

YOUTH PARTICIPATION INDEX

MONITORING REPORT OF
POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND
ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION
OF YOUTH 2020



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Impressum

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Introduction

Youth Participation Index (YPI) provides insight into the young people's opportunity to get involved in society. It captures their involvement in decision-making processes, their access to the labor market and their participation in social life. It comprises of 22 political, economic and social participation indicators and spans over a 5-year long data series, with data from 2016 to 2020 collected in five countries.

Youth Participation Index was developed by the Youth Banks Hub for the Western Balkans and Turkey Network of youth organizations (YBH4WBT Network) in 2016. The network was established through the project Youth Banks Hub for Western Balkans and Turkey, coordinated by Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation from Serbia and implemented in partnership with Partners Albania for Change and Development from Albania, Youth Alliance - Krusevo from North Macedonia, NGO Prima from Montenegro and Community Volunteers Foundation from Turkey (TOG).

The idea was to create a concrete tool that can be used by public authorities and civil society organizations to **systematically identify and address the most pressing challenges related to youth participation** in Albania, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey. Specifically, through regularly publishing, the Youth Participation Index goals have been to:

- Improve the practice of using data as a reliable base for any decision concerning youth;
- Compare countries according to key indicators of youth participation in all three dimensions: political, economic and social;

Monitor progress related to youth participation throughout the years in respective countries.

The purpose of this annual monitoring report is to provide an overview of the political, social and economic participation of youth in Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey through a unique set of indicators.

During the last five years of monitoring the position of young people, the YPI has indicated that although there has been some evidence of progress, there are significant challenges concerning the participation of young people in the political, economic and social domain in the Western Balkans and Turkey, such as the underrepresentation of youth in political life, exclusion from employment and education, as well as high risk of poverty. Nevertheless, some significant advances have been made both in terms of greater availability of youth-specific data and advocacy efforts based on conducted analysis. Thanks to the effort of the Youth Banks Hub it is now possible to obtain previously unavailable data related to youth participation in some countries (such as data on youth in prisons and youth receiving financial support provided by the social welfare system). Moreover, youth organizations in the Western Balkans and Turkey have successfully advocated for changes in policy frameworks in line with the recommendations based on YPI data.

Given that even before the onset of the crisis brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, participation of youth in social, economic and political processes was an ongoing challenge, the progress registered in the previous five years of monitoring YPI is likely will likely lose its momentum. Consequently, public authorities must step up their efforts to collect youth-sensitive data and address the low levels of youth participation. Unless urgent action is taken, young people are likely to suffer severe and long-lasting impacts as a result of the pandemic. In this process, YBH4WBT Network hopes that YPI could provide guidelines for advocacy efforts by civil society organizations and evidence-informed youth policy.

Chapter 1 - About Youth Participation Index

Why do we need an index of youth participation?

The Youth Participation Index is a unique method for measuring the level of opportunity young people have when it comes to their involvement in the decision-making processes. Youth participation may refer to a process in which the youth can engage and influence, and it may refer to an outcome, where the young people had a chance to contribute to a process. Different reasons for promoting participation have been mentioned in literature, including young people's right to participate and be heard in matters of their interest, helping them acquire vital competences every citizen needs, improving services concerning young people and creating inclusive local communities.¹

The EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027² places youth participation at the forefront of youth policy. Member States are invited to encourage and promote inclusive democratic participation of all young people in democratic processes and society, to actively engage them, support youth representations at local, regional and national levels and explore and promote the use of innovative and alternative forms of democratic participation e.g. digital democracy tools.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development³ also recognizes the active role of young people as “critical agents of change”. Moreover, the first priority of the UN 2030 Youth Strategy⁴ is “Engagement, Participation and Advocacy - Amplifying youth voices for the promotion of a peaceful, just and sustainable world”.

“Europe cannot afford wasted talent, social exclusion or disengagement among its youth. Young people should not only be architects of their own life, but also contribute to positive change in SOCIETY.”

- EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027

“Children and young women and men are critical agents of change who will, within the new Goals, find a platform to channel their infinite capacity for activism for the purpose of creating a better world.”

- Agenda 2030

The COVID-19 pandemic brought about a new set of challenges for young people, and in these circumstances, enabling youth participation is even more important. It has already been observed that the degree of participation of young people and youth representative bodies in European countries was often very low, and that “young people were forced to react but were not seen as an agent for their own account”.⁵ On the other hand, a need to “acknowledge the impact the current changes are having on young people today and include their voices when assembling stakeholders in strategic plans for restructuring policies, systems, workflows, and communities affected by COVID-19” was recognized.

Recognizing the need to improve youth participation in Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey, as well as the necessity to have reliable data and to contribute to raising the level of awareness concerning this issue, the YBH4WBT Network developed the YPI. Using an index as a measure has certain advantages but it also comes with some potential risks that need to be mitigated.

1 Kiilakoski, T. (2020). Perspectives on youth participation - https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/59895423/Kiilakoski_Participation_Analytical_Paper_final%252005-05.pdf/b7b77c27-5bc3-5a90-594b-a18d253b7e67

2 Engaging, Connecting and Empowering young people: a new EU Youth Strategy (COM/2018/269), <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52018D0269>

3 Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

4 Youth 2030 – United Nations Youth Strategy - https://5d962978-9e17-4b96-91be-93983605fae8.filesusr.com/ugd/b1d674_9f63445fc59a41b6bb50cbd4f800922b.pdf

5 Donovan, J. and Zentner, M. (2020). Towards a better understanding of the impact of Covid-19 on the youth sector, <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/72351197/Summary+13+Oct+2020.pdf/c8808ff7-25be-f7f9-3504-b2a189a64bd0>

Advantages of using an index:

- ✓ It can summarize complex, multidimensional youth-specific data;
- ✓ It is easier to interpret than many separate indicators;
- ✓ It can assess progress over time;
- ✓ It provides a mechanism for cross-country comparisons.

Disadvantages of using an index:

- ✗ It may send misleading policy messages if misinterpreted;
- ✗ The choice of indicators is limited to the data that is systematically collected annually and processed the same way in all countries.

The main advantages of using an index are that it is simple and easy to understand, but the potential risk is that it can be misinterpreted. Thus, it is crucial to ensure that the index does not oversimplify complex issues. To achieve this, the YBH4WBT Network has decided to prepare annual reports with detailed interpretation of the index and its implications, taking methodological implications into account.

At the beginning of the project, policy researchers tried to find the right set of indicators applicable to all participating countries. One challenge was that the Western Balkan countries had more or less the same official methodologies and statistics, unlike Turkey, which in some cases used different ones. Moreover, the data on the social participation of young people was scarce and irregularly collected. Throughout the years there have been changes in the officially recognized statistical methodologies in the participating countries and adjustments in the practices of institutions concerning the collection of youth-specific data, which affected the Index. To address these challenges, ensuring access to youth-specific data has become one of the aims of advocacy initiatives of civil society organizations involved in the YBH4WBT Network. Each year there is an effort to improve the methodology of preparing the Index and further increase the availability of youth-sensitive data.

Three key dimensions of youth participation

The youth participation index captures three dimensions of participation: the political, economic, and social dimension. Each dimension is assessed through a set of carefully selected indicators (Figure 1).

Political dimension refers to the opportunities young people have to be involved in political processes - to be informed on the work of the government, parliament and municipalities, to be engaged in youth networks and to be elected to political positions. The participation of young people in political life has recently become a priority all around the world, as it is recognized that they should have a say in political decisions as they make up a substantial share of the population and are disproportionately affected by certain political decisions (especially long-term ones).

Economic dimension refers to the degree of inclusion, or vice versa exclusion, of young people from the labour market. It captures the degree of their activity, employment, and self-employment.

Social dimension refers to the active participation of young people in social life. It is assessed via the integration of young people in the community through formal and nonformal education, as well as an absence of markers of potential exclusion - due to poverty, dependence on the social welfare system and time spent in prison or correctional facilities.

Figure 1 Structure of the



Youth Participation Index

Calculating the index and data comparison - what is the target in the area of youth participation?

There are several steps for calculating the Youth Participation Index. First, all indicators are made comparable in scale. Some indicators need to be inverted so that higher values show better performance. Subsequently, scores of each dimension of youth participation are calculated by averaging all indicators of that dimension. For instance, Youth Political Participation Index is calculated by averaging all indicators of youth political participation. Lastly, the overall Youth Participation Index is calculated as a sum of score for each dimension of youth participation.

Before presenting the data, it is important to note that, as was the case during previous years, the data will be compared to the targeted percentages which stand for the desired outcome for the region. These percentages were initially proposed by policy researchers engaged in the preparation of this report, drawing from sources such as the EU2020 Strategy, statistics of developed countries and researchers’ assessments.

Since the EU2020 Strategy has expired, it was decided to revise the target indicators. Most of the targets for indicators of political participation remained unchanged as they were based on

researchers' opinions of what would be the desired value of the indicator. The only exception is the indicator "percentage of young MPs". Previously, the target for this indicator represented a percentage reached in Sweden, however, it was decided to use the same target set by the IPU Forum of Young Parliamentarians⁶ to be reached by 2030. Concerning the indicators for economic participation, values of all targets were replaced by values reached on average in European Union (EU 27), except for the indicator "Young people who started their own business with the financial support from the state" whose target was set based on the researchers' opinion of what would be the desired value of the indicator.

The decision to change the values of targets changed somewhat targeted indices of political and economic participation, as well as the targeted Youth Participation Index. As it is shown in Table 1 containing the targeted percentages of each indicator, the targeted value for political participation is **43.5**, while the targeted value for economic participation is **43.5** (or **37.55** if the indicator "Young people that started their own business with the financial support of the state" is omitted). Summarizing those two dimensions, the targeted Youth Participation Index is now **87**.

Table 1 Targets for indicators of youth participation

Indicators of political participation	Target percentage	Indicators of economic participation	Target percentage
Young government ministers	5% (Researchers' assessment)	NEET rate	13.7% (EU27 2020)
Young MPs	15% (Inter-Parliamentary Union)	Youth unemployment rate	13.2% (EU27 2020)
Young mayors	5% (Researchers' assessment)	Long-term youth unemployment rate	3.2% (EU27 2020)
Young government deputy ministers	10% (Researchers' assessment)	Youth Labor force participation rate	53.2% (EU27 2020)
Online tools for information and participation in decision-making of government and parliament	100% (Researchers' assessment)	Youth employment rate	46.2 (EU27 2020)
Online tools for information and participation in decision-making of municipalities	100% (Researchers' assessment)	Young people that started their own business with the financial support of the state	60% (Researchers' assessment)
Existence of youth network at local levels	100% (Researchers' assessment)	Self-employed young people	6.2% (EU27 2020)
Existence of youth networks at the national level	100% (Researchers' assessment)		
Targeted index	43.5	Targeted index	43.5

6 The Inter-Parliamentary Union is the global organization of national parliaments, gathering 179 Member Parliaments and 13 Associate Members. More information can be found on website <https://www.ipu.org/about-us>.

Chapter 2 - Availability of youth-specific data in the region

In order to create policy measures that successfully tackle the specific challenges young people face and to increase youth participation, it is crucial to have the latest and accurate data. Moreover, youth organizations and young people themselves need to have access to all data related to their situation.

The YPI represents a unique combination of indicators monitored in all countries involved, allowing for the comparison of data. The major challenge in the process of devising the Youth Participation Index was to find the comparable indicators in each country, referring to the respective age group (youth aged between 15 and 29) and using the same methodology. The main persisting problem regarding data collection is related to the social dimension, where researchers could not identify a set of relevant indicators for which data could be collected in all countries.

In the following text, the availability of data concerning youth political, economic and social participation is discussed, as well as the data on the impact of the pandemic on youth participation. Lastly, these issues are considered in the context of EU integration and the 2030 Agenda.

Availability of data on youth political participation

The data on political participation can be collected, although this process is done manually in each of the countries. There are no official statistics on youth representation in parliaments and other political positions, nor the existence of youth networks. It should be noted that the absence of systematic data and information on youth representation in parliaments has already been recognized at the global level, and to collect the relevant data, the Inter - Parliamentary Union periodically conducts surveys on youth participation in national parliaments.⁷

Table 2 Availability of data for indicators of political participation per countries

Indicators	North				
	Albania	Montenegro	Macedonia	Serbia	Turkey
% of young ministers in Government	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
% of young deputy ministers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
% of young MPs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
% of young mayors	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Online tools for information and participation in decision making of government and parliament	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Online tools for information and participation in decision making of municipalities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Existence of youth structure (councils/parliaments/unions) on the national level	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Existence of youth structure (councils/parliaments/unions) on the local level	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

The main difficulty regarding the political dimension is the lack of data at a local level in Turkey. The reason for this is the fact that Turkey has 2951 municipalities, so the manual counting of online tools and youth networks at the local level is not feasible. To collect relevant information which would indicate what is the situation regarding youth political participation at the local level in Turkey, this year the data was collected in 81 city municipalities.

