

ALTERNATIVE REPORT

on the position and needs of youth
in the Republic of Serbia

2021



National Youth Council of Serbia



NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL OF SERBIA
**ALTERNATIVE REPORT ON THE POSITION AND NEEDS
OF YOUTH IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA – 2021**

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IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA – 2021

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NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL OF SERBIA

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Belgrade
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Research Methodology	7
2. Institutional Framework	13
3. Normative Framework.....	25
4. Political Participation and Attitude of Political Actors Towards the Youth	27
5. Values of Young People	37
6. Media, Social Networks and Applications.....	49
7. Youth and the Labor Market.....	51
8. Youth and Education	57
9. Activism and Volunteering	61
10. Safety and Health of Young People	63
11. Young People and Covid-19	69

1. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted in the period from May to July 2021. Based on the methodological approach and data collection method, the research was both qualitative and quantitative, i.e. both of the research and data collection methods were used.

The research included several data collection techniques:

1. Document analysis (desk analysis) was used to analyze the institutional and normative framework and all thematic areas that determine the position of young people, providing that it is possible to collect such data through desk research. In addition to institutional and normative framework analysis, the research included available data and reports of certain institutions, data collected and published by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia and other institutions such as the National Employment Service, unstructured data, but also analysis of available and published research related to youth which is important for certain topics. In places where indirect/secondary research was used, this is emphasized in the text. The basis for the desk analysis can be found in alternative reports from 2017/2018/2019/2020. The most important data are presented one more time in certain parts of the report and new data was added. Those who wish to get acquainted with the areas covered in previous reports can download the **Alternative Report on the Position and Needs of Youth in the Republic of Serbia – 2017, Alternative Report on the Position and Needs of Youth in the Republic of Serbia – 2018, Alternative Report on the Position and Needs of Youth in the Republic of Serbia – 2019 and Alternative Report on the Position and Needs of Youth in the Republic of Serbia – 2020.**

This year's desk research included adding data in some segments of the report for the second half of 2020 and the first half of 2021.

2. Interviews with stakeholders were used for qualitative research on certain topics, with participants who were selected based on the criteria of relevance for the given topic. Interview topics were

selected based on the assessment of where it was necessary to gain additional knowledge, and where the desk analysis did not provide all the necessary data. Some interviews were conducted in writing, and some live, via Zoom application. A total of six interviews were conducted on the following topics:

1. Work and functioning of the Youth Council (structured interview: Jelena Božić, member of the Youth Council);
2. Functioning, advantages and disadvantages of “My First Salary” program (semi-structured interview: Bojana Bondžić, participant in “My First Salary” program);
3. Functioning, process and development of “My First Salary” program (structured interview: Ilija Knežević, Head of the Education and Training Department at the National Employment Service);
4. Analysis of the report on the evaluation of implementation of the National Youth Strategy (structured interview: Mihajlo Đukić, research associate at the Institute of Economic Sciences and project manager for the evaluation of implementation of the National Strategy for 2019);
5. Young politicians in Serbia and their view of the youth (Pavle Grbović, President of the Free Citizens Movement);
6. Young politicians in Serbia and their view of the youth (Valentina Reковиć, activist of the Freedom and Justice Party);
7. Functioning of secondary schools during the COVID-19 pandemic (Miloš Blagojević, Acting Assistant Minister of Education, Science and Technological Development for Secondary Education and Adult Education);
8. Functioning of secondary schools during the COVID-19 pandemic (Aleksandar Nikolić, Secretary General of the Serbian Union of Secondary School Students);
9. Functioning of faculties during the pandemic (student vice-dean from the group of social sciences and humanities faculties of the University of Belgrade);
10. Functioning of faculties during the pandemic (student vice-dean from the group of natural sciences and mathematical faculties of the University of Belgrade);
11. Functioning of faculties during the pandemic (student from Belgrade);

12. Functioning of faculties during the pandemic (student from Novi Sad).

3. Online questionnaire for youth aged 15 to 30 who live in the territory of the Republic of Serbia. The sample type is intentional/targeted at the youth population as part of the general population with respect to age (from 15 to 30 years), and within that (basic) group, the sample was stratified based on age, gender, place of residence and education. The questionnaire consisted of nine groups of questions: 1. *General information*; 2. *Political participation*; 3. *Values of young people*; 4. *Media, social networks and applications*; 5. *Education, employment and mobility*; 6. *Social activism and participation of young people*; 7. *Safety and health of young people*; 8. *Volunteer work*; 9. *Attitudes towards the coronavirus pandemic*. Open-ended and closed-ended questions (possible responses, multiple response questions and rating scales) were combined, and the questionnaire consisted of 111 questions. None of the questions was mandatory for the participants to answer. A total of 1,389 respondents from the territory of the Republic of Serbia completed the questionnaire.

Differences in responses by gender, age and region of residence were examined during the analysis of collected data. In some segments of the research, additional tests were conducted and this fact is pointed out in the text. Classical descriptive analyzes were used in the analysis of the data: frequencies and cross-tabulations, as well as tests (Independent Samples t Test, One-Way ANOVA, etc.) at significance levels *** = $p < 0,001$; ** = $p < 0,01$ and * = $p < 0,05$.

Table 1. Research methodology

Research instrument: questionnaire	Sample size: 1,389
Research technique – data collection technique: <i>online</i> survey	Research period: May 2021
Target population: young people aged 15 to 30 years	Error margin with 95% probability: +/- 1.22 for incidence of 5%; +/- 1.68 for incidence of 10%; +/- 2,81 for incidence of 50%
Sample type: random, stratified based on age, gender and place of residence	Data processing program: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)

The margin of error is a deviation or percentage range within which lies a response that we would have received if we were able to survey the entire population instead of just a sample. The margin of error for this sample is minimal.

Sample description:

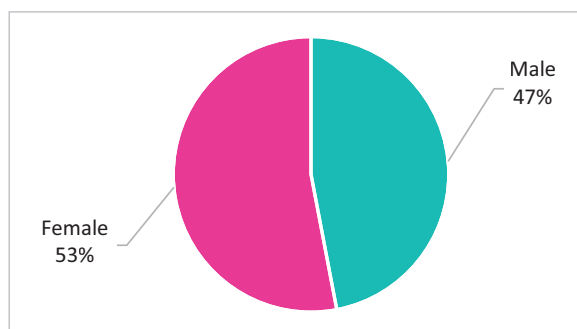
The questionnaire was filled out by young people of all age groups according to the age of the participants. For ease of presentation, young people were divided into three groups based on their age:

Table 2. Sample with regard to age

Groups:	Age range	Percentage of participants (%)
Group 1	youth from 15 do 19 years of age	34.9
Group 2	youth from 20 to 24 years of age	33.4
Group 3	youth from 25 to 30 years of age	31.8

The questionnaire was completed by 52% of young women and 48% of young men.

Graph 1. Sample with regard to the gender of participants



Based on the type of settlement in which the participants live, the sample is as follows:

Table 3. Sample with regard to the type of settlement of participants

Type of settlement:	Percentage of participants (%):
City (Belgrade, Novi Sad, Niš, Kragujevac)	38.7
Town	23.5
Municipality with a population over 30,000	12.9
Municipality with a population under 30,000	11.7
Settlement with a population under 10,000	13.2

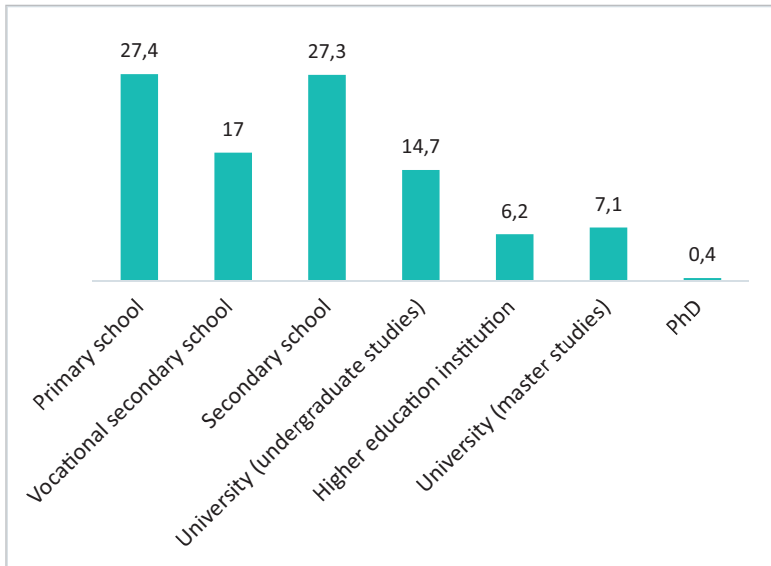
With regard to the region in which the participants live, they come from:

Table 4. Sample with regard to the region in which the participants live

Region	Percentage of participants (%):
Belgrade region	27.4
Vojvodina region	24.7
West and Central Serbia	24.1
East and South Serbia	23.8

According to the level of education acquired, participants were divided into the following categories:

Graph 2. Sample with regard to acquired education



2. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter of the Alternative Report describes the key institutions and actors of youth policy. General information is provided on the Ministry in charge of youth policy, the Youth Council, the Provincial Secretariat for Sports and Youth, local youth policy, organizations of the youth and organizations for the youth.

