

# Youth Political Attitudes in Asia

What the 2025 Survey Reveals

NextGen Democracy: Asia-Pacific Youth Leadership Program

Tokyo | February 2-4, 2026

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# Survey overview

The 3<sup>rd</sup> time survey | August 2025 | Ages 18–39 | Online panel (Qualtrics, double opt-in)

Countries: Japan | Korea | Indonesia | Thailand

## Sample sizes (n)

Japan: 1,026

Korea: 1,016

Indonesia: 1,025

Thailand: 1,013

## Key focus

- **Participation quantity & quality** (action diversity & motivation )
- **Political efficacy** (Political action & voting vs impact)
- **Deliberation** (frequency × breadth × open to differing views)
- **Civic learning** (in-school vs out-of-school)
- **Barriers against and Encouragement for participation**
- **Democracy defender identity** amid democratic regression

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*Note: results shown are % of respondents (unless noted).*

# What the survey asks

**Interest**

Are youth engaged with politics at all? (Q4)

**Relevance**

Do they connect politics to daily life? (Q5)

**Definition**

What do they count as “good participation”? (Q6)

**Action**

What do they actually do? How diverse? (Q7)

**Efficacy**

Do actions or voting feel impactful? (Q8–Q10)

**Dialogue**

Do they deliberate across differences? (Q11–Q13)

**Learning**

Where do they learn civics—in school vs out of school? (Q14–Q15)

**Constraints**

What holds them back; what would help? (Q16–Q18)

**Correlations**

What moves together to sustain participation? (key correlations)

**Dem Def. identity**

Do youth see themselves as democracy defenders? (Q19–Q21)

Takeaway: We will keep returning to one question: what converts interest into meaningful, sustained participation?

# Key findings

**From Interest to Influence:** Interest is widespread—but many young people still struggle to feel their actions make a difference.

## Attitudes (Interest & Relevance)

- Interest: Majorities are interested in all four countries; Thailand leads in 78%, Korea and Indonesia cluster in the high-60s, and Japan is lowest, with a larger disengaged minority.
- Relevance: Politics feels connected to daily life for most, but least so in Japan—fewer “everyday” routes into participation.

## Enablers (Dialogue & Learning)

- Dialogue: Widely valued, yet high-quality deliberation (frequent × multi-venue × open to differing views) is rare; most youth fall into low-to-mid levels.
- Learning: Civic learning exists across countries. Out-of-school learning best predicts richer deliberation and broader participation (more than in-school).

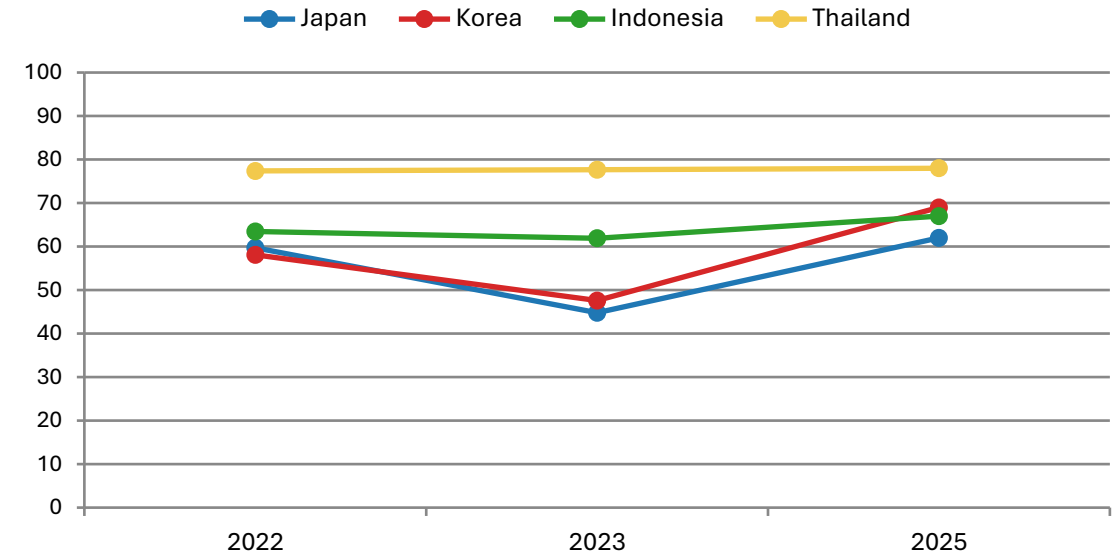
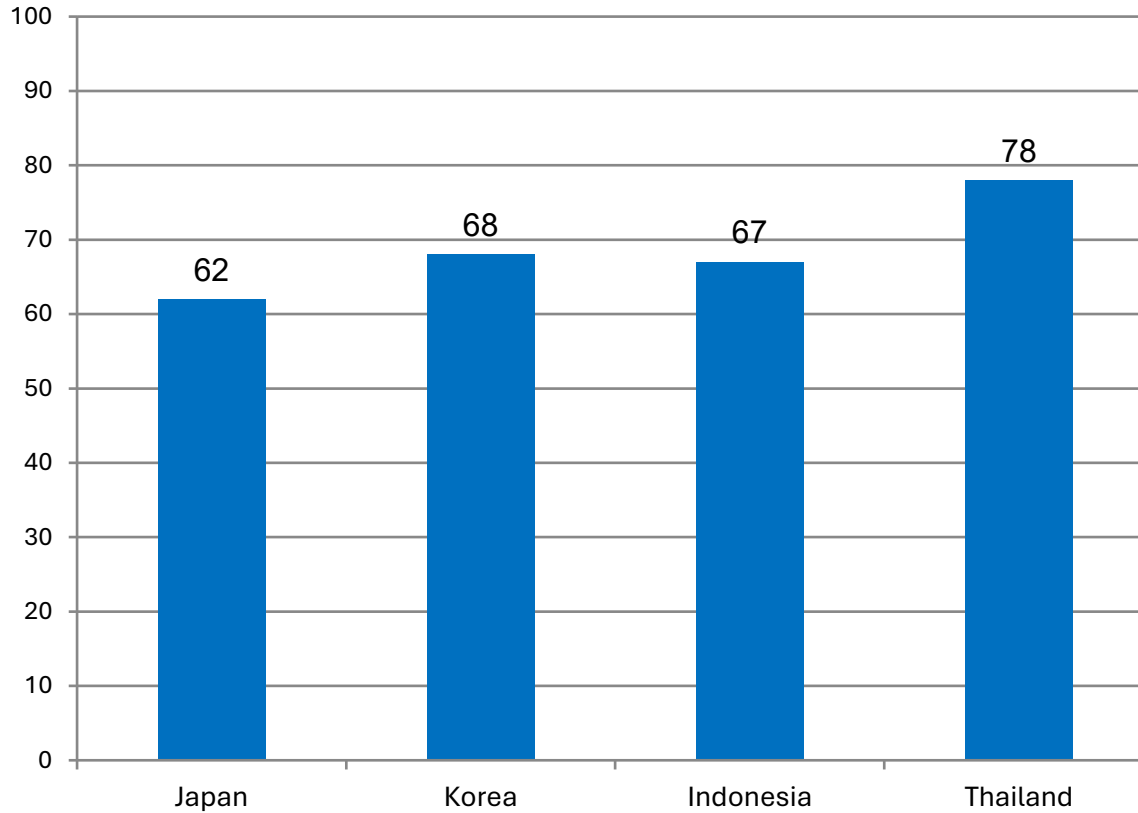
## Outcomes (Action & Responsiveness)

- Action: Voting dominates everywhere; beyond voting, action is broadest in Indonesia/ Thailand, mid-range in Korea, and thinnest in Japan.
- Responsiveness gap: The shared bottleneck is perceived impact—only a minority feel their actions matter—limiting sustained engagement.