⁷ Inter-Parliamentary Union, <https://www.ipu.org/our-impact/youth-empowerment>

Availability of data on youth economic participation

The data on economic participation has been collected using official statistics, published annually. The main source for data on indicators of youth economic participation is the Labor force survey, which is conducted in each country by national statistical offices using official methodologies in line with EUROSTAT.

Table 3 Availability of data for indicators of economic participation per countries

Indicators	North				
	Albania	Montenegro	Macedonia	Serbia	Turkey
NEET rate	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Youth unemployment rate	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Long-term youth unemployment rate	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Youth Labor force participation rate	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Youth Employment rate	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Young people that started their own business with the financial support of the state	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗
Self-employed young people	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

The only exception is the information on young people who started their own business with financial support from the state, measured as the percentage of young people who received subsidies among applicants. The data regarding this indicator is collected by the official institution in charge of offering subsidies, and this is the only indicator for which, in some cases, it was difficult to obtain this information.

Availability of data on youth social participation

The table on the availability of data for indicators of the social dimension of youth participation clearly shows that most obstacles have been encountered in this segment. Researchers have faced challenges in choosing a set of indicators to adequately capture the social participation of young people collected by all target countries every year using the same methodology.

Indicators related to the formal education system are usually collected by the national statistics offices. In this area, it is crucial to ensure comparability of data, since countries sometimes use different methodologies when measuring drop-out, enrollment, and graduation rates. This is the case with Albania and Turkey. The educational system in Turkey is different from the one in other participating countries, so the data is not fully comparable. The data regarding education has its limitations since in most countries it still cannot be collected by following young people through education until they drop out or graduate, using individual student registers.

In 2019, researchers have added indicator related to education that comes from a Labor Force Survey and is currently available via Eurostat for all countries except for Albania and Montenegro. The indicator refers to participation in non-formal education.

The data on young people at risk of poverty comes from a Survey of Income and Living Conditions (SILC), which is being conducted in all countries. The problem of missing data regarding this indicator is that the results of this survey are sometimes published after the completion of this report. For instance, Institute of Statistics in Albania published the 2017 and 2018 SILC results in December 2019 and 2019 results in May 2021. The results for Montenegro and North Macedonia are expected in December 2021.

Table 4 Availability of data for indicators of social participation per countries

Indicators	Albania	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia	Turkey
Young people at risk of poverty	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
Young people part of social welfare system	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗
Young people in prisons	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Dropout from secondary education	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Young people enrolled in tertiary education	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Young people graduated from tertiary education	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Participation rate in non-formal education and training	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓

When the Index was first getting developed, most countries did not have the data for young people in prisons. Over the past five years, the system of recording and providing data has improved. For example, the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Serbia at first provided the number of young prisoners without the total number of prisoners, but in the second year, it provided the percentage of young people in prisons. The Ministries of Justice in each of the countries now collect the data by age groups. Only Turkey still has difficulties when it comes to collecting this type of data, although this year the percentage of prisoners in the age group 18-40 has been obtained which is a noteworthy progress.

Similarly, efforts are made to change the status quo regarding the social welfare system and to include youth sensitive data in this area as well. Serbia was, until this year, the only country that could provide this information. In 2020, researchers in North Macedonia have been able to collect data concerning this indicator which is a significant step forward.

Availability of data on the impact of COVID-19 on youth participation

COVID-19 has influenced all aspects of life and all age groups. Young people have experienced many changes during this period, some of which have or could have a significant impact on their economic, social, and political participation. However, one of the main challenges in participating countries is that there is still not enough data on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on youth participation.

It is crucial to obtain relevant data in order to create adequate policy responses. In this regard, at the European level, there have been several large-scale research studies and surveys, but this was not always the case in the participating countries.

For instance, in Turkey, there have been no official studies about the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on youth. In 2021, the Ministry of Youth and Sports published a special issue dedicated to the pandemic, in its periodic Journal of Youth Research consisting of six articles by different academics, who had conducted research studies about different aspects and effects of the pandemic among youth in 2020, but no article in this issue dealt with political, economic and/or social participation of youth etc. Similarly, researchers noted that in Montenegro there are not enough data related to specifically young people that would help us understand how the pandemic influenced different aspects of their life and their socioeconomic position.

Even though there is a lack of data in this field, in each of the countries there have been some studies and surveys that could shed more light on the scale of impact caused by the pandemic. Moreover, some initiatives launched at the European level, such as “Knowledge HUB: COVID-19 impact on the youth sector” by the EU-Council of Europe youth partnership,⁸ are also relevant for the participating countries as they contain relevant data.

8 More information on website: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/covid-19>

Having reliable and transparent statistics is a major request from the EU to all the countries in the pre-accession phase.⁹ It is required that the Member States be able to produce statistics based on professional independence, impartiality, reliability, transparency, and confidentiality. Common rules are provided for the methodology, production, and dissemination of statistical information.

Negotiations under Chapter 18 relating to statistics include the harmonization of the legal regulations of the candidate country with the EU *acquis communautaire*. This chapter is considered especially important, as the positive changes resulting from a productive negotiation process will provide better quality, availability, and credibility of data. Reliable and comparable statistics are the preconditions for a successful negotiation.

As candidate countries, Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey are undergoing an appraisal process concerning their ability to assume the obligations of EU membership, and their progress concerning Chapter 18 on statistics is assessed within annual reports.¹⁰ According to the assessment in the latest reports, all of the countries are still moderately prepared in the area of statistics, meaning that some progress was made but that further significant efforts are needed.

North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia still need to considerably strengthen the human and financial resources of Statistical Offices, so that they can fulfil their responsibilities and ensure staff retention. Serbia should adopt the new statistical law to increase the independence of the Statistical Office. In Albania, the recommendation from the European Commission report is to implement the amended Law on Official Statistics and continue expanding the scope of official statistics in line with the EU *acquis*, and in Turkey, the recommendation is to broaden and further reinforce coordination between Turkish Statistical Institute and other data providers. In the context of this report, it is also important to state that the Labor Force Survey is conducted regularly in all countries, as well as the Survey of Income and living conditions (EU-SILC). It is assessed that the labor market statistics are largely compliant with EU standards. In North Macedonia activities are underway to improve statistics on education.

Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey also need to regularly produce data needed for monitoring progress towards the sustainable development goals set by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. More than one-third of sustainable development targets reference young people explicitly or implicitly, with a focus on empowerment, participation and/or well-being.¹¹ Some of these targets and related indicators can be directly connected to the indicators of the Youth Participation Index (Table 5). However, data for indicators of these targets are not available in all of the countries, which is a significant barrier in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

9 European Commission - Chapters of the *acquis*/negotiating chapters: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/enlargement-policy/glossary/chapters-acquis-negotiating-chapters_en

10 More information on website: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/enlargement-policy/strategy-and-reports_en

11 United Nations Development Program, Youth as partners for the implementation of the SDGs, https://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Democratic%20Governance/Youth/Fast%20Facts%20-%20Youth%20&%20SDGs_2017-January_final.pdf

Table 5 Connection of youth participation indicators and SDG targets and indicators

SDG target	SDG Indicator	Youth Participation Indicator
1.2.2 Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions	1.2 By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions	Young people at risk of poverty
1.3.1 Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable	1.3 Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable	Young people part of social welfare system
4.1.2 Completion rate (primary education, lower secondary education, upper secondary education)	4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes	Dropout from secondary education
4.3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex	4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university	Young people graduated from tertiary education/ Participation rate in non-formal education and training
8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value	8.5.2 Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities	Youth unemployment rate
8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training	8.6.1 Proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment or training	NEET rate

The next chapters will provide an overview of the most recent data¹² on youth political, economic and social participation. After this, Youth Participation Index 2020 will be presented and discussed.

Youth Participation Index 2020

Chapter 3 - A closer look at youth political participation

Key facts and findings

- ❖ Albania and Serbia have recorded a slight upward trend in political participation, whereas the situation in Montenegro has remained unchanged compared to the previous year. In North Macedonia, the value of the political participation index has decreased considerably from 4.7 in 2018 to 3.4 in 2020.
- ❖ **The youth are still vastly underrepresented in political life in all countries.** In all participating countries, there have been no ministers under thirty in the period 2016-2020 and in North Macedonia and Turkey there were no young deputy ministers either. In the last two years only in Serbia and Albania, there were young deputy ministers and only in Serbia young mayors. Young people accounted for between 0.8% and 7.6% of MPs.
- ❖ In Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia there are **established youth networks at the national level**, whereas this is still not the case with Albania and Turkey. The **situation concerning the number of municipalities that have active local youth structures has deteriorated** in 2020 in all of the countries, except Serbia.
- ❖ In all countries the **majority of ministries and parliaments use online tools - websites, Twitter and Facebook accounts**. In Montenegro and Turkey online tools for information and participation in decision-making processes at national levels are most developed. There is a downward trend in this area in North Macedonia.
- ❖ Only Montenegro and Turkey have high availability of **online tools for information and participation in decision-making processes at the local level**. In Albania, there was a significant increase in the percentage of municipalities present online in five year period, from 52% in 2016 to 74% in 2020. Both in Serbia and North Macedonia, progress was noted between 2016 and 2018, however, since then the percentage has decreased in North Macedonia to 71, 6% and remains almost the same in Serbia (85.2%).

The year 2020 presented many challenges, not only to social inclusion and labor market participation of young people but also to their political involvement. The index of political participation, summarizing multiple indicators, can indicate changes in the overall involvement of youth in political processes over the years. Based on the collected data several conclusions can be drawn:

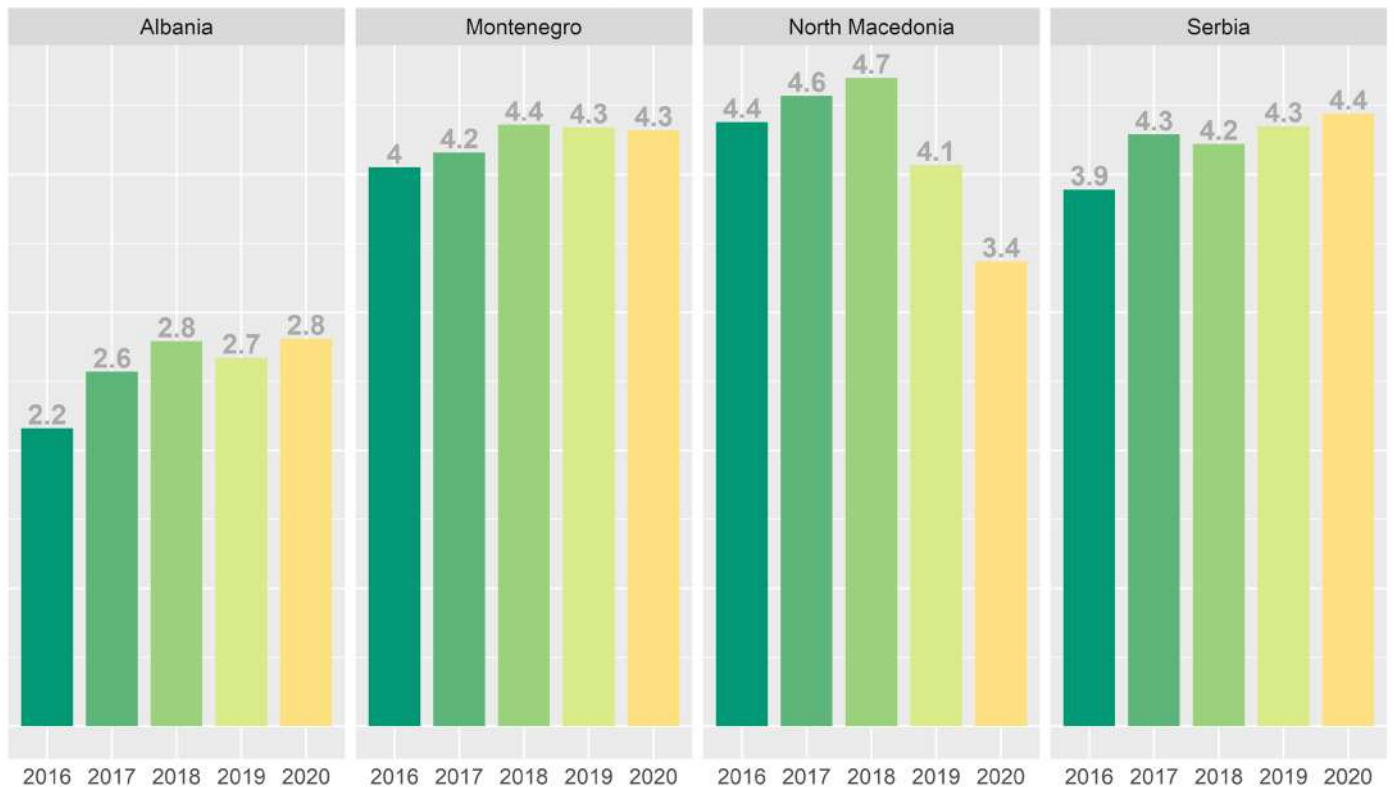
- ❖ Firstly, the situation concerning political participation in all participating countries is still far from what it could be. The highest value of this index is still lower than number 5, which is significantly lower than the target value, being 43.5.
- ❖ Secondly, the situation in Turkey and Albania concerning political participation is, judging from the index and the collected data, even more troublesome than in other countries.
- ❖ Lastly, it is of particular concern that in North Macedonia the value of this index has decreased considerably in the last two years (from 4.7 in 2018 to 3.4 in 2020) - mostly due to the decline in the use of online tools of municipalities and the existence of youth structures at the local level as well as the lack of improvement in the number of young people on political positions. In Albania, Montenegro and Serbia there is some evidence of progress in this area compared to 2016. However, the situation has not changed significantly in the last two years.

