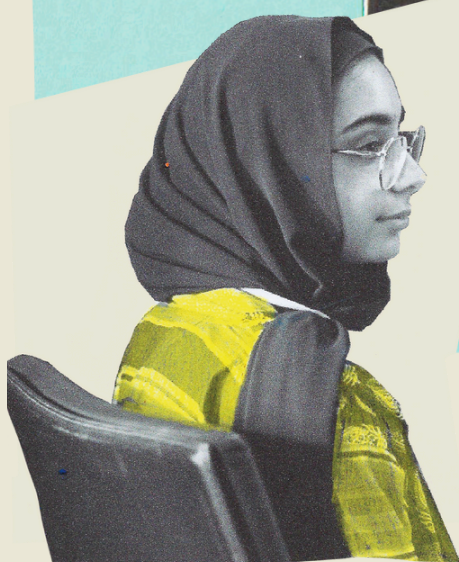


**THE YOUNG
WOMEN'S
MOVEMENT**



Young Women Demand *Manifesto*

What young women need in the 2026
Scottish Parliament election



Introduction



The Young Women's Movement are delighted to launch our Young Women Demand Manifesto for a Scotland where young women and girls can feel safe and thrive.

The 2026 Scottish Parliament election is a vital moment to hold political parties accountable to their duty to advance young women's rights and gender inequality. Below we set out our six policy priorities to ensure that the voices and experiences of young women and girls are at the heart of party manifestos, with a view to informing future policy making in Scotland.

Our Manifesto has been co-designed with young women and girls across Scotland using an intersectional feminist approach, and these six demands are drawn directly from their diverse perspectives, experiences and insights gathered through our research.

We are calling on all Scottish political parties to implement our demands to improve the lives and futures of young women and girls across Scotland, no matter their background or circumstances.

Young Women Demand:



1

Protect and promote young women's human rights through the introduction of a Human Rights Bill for Scotland

2

Prevent and eliminate violence against young women and girls by providing sustained funding for women's and youth organisations

3

Address online violence against young women and girls through the robust regulation of digital technologies

4

Tackle misogynistic and sexist views, attitudes and behaviours amongst young men and boys through increased educational interventions

5

Equitable healthcare access and outcomes for young women and girls, particularly in mental health and sexual and reproductive healthcare, by prioritising women's health as a key policy area

6

Equal opportunities for young women and girls to get involved in politics, democracy and decision-making processes

1

Human rights

Young women across Scotland feel as if their human rights are under threat. Our Status of Young Women in Scotland (SYWS 2024-25) research found that young women are very concerned about a regression in their rights, expressing fear and anxiety as changes in society, culture and politics make their rights feel more precarious than ever.

Many young women do not feel safe in public places and many do not feel they are afforded the same educational and employment opportunities as young men. This inequality is amplified for young women who experience multiple intersecting forms of oppression such as racism, classism, homophobia or ableism, which when combined create unique obstacles for them to exercise their rights.

The current Scottish Government has recently committed to introducing the Human Rights Bill after the next Scottish election.

We ask that all Scottish parties standing in the 2026 election publicly commit to introducing a Human Rights Bill for Scotland, ensuring young women's human rights are firmly on the political agenda.