Takeaway: Build the pathway—learning → dialogue → action → **visible impact**—so participation can be sustained.

## Q4. Political interest (2025) + trend

Share who are “very” or “somewhat” interested in their country's politics



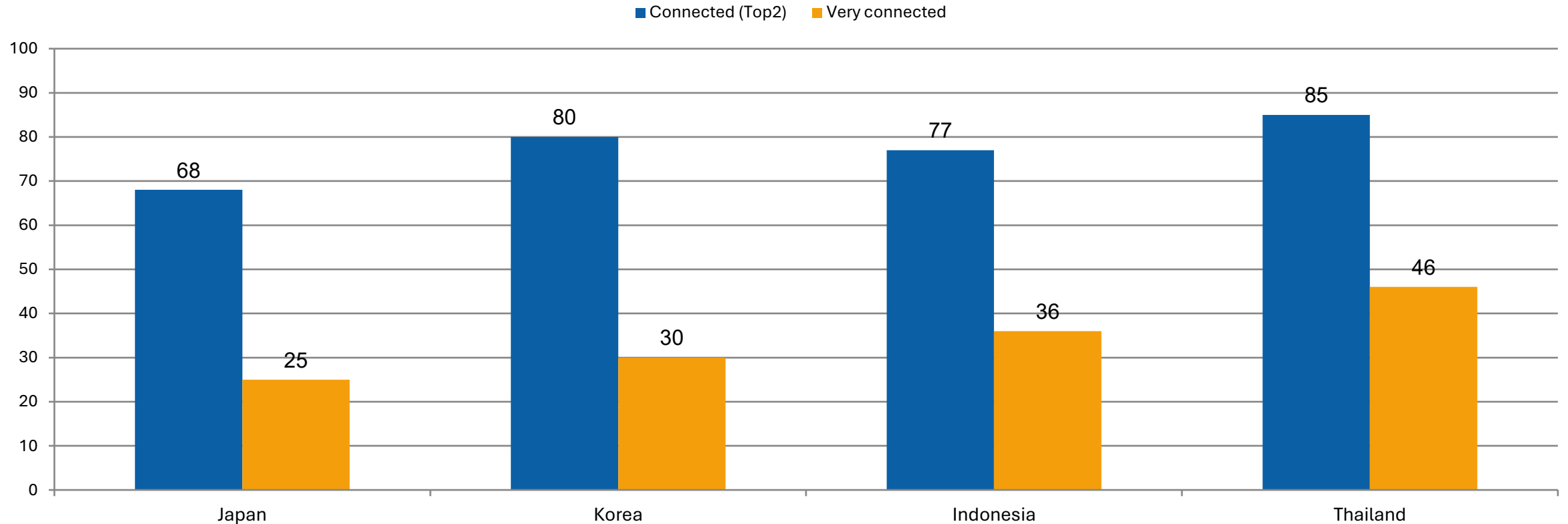
- Japan & Korea → V-shaped rebound from 2023-2025, driven especially by teens/ 20s.
- Indonesia & Thailand → high and stable across the rounds.

JP: 59.7 → 44.8 → 62.0 | KR: 58.1 → 47.6 → 69.0  
 ID: 63.5 → 61.9 → 67.0 | TH: 77.4 → 77.7 → 78.0

Takeaway: Interest isn't fixed. Political context can re-ignite youth attention, but keeping it alive is the real challenge.

## Q5. Does politics feel connected to daily life?

Share who feel politics is “very” or “somewhat” connected to their daily life

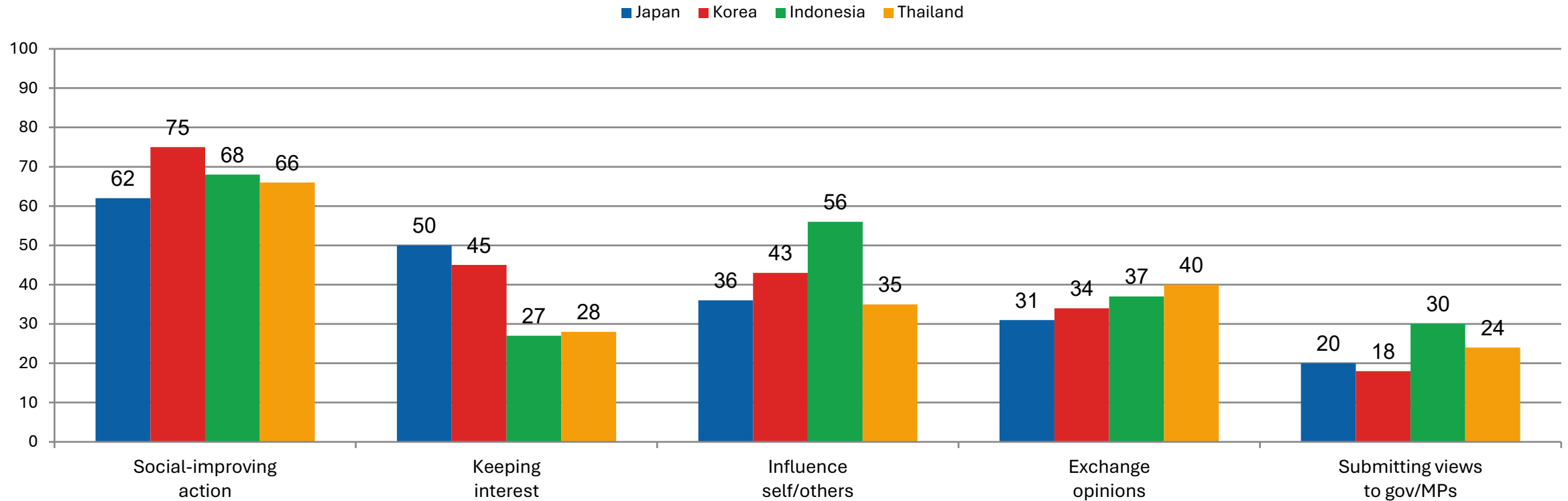


Not connected (Bottom2: not much / not at all): [Japan 32%](#) • Korea 20% • Indonesia 23% • Thailand 15%

Takeaway: Politics feels relevant cross nationally, but less so in Japan, narrowing everyday entry points into participation.