12 The program R: R Core Team (2021) was used for data analysis. R: A language and environment for statistical computing. R Foundation for Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria. URL <https://www.R-project.org/>. The key package used in the analysis are: Wickham et al., (2019). Welcome to the tidyverse. Journal of Open Source Software, 4(43), 1686, <https://doi.org/10.21105/joss.01686>



The data suggest that all countries are far from reaching the target. When we look at the values of the index over the years some significant patterns emerge. However, in order to understand them and examine this data more closely, we need to look at indicators and their values in more detail.¹³

Index of youth political participation over years...



Youth are still vastly underrepresented in political life

In all participating countries youth participation in politics is at a low level (Table 6). In 2020, young people accounted for between 0.8% of MPs in Turkey to 7.6% of MPs in Serbia, which is far

13 The table with all data regarding political participation is in the Annex 1 of the document.

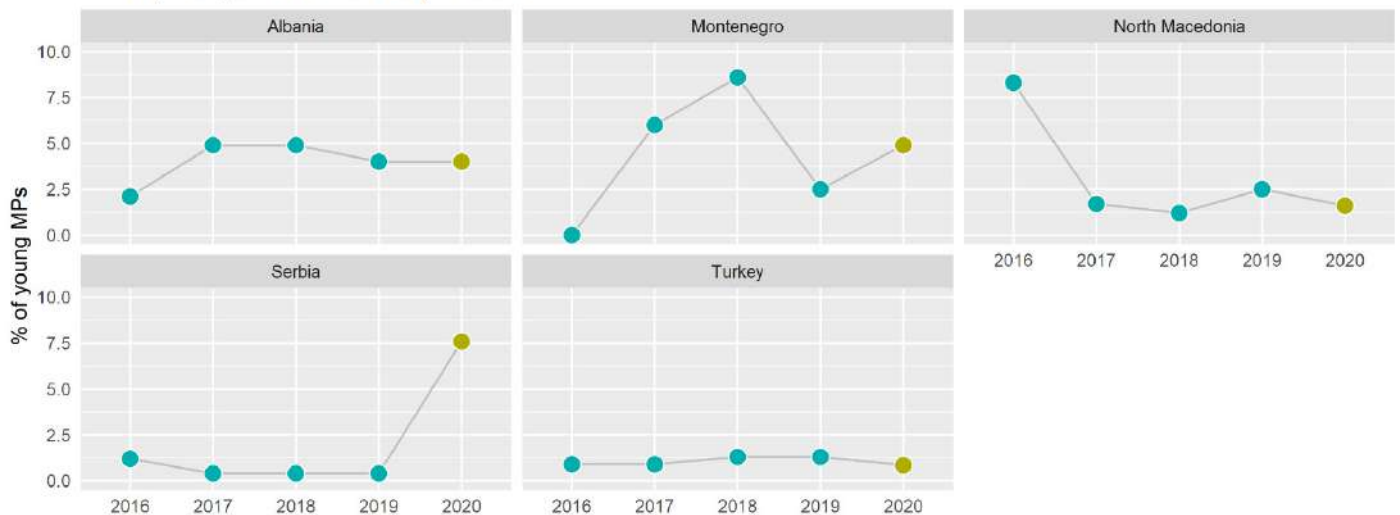
from the targeted 15% set by the Inter-Parliamentary Union’s Forum of Young Parliamentarians¹⁴ to be reached by 2030. There were no ministers in Government and almost no mayors under thirty in any of the countries. Out of all the countries, there were deputy ministers under thirty only in Albania and Serbia.

THE NUMBER OF YOUNG MINISTERS IN GOVERNMENTS OF ALBANIA MONTENEGRO NORTH MACEDONIA SERBIA TURKEY

Indicators	Albania	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia	Turkey
% of young ministers in Government	0	0	0	0	0
% of young deputy ministers	3	0	0	1	0
% of young MPs	4	4.9	1.6	7.6	0.8
% of young mayors	0	0	0	1.8	0

What has changed in the five year period in which data has been collected? In Serbia, there has been a sharp increase in the percentage of MPs under thirty, from only 0.6% in 2019 to 7.6% in 2020, one of the highest percentages registered in any of the countries in the last five years. The largest number of MPs in any of the participating countries was registered in North Macedonia in 2016 when young MPs accounted for 8.3% of all MPs and in Montenegro in 2018 when this percentage was 8.6%. In North Macedonia, there was a decline in the subsequent years, when the percent of MPs aged under thirty was between 1% and 3%. In Montenegro, the percentage of MPs dropped to 2.5% in 2019, but it almost doubled in 2020. Albania experienced a rise from 2016, when this number was around 2%, whereas that number doubled in the subsequent years. On the other hand, this percentage was consistently low in Turkey, around 1%.

Youth participation in national parliaments



In Montenegro all MPs under thirty are male. In other countries this is not the case, female MPs either slightly outnumber male MPs or the male/female ratio is 50:50 as is the case in North Macedonia.

For a young person, becoming a minister or a mayor is highly unlikely based on the collected data. In all participating countries, there have been no ministers under thirty in the period 2016-2020 and in North Macedonia and Turkey there were no deputy ministers under thirty in this period as well.

14 The Inter-Parliamentary Union is the global organization of national parliaments, gathering 179 Member Parliaments and 13 Associate Members. More information can be found on website <https://www.ipu.org/about-us>.

In the last two years young people were elected to high political positions only in Serbia and Albania. In Serbia young men were appointed to be deputy ministers and mayors and in Albania young women were elected as deputy ministers. The highest registered percentage of young mayors in any of the countries in the last five years was 6% in Albania in the period from 2016 to 2018, although in the last two years this percentage dropped to zero after local elections.

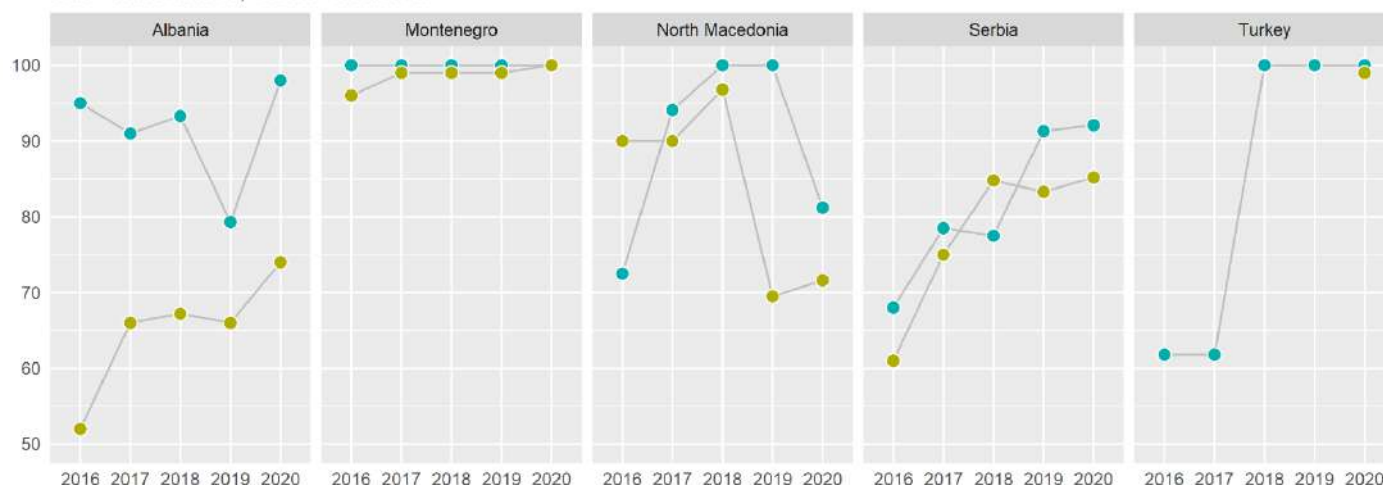
Online tools for information and participation of youth in the decision-making processes within governments, parliaments and municipalities are still not completely utilized

The results of the survey for 2020 indicated that in all the countries the majority of ministries and parliament use online tools - websites, Twitter and Facebook accounts, which is important for enabling youth participation. In Montenegro this percentage was 100% each year since 2016, Turkey reached 100% in 2018 and maintained that score and Albania registered a significant increase compared to the previous year and now this percentage is 98%. In Serbia, the percentage is also relatively high, 92%. However, in North Macedonia, there has been a positive trend since 2016 reaching 100% in 2019, only to drop by 18.8 percentage points in 2020.

Table 7 Indicators of youth economic participation

Use of online tools on the national and local level (in %) over years

Blue - national level; Yellow - local level



In contrast to the situation at the national level, only Montenegro and Turkey have high availability of online tools for information and participation in decision-making processes at the local level, 99.6% in Turkey and 100% in Montenegro. Both in Serbia and North Macedonia, there was progress between 2016 and 2018. However, since then the percentage has decreased to 71.6% in North Macedonia and remains almost unchanged in Serbia (85.2%). In North Macedonia, the reason behind this is the decreased use of Twitter accounts by municipalities, so it does not necessarily indicate the negative trend in enabling youth political participation. Mayors' personal accounts on social media are more frequently used for citizens' engagement than as official channels for municipalities.

In Albania, there was a significant increase in the percentage of municipalities which have an online presence in the last five years, from 52% in 2016 to 74% in 2020. Due to the quarantine period and restrictive measures prohibiting public gathering and movement of people, according to the information provided by the municipalities, the number of youth centers and their activities have decreased. Thus, municipalities have made efforts to enable the involvement of youth in decision-making through online platforms, in which most of the discussions on various topics in their community have taken place, leading to an increase in the availability of online tools.

The existence of youth structures varies between countries

Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia have established youth structures at the national level, whereas this is still not the case with Albania and Turkey. The situation regarding this remained unchanged in the period from 2016 to 2020.

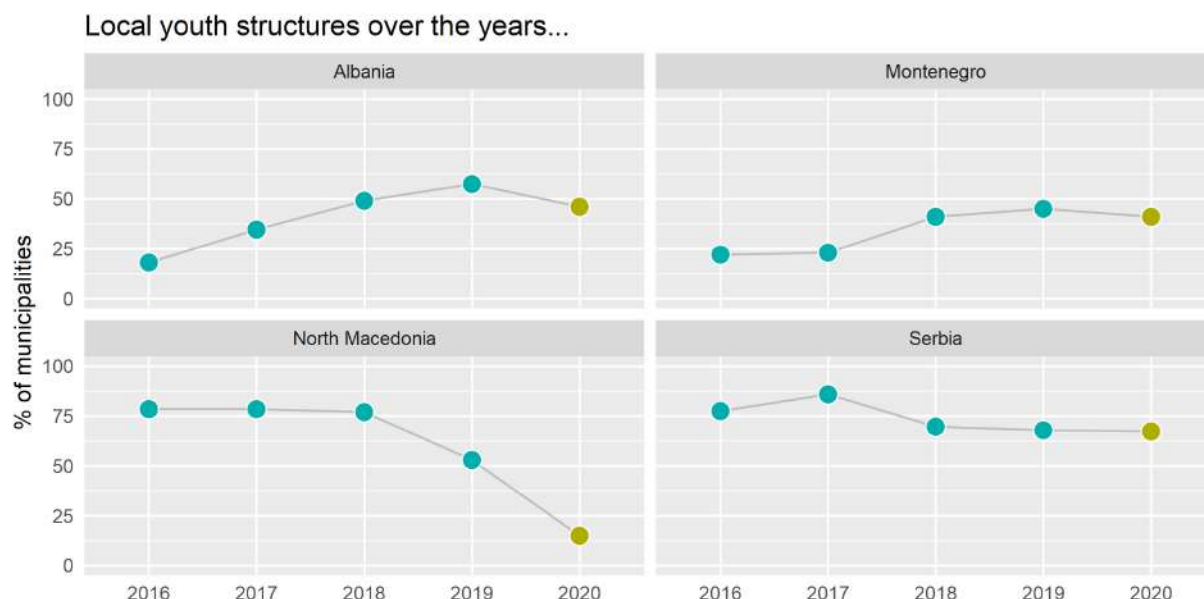
There have been two civic independent initiatives in Turkey attempting to establish independent and autonomous National Youth Councils - the National Youth Parliament (2004) established with the facilitation of the Habitat Centre for Development and Governance with the participation of the Municipal Youth Council and GOFOR Youth Organizations Forum (2014) established with the support of Community Volunteers Foundation and Youth Services Centre which became a member of the European Youth Forum with observer status in 2019.