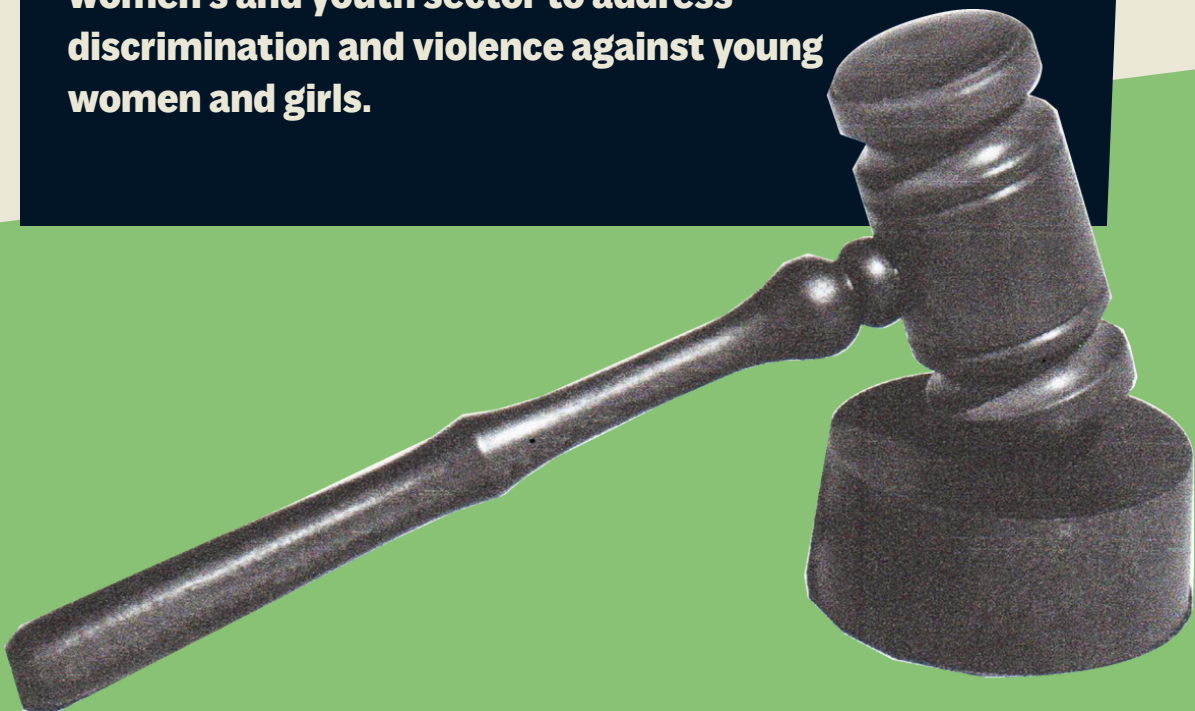
2

Violence against women and girls

Our [SYWS 2024-25](#) shows that 1 in 4 young women do not trust service providers or public authorities to uphold their human rights – particularly the police, the criminal justice system and the healthcare system.

Young women told us that they turn to women's support services and community groups when they feel let down. Women's and youth organisations are at the forefront of every area of progress in culture, law, policy and practice in young women and girls' lives, yet the women's sector only receives 1.8% of charitable funding.

We ask that all Scottish political parties commit to providing consistent, regular and reliable funding and investment into the women's and youth sector to address discrimination and violence against young women and girls.





Online gender-based violence

Due to advancing technologies and the widespread use of the internet, women and girls across Scotland are increasingly at risk of being subject to gender-based violence online. Young women in Scotland are particularly at risk, with 27% of 16–24-year-olds experiencing online violence.

Anti-rights actors are increasingly using online spaces to push back against women's rights, creating a hostile digital environment.

We ask Scottish political parties to commit to tackling the daily threat of tech-facilitated gender-based violence and the dangers it poses to young women and girls across Scotland.

This includes working with the UK government to ensure tech companies who fail to appropriately manage misogyny, sexism and gender-based violence are held accountable.