## Q6. What counts as “good political participation”?

Top definitions (select up to 3) — comparison across five key items

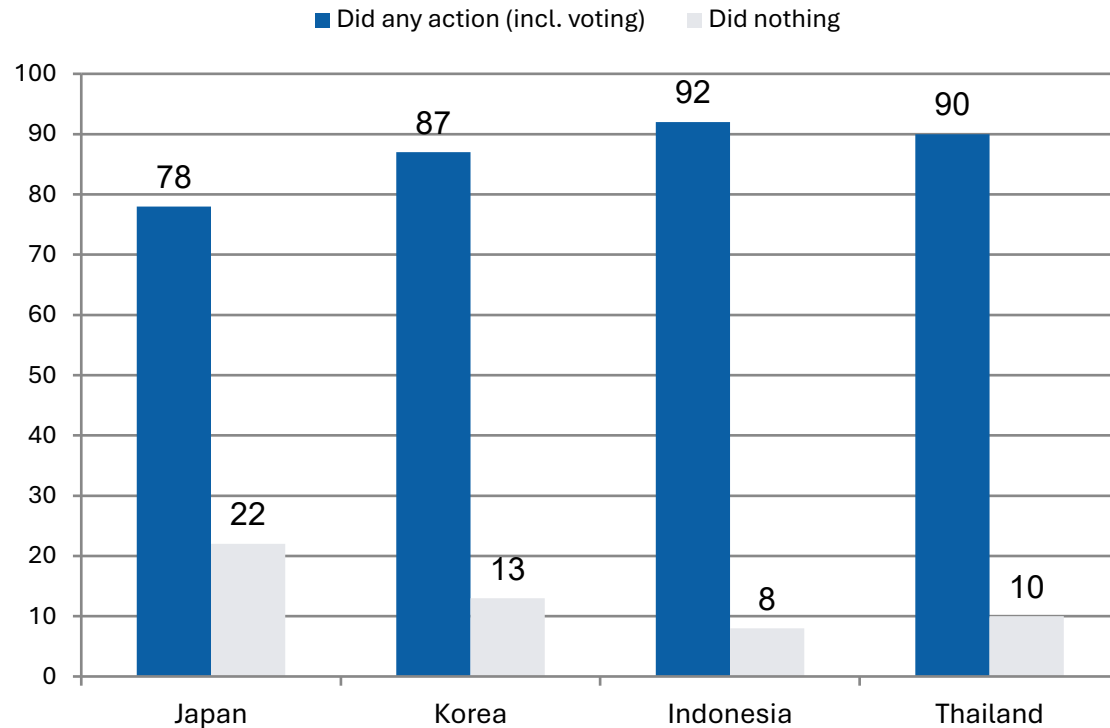


% who answered "don't know" → Japan 10% | Korea 5% | Indonesia 2% | Thailand 5%

Takeaway: “**Social-improving action**” is the #1 definition across all four countries. Japan and Korea more often count “keeping interest,” while Indonesia and Thailand place more weight on influence and dialogue.

# Q7. Participation: what do young people actually do?

Participation is high in aggregate, but the mix of actions differs sharply



Top 3 actions (by country)

## Japan

- Top 1: Voting in national elections (68%)**
- Top 2: Posting/sharing political content on SNS (16%)**
- Top 3: Joining policy dialogues / study meetings (7%)**

## Korea

- Top 1: Voting in national elections (71%)**
- Top 2: Joining demonstrations / petition drives (32%)**
- Top 3: Joining political / student groups (14%)**

## Indonesia

- Top 1: Voting in national elections (69%)**
- Top 2: Posting/sharing political content on SNS (51%)**
- Top 3: Joining policy dialogues / study meetings (34%)**

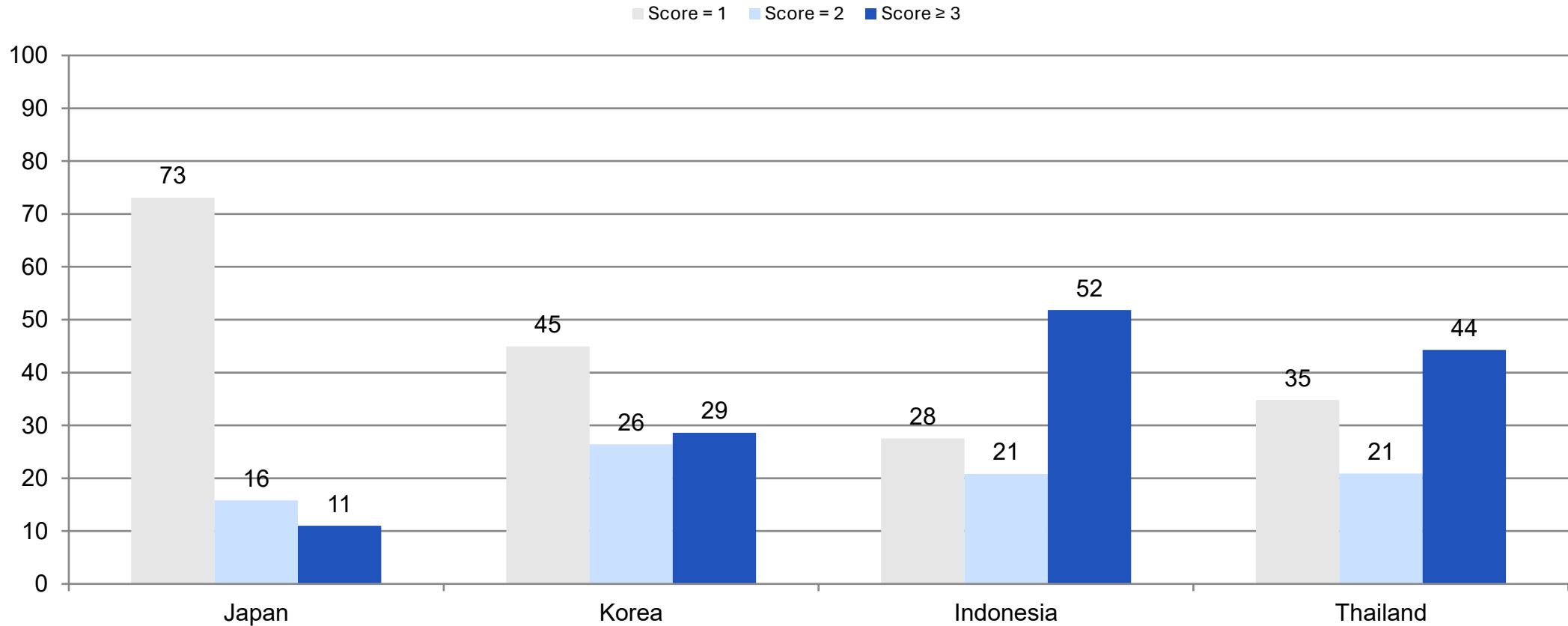
## Thailand

- Top 1: Voting in national elections (61%)**
- Top 2: Posting/sharing political content on SNS (51%)**
- Top 3: Sending opinions to politicians (29%)**

**Takeaway: Voting** is most common as youth participation across countries, yet the next step diverges. SNS-led expression in Indonesia/Thailand, advocacy actions in Korea, and a much thinner beyond-voting repertoire in Japan.

# Action diversity score (1-7) among those who have acted

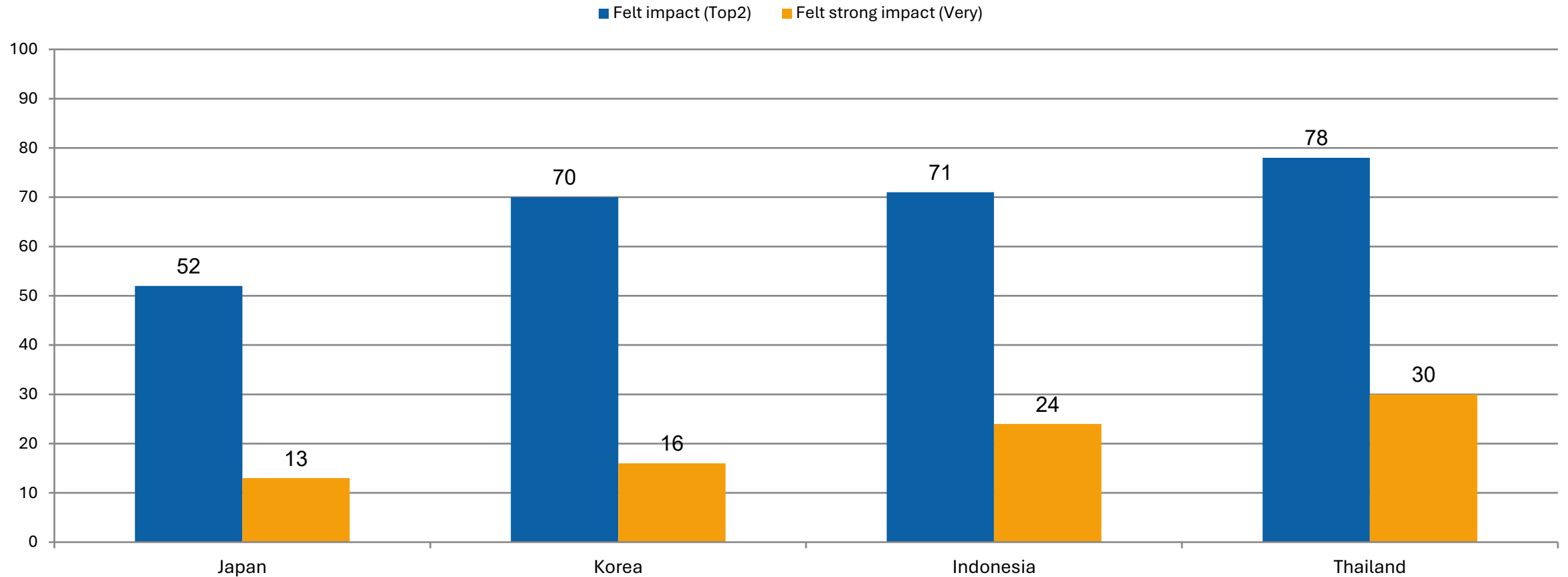
Share who engaged in 1, 2 or 3+ different types of political action (higher = more diverse participation)



**Takeaway:** Action diversity differs markedly. Indonesia/Thailand exhibit the broadest action repertoires, whereas Japan is dominated by single-action participation, voting-weighted, 7+ in 10 are score 1.