Country	Existence of youth structure (councils/parliaments/unions) on the national level	Existence of youth structure (councils/parliaments/unions) on the local level (in %)
Albania	✘	46%
Montenegro	✔	41%
North Macedonia	✔	15%
Serbia	✔	67%
Turkey	✘	21%

When it comes to the local level, the percentage of municipalities that have active youth structures (based on their websites and social network pages) ranges from only 15% in North Macedonia and 21% in Turkey to 67% in Serbia.

Based on the information available online, it seems that the situation concerning the number of municipalities that have active local youth structures has deteriorated in 2020 in all of the countries, except Serbia where the situation has remained unchanged.

In Albania, this number has been increasing steadily from 2016, only to drop to under 50% in 2020. Law no. 75/2019 “On Youth” adopted in 2019 stipulates that the establishment of youth centers is in the competence of the local self-government. The situation caused by the pandemic and the lack of experience of municipalities in creating youth structures have led to a decrease in the number and activity of youth structures during 2020. Most municipalities cooperate with civil society organizations in order to create these structures but there are no manuals or other tools available to facilitate and unify the way in which these structures operate and are organized all municipalities.



In Montenegro, the situation has also slightly declined compared to the previous year. It is important to note that local youth clubs, previously established in eleven municipalities, ceased to operate because the old ministry did not sign long-term contracts with young people hired to act as local administrators of those clubs. The new ministry has not found a model to prolong or sign new agreements with them. It has been announced that new persons will be hired in the future. Still, the continuity in work has indeed been disrupted and structural changes combined with the effects of COVID 19 endangered already fragile results of the work in this area.

In North Macedonia the decrease in the number of local youth structures has been significant. This can be attributed to the negative impact of COVID-19. Although the municipalities were obliged to create local youth councils by the Law for Youth Participation and Politics the burning issues raised by the pandemic postponed the process.

Youth Participation Index 2020

Chapter 4 - A closer look at youth economic participation

Key facts and findings

- ❖ Similarly, as in the case of political participation, **the economic participation of young people in all participating countries is still not as good as it could be.** Even though the EU countries also registered worsened economic situation of young people in 2020, the state of youth economic participation in the EU is still far better than in participating countries. In all countries, there was evidence of decline or stagnation compared to the previous year.
- ❖ **For the first time in the last five years, NEET rates began increasing in all the countries.** The greatest increase was recorded in Montenegro, where the percentage of young people in the NEET situation was higher by 5.3 percentage points compared to 2019. However, the situation in all countries is worrying, since this rate varies from 20% to 32%. In all countries, NEET rates were higher for young women than for young men.
- ❖ **Youth unemployment rates either stagnated or were increased compared to the previous year.** In Albania, Serbia and Turkey, the youth unemployment rate stood at around 21%, whereas in North Macedonia and Montenegro this rate was around 30%. **A significant number of young people are unemployed for longer than 12 months.**
- ❖ **Youth employment rates also decreased in almost all countries in 2020, as well as youth labor force participation rates.** In almost all countries, labor force participation rates are considerably higher for young men than for young women.
- ❖ **Not many young people are self-employed,** although there are significant differences among countries. In 2020, the percentage of self-employed young people varied from merely 0.4% in North Macedonia to 18.5% in Albania. One in four young persons who chose to apply for subsidies for self-employment received them in Serbia, while this was the case with around two-thirds of young people in North Macedonia. In Albania, this percentage was only 3%.

What can we conclude about the economic participation of young people by looking into the index of economic participation? In interpreting the index it is important to note that the data for one indicator of economic participation (young people that started their own business with financial support) could not be obtained for Turkey in 2020 and Montenegro in previous years, and for North Macedonia there was some missing data when it comes to the indicator related to self-employed young people in 2018. Thus, this index is completely comparable only for Albania and Serbia over the years, since all indicators of economic participation are available for them.

Judging from the index created based on the data on economic participation over the years, several conclusions can be made.

- ❖ Similarly, as in the case of political participation, the economic participation of young people in all participating countries is still not as good as it could be. The highest registered value of this index is lower than the number 6, which is significantly lower than the target value of 43.5.
- ❖ Judging from the collected data, the state of economic participation of young people is particularly worrying in North Macedonia.
- ❖ In contrast to the previous year when there has been some evidence of progress, the situation concerning economic participation in 2020 is stagnating or worsening in all countries.

INDEX OF YOUTH
ECONOMIC
PARTICIPATION

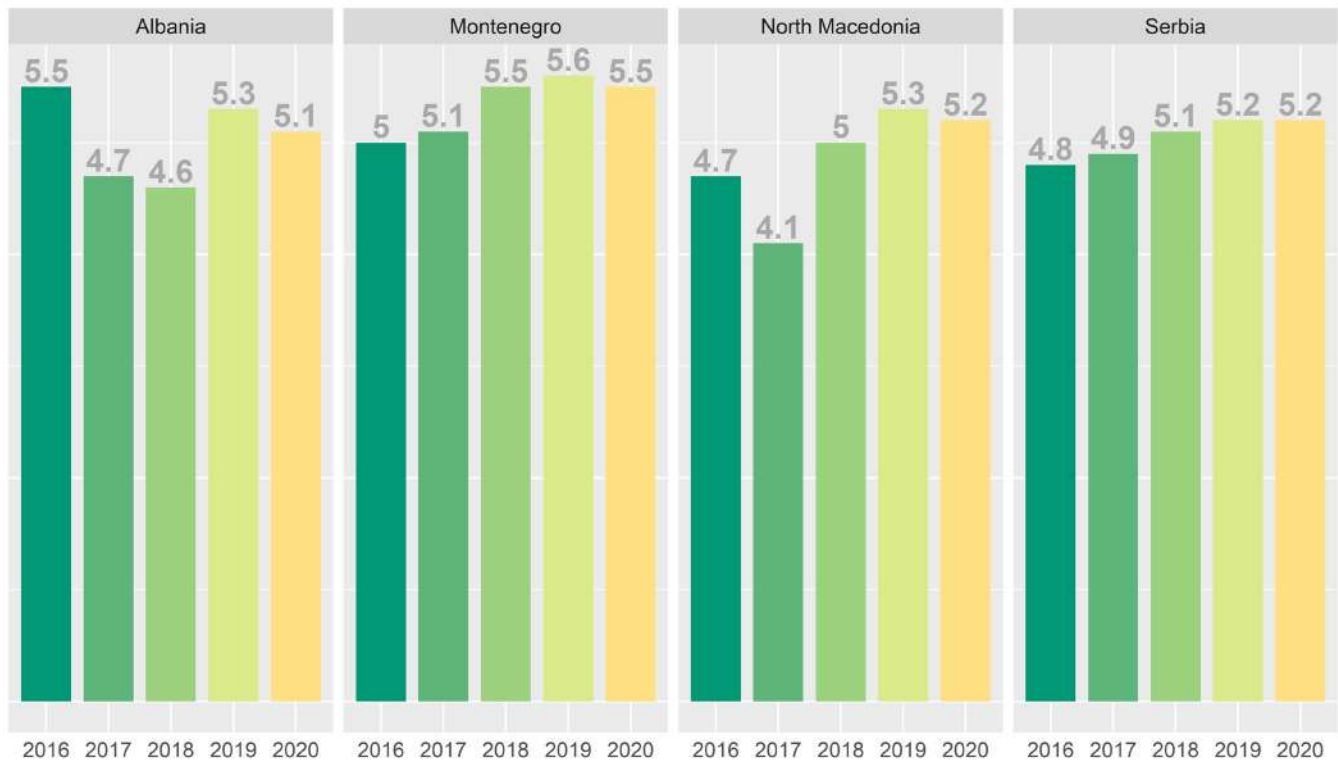
 43.5



Montenegro	5.5	
Turkey	5.3	
Serbia	5.2	
N. Macedonia	5.2	
Albania	5.1	

Young people had experienced many challenges in this domain before 2020, and the situation has, in some aspects, remained almost unchanged whereas in others, it has even worsened. To examine this data more closely, we need to look at the indicators of the economic dimension of youth participation and their values in more detail.¹⁵

Index of youth economic participation over years...



15 The table with all data regarding economic participation is in the Annex 1 of the document.

An overview of the economic indicators points to several employment challenges across participating countries. There is a significant percentage of unemployed youth out of which some have been unemployed for longer than 12 months. Moreover, a considerable number of young people are not in employment nor education and training.

If we look at this data in more depth, what conclusions can be made?

The number of young people neither in employment nor in education and training increased in all countries

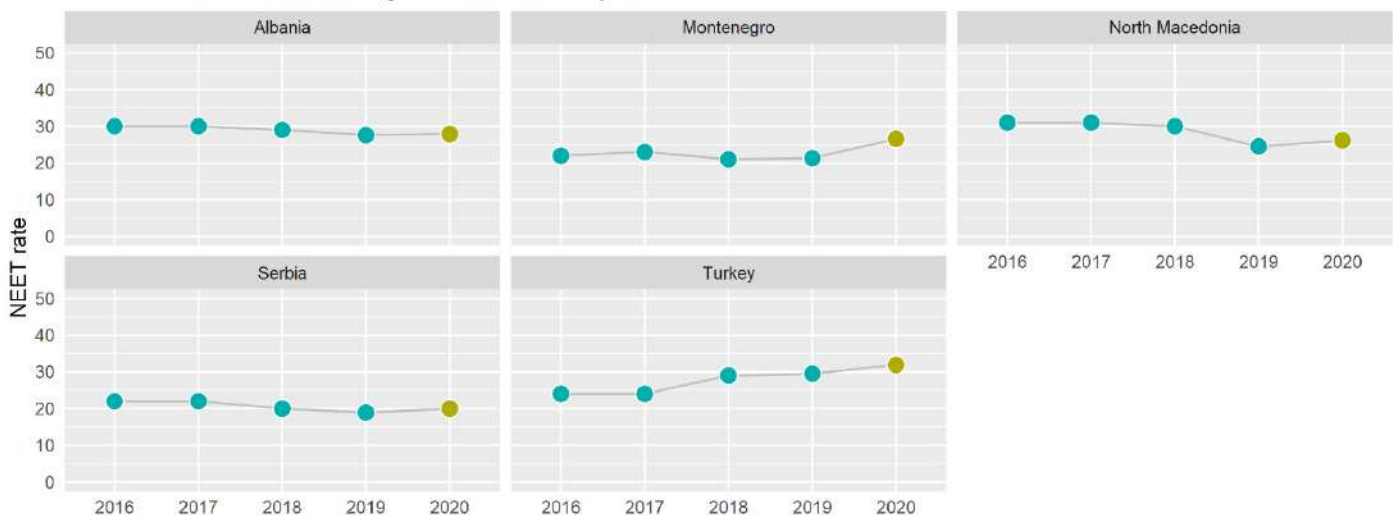
Indicators related to self-employment

Indicators	Albania	North Macedonia	Montenegro	Serbia	Turkey	EU-27
NEET rate	27.9	26.2	26.6	20.0	31.9	13.7
Youth unemployment rate	20.9	29.6	30.7	20.5	21.9	13.2
Long-term youth unemployment rate	11.4	21.1	13.4	9.1	4.8	3.2
Labour force participation rate	52.1	47.6	45.1	45.2	48.5	53.2
Youth employment rate	41.2	33.5	31.3	36.0	37.9	46.2

In 2020, the percentage of young people neither in employment nor in education and training (neither formal nor non-formal) were high in all participating countries, ranging from 20% in Serbia to almost 28% in Albania and 32% in Turkey. These rates are significantly higher compared to the EU-27 average of 13.7%, and they are far from the target percentage of 9% set by the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan¹⁶ to be achieved by 2030.