4

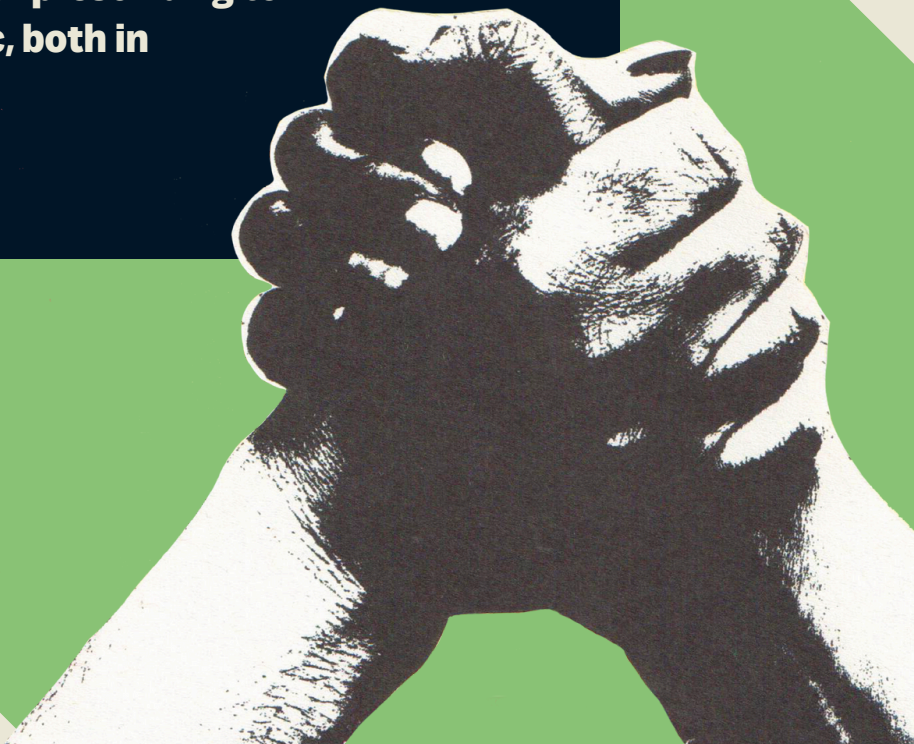
Misogyny and young men

Our [SYWS 2024-25](#) research shows that young women across Scotland are concerned about the rise of far-right politics at home and globally, as well as increasing misogyny and the radicalisation of young men online as barriers to young women accessing their rights.

[Online misogyny](#) is being intensified by the manosphere and the biased algorithms that target young men. Nonetheless, it is not up to young women to tackle the rise of misogyny in Scotland – the solution is including men and boys in the conversation from the outset.

We ask all Scottish political parties to commit to tackling the rise of misogyny in Scotland.

This includes introducing greater interventions to educate young men and boys on the dangers of prescribing to misogynistic rhetoric, both in person and online.





Health inequality

Young women and girls continue to struggle to access the basic healthcare they need and deserve.

Through our research ([SYWS 2022-23](#)) and continued engagement with the Scottish Government's Women's Health Plan team, young women and girls consistently tell us that they are not taken seriously in healthcare settings, with many detailing experiences of discrimination and misogyny due to their age, gender and other intersecting identities.

Young women and girls described feeling like their health concerns were routinely blamed on anxiety, stress, hormones, and even imaginations.

Young women also fear a rollback in their reproductive rights due to the rise of the far-right and other anti-women's rights actors.



We ask that the next Scottish Government continue to prioritise the Women's Health Plan as a key policy area, ensuring young women and girls can access adequate healthcare in their communities and that they receive respectful, unbiased treatment that responds to their needs.

The next Scottish Government must also commit to modernising abortion law, ensuring abortion is treated as healthcare for young women across Scotland.



Democracy and decision-making

Political apathy amongst young women across Scotland is increasing. Our [SWYS 2024-25](#) research shows that 1 in 2 young women do not trust politicians to advocate for their human rights, with 58% of young women feeling like they are not involved in decisions about the way Scotland is run.

The spread of political misinformation and disinformation online, coupled with reduced social media monitoring, further threatens democracy for young women and girls.

In our 2024 [Young Women Lead report on democratic wellbeing](#), young women expressed a strong need for politicians and decision-makers to engage with them authentically, ensuring their voices are heard and considered in decisions that impact their lives.

We ask all Scottish political parties to commit to meeting young women and girls, where they are and on their level, during and after the election campaign, ensuring that their voices and experiences are not only listened to and valued but that they inform policy decisions and shape Scotland's future.





**So...
what now?**

To support the demands The Young Women's Movement are calling for, you can:



Post your support for Young Women Demand on social media or share our post on LinkedIn, Instagram, TikTok or Facebook.



Write to your current MSPs using our [letter template](#).



[Register to vote in the 2026 Scottish Parliament election](#)



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