## Q8. Efficacy from action: “Did I make an impact?”

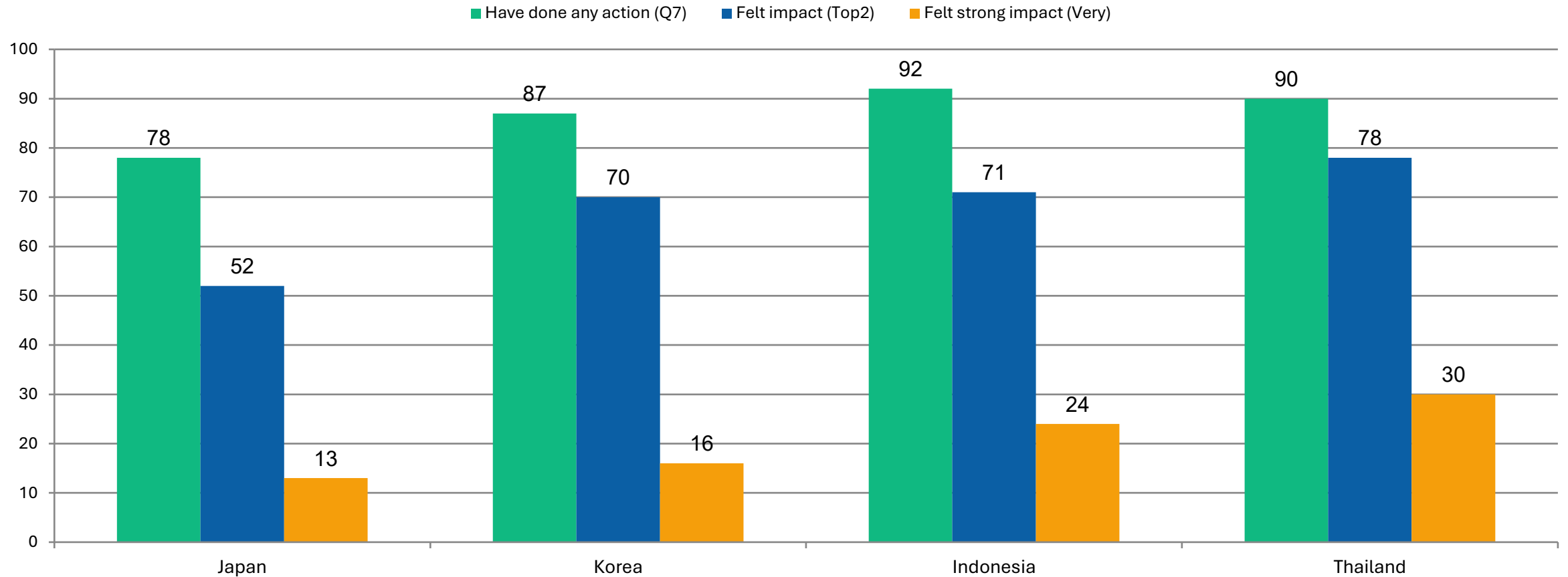
Asked of respondents who reported any political action



Takeaway: Among those who act, while 'some impact' is attainable for many actors (except Japan), few see clear evidence of real change.

## Q8. Efficacy from action: “Did I make an impact?”

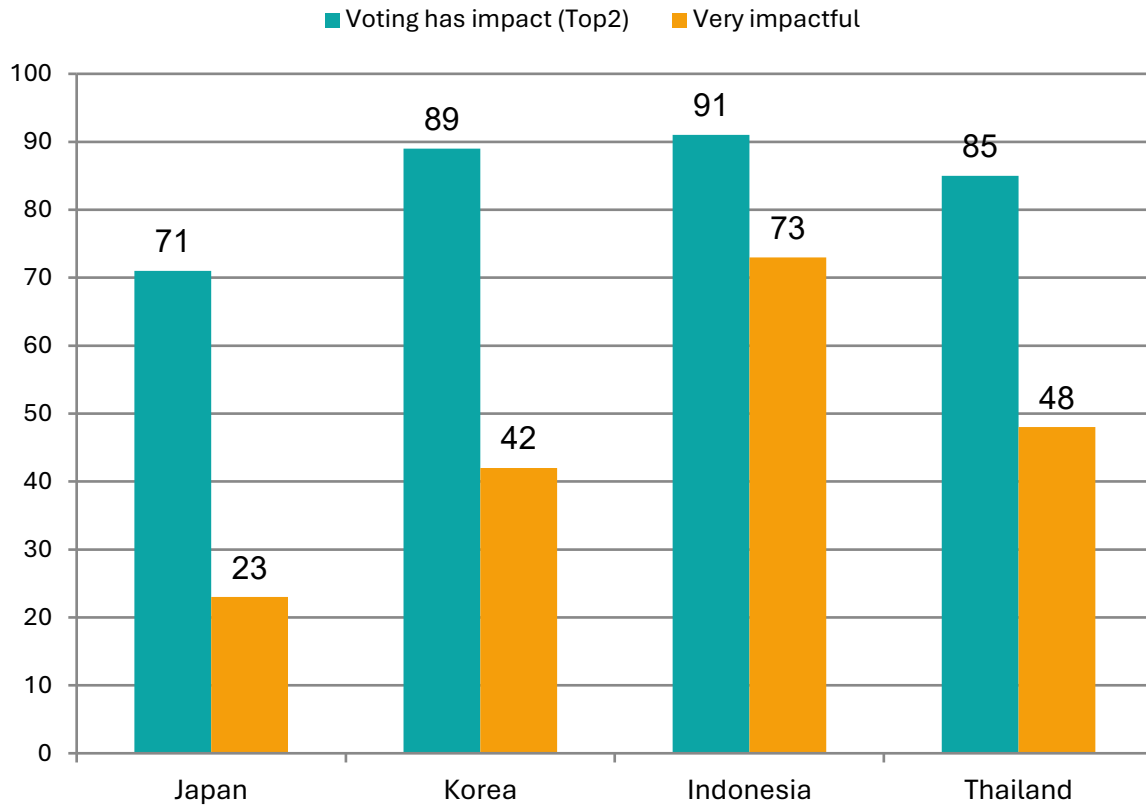
Green: any action (Q7, all respondents) | Blue/Orange: impact among actors (Q8)



Takeaway: The main drop-off is post-action: **many act, fewer feel impact, and only a minority feel strong impact:** The shared bottleneck is **responsiveness and visibility gap, otherwise making repeat participation harder.**

# Q10. Voting efficacy: “Does voting influence politics?”

Voting is widely perceived as impactful, but intensity differs across countries



2022–2025 trend (Top2: voting has impact)