In contrast to the previous year when there has been some evidence of progress, the situation has changed for the worse. In all countries, NEET rates have increased since 2019. In Montenegro, this difference is most pronounced amounting to 5.3 percentage points. In Turkey, the percentage was up by 2.4 percentage points compared to the previous year, so that in 2020 almost every third young person was neither in employment nor in education and training.

How have NEET rates changed in the last five years?



A closer look at the data reveals that there are also significant gender gaps that need to be taken into account.

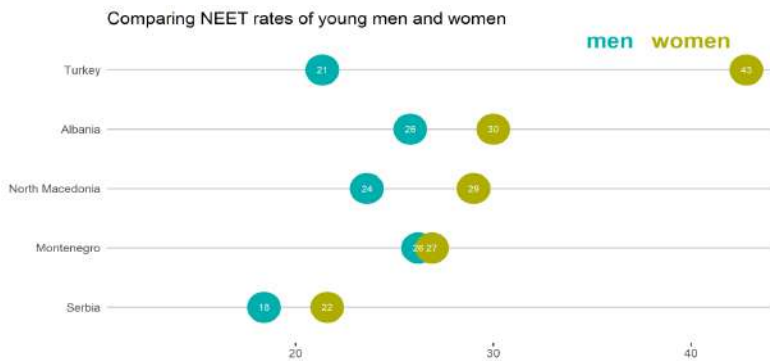
NEET rates were higher for young women than for young men in all countries except Montenegro. The difference is particularly prevalent in Turkey - 22 percentage points.

16 https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/economy-works-people/jobs-growth-and-investment/european-pillar-social-rights_en

Youth unemployment rates are either stagnating or increasing

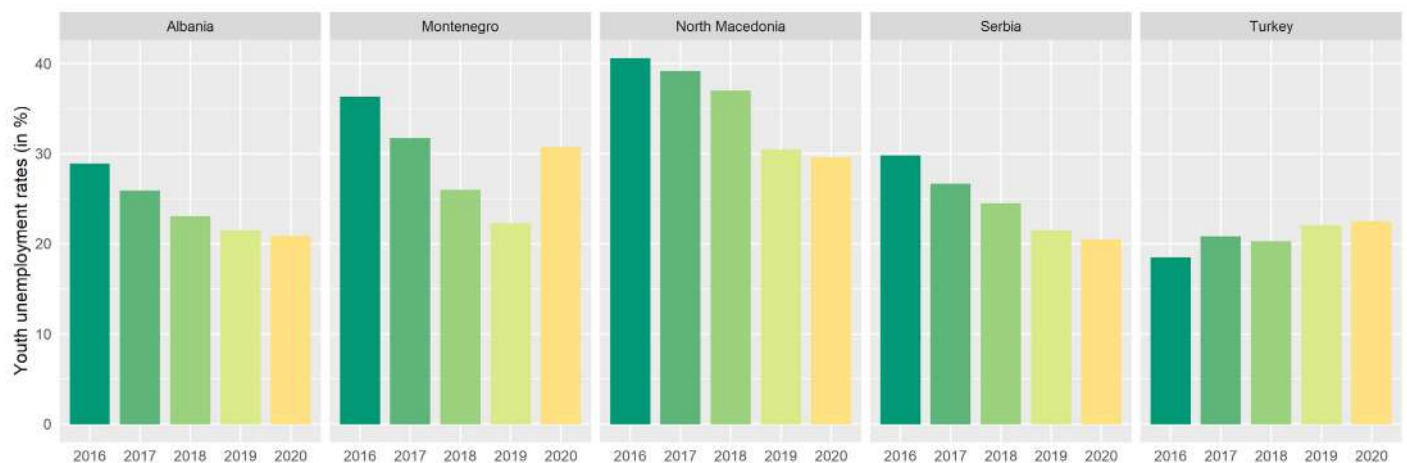
THERE ARE
MORE
NEET WOMEN
THAN MEN
IN ALL COUNTRIES

* NEET-young people neither in employment nor in education and training



The downward trend of youth unemployment registered since 2016 in Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia was halted in 2020. The unemployment rate of the population aged 15-29 in North Macedonia remained the highest one of all participating countries. However, since there was a significant increase in the youth unemployment rate in Montenegro it is now also one of the highest. The situation is different in Turkey, where the youth unemployment rate has increased by 1.8 percentage points compared to the previous year. However, it is still worryingly high as it amounts to around 22%, which is still well above the EU average (13.2%).

The unemployment rates were higher for young women than for young men in Turkey (25.7% compared to 19.8%), and in North Macedonia (31.8% compared to 28%). In other countries, the



differences were not that prominent. In Albania, differences in unemployment rates of young men and women were a mere 0.3 percentage points, 2.1% in Montenegro and 2.7% in Serbia.

Youth employment rates also decreased in almost all countries in 2020. The only exception was Albania where this rate remained unchanged. The greatest difference was registered in Montenegro - 8.4 percentage points and in Turkey - 3.6 percentage points. In 2020, these rates varied from around 34% in North Macedonia and Montenegro to around 41% in Albania, which is still lower than the EU average of around 46%.

These results can be interpreted in the context of the pandemic which has affected businesses in any sector of the economy, especially the SMEs (small and medium enterprises). In Turkey, the hospitality sector¹⁷ is one of the sectors which was most affected by the crisis and this

17 Impact of the Second Wave COVID Measures on Employment in Turkey, ILO Turkey, 2021. www.ilo.org/ankara/publications/research-papers/WCMS_775757/lang--en/index.htm

meant that jobs held by young people, most of whom work in this sector, were endangered. According to a World Bank report¹⁸, in 2020 Montenegro suffered a 90 percent collapse in tourism that drove the contraction of the entire economy with a 15 per cent recession that was one of the deepest in Europe.

The effect of the pandemic on youth employment was also evident in the reduction of income of young people who were employed. In Turkey, one study¹⁹ revealed that one in four young people stated that they were unable to pay some expenses such as rent, electricity, water. In Montenegro, as a result of the pandemic, over 50 percent of youth faced either income decline or inability to afford at least one basic good and service or both of these economic hardships²⁰, and income decreases were more often reported by Roma youth and youth with disabilities, who struggled to pay for one or more basic needs.

Many young people are unemployed longer than 12 months

Do young people remain unemployed for long? The answer to that question can be found by observing long-term unemployment rates, the share of unemployed young people who haven't had a job for at least 12 months among active young people. The data tells us that, in all countries except Turkey, 9% or more of active young people have been unemployed for a longer period. Similarly, as in the case of youth unemployment rates, this rate is highest in North Macedonia (21.1 percent), although it dropped by 8.6 percentage points compared to the value registered in 2016. This rate is the lowest in Turkey, 4.8%, and it's the one closest to the value of the EU average of 3.2%. The situation concerning long-term unemployment did not deteriorate in 2020 unlike other indicators related to the position of young people in the labor market, possibly since it was still early to detect changes in this indicator. Nevertheless, given that long-term unemployment rates are significantly high in almost all countries, this issue also requires attention.

Long-term unemployment rates were similar for young men and women in Serbia. In North Macedonia and Montenegro, this rate was slightly higher for women, while in Albania and Turkey the observed differences were more prominent. Although the long-term unemployment rate, in general, was not high in Turkey - 4.8%, for young women it was 7.6% and for young men around 3%. In Albania, 12.6% of young men have been unemployed for more than 12 months, whereas this was the case for 10.2% of young women (among the active population).

Youth labor force participation rates decreased

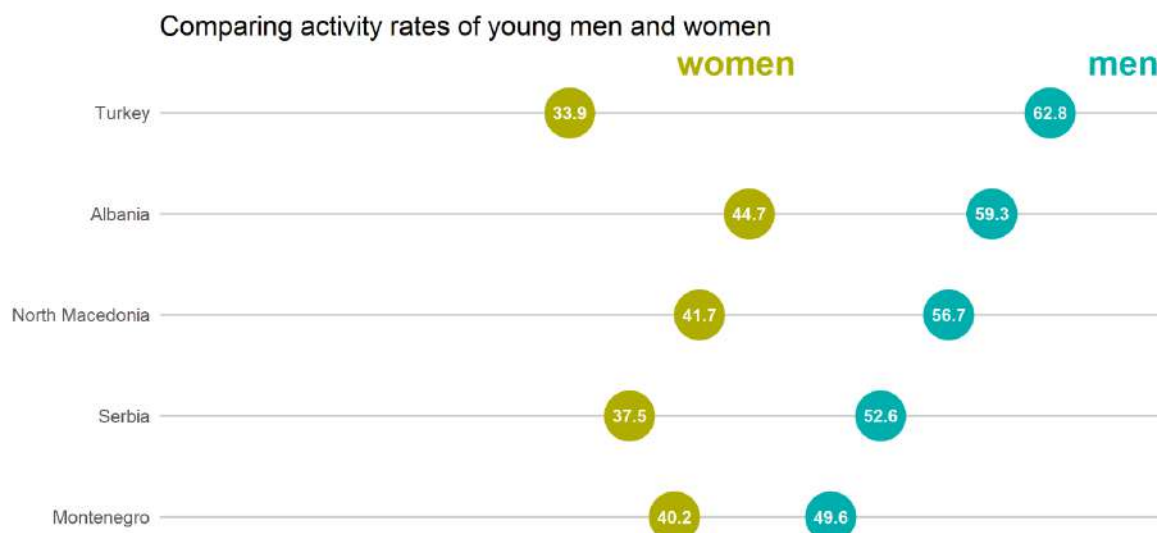
Youth labor force participation rates were also in decline in all countries - the greatest fall was observed in Montenegro (6%) and Turkey (4.8%). The highest youth labor force participation rate was registered in Albania (52.1%), being close to the EU average of 53.2%.

When it comes to youth labor force participation rates, considerable gender differences emerge. In all countries, labor force participation rates are higher for young men than young women. A striking difference is observed in the case of Turkey. However, in other countries, the differences are also substantial. Except for Montenegro where the difference was around 9 percentage points, in all other countries it was around 15 percentage points.

18 World Bank Group (2021), Western Balkans Regular Economic Report No.19, Subdued Recovery. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/35509/Subdued-Recovery.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

19 Youth Well-being in Turkey Research Series, 3, Habitat Association, field study by Infakto Research Workshop, 2020.

20 British Council (2021), Covid Screenagers: Socially Distant, Digitally Close, Montenegro, britishcouncil.org



Not many young people are self-employed

Self-employment can also be a viable choice for many young people. However, not many of them opt for it. In 2020, the percentage of self-employed young people varied from merely 0.4% in North Macedonia to 18.5% in Albania. There were challenges in collecting the data in previous years, so we can compare these rates only for Serbia and Montenegro. In Serbia, the percentage of self-employed young people increased by 5.4 percentage points from 2016, and in Montenegro, it dropped by 0.4 percentage points from 9% registered in 2016.

When it comes to the percentage of young people who received subsidies to start their own business among all applicants, in North Macedonia two-thirds of them were successful, similarly to the previous year. In Serbia, approximately 1 in 4 applicants received financial support.

Indicators related to self-employment

Indicators	North				
	Albania	Macedonia	Montenegro	Serbia	Turkey
% of self-employed young people among youth population	18.5	0.4	8.6	6	6.65
% of young people that started their own business with the financial support of state	3.0	61.5		26	

In Albania, only 3% of applicants received subsidies, meaning that in the last five years the number of young people who started their own business with the support of the state has decreased by 51.5 percentage points. According to the data from the Ministry of Finance and Economy, the Albanian Investment Development Agency did not provide financial grants from the state budget in 2020, leaving young people without any support except the one given by Agency for Agricultural and Rural Development. Although the lack of funds provided by the state continues to be an issue, this is somewhat compensated by the financial and mentoring support provided to young entrepreneurs by local and foreign organizations in Albania.

In all countries, a higher number of young men were self-employed when compared to the number of young women. The most pronounced differences were registered in Montenegro where 13% of young men were self-employed compared to only 0.3% of young women and in Turkey where the percentage of young self-employed men was 8.6% in contrast to 3.3% of young women.