This chapter is an introduction for readers to the institutional framework for youth policy.

2.1 Ministry of Youth and Sports (MYS)

The Ministry of Youth and Sports is the Government department in charge of youth and sports. It was established on 15 May 2007, and the organization of the Ministry has not changed since then. The first Minister of Youth and Sports was Snežana Samardžić Marković, she was followed by Alisa Marić, and for the last eight years (since 3 September 2013), the Minister of Youth and Sports has been Vanja Udovičić. He remained in that position after the election of the second government of Ana Brnabić on 28 October 2020 – it is the fifth consecutive Government in which Udovicic is in this position, which currently makes him the longest serving Minister within the same Ministry.

On 11 March 2021, the Government elected **Milan Savić** to the position of the **State Secretary** in the Ministry of Youth and Sports.¹ Savić was previously elected MP from the list “Aleksandar Vučić – For Our Children“ in 2020 as one of the young MPs (born in 1991), and he resigned from the post of MP after being elected State Secretary. The second position of the State Secretary, envisaged by the systematization of jobs in the Ministry, has not yet been filled.²

1 Decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia No. 119–2086/2021

2 Ministry of Youth and Sports Fact Sheet, 31 May 2021, <https://www.mos.gov.rs/storage/2021/06/informator-o-radu-maj-2021-latinica.pdf>

After the previous Assistant Minister Snezana Klačnja left the position at the end of 2018, it took the Government of the Republic of Serbia two years to fill this position. On 17 December 2020, Snežana Žugić was elected acting Assistant Minister in the Youth Sector for a period of six months.³ Her term as acting Assistant Minister was extended for another three months on 16 June 2021.⁴ The absence of a Assistant Minister with full mandate remains an unsatisfactory situation in the context of youth policy implementation.

Number of employees in the Youth Sector and their structure:

According to the Fact Sheet, which was last updated in May 2021, there are **10 employees out of a total of 15 planned employees** in the Youth Sector. Of that number, eight are civil servants – executive officers (out of 13) and one other employee. Compared to last year, the situation has changed in the sense that one vacancy has been filled (Assistant Minister).

The number of employees in the Youth Sector has increased from 11 to 15, thus the long-standing recommendation of the Alternative Report to expand the Youth Sector was partially complied with. However, the share of jobs is almost unchanged compared to the previous year (18% in 2021 compared to 16% in 2020), and the Sports Sector still has more than twice as many employees (27 versus 11).

In 2020, 95% of the funds provided for youth policy was implemented.

The total budget for youth policy envisaged in the revised budget for 2021 amounted to RSD 1,353,689,000, of which social insurance benefits from the budget within the Fund for Young Talents amount to RSD 899,001,000. The rest of the budget for the Youth Sector was only RSD 454,688,000. If we look at the entire MYS budget, which amounts to RSD 8,687,813,000 (excluding donations from international organizations and EU financial assistance), the percentage of the budget spent on the youth is 15.58%, and if the social insurance benefits covered from the budget within the Fund for Young Talents

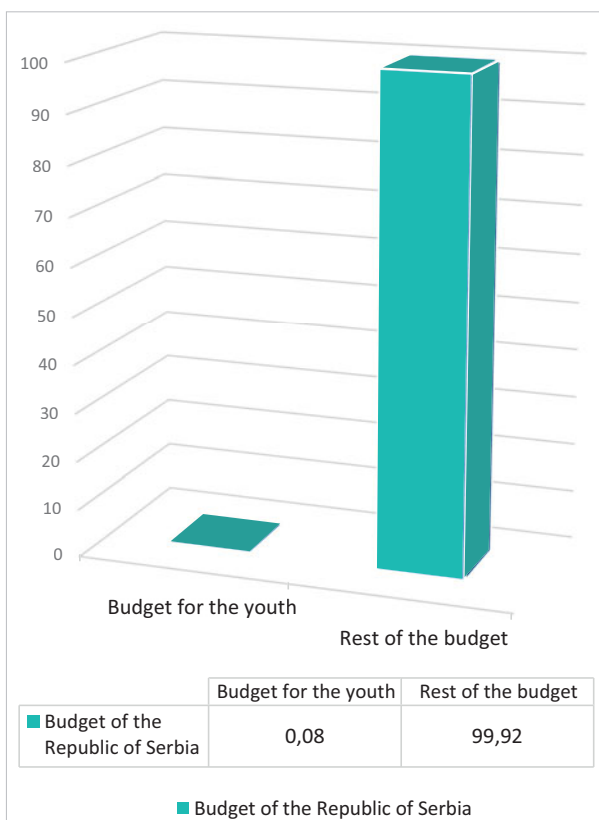
3 Decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia number 119–8705/2020

4 Decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia number 119–5228/2021

are excluded, the percentage of the budget spent on the youth is 5.23%. This indicates that the situation with regard to the youth policy is worse compared to the previous Alternative Report, when 22% of the MYS budget was allocated for the youth policy (6% without the Fund for Young Talents).

If we look at the previous budget of the Republic of Serbia, the percentage of the budget allocated for the youth through MYS amounts to 0.08% of the annual republic budget, and if social insurance benefits from the budget within the Fund for Young Talents are excluded, the percentage of the budget allocated for the youth amounts to 0.03%. These findings are unchanged compared to the previous year.

Graph 3. Budget for the youth within the budget of the Republic of Serbia for 2019 (in %)



MYS communication – social networks

Regarding communication of the Ministry of Youth and Sports through official accounts on social networks (Facebook and Instagram), **we still notice that the Ministry's reports and communications predominantly refer to sports topics.** Repeating the practice from the previous two reports, monitoring of social networks was carried out again this year, and the observed period was January – June 2021.

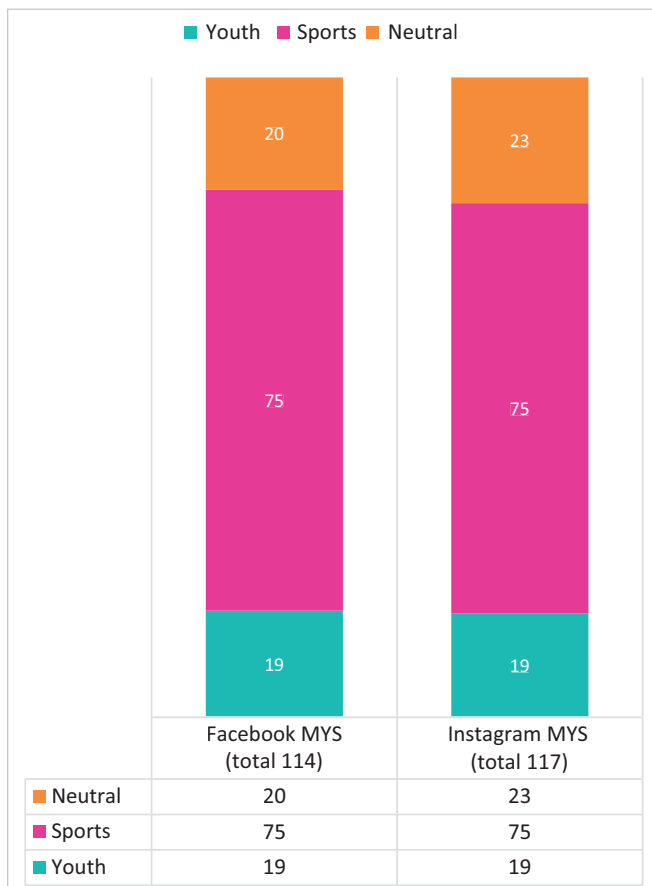
Data from the Facebook social network show that in the six-month period, the total number of posts for the official page of the Ministry of Youth and Sports (11,338 likes)⁵ was 114, of which 75 were related to sports and 19 to youth, which is an even greater imbalance than the previous time (69:22). On the official MYS Instagram account (7,520 followers)⁶, the total number of posts was 117, of which, same as on Facebook, 75 were related to sports, and 19 to youth (last year's ratio was 92:21).