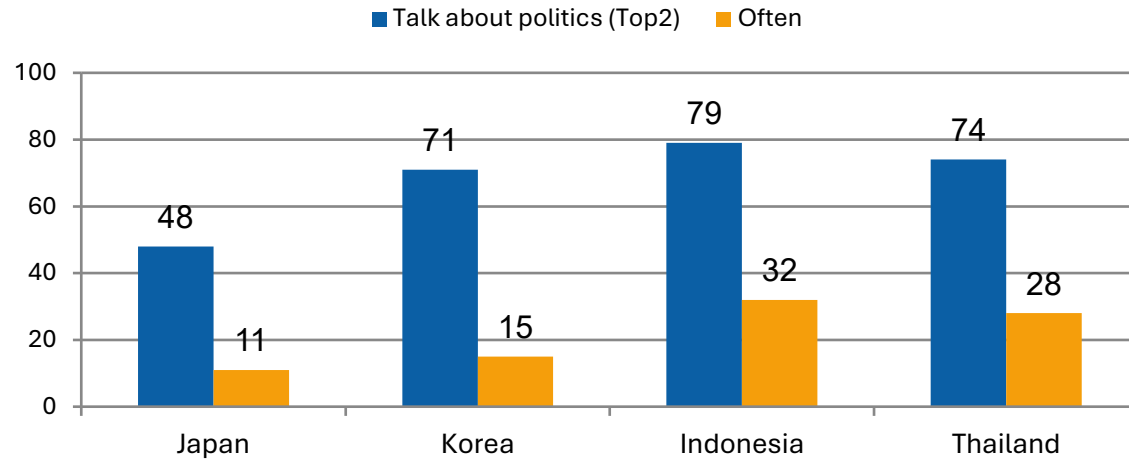
	2022	2023	2025
Japan	62	54	71
Korea	92	90	89
Indonesia	92	93	91
Thailand	90	87	85

Note: Trend table shows Top2 (%), rounded to whole numbers.

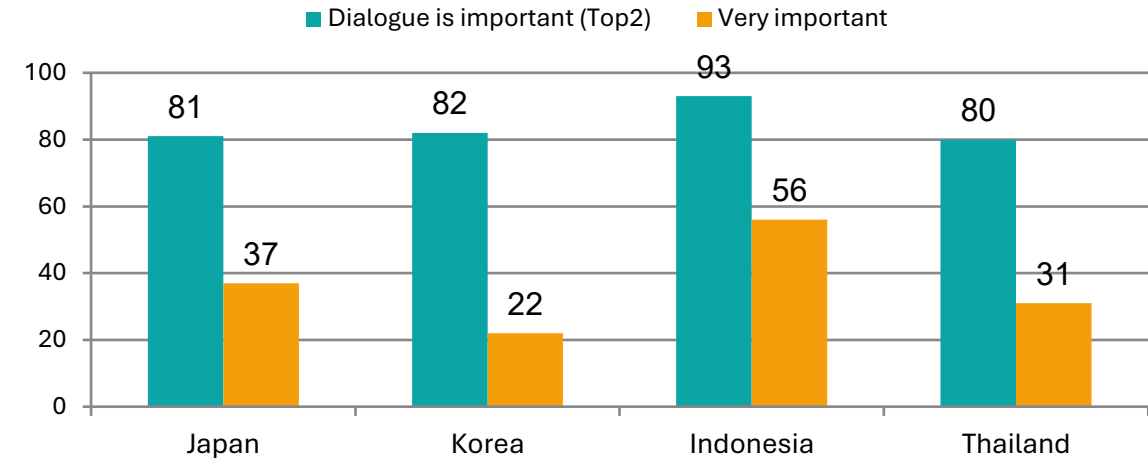
Takeaway: Voting efficacy is high across all four countries; Indonesia stands out for “very impactful”—suggesting elections and policy participation are widely seen as credible ways to move society.

# Q11–13. Dialogue & deliberation

Norms are strong across countries; practice and breadth are uneven



Q11. Do you discuss politics with others?



Q13. How important is dialogue across differing views?

Venue	JP (n=489)	KR (n=727)	ID (n=808)	TH (n=746)
Family / friends	69%	81%	67%	61%
Workplace	34%	29%	51%	58%
Online forums / SNS	23%	24%	55%	37%
School / clubs	23%	20%	24%	31%
Civic groups / community	7%	5%	35%	15%
Other	3%	1%	3%	4%

Q12. Where do these conversations happen? (multiple responses; asked of Q11 Top2)

**Takeaway:** Dialogue is valued across all four countries (Q13), but practice is uneven—Japan discusses politics far less (Q11), and most conversations happen in private circles (Q12).

# Deliberation score (Q11–Q13)

How we measure “quality of participation” through dialogue

## Score calculation (0–9)

Q11 Frequency (0–2): Often=2 | Sometimes=1 | Rarely/Never=0

Q12 Venue diversity (0–6): +1 point for each venue where politics is discussed

Q13 Attitude to differing views (0–1): Important=1 | Not important=0

Total score = 0–9 points

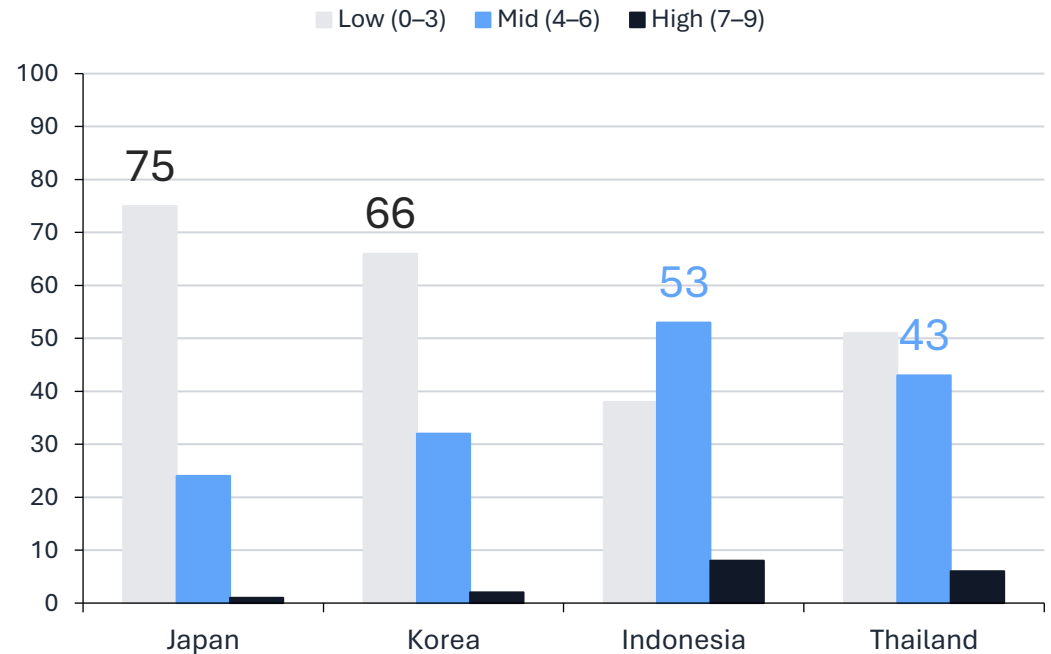
### Classification

Low (0–3): limited dialogue frequency and/or narrow venues; deliberation is not yet habitual

Mid (4–6): some dialogue across a few venues; engagement is present but uneven

High (7–9): frequent dialogue across multiple venues + values dialogue across differences