Youth Participation Index 2020

Chapter 5 - A closer look at youth social participation

Key facts and findings

- ❖ Due to the high number of indicators for which the data is missing, the social participation index could not be calculated. This challenge has been present for five years in a row indicating **significant challenges in obtaining data related to the social participation of young people**.
- ❖ Montenegro still has the highest percentage of young people who dropped out of secondary education (2.3% in 2020), although it decreased significantly compared to 2019. Between 13% and 92% of young people were enrolled in tertiary education, indicating large differences among the countries in this respect. When it comes to the **rates of completing tertiary education, in the period from 2016 to 2019 this number was below 30% in all countries**. In 2020 in Montenegro rate of graduating from tertiary education was about 45% which is the highest registered rate in the last five years. Young men are less likely to complete both secondary and tertiary education.
- ❖ A very **small percentage of young people reported that they participated in non-formal education and training** in the last 4 weeks - below 2% in North Macedonia and Serbia and 4.4% in Turkey, which signifies a decline compared to the year before.
- ❖ **One in four young people was at risk of poverty** in 2020 in Serbia and Turkey. Similar numbers were registered in Albania, North Macedonia and Montenegro in 2019.
- ❖ Approximately **one-quarter of all prisoners were young people** in Montenegro and Serbia, and around 30% in Albania and North Macedonia. They were predominately young men.

The social Participation dimension still presents the main obstacle in the calculation of the YPI, since the majority of countries do not have available statistics for the same indicators collected through identical methodology.²¹ The comparative data obtained from the respective institutions is not available or does not match the indicators' target group, and in that way does not reflect the overall situation in many cases.

The participation of young people in formal and non-formal education needs to be improved

When interpreting the rate of participation of young people in education, it is important to note that there are some methodological differences regarding the indicators. The National Institute of Statistics in Turkey does not calculate dropout from secondary education, only early leavers from education and training for young people at the age of 18-24.

Regarding young people's education, it should be noted that Montenegro still has the highest percentage of young people who dropped out of secondary education (although in the previous years it was around 5% whereas in 2020 it was 2.3%). According to the available data, the lowest dropout rate of young people from secondary education was registered in Serbia - where it stood below 1.5 over the years, and in North Macedonia where it dropped from 2.3 in 2017 to 0.6% in 2020.

Between 13% and 92% of young people were enrolled in tertiary education. When it comes to rates of youth graduating from tertiary education, measured as a number of graduated/total of enrolled people, what can be concluded is that over the years this number was under 30%, the highest one being in Albania, where it levelled at around 26% in the last three years. However, in 2020 in Montenegro, the highest graduation rate was registered - 45.4%.

Recognizing the importance of non-formal education for young people, in 2019 researchers decided to include an additional indicator that could help shed some light on youth participation in this type of education and training. Results indicate that not only does the exceedingly small percentage of young people participate in non-formal education but also that there is a decline compared to the previous year. Under 2% of young people in North Macedonia and Serbia and 4.4%

in Turkey reported that they participated in non-formal education and training in the last 4 weeks, far below the EU average of 8,4%.

Table 8 Indicators of participation of young people in formal and non-formal education

Indicators	North				
	Albania	Macedonia	Montenegro	Serbia	Turkey
Dropout from the secondary education	1.8	0.6	2.3	0.8	
Young people enrolled in tertiary education	91.6	13.4	32.3	54.7	43.4
Young people graduated from tertiary education	25.0	11.9	45.4	17.6	
Participation rate in non-formal education and training (last 4 weeks)		1.9		1.3	4.4

When it comes to indicators regarding education, we do not have complete data disaggregated by gender but the data we have indicates that young men are more likely to drop out of education than young women. For instance, in Serbia, drop-out rates from secondary education were 1.2% for young men compared to 0.3% for young women. The situation is similar in Montenegro and North Macedonia, although the differences were smaller. More young women enroll in tertiary education (for instance 64% compared to 46% in Serbia, 37% compared to 28% in Montenegro). The differences exist when it comes to the completion of tertiary education as well, although they are not that high.

These discrepancies are not only a characteristic of participation in formal education but of non-formal education as well. Although the overall participation is low, it is even lower for young men. For instance, in North Macedonia this rate was 3.1% for young women and 2.5 for young men; in Turkey 7.3 for young women and 5.7 for young men.

Evidence from different studies²² suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic had a crucial impact on young people's access to education. Periodical closure of schools and shifting to online education brought about by the pandemic-related policy measures have significantly impacted youth participation in education and training and may have affected the quality. Barriers related to education also limit the social interaction of in-school youth and disrupt their daily routines.

Participation in online education and training is particularly difficult for some young people in vulnerable positions. For instance, in Albania,²³ an estimated 11,000 students, mainly those living in rural areas, did not have access to online learning because of the lack of access to the internet or digital devices at home. Even when young people had access to technical equipment they faced other barriers. For example, in Turkey, a significant percentage of students²⁴ reported that they could not follow their courses due to low motivation or because of the home environment, having less interaction in online courses than face-to-face interaction, internet/power outages, and factors such as difficulties with the online system. The same study showed they felt stressed, inefficient and anxious as a result of technical insufficiency and missed the free time spent in their schools outside of classes and their friends.

Not only do young people face barriers in participation in education and training, but also

22 Review of research on the impact of COVID-19 on young people and their access to services, <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/72351197/Briefing+3+on+the+Impact+of+Covid-19+on+education+employment+and+mental+health.pdf/ca3a193d-6c82-fb66-139b-d0fa805c01cb>

23 Effectiveness in COVID-19 Response - Albania Case Study Report, <https://partnersalbania.org/publication/effectiveness-in-covid-19-response-albania-case-study-report/>

24 Determination of Young People's Well-Being During the COVID-19 Pandemic, Youth Approaches to Health Association (Y-PEER Turkey), supported by UNFPA, 2020. <https://turkey.unfpa.org/en/publications/young-peoples-well-being-during-covid-19>

in some cases the quality of what they have learnt is at stake. In Montenegro, one study²⁵ showed that although they spent more time studying during the pandemic, students reported learning loss. Similarly, in Serbia research²⁶ revealed that many young people stated that their motivation for learning decreased during the pandemic and that they believed that they learnt less than they did before the pandemic.

One in four young people is at risk of poverty

Due to the timing of the release of SILC Survey results, at the time this report was being drafted, the percentage of youth at risk of poverty could be obtained only for Serbia and Turkey. In Serbia, the value of this indicator continued decreasing in 2020 and dropped significantly from 28.8% in 2016 to 22% in 2020. In Turkey, this value (according to Eurostat) increased slightly compared to the previous year and it stood at 24%. In 2019, these rates were similar in North Macedonia (25.9%), Albania (25.6%) and Montenegro (24.6%).

Although it is too early to assess the full impact of the pandemic on youth poverty rates, it is assumed²⁷ that the pandemic will deepen inequalities and offset the countries' advances in tackling poverty and social exclusion.

More than a quarter of prisoners are young people

In 2020, approximately one-quarter of all prisoners in Montenegro and Serbia were young people and around 30% in North Macedonia and Albania. In North Macedonia and Serbia, this value slightly increased compared to the previous year, by 2.5 and 1 percentage points.

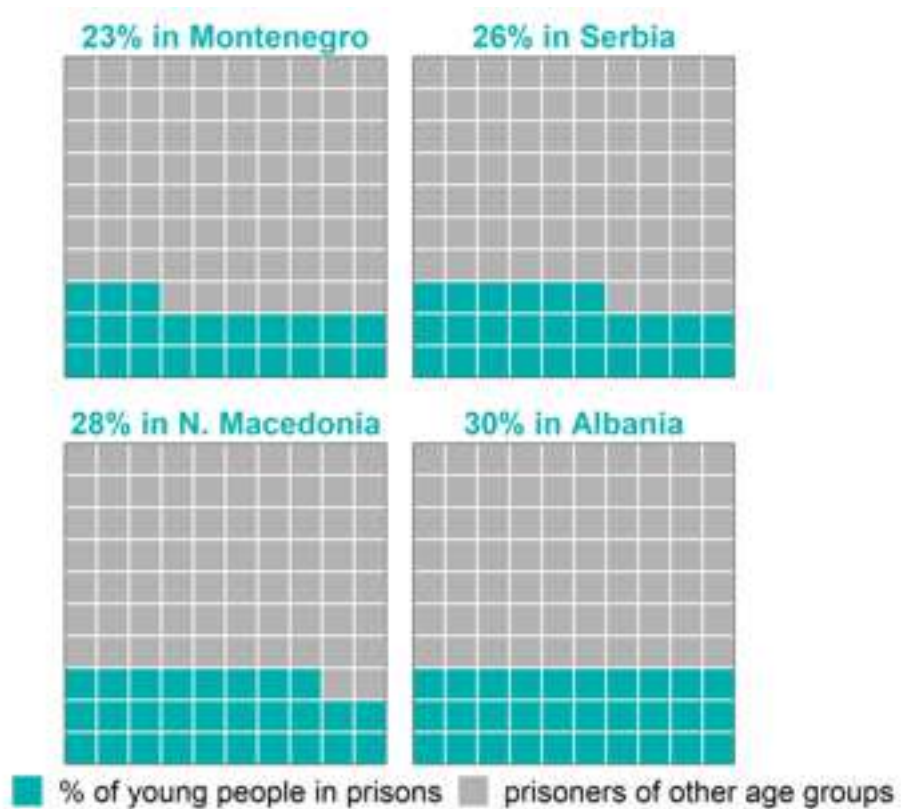
In Albania, the percentage of prisoners under thirty dropped from 46% in 2017 to 30% in 2020, and a similar trend can be observed for Montenegro where this percentage decreased from 33% in 2017 and 52% in 2018 to 23% in 2020.

The values for this indicator for Turkey are still not available. However, this year it was possible to obtain data for the age group 18-40, which could provide some approximate picture of the situation although it is not comparable with other countries. The percentage of prisoners in this age group was 65%.

25 British Council (2021), Covid Screenagers: Socially Distant, Digitally Close, Montenegro, britishcouncil.org

26 Uticaj pandemije korona virusa na populaciju mladih u Srbiji (2020), https://cpz.rs/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/SeConS_CP%C5%BD_-Uticaj-pandemije-korona-virusa-na-populaciju-mladih-u-Srbiji-FINAL.pdf

27 European Training Foundation (2020), Unlocking Youth Potential In South Eastern Europe and Turkey, https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2020-10/youth_in_seet.pdf



When it comes to data on young people in prisons, it should be noted that for all countries where this data is available, **there was a major difference in the number of imprisoned young men compared to young women**. In Serbia, 97% of young prisoners were young men, and in Montenegro, it was reported that 98% of young prisoners were young men.

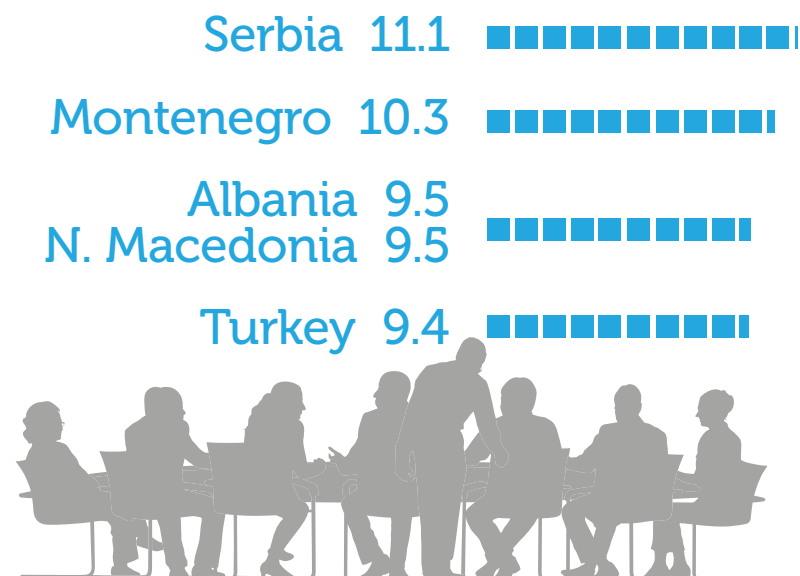
Chapter 6 - Youth Participation Index 2020

In interpreting the following data, several points need to be taken into account:

- ❖ The Youth Participation Index is prepared only by taking the indicators of political and economic participation into account, as the data for social participation is mostly unavailable.
- ❖ To make the index comparable between countries, two of the indicators of economic participation have been left out, due to missing values. This is the case with the data regarding young people who started their own business with the financial support of the state (missing for Montenegro for all years) and self-employed young people (missing for North Macedonia for 2018).
- ❖ During the previous years, the data for Turkey was missing for several indicators related to political participation, as well as economic participation, and thus the Index could not be calculated. This year the necessary data could be collected and consequently the index was prepared.