Conclusions from the previous two monitoring reports remain valid: it is noticeable that, when talking about youth and sports at the same time, the information is related exclusively to sports (which is always in the foreground, i.e. in the first part of the post), while the youth and national strategy for the youth are mentioned in a uniform and generic way. Most of the posts only talk about spending time socializing with athletes and sports workers, and the youth stays in the background.

5 Facebook MOS, <https://www.facebook.com/MinistarstvoOmladineISporta/>

6 Instagram MOS, <https://www.instagram.com/omladinaisport/>

Graph 4. Communication of MYS and the Minister on social networks



2.2 Youth Council

In accordance with the Law on Youth, the Youth Council was established by the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia⁷ on 24 January 2014 and constituted at the session held on 24

⁷ Decision on the establishment of the Youth Council (Government of the RS, 05 Number: 02–559/2014–1)

February 2014. The main task of the Council is to encourage and harmonize activities related to the development, realization and implementation of the youth policy, propose measures for its improvement, as well as propose measures for harmonization and coordination of activities of Ministries and other bodies responsible for specific areas in the youth sector, and all other actors of youth policy, in accordance with strategic and legal acts in this area. As an advisory body to the Government, the Council ensures that the voice of the youth is heard and respected, so that young people can participate in the development, implementation and monitoring of the implementation of public policies.⁸ The Youth Council operates according to the Rules of Procedure of the Youth Council.⁹

From its establishment until 2020, 13 sessions of the Council were held. In 2020, no session of the Youth Council was held.

National Youth Council of Serbia, in accordance with the acquired status as the youth umbrella association and pursuant to Article 14 of the Law on Youth and obligations arising from it, in 2020 announced a call for the election of 15 members of the Youth Council as representatives of associations of the youth, associations for the youth and their unions. In February 2021, the Government of the Republic of Serbia passed a Decision¹⁰ on the appointment of the Deputy President and members of the Youth Council. The Youth Council has 38 members, and in accordance with the law (at least 1/3 are youth representatives), there are 15 young members representing associations of the youth, associations for the youth and their unions.

Four sessions of the Youth Council were held since the decision was adopted on the election of new members of the Youth Council (in February).

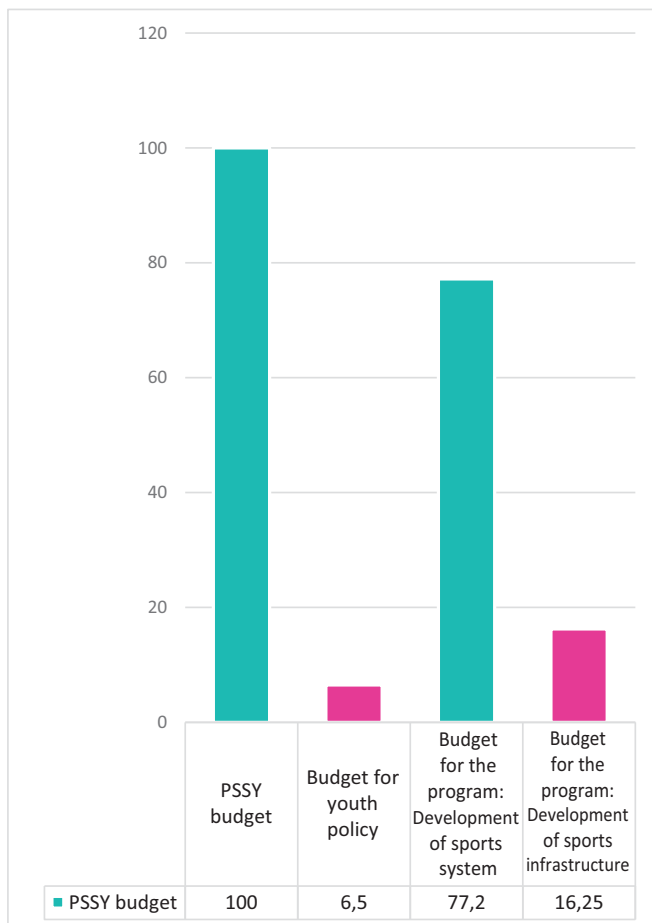
8 MYS, <http://www.mos.gov.rs/savet-za-mlade-3?lang=lat>

9 Rules of Procedure of the Youth Council, <https://www.mos.gov.rs/public/ck/uploads/files/Dokumenta/Omladina/savet-za-mlade/Poslovnik%20o%20radu%20Saveta.pdf>

10 Decision on the election of the Deputy President and members of the Youth Council, Government of the Republic of Serbia, 24 number: 119–1668/2021, <https://www.mos.gov.rs/storage/2021/03/o-imenovanju-szm.pdf>

2.3. Provincial Secretariat for Sports and Youth (PSSY)

Graph 5. Budget for youth policy within the PSSY budget



2.4 Local youth policy

In accordance with the Law on Local Self-Government, local self-government units in the Republic of Serbia have the authority to deal with youth policy. Article 20, paragraph 15 Competencies

of local self-government units states the following: local self-government unit performs other tasks of local importance stipulated by the law (for example in the fields of defense, protection and rescue, fire protection, **youth policy**, zoohygiene, etc.), as well as activities of direct interest to citizens in accordance with the Constitution, law and statute.¹¹

The Law on Youth defines measures and activities undertaken by local self-government units, which aim to improve the social position of young people and create conditions for the realization of their needs and interests in all areas of interest to young people. Local self-government units are youth policy actors, along Republic of Serbia and the autonomous province they are the youth policy holders, along with other entities such as: institutions, associations that conduct youth activities and other entities involved in the implementation of youth policy.¹²

The Law on Youth stipulates several instruments of local youth policy:

1. Financing of local youth policy and implementation of the National Strategy for the Youth – NSY (funds for the implementation of the Strategy are provided in the budget of the Republic of Serbia, as well as in the budget of the Autonomous Province and local self-government units and from other sources, in accordance with law).¹³
2. Local Action Plans for Youth – LAPY (in accordance with NSY, the Autonomous Province and local self-government units establish action plans for the implementation of the Strategy on their territories and provide funds in their budgets for the implementation of these plans).¹⁴
3. Youth Council of the local self-government unit (for the purpose of coordinating activities related to the implementation

11 Law on Local Self-Government, “Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, no. 129/2007, 83/2014 – other law, 101/2016 – other law, and 47/2018.

12 Law on Youth, “Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, no. 50/2011, Article 3

13 Ibid., Art. 12, para. 1.

14 Ibid., Art. 12, para. 2.

of youth policy on the territory of the Autonomous Province and local self-government units, the competent body of the Autonomous Province and the competent body of local self-government units may establish provincial, city and municipal youth councils).¹⁵

4. Youth Office (for the purpose of providing conditions for active involvement of young people in the life and work of the community, empowerment of young people, support for organizing various social activities for youth, learning and creative expression of the needs of young people, local self-government units may, within their powers, needs and possibilities, establish a youth office. The youth office is financed from the budget of the local self-government unit, as well as from other sources, and activities are carried out in accordance with the NSY and local action plans for the youth).¹⁶
5. Involvement of associations of the youth, associations for the youth and their unions in the implementation of local youth policy (financing the needs and interests of young people in the local self-government unit is carried out in accordance with the interests and needs of the local self-government unit – encouraging associations of the youth, associations for the youth and their unions to participate in the implementation of youth policy, including capacity building of youth associations on the territory of the local self-government).¹⁷
6. Establishment and operation of youth clubs, youth centers, etc.¹⁸

As part of the research of the National Youth Council of Serbia and the Group for Analysis and Public Policy Making on local youth councils,¹⁹ data on other instruments of local youth policy were collected.