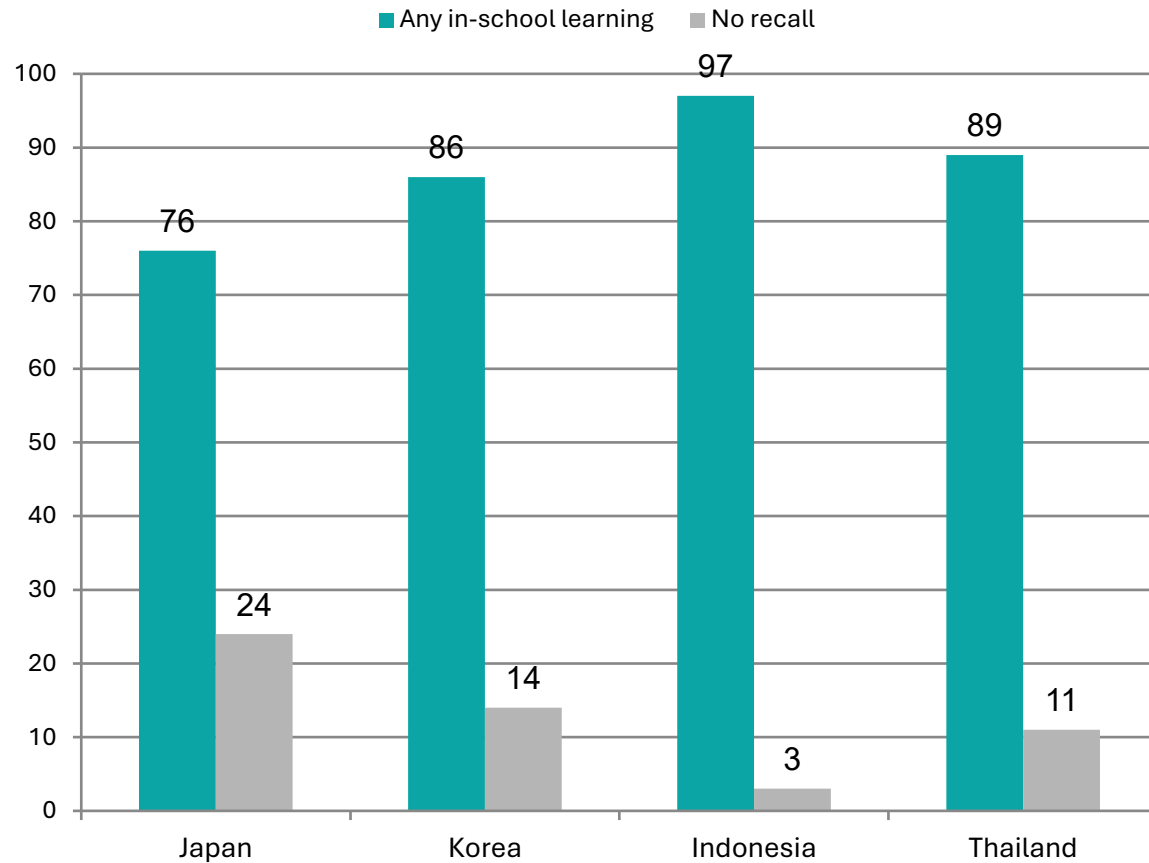
## Deliberation class



Takeaway: High deliberation is rare (1–8%). Indonesia/Thailand have larger mid groups. Japan/Korea are mostly in the low tier.

# Q14. In-school civic learning

Share reporting any in-school civic/political learning

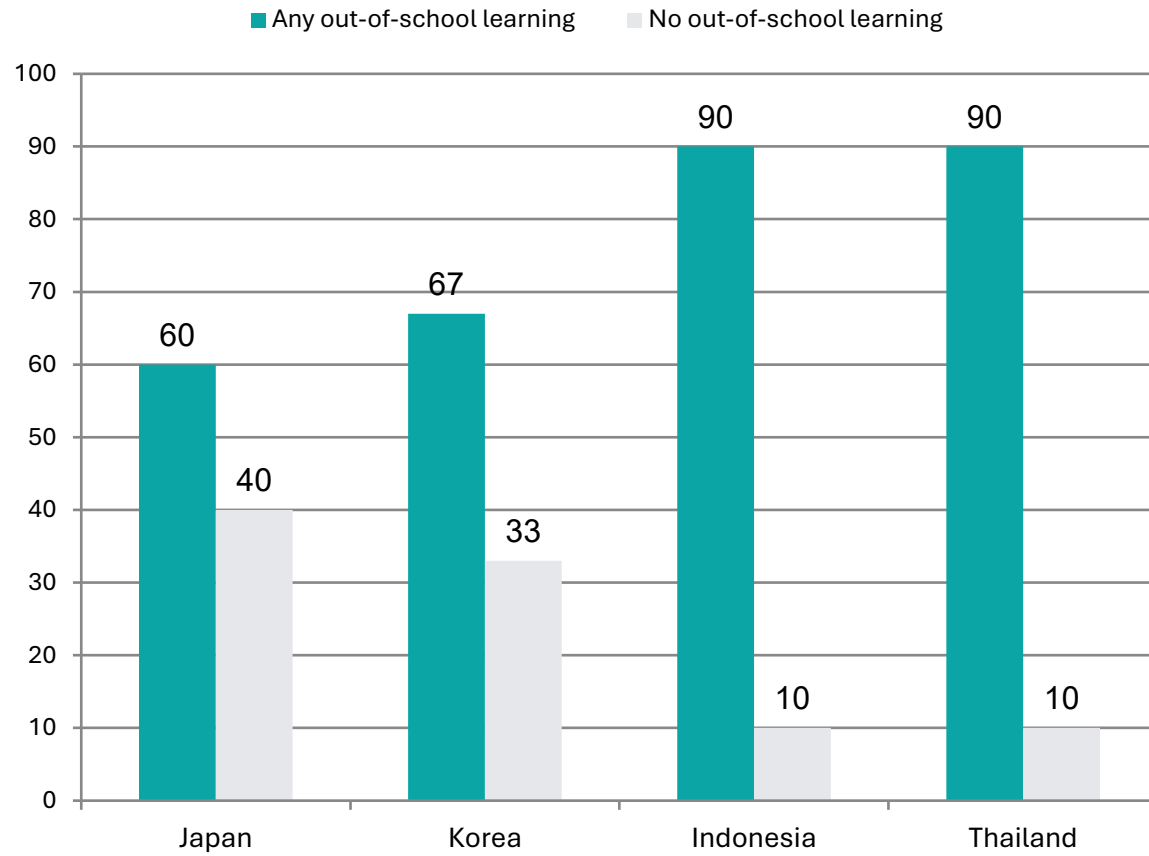


Types of Civic Learning	JA	KO	IN	TH
<b>Knowledge-based</b>				
Constitution / human rights	55%	58%	77%	44%
Political system / elections	51%	46%	60%	40%
<b>Participatory</b>				
Discussing social issues	36%	47%	65%	47%
Mock election / debate	23%	45%	45%	34%

Takeaway: In-school civic learning is common, but participatory formats are uneven—especially limited in Japan.

# Q15. Out-of-school civic learning

Out-of-school learning is the key differentiator between Northeast and Southeast Asia



## Out-of-school learning channels (Q15)

Channel	JP	KR	ID	TH
Internet (websites/SNS)	48%	43%	68%	65%
Mock election / mock parliament	8%	17%	33%	30%
NGO / community activities	6%	16%	31%	24%
Political lectures / events	10%	16%	30%	28%
Party / political org activities	6%	10%	31%	24%
Internship at legislator office	5%	6%	10%	15%

Takeaway: Out-of-school civic learning turned out the clearest regional divider. **Offline experimental** opportunities are far more common in **Southeast Asia**, while **Northeast Asia** often stays **online-first learning**.