YOUTH
PARTICIPATION
INDEX

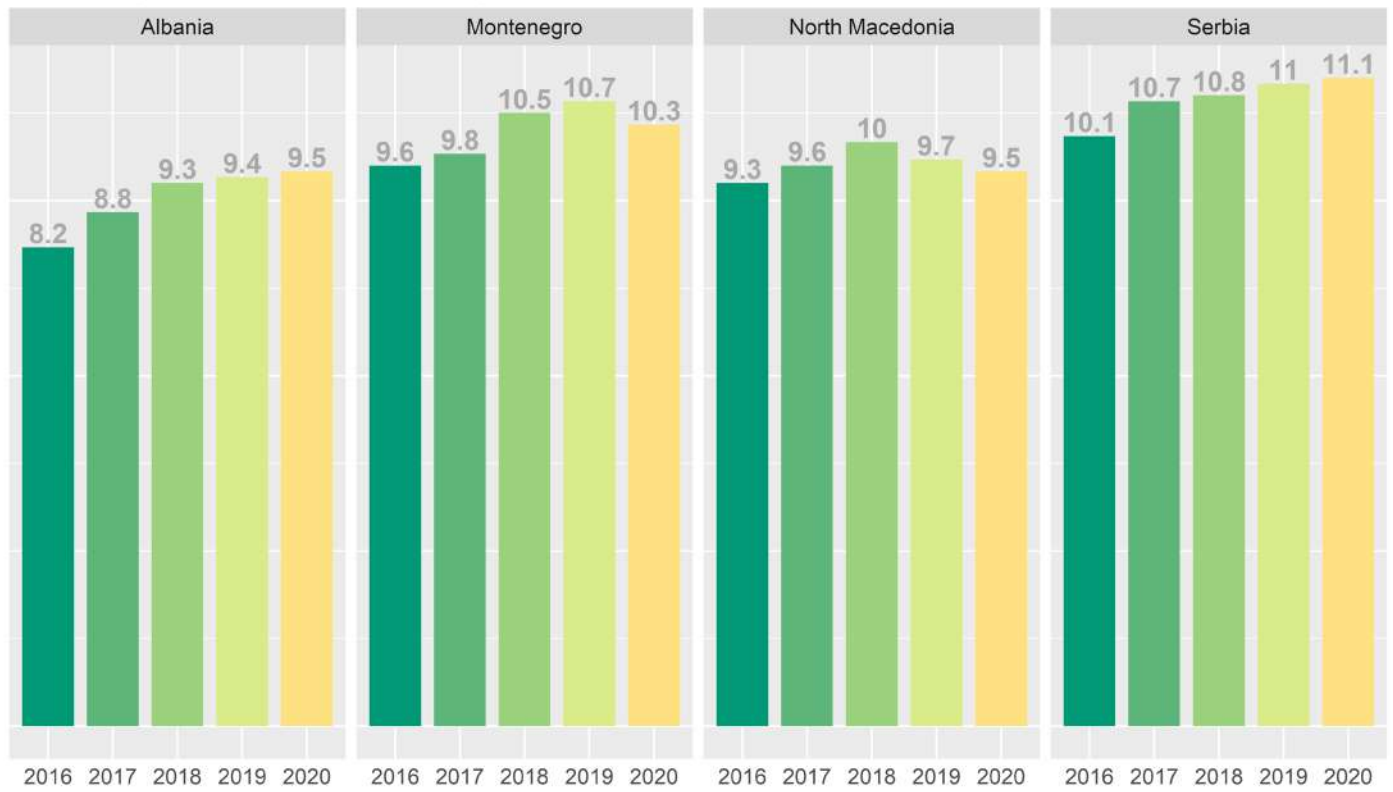
 81



Taking all of the considerations into account, what can be concluded by looking at the index?

- 1 The first conclusion is that there is a significant discrepancy between the current situations in the five participating countries compared to the target value, which is 87.
- 2 Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey are largely similar in terms of the state of youth participation. In all of them, there are challenges concerning the participation of young people in the political, economic and social domain, as confirmed by the previously reported research results, although the specific barriers faced by youth do sometimes differ.
- 3 In the previous years there has been some evidence of progress. However, **in 2020 youth participation index has either remained almost unchanged or started decreasing in participating countries**. The decline in youth participation according to the index is most evident in the case of Montenegro and North Macedonia.
- 4 After five years it is **still not possible to obtain data for the same set of indicators of youth social participation**. Some of the key data on youth from vulnerable groups are still missing.

Index of youth participation over years...



Chapter 7 Recommendations to improve youth participation

Based on the results of the YPI, we can see that the youth in the region can be identified as a vulnerable group and that they face major challenges such as the risk of poverty, high unemployment and long-term unemployment rates, high NEET rates and underrepresentation in political life. Some of the challenges are even greater for young women, others for young men. Moreover, the difficulty of accessing youth-sensitive data is of particular concern.

The YPI enables us to see that the situation concerning economic participation in 2020 is stagnating or worsening in all countries - unemployment and NEET rates are increasing in the majority of countries which is a worrying trend. Index of political participation also remained mostly unchanged in the previous period or it started decreasing. Values of indicators are still considerably different than the EU average and results show great discrepancies concerning the targeted values.

The large discrepancy between the current and targeted values should trigger changes in this field. Cooperation between all the stakeholders is vital to establish the different measures targeting the actual needs of young people, but also to exchange examples of good practices which have been already created and implemented in the countries. Bearing all this in mind, the next steps should be to continue with advocacy activities with the focus on improving two main issues: **lack of data and low level of youth participation.**

I Recommendations concerning the absence of youth-sensitive data

In order to address key challenges concerning the lack of youth-specific data, a set of recommendations is proposed in the following text. They include existing relevant recommendations prepared in the previous years which have still not been implemented, as well as new recommendations based on the changes in the accessibility of data in this year and observed new trends.

1. The institutions are to start collecting youth-sensitive data in the field of economic, social, and political participation for the category of youth as it is legally defined.

It is clear from the intensive data collection and analysis done for this report that national statistical agencies and other relevant authorities need to step up the efforts to collect more youth-specific data.

Systematically collected high-quality data are a prerequisite for informed policies and support measures for youth, especially vulnerable groups of young people. In particular, the system of collecting and processing data related to the social dimension of youth participation needs to be significantly improved. To harmonize statistics with the EU standard, legislative and institutional reforms should be implemented following the recommendations listed in annual progress reports.

Therefore, the YBH4WBT Network strongly recommends that institutions responsible for collecting and processing data (the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, the Institute of Statistics in Albania - INSTAT, the Statistical Office of Montenegro - MONSTAT, the State Statistical Office of the Republic of North Macedonia and Turkish Statistical Institute - TurkStat), as well as other national institutions (Ministries in charge of youth, education, social protection and Local Governments), begin to collect data concerning the following:

- **Data related to young people in the social welfare system should be monitored and regularly reported.** Developing and improving the data collected on young people in the social welfare system is a key precondition for creating quality support measures for the most vulnerable youth and it is in line with the obligations concerning Agenda 2030. In 2020, this information was available for Serbia and for the first time North Macedonia, which is an important step forward. Each country should use all available resources and begin to monitor young people's access to social protection systems.

- **Data on young people who started their own business with the financial support of the state** should be regularly reported. Many countries implement policy measures aimed at increasing self-employment. Therefore, this indicator would be useful for gaining insight into the success rates that young people have when applying for subsidies, and to plan how they should be supported.
- **Data on young people at risk of poverty** needs to be carefully monitored. Since there is a concern that pandemics may push young people into poverty, the situation concerning this indicator needs to be constantly observed.
- **Data related to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on young people and especially on the most vulnerable youth groups should be regularly collected.** The potential long-term disadvantages young people could face because of the pandemic necessitate the research studies on this issue. Since the COVID-19 pandemic has a disproportionate impact on vulnerable groups of young people that are already in precarious situation, reliable data on their position needs to be obtained. This would enable policymakers to build policies directly targeted to the most vulnerable youth groups.

2. Data concerning the youth should be easily accessible.

In some cases, the lack of publicly available youth sensitive data meant that data needed to be collected through official requests to institutions and depended on their willingness to share the data. Some of the publically available data was difficult to find. Thus, the recommendation is that data concerning the youth should be easily accessible:

- **Public statistical offices should dedicate a section to collect statistics concerning young people on their websites.** This would make it easier for anyone interested in youth-sensitive data, from policy-makers to youth organizations and young people themselves, to obtain it. Since all countries have youth policies, this will make it easier to work on reaching targets, as all those involved have direct access to relevant data. This also sends a clear message that statistics on youth are important and need to be taken into account. An example of a section collecting statistics from a range of other domains on which data is available segregated by age can be found on the Eurostat website: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/youth>. This process can also be connected with the monitoring of achievement of targets set by the Agenda 2030 concerning youth. The example of the data visualization platform “Youth SDG Dashboard” used to track youth indicators across different targets can be found on the website: <https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/youth-sdg-dashboard/>.
- **The release of datasets obtained via publicly supported research studies involving youth in an open format, as open data, should be strongly encouraged by national institutions.** This is important so that researchers can explore available data and conduct secondary analyses. Young people themselves could be encouraged to conduct youth research using these datasets, and to participate in the creation of data-informed youth policies.
- **Data on young people holding political positions should be easily available** on official websites of parliaments. The age of all of the Members of Parliament should be available on the websites of and the number of MPs under thirty should be clearly communicated.
- **Data on monitoring the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on young people needs to be easily accessible.** In each of the countries, a reference section to research and knowledge development on the issue should be established on a relevant official website. A specific set of indicators could be dedicated specifically to monitoring the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on youth and research studies and datasets concerning this issue could be also made available in this way.

II Recommendations to address the low level of youth participation

Youth participation matters and the issue of youth disengagement continue to be a major problem faced not only by the Western Balkan region and Turkey but also by modern democracies in the EU.²⁸ Based on the results of the YPI, the participation of young people in the decision-making process is extremely low in the countries of the Western Balkans and Turkey. Evidence from different studies suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic had a crucial impact on young people's access to education, employment and social services, and thus the urgent measures need to be implemented.

To address the issues recognized within this report, recommendations are proposed in the following text. They include existing relevant recommendations prepared in the previous years which have still not been implemented, as well as new recommendations based on most recent data.

1. The transparency of information and the establishment of better communication between state institutions and young people at the national and local levels must be improved.

The countries should strive towards ensuring online tools for information and participation of youth in decision-making processes within governments, parliaments and municipalities. The first step in encouraging youth participation is to provide information that is publicly available through online tools, such as websites and social networks. Consequently, it is necessary for all municipalities, governments and parliaments to have an online presence and to publish information transparently. The YPI 2020 shows that this is still not the case in all participating countries, especially at the local level.

The information must be published following a culture of communication tailored to each target group. Bearing in mind that young people mostly use social networks as channels of communication, all relevant institutions must have official websites, as well as Facebook and Twitter accounts. This is a prerequisite for establishing communication between policy-makers and young people and enabling their participation in the decision-making process.

2. Youth institutional structure (councils/parliaments/unions) which ensures the participation of young people in the decision-making process at national and local levels needs to be established in all countries.

Albania and Turkey still have not developed mechanisms for involving young people in the decision-making process at the national level in the form of youth structures. At the same time, the number of active youth structures at the local level ranges from only 15% in North Macedonia and 21% in Turkey to 67% in Serbia. It seems that the situation concerning the number of municipalities that have active local youth structures has either stagnated or worsened in 2020 in almost all of the countries, which is deeply worrying.

It is necessary to advocate for the opportunity to build youth councils, parliaments and unions to ensure the participation of young people in the decision-making process at the national and local levels. Moreover, it might be useful to enhance the cooperation of municipalities with civil society organizations for the creation of these structures as well as to prepare relevant resources and tools including review of best practices to facilitate and unify the way in which these structures function and are organized in all municipalities.

28 Kitanova, M. (2019). Youth political participation in the EU: evidence from a cross-national analysis, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13676261.2019.1636951>.

3. Youth access to political positions needs to be improved, and in particular, the number of MPs under thirty needs to increase.

Young people continue to be vastly underrepresented in parliaments. It is also highly unlikely that they become mayors, deputy ministers or ministers judging from the fact that there are almost no young people in those positions. According to the report on global youth participation in parliaments,²⁹ improving youth representation can strengthen the legitimacy of parliament, achieve greater fairness in access to political decision-making, contribute to better policymaking and potentially help young people who are disinterested in politics to restore trust in political institutions.

To increase the number of MPs under thirty, governments, parliaments, political parties and youth organizations should adopt strategies to raise awareness concerning the importance of youth participation in politics. One of the options is also to introduce youth quotas, i.e. to reserve seats in parliaments to ensure youth presence. It would also be useful to establish youth caucuses in national parliaments to promote youth issues in public policy.