15 Ibid., Art. 17.

16 Ibid., Art. 18.

17 Ibid., Art. 26.

18 Ibid.

19 All data based on: Boban Stojanović, *Lokalna omladinska politika: Saveti za mlade jedinica lokalne samouprave*, Krovna organizacija mladih Srbije i Grupa za analizu i kreiranje javnih politika, Beograd, 2021

In this Report, we will individually present all the instruments, and in connection with the Youth Council of the local self-government units, we will only list the numerical findings. All the findings of the local youth policy were made for all municipalities and cities (except the territory of Kosovo and Metohija, due to a different territorial and organizational structure, in accordance with the resolution of the United Nations Security Council 1244).

1) Local youth policy funding:

Previous research (Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation and Alternative Report on the Position and Needs of Youth from 2020) examined this topic on a sample of municipalities and cities, although even then the results were quite modest.

The research showed that 52 out of 145 local self-government units (35.9%) do not have allocated funds for financing local youth policy.

2) Local Action Plans for the Youth (LAPY):

The fact that as many as 106 (73.1%) local self-government units do not have a valid local action plan for the youth speaks best about the fact that local youth policy is not being implemented at an optimal level.

3) Youth councils of local self-government units:

A research done by the local youth councils showed that as many as 66 out of 145 (45.5%) local self-government units do not have a youth council. Additional analysis of inclusiveness and functionality of local youth councils showed that only seven local youth councils can be characterized as inclusive and functional, and that most youth councils are in fact in the category of “established to meet the requirement of establishing a local youth council” (29 local youth councils, which is 43.9% of the number of established youth councils).

4) Youth offices:

The research showed that 52 (35.9%) local self-government units do not have an established youth office and there are another 18 (12.4%) local self-government units that have a formally established youth office, however that office has no employees.

5) Involvement of associations of the youth, associations for the youth and their unions in the implementation of local youth policy:

Regarding the involvement of associations of the youth, associations for the youth and their unions in the implementation of local youth policy and funding of projects and programs for associations, the survey showed that 115 (79.3%) local self-government units do not have allocated funds for financing associations of the youth and associations for the youth (citizens' associations) for the implementation of local youth policy.

6) Youth clubs (clubs for the youth, youth centers):

The research showed that as many as 119 (82.1%) out of 145 local self-government units do not have a youth club. The research showed that only six (4.2%) out of 145 local self-government units have all the instruments of local youth policy. The research also showed that 23 (15.9%) out of 145 local self-government units do not have any instrument of local youth policy.

3. NORMATIVE FRAMEWORK

3.1 Law on Youth

In mid-2021, the Ministry of Youth and Sports announced the beginning of drafting of the Law on Amendments to the Law on Youth.²⁰ This announcement envisaged collecting written proposals and comments for a period of 10 days (until 14 June 2021), for only three defined areas. After that, it was announced that a working group will be established for this process and that a broad public debate will be opened regarding the amendments to the Law on Youth.²¹

National Youth Strategy (NYS) for the period from 2015 to 2025

In November 2020, the Ministry of Youth and Sports addressed the Republic Secretariat for Public Policies (RSPP) with information that it plans to launch a revision of the current National Youth Strategy (2015–2020). RSPP will provide methodological support to the Ministry so that the new document would be fully harmonized with the Law on Planning System, which includes compliance with other public policy documents with established measures concerning youth,²² and we expect that the revision of this strategy will soon be formally initiated.

20 MYS, no. 030–01–20/2021-04 dated 4 June 2021

21 See: <https://koms.rs/2021/06/11/zakon-o-mladima-zasto-se-i-tebe-tice/>

22 See: Boban Stojanović, (post)KOVID-19 mere i politike za mlade, Vestminsterska fondacija za demokratiju, Beograd, 2020

3.2 Action plans for the implementation of the “National Youth Strategy 2015 – 2025”

The first Action Plan for the implementation of the National Youth Strategy was adopted for the period 2015–2017. Details on its implementation are available in previous editions of the Alternative Report.

Implementation of the Action Plan 2018–2020

There are currently two evaluations of the implementation of the National Youth Strategy for the period covered by the Action Plan 2018–2020. The first evaluation, for 2018, was done by Ninamedija,²³ while the second evaluation, for 2019, was conducted by the Institute of Economic Sciences (IES).²⁴ The evaluation for 2020 is planned to be conducted in the third quarter of 2021.²⁵

When comparing the research conducted by the Institute of Economic Sciences on the implementation of the Action Plan for the implementation of the National Youth Strategy for 2019 and the research conducted by Ninamedija for 2018, there is a **noticeable improvement in the situation within one year**. For example, in the research for 2018, **only 20 out of 230 activities** were marked as 100% completed, while in the research for 2019 (conducted by IES), that number climbed to 152 out of 230. Also, in 2018, the average percentage of activity realization indicators was 34.8%, while in 2019 it was over 80%.

23 Ministry of Youth and Sports, <https://www.mos.gov.rs/storage/2021/02/izvestaj-o-realizaciji-2018-i-indikatori.pdf>

24 Ministry of Youth and Sports, <https://www.mos.gov.rs/public/documents/upload/sport/inspekcija/Godisnja%20evaluacija%20sprvodjenja%20%20NSM%202019.pdf>

25 Information based on the Request for access to information of public importance no. 96–00–00019/2021-02/1.

4. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND ATTITUDE OF POLITICAL ACTORS TOWARDS THE YOUTH

4.1 The youth in political institutions

According to the latest estimate of the population at the end of 2019, which was published on 1 July 2020,²⁶ there are 1,141,016 young people (15–30 years old) and they make up 16.47% of the population in Serbia or almost exactly 1/6 of the population.

In the current convocation of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, at the time of its constitution after the elections of 21 June, there were 28 MPs under the age of 30, thus young people were represented in this representative body with 11.2% of the total number of MPs. There are currently 22 young MPs in the National Assembly, which is 8.8% of the total number of MPs.

As was the case before, the Youth Committee has not been formed in this convocation of the National Assembly.²⁷

In the Government of the Republic of Serbia, no minister or member of the Government is in the category of young people.

Along with the parliamentary elections in 2020, local elections were held in almost all local self-government units in Serbia, and we collected data on the number of young mayors and municipal council

26 Estimated population at the end of 2019, Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, <https://www.stat.gov.rs/sr-cyrl/oblasti/stanovnistvo/proce-ne-stanovnistva/>

27 See: [http://www.parlament.gov.rs/narodna-skupstina-/vazna-dokumenta/poslovnik-\(precisceni-tekst\)/radna-tela-narodne-skupstine.1334.html](http://www.parlament.gov.rs/narodna-skupstina-/vazna-dokumenta/poslovnik-(precisceni-tekst)/radna-tela-narodne-skupstine.1334.html)

chairmen, as well as young members of municipal councils.²⁸ Within the highest functions in local self-government units, only the chairman of the municipal council of Požega – Đorđe Nikitović falls into the category of young people,²⁹ while no mayor in Serbia is in the category of young people.

A total of 21 (14.5%) local self-government units do not have young members of the council, and 16 (11%) local self-government units have more than 15% of young members of the council.

The local self-government units in which young people are most represented through their members of the council are Ada (27.6% of young members), Inđija (27% of young members), Požarevac (23.5% of young members) and Beočin (21.7% of young members).

4.2 Political participation of the youth

Young people obtain information about politics and political events mostly through social networks (78.1%), followed by web portals, family and friends (46.3%), while television has fallen to fourth place as a source of information (43.4%).

Table 5. Method of obtaining information about political developments in percentage (%)

Method:	2018	2019	2020	2021
Television	49.1	47.6	51.1	43.4
Daily newspapers	26.4	17.7	15	13.3
Social networks	69.8	62.2	73.6	78.1
Internet (web portals)	71.3	62.6	76.5	75.6

28 Data based on research: Boban Stojanović, *Lokalna omladinska politika: Saveti za mlade jedinica lokalne samouprave*, KOMS i GAJP, Beograd, 2021

29 Council Chairman of the municipality of Požega Đorđe Nikitović was born in 1994

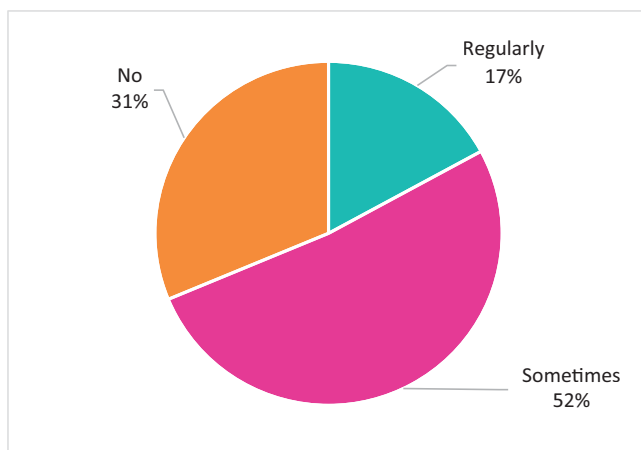
Method:	2018	2019	2020	2021
News portal applications	19.8	15.9	21	22.1
Family and friends	39.3	35.7	44.3	46.3

Compared to the previous year, we notice an increase in young people's interest in topics of corruption and crime, as well as environmental protection, while interest in topics related to economic and national issues has declined.

Table 6. Interest in political topics

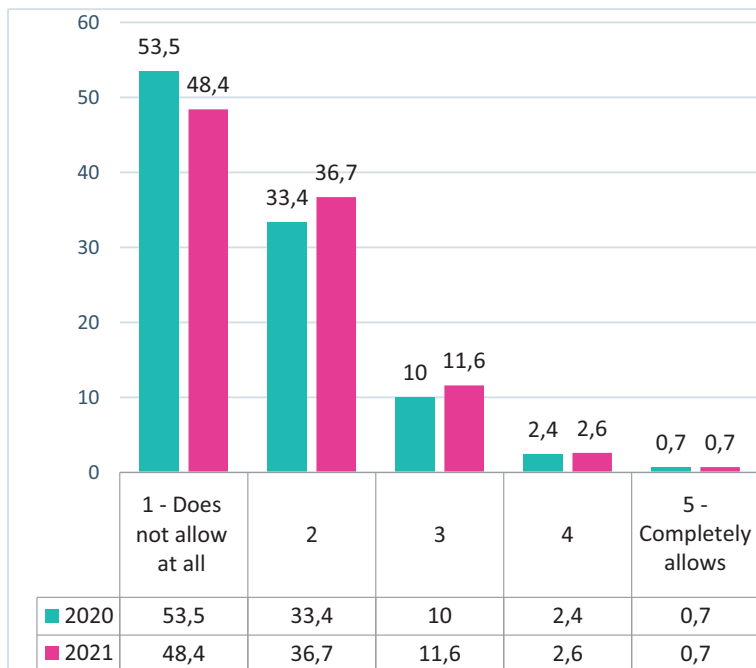
Topics	2020 (in %)	2021 (in %)
National topics (Kosovo, situation in the region, foreign policy of Serbia)	54.3	45.6
Economic topics (employment, government economic policy, investments)	56.8	48.6
Corruption and crime	44.9	51
Functioning/non-functioning of democracy in Serbia	50.6	47.3
Safety	36.5	33
European integration	21.3	21.8
Youth policy	38.9	41.4
Environmental protection measures	43.7	50.6
Dealing with the past (war crimes, reconciliation)	30.4	22.7

When asked whether they follow politics at the local (municipal/city) level, only 17.1% responded that they follow it regularly.

Graph 6. Do you follow politics at the local level?

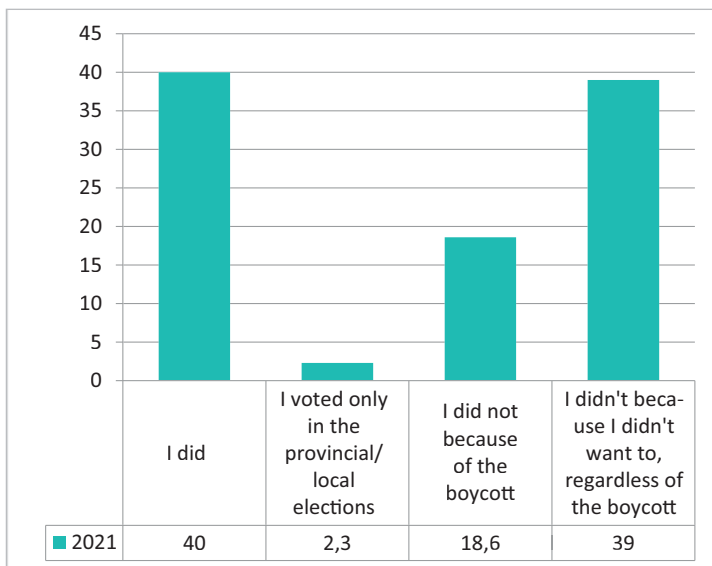
When asked “How much does the political system in Serbia allow young people to influence political processes and decisions?”, **on a scale from 1 to 5** (1 – Not at all; 5 – Completely) **the average answer of the participants is 1.71, which is a slightly higher average score compared to 2020 (1.64)**. Only 0.7% of young participants believe that the political system completely allows the influence of young people on political processes and decisions, the same as last year. The percentage of answer 1 – that it does not allow it at all decreased from 53.5% to 48.4% compared to the previous year.

Graph 7. Influence of young people on political processes and decisions (%)

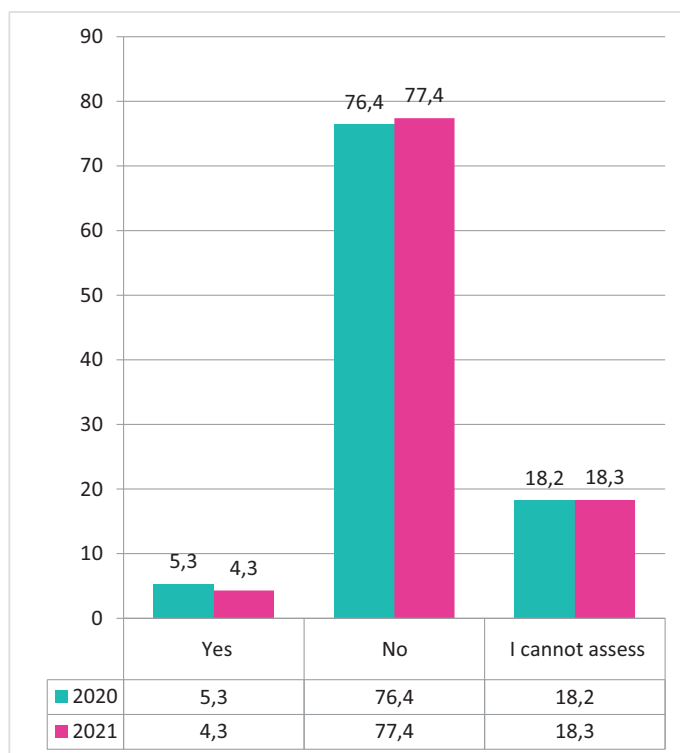


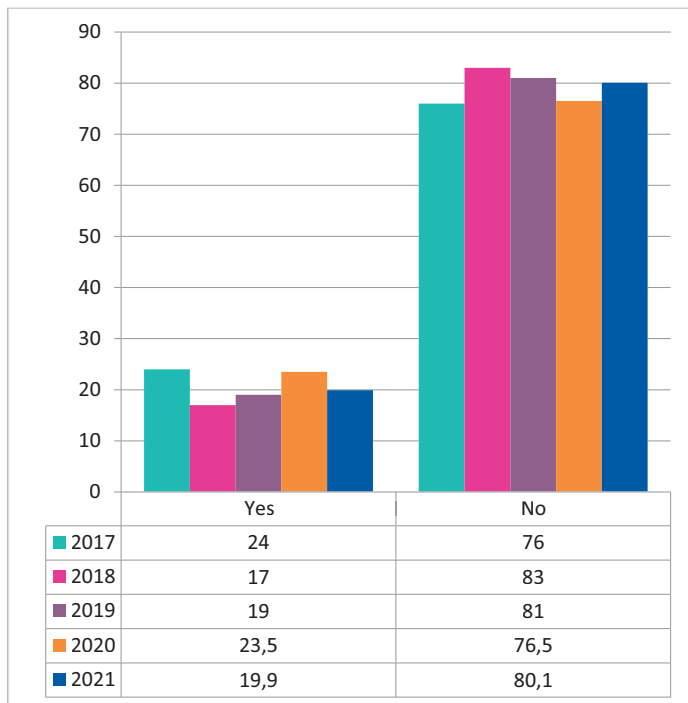
When asked “Did you vote in the previous elections, in 2020?”, 40% of respondents answered that they did, 2.3% of young people answered that they did vote but only in the provincial/local elections, 18.6% of young people stated that they did not vote because of the boycott, and 39% of young people said that they did not vote because they did not want to, regardless of the boycott.