# Q16. What In-School Support Would Encourage Participation?

## 1 Class on causes & solutions of social issues

Avg (4 countries): 54% Range: 48–68%

JP

50%

KR

48%

ID

68%

TH

50%

## 2 Class to listen to others and practice dialogue

Avg (4 countries): 44% Range: 32–56%

JP

32%

KR

45%

ID

56%

TH

43%

## 3 Practice organizing and presenting your opinion

Avg (4 countries): 38% Range: 29–44%

JP

29%

KR

36%

ID

44%

TH

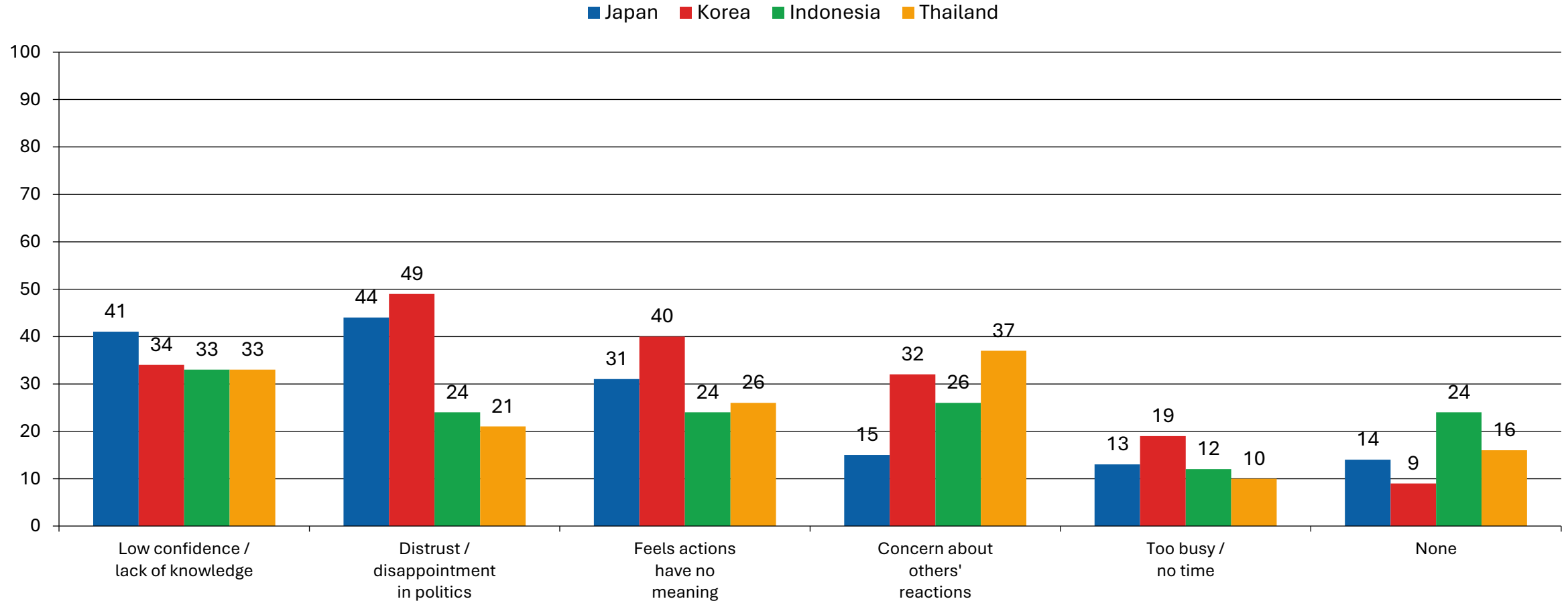
43%

Note: Japan's #3 is mock election/parliament (30%), closely followed by presenting opinions (29%).

Takeaway: Across Asia, youth most want civic learning that strengthens their **capacity and confidence to act**—problem-solving on social issues and dialogue skills.

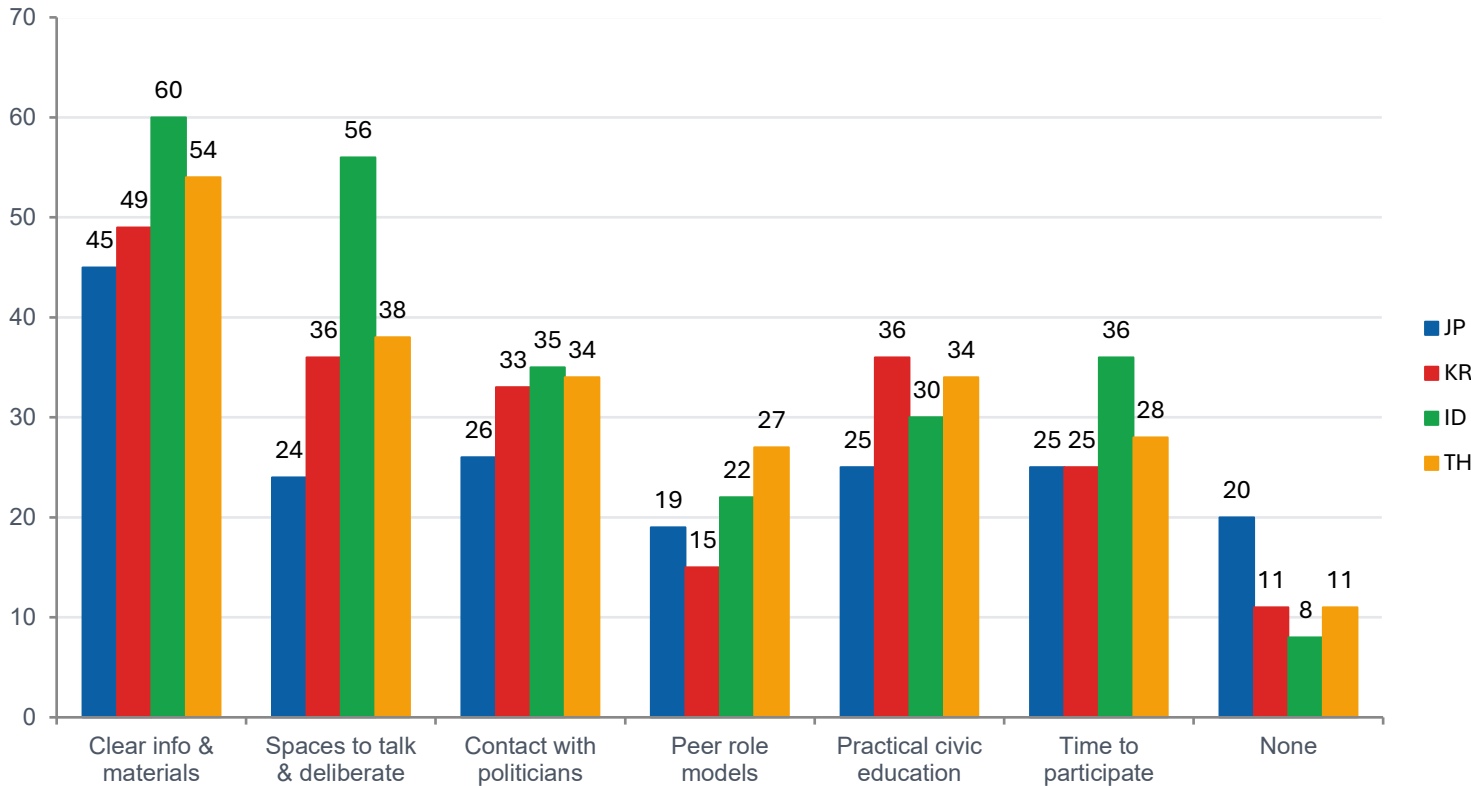
# Q17. Barriers to political participation

Breakdown of obstacles identified by youth (multiple answers)



Takeaway: Across all four, **low confidence/knowledge, distrust and low efficacy** are common barriers. **Distrust** and **efficacy** concerns are strongest in Japan & Korea; social pressure stand out in Korea, Indonesia, and Thailand.

# Q18. What support would encourage political participation?



## Country snapshots (Top 3)

### Japan

- #1 Clear info & materials (45%)
- #2 Contact with politicians (26%)
- #3 Practical education / Time (25% each)

### Korea

- #1 Clear info & materials (49%)
- #2 Practical education & Dialogue spaces (36% each)
- #3 Contact with politicians (33%)

### Indonesia

- #1 Clear info & materials (60%)
- #2 Spaces to talk & deliberate (56%)
- #3 Time to participate (36%)

### Thailand

- #1 Clear info & materials (54%)
- #2 Spaces to talk & deliberate (38%)
- #3 Practical education / Contact (34% each)

Takeaway: Youth in four countries are motivated by civic “infrastructure”—clear information and spaces for discussion. Japan is the exception, with fewer prioritizing deliberation; access to politicians also emerges as a distinctive driver.

# Correlation highlights: what moves together to sustain participation?

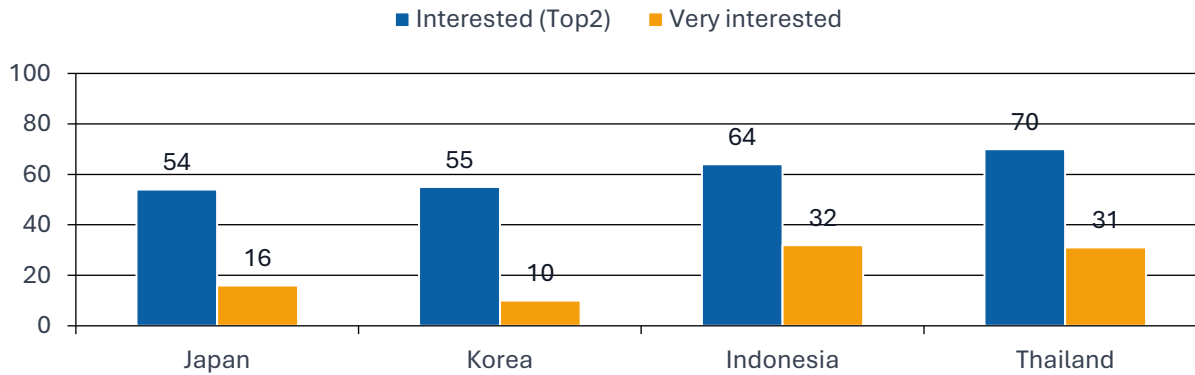
Correlation	JP	KR	ID	TH
In-school learning ↔ Participation	0.28	0.35	0.47	0.58
<b>Out-of-school learning ↔ Participation</b> <small>Key pathway (consistent across countries)</small>	<b>0.63</b>	<b>0.53</b>	<b>0.63</b>	<b>0.64</b>
In-school learning ↔ Deliberation	0.27	0.28	0.38	0.48
<b>Out-of-school learning ↔ Deliberation</b> <small>Key pathway (consistent across countries)</small>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>0.40</b>	<b>0.55</b>	<b>0.54</b>
<b>Deliberation ↔ Participation</b> <small>Key pathway (consistent across countries)</small>	<b>0.51</b>	<b>0.46</b>	<b>0.54</b>	<b>0.55</b>
<b>Participation ↔ Action efficacy (Q8)</b> <small>Weak link across all countries</small>	0.35	0.24	0.20	0.22
<b>Participation ↔ Voting efficacy (Q10)</b> <small>Weak link across all countries</small>	0.32	0.27	0.11	0.26

Takeaway: **Learning (especially Out of school) → dialogue → participation shows moderate–strong correlations ( $r \approx 0.40\text{--}0.64$ ).**  
 But participation → efficacy remains weak everywhere ( $r \approx 0.11\text{--}0.35$ ), highlighting the need to make impact visible.

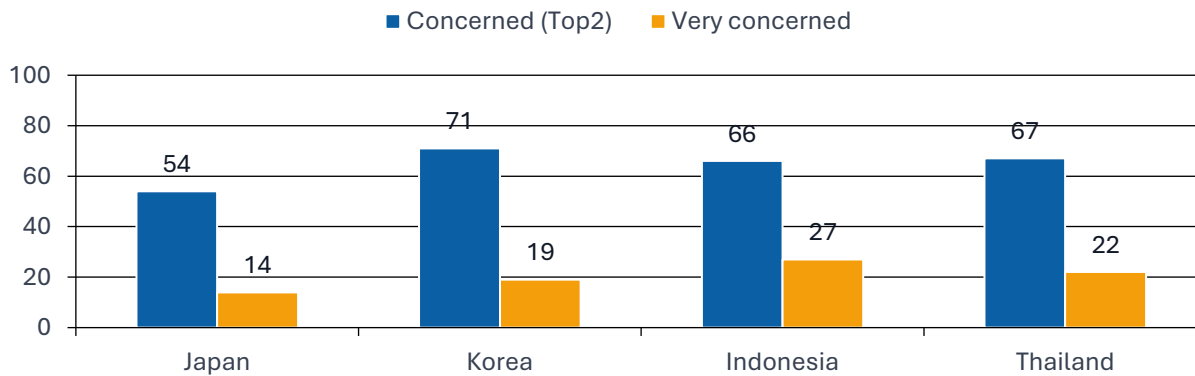
# Q19–Q21. Do youth see themselves as democracy defenders?

Global awareness, concern over U.S. pullback, and who should step up

## Q19. Interested in politics in other countries



## Q20. Concerned about U.S. reducing democracy support



## Q21. If U.S. support shrinks, who should fill the role? (Top 3)

### Japan

- #1 Japan (36%)
- #2 EU (27%)
- #3 None (23%)

### Korea

- #1 Korea (47%)
- #2 EU (42%)
- #3 UN / intl. orgs (39%)

### Indonesia

- #1 Other democracies (33%)
- #2 UN / intl. orgs (32%)
- #3 Indonesia (30%)

### Thailand

- #1 Thailand (41%)
- #2 EU (23%)
- #3 ASEAN / UN (18% each)

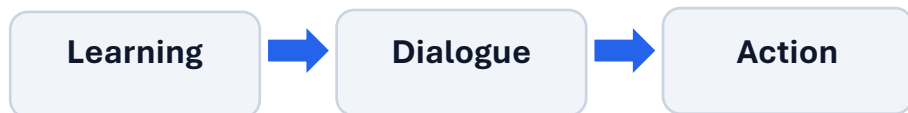
Takeaway: Many youth look beyond the U.S.—often naming **their own country** and **multilateral partners** as defenders, Japan showing the most ambivalence.

# Bridge to the sessions to go

From survey results to the discussion agenda: how to turn interest into influenced

## What the survey suggests (Session 1 recap)

- **Interest & relevance:** Interest is widespread, but linking politics to daily life is uneven—weakest in Japan.
- **Participation:** Voting dominates; beyond voting, action repertoires diverge (Indonesia/Thailand broad; Korea mid-range; Japan thin).
- **Responsiveness gap:** Even among those who act, strong impact is rare—action often doesn't translate into felt influence.
- **Enabler:** Out-of-school civic learning most strongly supports deliberation and participation.



**Weak link: Action → “I made an impact” (efficacy)**

**Japan example:** 78% acted; only 52% felt any impact; 13% felt strong impact.

## Discussion points for Sessions 2–4

- **Session 2 — Political efficacy:** Minimize the responsiveness gap—make outcomes visible (feedback loops, reporting back, trust-building).
- **Session 3 — Learning pathways:** Scale experiential civic learning (in & out of school)—from information to practice.
- **Session 4 — Spaces for Deliberation:** Build repeatable, high-quality dialogue across differences—so youth gain confidence to act.

### Common insights in four countries:

Make impact visible and perceivable • Build participation capacity • Reduce social risk • Repair trust • Expand safe channels beyond voting

**Japan:** Vote-first & weighed • Thin repertoire • Passive SNS use • Relevance gap

**Indonesia:** Broad repertoire • Digital expression • High voting efficacy • Community venues

**Korea:** Distrust • Efficacy doubts • Advocacy/protest • Polarization context

**Thailand:** Higher interest • Higher perceived impact • Social pressure / backlash concerns