Since some of the countries plan to have elections in the upcoming period, this is an opportunity to advocate for the greater presence of young people in political positions.

4. Urgent measures for reducing youth unemployment and the number of young people not in employment nor education need to be implemented in all countries.

Indicators of youth economic participation have already shown negative effects of the COVID 19 pandemic. Increasing numbers of young people not in education and training, nor in employment, high youth unemployment rates and decreasing labor force participation rates signify young people's vulnerable situation, which can have lifelong consequences, damaging their employability and their future career prospects.

Thus it is crucial to develop and implement measures that would lessen the negative effects of a pandemic on youth employment prospects and to carefully monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of existing measures. Cooperation between public institutions and CSOs working with young people is vitally important to reach young people in vulnerable situations. CSOs working with the youth can also contribute by sharing the information on existing measures, and information related to those measures should be disseminated via online tools used by young people. It is also highly important to include young people and CSOs that work with them in the process of creating and evaluating these measures.

5. Young people's entrepreneurship, especially one by young women, should be stimulated and promoted, by providing adequate and continuing (administrative, legal, technical, mentorship) assistance and (financial) support.

Data on youth entrepreneurship suggest that not only does a relatively small number of young people choose self-employment as an option but also that those who do choose it may lack adequate support. This was the case with some of the countries in this year's report, but it is also worrying that in some of the countries data on the percentage of young people who received subsidies to start their own business among all applicants cannot be obtained. As for all other issues, it is necessary to have quality data to plan adequate measures. In preparing policy responses concerning youth entrepreneurship specific attention must be given to young women since they opt for self-employment significantly less than young men.

29 Inter-Parliamentary Union (2019). Youth participation in national parliaments, <https://www.ipu.org/our-impact/youth-empowerment>

6. Participation of young people, especially young men, in secondary and tertiary formal education should be encouraged, as should participation in non-formal education and training.

Data indicates that young people, especially young men, are at risk of failing to complete secondary and tertiary education. Given that the targets set by the 2030 Agenda and many national policy documents are that all young people complete secondary education and to increase the number of people who have completed tertiary education, this is a worrying finding. An in-depth analysis of the reasons behind this situation in each of the countries is needed, followed by specific measures to address all observed challenges. Education and training were disrupted by the pandemic and there were many barriers to the participation of young people in educational processes, especially those from vulnerable groups.

Participation of young people in non-formal education and training is also quite low, and the pandemic had a further negative effect on this participation. This needs to be recognized in national policy documents and measures should be put in place to increase youth participation. Many civil society organizations are engaged in the provision of this type of education and could offer valuable insights.

7. New support measures for specific vulnerable groups should be developed, taking into account gender differences.

The alarming number of young people at risk of poverty or in prisons, as well as a high youth NEET rate, leads to the conclusion that it is necessary to improve the situation of young people in vulnerable positions as soon as possible. The needs of young people from vulnerable groups may be amplified by the pandemic and while further research studies are also needed to better understand the specific situation of these young people, the main recommendations from the previous years are still relevant.

The countries of the Western Balkan and Turkey should develop appropriate support measures to target vulnerable young people. When devising these measures, it is important to take gender differences into account - whilst a larger percentage of young women are not in education and training, nor in employment, more young men are imprisoned and do not complete education.

Since CSOs have continuous contact with young people and mechanisms to recognize their needs, a partnership between the CSO and the state is of high importance. Only a joint effort on new measures of support can ensure the appropriate response to the needs of young people.

In each of the countries, one in every four young people is at risk of poverty. At the same time, the information on young people in the social welfare is lacking in the majority of countries, making it difficult to completely understand the situation. Never has it been more urgent than in these circumstances to collect quality data concerning the social dimension of youth participation and to prepare informed measures to improve the situation of young people most at risk.

Annex 1 – Data collected in the process of preparing this report 2016-2020 for each of the participating countries

Albania	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Young ministers in Government M/F	0.0%	0%	0.0%	0.0%	0,0%
Young deputy ministers in government M/F	0.0%	3%	3.0%	7.0%	3,0%
Young MPs in the parliament M/F	2.1%	4.91%	4.9%	4.0%	4,0%
Young mayors	6.0%	6.00%	6.0%	0.0%	0,0%
Online tools for information and participation in the decision-making process of government and parliament institutions	95.00%	91%	93.3%	79.3%	98,0%
Online tools for information and participation in the decision-making process within municipalities	52.0%	66%	67.2%	66.0%	74,0%
Existence of youth structure (councils/parliaments/unions) on a national level	0%	0%	0.0%	0.0%	0,0%
Existence of youth structure (councils/parliaments/unions) on a local level	18.03%	34.6%	49.0%	57,4%	46,0%
NEET rate	30.0%	29.70%	28.6%	26.6%	27,9%
Youth unemployment rate	28.9%	25.9%	23.1%	21.5%	20,9%
Long-term youth unemployment rate	16.7%	13.8%	13.1%	11.5%	11,4%
Youth Labor force participation rate	45.7%	45.8%	50.1%	52.5%	52,1%
Youth Employment rate	32.4%	33.8%	38.5%	41.2%	41,2%
Young people that started their own business with the financial support of state	54.50%	0.0%	0.0%	26.0%	3,0%
Self-employed young people	29.00%	18.3%	0.9%	7.8%	18,5%
Young people at risk of poverty	Approximate indicator 15%				
Young people in prisons	36.54%	46.00%	47.7%	34.8%	30,0%
Young people part of social welfare system					
Dropout from secondary education	3.70%	3.35%	3.2%	2.6%	1,8%
Young people enrolled in tertiary education	56.80%	53.9%	53.9%	59.5%	91,6%

Young people graduated from tertiary education	21.48%	25.19%	26%	26.7%	25,0%
Participation rate in non-formal education and training (last 4 weeks)					

North Macedonia	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Young ministers in Government M/F	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Young deputy ministers in government M/F	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Young MPs in the parliament M/F	8.3%	1.7%	1.2%	3.3%	1.6%
Young mayors	1.3%	1.3%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Online tools for information and participation in the decision-making process of government and parliament institutions	72.5%	94.1%	100.0%	100.0%	81.2%
Online tools for information and participation in the decision-making process within municipalities	90.0%	90.0%	96.8%	69.5%	71.6%
Existence of youth structure (councils/parliaments/unions) on a national level	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100,0%
Existence of youth structure (councils/parliaments/unions) on a local level	78.5%	78.5%	77.0%	53,0%	15.0%
NEET rate	31.3%	31.1%	29.8%	24.5%	26.2%
Youth unemployment rate	40.6%	39.2%	37.0%	30.5%	29.6%
Long-term youth unemployment rate	29.7%	28.9%	26.3%	23.1%	21.1%
Youth Labor force participation rate	48.1%	49.7%	49.1%	49.4%	47.6%
Youth Employment rate	28.6%	30.2%	30.9%	34.3%	33.5%
Young people that started their own business with the financial support of state	47.7%	0.0%	13.7%	64.4%	61,5%
Self-employed young people	6.0%	7.3%		1.6%	0.4%
Young people at risk of poverty	Approximate indicator 24.8%	22.2 %			26.2%
Young people in prisons	0.20%		31.4%	25.3%	27.8%
Young people part of social welfare system					29.7%
Dropout from secondary education		2.30%	1.40%	0.5%	0.6%
Young people enrolled in tertiary education		28.90%	14.50%	38.8%	13.4%
Young people graduated from tertiary education		11.50%	16.50%	15.2%	11.9%
Participation rate in non-formal education and training (last 4 weeks)	2.3%	1.9%	2.0%	2.8%	1.9%

Montenegro	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Young ministers in Government M/F	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0,0%
Young deputy ministers in government M/F	4.4%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0,0%
Young MPs in the parliament M/F	1.2%	6.0%	8.6%	2.5%	4,9%
Young mayors	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0,0%
Online tools for information and participation in the decision making process of government and parliament institutions	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100,0%
Online tools for information and participation in the decision making process within municipalities	96.0%	99.0%	99.0%	100.0%	100,0%
Existence of youth structure (councils/parliaments/unions) on a national level	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100,0%

Existence of youth structure (councils/parliaments/unions) on a local level	22.0%	23.0%	41.0%	45,0%	41,0%
NEET rate	22.3%	22.6%	21.0%	21.3%	26,6%
Youth unemployment rate	36.3%	31.7%	26.0%	22.3%	30,7%
Long-term youth unemployment rate	18.6%	18.5%	15.7%	13.8%	13,4%
Youth Labor force participation rate	49.5%	48.7%	48.2%	51.1%	45.1%
Youth Employment rate	21.0%	21.3%	35.9%	39.7%	31.3%
Young people that started their own business with the financial support of state					
Self-employed young people	9.0%	8.4%	5.8%	4.0%	8,6%
Young people at risk of poverty	27.9%	26.2%			26,6%
Young people in prisons	31.1%	33.2%	52.2%		23,2%
Young people part of social welfare system					
Dropout from secondary education	5.50%	5.4%	4.6%	5.0%	2,3%
Young people enrolled in tertiary education	33.90%	34.5%	33%	54.2%	32,3%
Young people graduated from tertiary education	12.86%	14.51%	14.59%		45,43%
Participation rate in non-formal education and training (last 4 weeks)			2.8%	1.30%	

Serbia	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Young ministers in Government M/F	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Young deputy ministers in government M/F	1.0%	1.0%	5.0%	5.0%	1,0%
Young MPs in the parliament M/F	1.2%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	7.6%
Young mayors	2.5%	2.43%	0.60%	0.60%	1.80%
Online tools for information and participation in the decision-making process of government and parliament institutions	68.0%	78.55%	77.50%	91.25%	92.14%
Online tools for information and participation in the decision-making process within municipalities	61.0%	75%	84.75%	83.18%	85.20%
Existence of youth structure (councils/parliaments/unions) on a national level	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Existence of youth structure (councils/parliaments/unions) on a local level	77.5%	85.9%	69.7%	67,9%	67.3%
NEET rate	22.3%	21.70%	20.10%	18.90%	20.00%
Youth unemployment rate	29.8%	26.70%	24.50%	21.50%	20.50%
Long-term youth unemployment rate	16.7%	13.10%	11.70%	10.00%	9.10%
Youth Labor force participation rate	47.2%	47.6%	48.1%	47.00%	45.2%
Youth Employment rate	33.1%	34.9%	36.3%	36.90%	36.0%
Young people that started their own business with the financial support of state	23.3%	19.50%	20.5%	24.35%	26.0%
Self-employed young people	0.6%	2.76%	6.8%	6.87%	6.0%
Young people at risk of poverty	30.30%		26.6%	24.8%	23.9%
Young people in prisons	32.70%	27.7	26.5%	24.9%	25.9%
Young people part of social welfare system	18.97%	18.16%	18.1%		24.0%
Dropout from secondary education	1.10%	1.30%	1.40%	1.10%	0.80%
Young people enrolled in tertiary education	50.70%	54.20%	54.70%	54.70%	54.70%
Young people graduating from tertiary education	20.00%	19.70%	18.10%	18.13%	17.60%
Participation rate in non-formal education and training (last 4 weeks)	3%	2.8%	2.3%	2.40%	1.3%

Turkey	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Young ministers in Government M/F	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Young deputy ministers in government M/F	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Young MPs in the parliament M/F	0.90%	0.90%	1.30%	1.30%	0.85%
Young mayors	0.29%	0.29%		0.00%	0.00%
Online tools for information and participation in the decision-making process of government and parliament institutions	61.80%	61.80%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Online tools for information and participation in the decision-making process within municipalities	90.00%	90.00%			99.57%
Existence of youth structure (councils/parliaments/unions) on a national level	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Existence of youth structure (councils/parliaments/unions) on a local level					20.99%
NEET rate	24.00%	24.20%	29.10%	29.51%	31.92%
Youth unemployment rate	18.50%	20.80%	20.30%	22.10%	21.90%
Long-term youth unemployment rate	3.0%	3.3%	3.2%	4.53%	22.50%
Youth Labor force participation rate	56.10%		44.00%	53.30%	48.50%
Youth Employment rate	34.20%	34.10%	35.00%	41.50%	37.90%
Young people that started their own business with the financial support of state	22.62%				
Self-employed young people				2.8%	6.65%
Young people at risk of poverty	27.10%			22.7%	24.0%
Young people in prisons	63.00%				65.14%
Young people part of social welfare system					
Dropout from secondary education				28.70%	26.70%
Young people enrolled in tertiary education	40.53%	42.43%	45.60%	44.10%	43.40%
Young people graduated from tertiary education			9.57%		
Participation rate in non-formal education and training (last 4 weeks)	5.3%	5.5%	6.9%	6.50%	4.4%



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WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY