education in schools. Parties will have to actively engage in recruiting young people and in developing their youth wings, to meet the quota requirements. Governments may have to fund campaigns and educatory programmes and to design training. De facto, the introduction of youth quotas would thus have to be followed by a series of other measures to enhance youth participation. Youth quotas must therefore be understood in light of this institutional ripple effect. As such, this is an argument for focusing on the introduction of quotas since it presupposes a series of other measures to be put in place. It is properly radical in this sense because its implementation necessitates an entire rethink of how to train and integrate more young people into politics.

Notes

1 See Chauvel 1998; Griffith 2011; Howker/Malik 2010; Tremmel 2006; Tremmel 2009; Willetts 2010.
2 See Daniels 1988; Gosseries 2007; Mc Kerlie 1989.
3 See Gosseries 2007.
4 Philips 1995: 63.
5 See Philips 1995; Mansbridge 1999; Williams 1998.
6 See Philips 1995; Mansbridge 1999.
7 Mansbridge 1999: 628.
8 Philips 1995: 37.
9 Mansbridge 1999: 637.
10 Cracknell/McGuinness/Rhodes 2011: 36.
11 Note that, although young people were equally likely to vote for the three parties, 44% of voters aged over 65 years old were likely to vote for the Conservatives and only 16% were likely to vote for the Lib Dems. However, 31% were likely to vote for Labour (just like the 18–24 year olds).
12 Although comparable claims, put forward by pensioners' organisations, were roundly criticised by young people in Germany.
13 Van Parijs 1995: 298.
14 Berry 2012: 13.
15 See Philips 1995: 27-57.
16 See Hen and Foard in Berry 2012: 40.
17 See Chauvel 1998: 286-289.
18 See Swinson in Parkinson 2009.
19 See Buckingham 2012; Howker and Malik 2010; Intergenerational Foundation 2012.
20 See Jones 2011.
21 Howker and Malik 2010: 69.
22 See Leach 2011.
23 Furlong and Cartmel in Berry 2012: 16.
24 See Bidadanure 2012.
25 The first version of the scheme, which completely excluded young people under 25 years old, was considered an illegitimate discrimination by the French Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination Commission (Haute Autorité de Lutte Contre les Discriminations 2008, 8-10).
26 Daniels 1988: 62.
27 Philips 1995: 33.
28 See Scanlon 1986: 177-185.
29 See Scanlon 1986: 177-179.
30 Scanlon 1986: 179.
31 Scanlon 1986: 180.
32 Scanlon 1986: 181.
33 See Scanlon 1986: 180-181.
34 Goodin 1977: 259.
35 See Goodin 1977: 260.
36 See Philips 1995: 27-57.
37 See Mansbridge 1999: 648-650.
38 Taylor in Philips 1995: 40.
39 See Mansbridge 1999: 651.
40 Mansbridge 1999: 651.
41 Howker and Malik 2010: 154.
42 See Mansbridge 1999: 641-643.
43 See Mansbridge 1999: 642.
44 Note that this is potentially also a point that falls into the substantive representation argument. If there is a better vertical communication as a result of youth quotas, this is also likely to improve the substantive representation of youth concerns in parliaments. In fact, Mansbridge classifies enhanced vertical communication under the category of substantive representation (Mansbridge 1999, 641-643).

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