Graph 8. Did you vote in the elections of the previous year, 2020 (in %, those who have the right to vote)?



We asked whether young people think that the elections in Serbia are free and fair; the percentage of those who believe that they are, decreased further by 1% compared to the previous year and amounts to 4.3%.

Graph 9. Are the elections in Serbia free and fair?

Graph 10. Is there a politician who you trust?

Compared to the previous year, the number of young people who answered that there was a politician who they trusted had decreased (by 3.6%).

In the research, we examined the trust that young people have in certain institutions. We asked them how much trust they have in institutions on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 – No trust at all 5 – Complete trust) and the average answers were as follows:

Table 7. Trust of young people in institutions

Institution	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Army	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.88	2.78
Police	* ³⁰	2.3	2.4	2.11	1.97
Media	*	1.6	1.5	1.59	1.61
Youth offices	2.6	2.55	2.5	2.37	2.31
Ministry of Youth and Sports	2.3	2.1	2.2	2.12	1.97
Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development	*	1.9	1.95	1.90	1.84
Ministry of Health	*	*	*	2.00	1.88
Church	2.2	2.1	2.4	2.6	2.61
Municipal Council Chairman/Mayor	1.9	1.65	1.7	1.67	1.57
National Assembly	1.7	1.5	1.6	1.52	1.43
Government of the Republic of Serbia	1.7	1.5	1.6	1.59	1.48
Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia	1.7	1.5	1.6	1.51	1.41
President of the Republic	1.6	1.5	1.6	1.56	1.50
Political parties	1.5	1.3	1.4	1.35	1.37

The main conclusion is that **young people do not have trust in any of the institutions surveyed (<3.00)**. No institution has an average score above 3, which shows that young people are completely distrustful and feel neglected.

³⁰ It was not included in the research

We also researched the trust that young people have in individuals who are in charge of some of the key institutions. The average scores are shown in the graph below.

Table 8. Trust of young people in individuals

Individual	2018	2019	2020	2021
Patriarch Porfirije	*	*	*	2.71
Aleksandar Vulin*	1.2	1.3	1.28	1.23
Nebojša Stefanović* ³¹	1.3	1.4	1.37	1.25
Ivica Dačić	*	*	*	1.42
Ana Brnabić	1.6	1.6	1.57	1.42
Aleksandar Vučić	1.7	1.6	1.56	1.46
Vanja Udovičić	2	2	1.92	1.65
Branko Ružić	*	*	*	1.34
Zlatibor Lončar	*	*	1.45	1.35

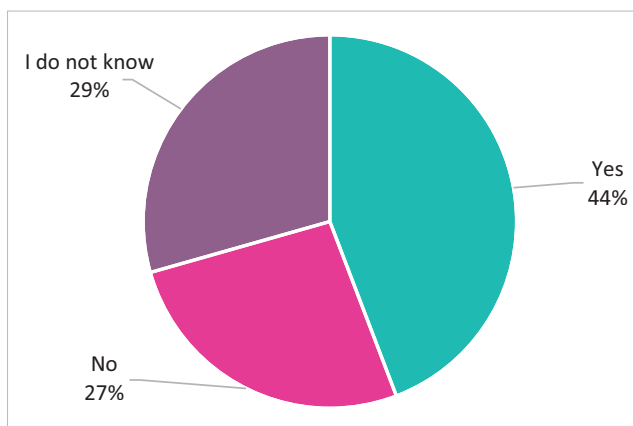
When we compare the average scores for institutions and individuals who are in charge of these institutions, we notice that the differences between the trust and the individual are very small in almost all cases, except in relation to institutions of army and police and Ministers who are in charge of those institutions (army – 2.78; Minister of Defense Nebojša Stefanović – 1.25; police – 1.97; Minister of Internal Affairs Aleksandar Vulin – 1.23). **Trust in the Minister of Youth and Sports Vanja Udovičić dropped most significantly compared to the previous year 2020, from 1.92 to 1.65.**

31 Aleksandar Vulin and Nebojša Stefanović swapped Ministries in the Government of the Republic of Serbia after the 2020 elections.

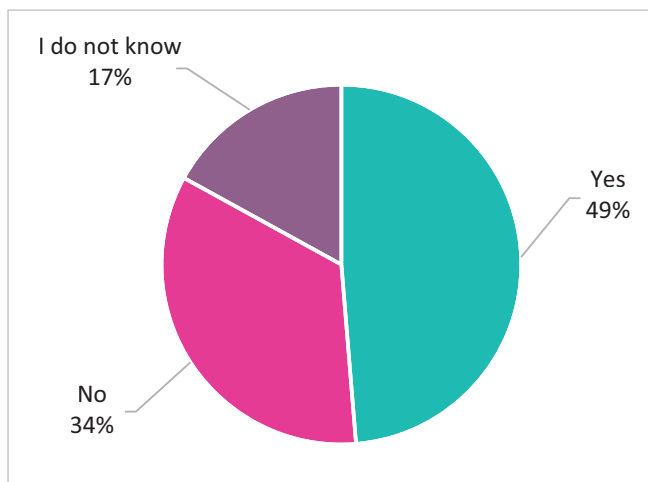
5. VALUES OF YOUNG PEOPLE

We asked young people whether democracy is the best form of political governance, and we obtained the following results:

Graph 11. Attitude of young people towards democracy



Graph 12. Attitude of young people towards leadership and leaders



We wanted to examine the attitude of young people towards gender equality through attitude statements on a scale from 1 – Completely disagree to 5 – Completely agree:

Table 9. Agreeing with claims about gender equality

Claim:	Average response rating:	Women	Men	Differences in responses ³²
Women in Serbia earn less than men when it comes to same jobs.	3.43	3.93	2.83	(1)

32 (1) There is a statistically significant difference in responses between young men and women.

(2) There is a statistically significant difference in responses between different age groups.

(3) There is a statistically significant difference in responses between the regions from which the respondents come.

Claim:	Average response rating:	Women	Men	Differences in responses
Caring for children and the house is still mostly a woman's job in Serbia.	3.92	4.28	3.51	(1)
People in Serbia find it harder to accept women than men in positions of power.	3.98	4.47	3.41	(1)
Quotas for women, for example in the Parliament, will help improve their position.	3.01	3.40	2.56	(1) (2) ³³
There are male and female occupations.	2.59	2.21	3.04	(1) (2) ³⁴
Women who put their careers ahead of starting a family are selfish	1.8	1.44	2.23	(1) (3) ³⁵
In today's society, women are equally free as men.	2.82	2.29	3.46	
In cases of rape, it might be a woman's fault	1.83	1.53	2.17	(1)

333435

- 33 There is a statistically significant difference among respondents aged 15–19 when it comes to quotas for women in institutions. This age group agrees more with the claim that quotas help improve the position of women.
- 34 The 15–19 age group agrees *less* with the claim that there are male and female occupations compared to other two age groups.
- 35 Young people from the region of Central and West Serbia agree more with the claim that women who put their careers ahead of their families are selfish, although their score is also 2.01.

We re-examined the attitudes of young people towards the position of LGBTQ population and their rights. We presented them with attitude statements in order to examine their attitude by rating the following situations on a scale from 1 to 5 in relation to how they would feel (1 – I would not mind at all; 5 – I would mind it very much):

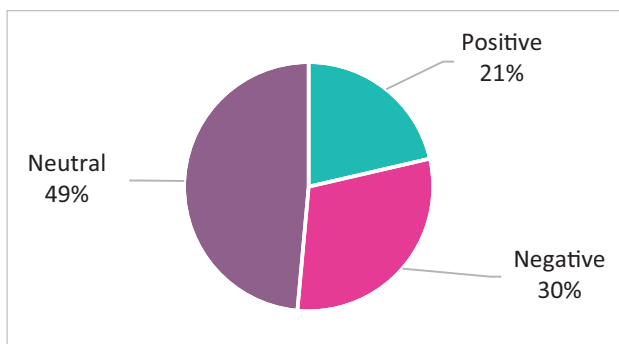
Table 10. Agreeing with the claims regarding the LGBTQ population

Claim:	Average score 2020	Average score 2021	Differences in responses ³⁶
If a member of the LGBTQ population was your child's teacher?	2.48	2.20	(1) ³⁷ (3) ³⁸
If a member of the LGBTQ population was your neighbor?	1.82	1.86	(1) (3)
If members of the LGBTQ population were more present in the media?	2.64	2.48	(1) (3)
If a gay parade was held in your city/town?	3.05	2.93	(1) (2) ³⁹ (3)

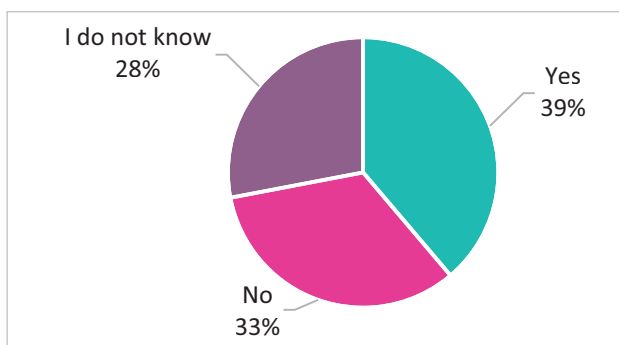
- 36 (1) There is a statistically significant difference in responses between young men and women
 (2) There is a statistically significant difference in responses between different age groups.
 (3) There is a statistically significant difference in responses between the regions from which the respondents come.
- 37 In all categories except same-sex marriages, there is a difference in attitudes based on gender, which is statistically significant. Young women would be less bothered by these phenomena than young men.
- 38 There is a statistically significant difference in all categories when it comes to respondents from the region of Central and West Serbia, who are more bothered by these phenomena.
- 39 There is a statistically significant difference between respondents aged 15–19 years. This age group would be less bothered by the gay parade.

Claim:	Average score 2020	Average score 2021	Differences in responses
If same-sex marriages became legal?	2.74	3	(3)
If same-sex couples were allowed to adopt children?	2.98	3.12	(1) (3)

Graph 13. Attitudes of young people towards the EU

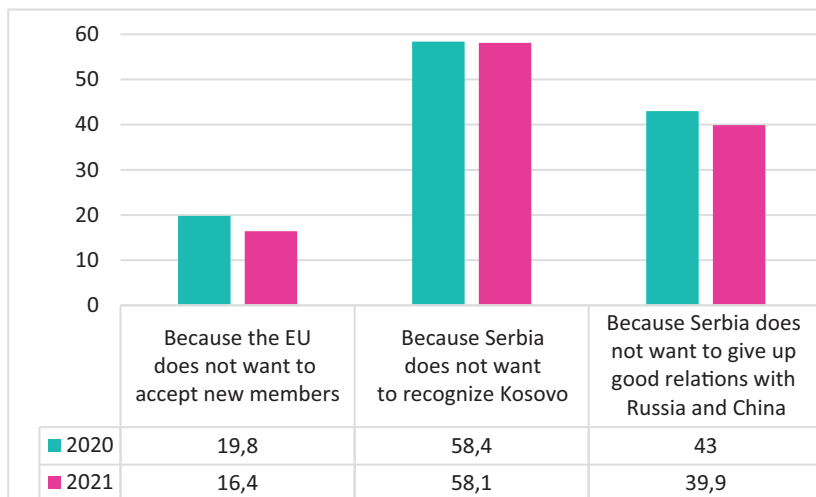


Graph 14. Attitudes of young people towards Serbia's path to the EU

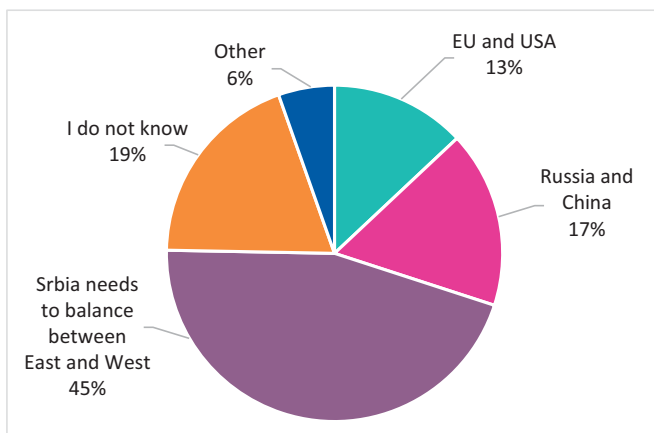


We asked young people why, in their opinion, Serbia has not yet become an EU member, and they believe that it is mostly because Serbia does not want to recognize Kosovo (58.1% – unchanged compared to 2020), as well as because Serbia has not implemented all the reforms necessary for the membership (57.9% – a slight increase in this belief).

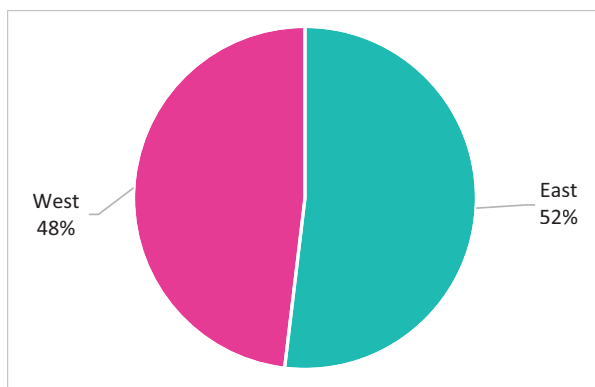
Graph 15. Why has Serbia not become a member of the EU (part one)



Graph 16. Attitudes of young people towards Serbia's foreign policy



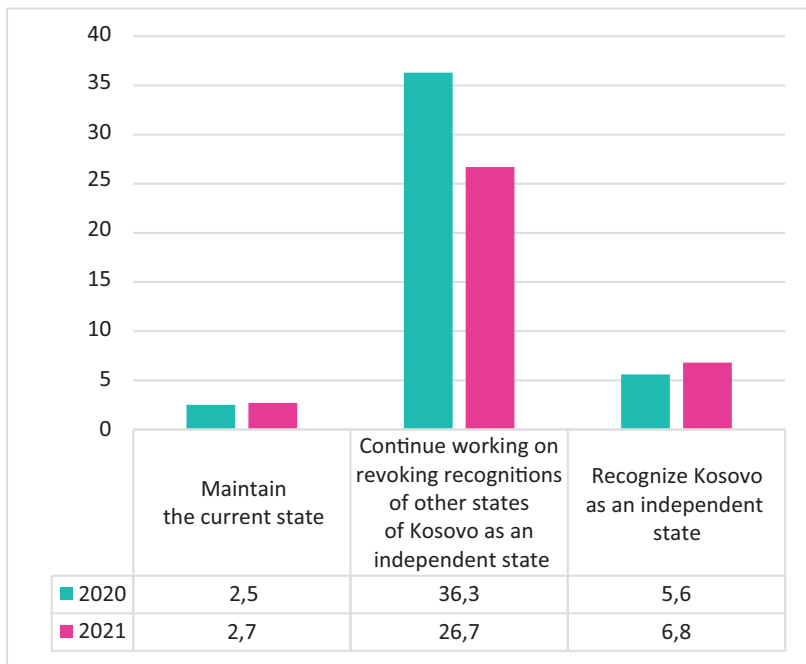
Graph 17. Attitudes of young people towards choosing a side with regard to Serbia's foreign policy



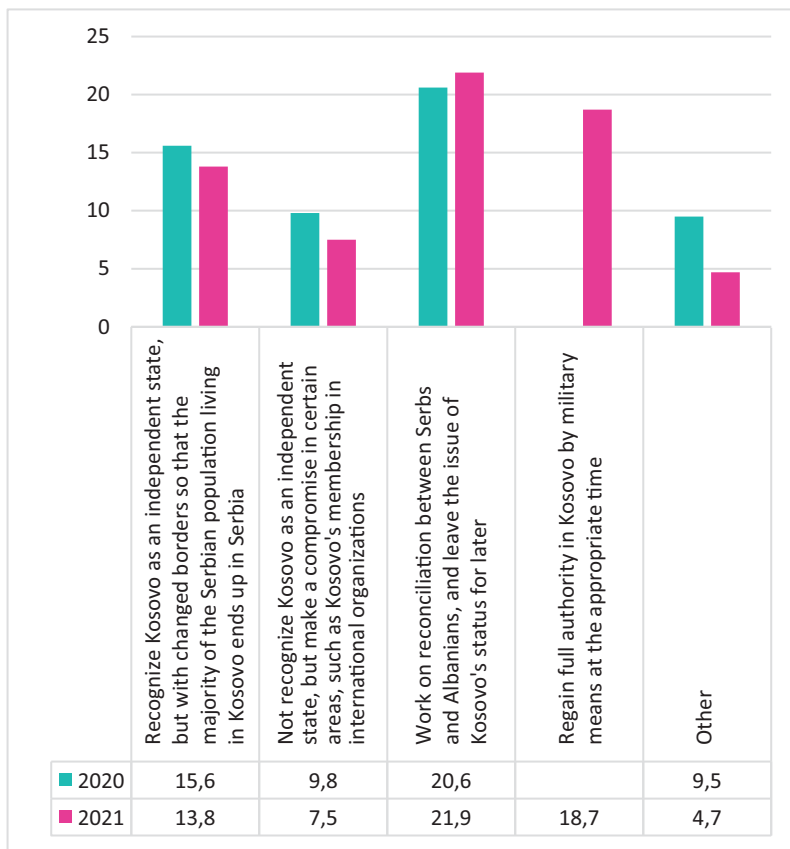
With regard to the first question about the foreign policy orientation of Serbia, there are no statistically significant differences on any grounds (gender, age, region). When it comes to the West-East dichotomy, there are no statistically significant differences in responses in relation to age and region, while there is a very slight difference between the genders – young men opt more for the East.

This year, we repeated the questions about Kosovo, as well as about NATO. We asked what Serbia, in the opinion of young people, should do on the issue of Kosovo, and this year we added the option of “regaining authority in Kosovo by military means”, and the answers are as follows:

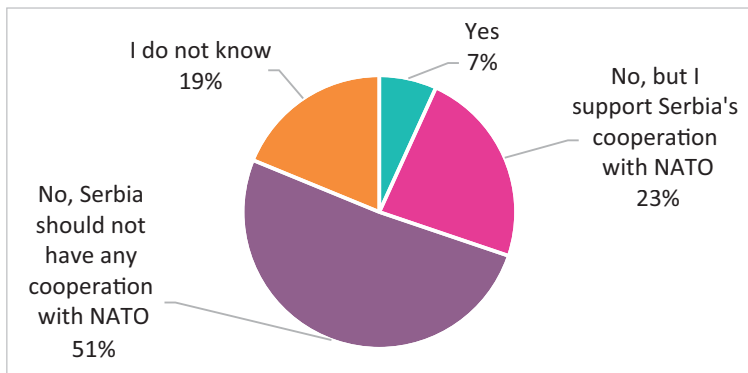
Graph 18. Attitudes towards Kosovo (part one)



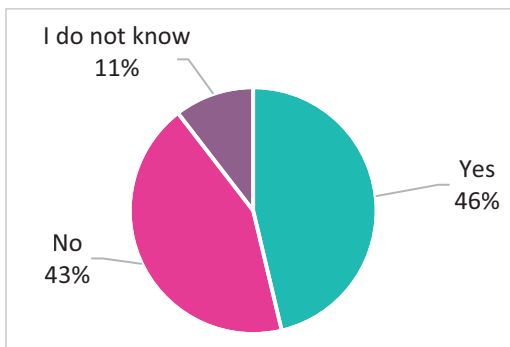
Graph 19. Attitudes towards Kosovo (part two)



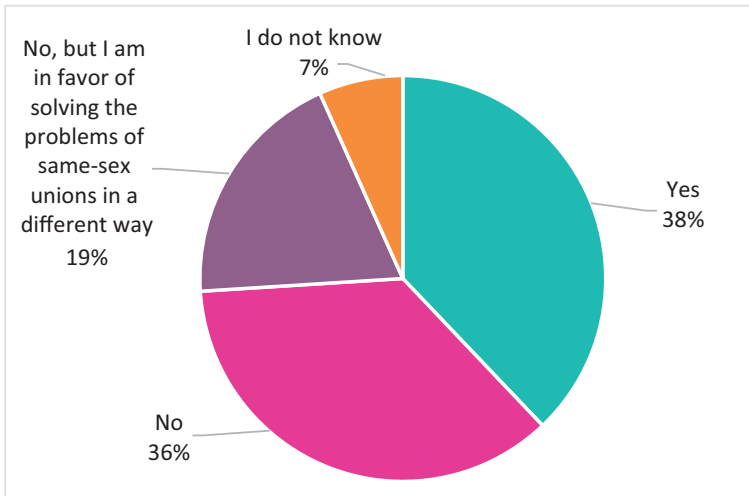
Graph 20. Attitudes of young people towards joining NATO



Graph 21. Attitudes of young people towards the introduction of military service for men



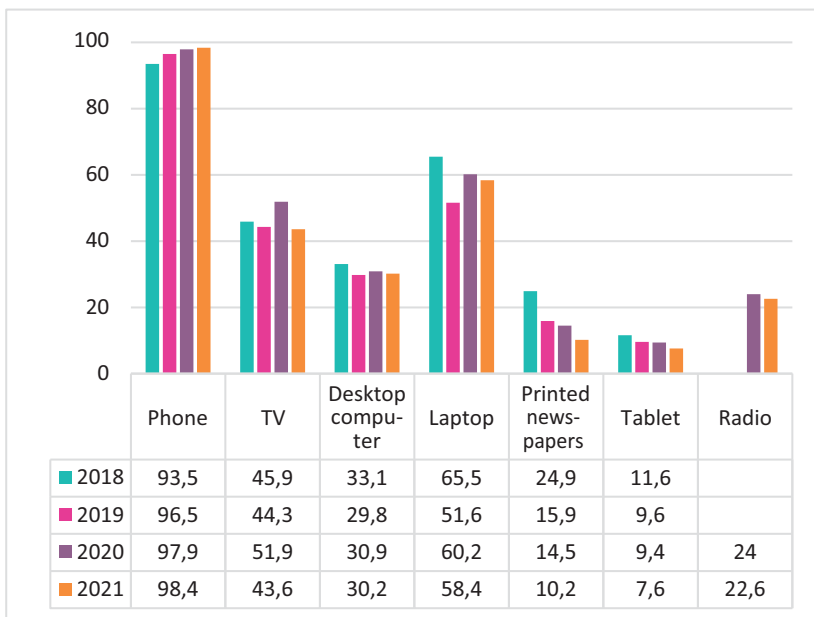
Graph 22. Attitudes of young people towards the adoption of the Law on Same-Sex Unions

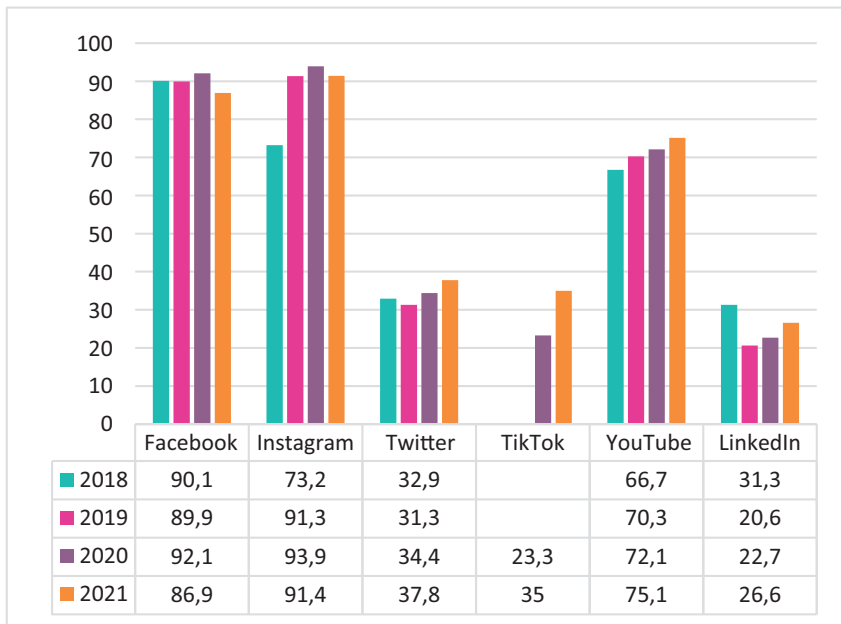


6. MEDIA, SOCIAL NETWORKS AND APPLICATIONS

We asked young people what devices they use for obtaining information. As we can see from the answers, most of them use the phone to stay informed (as much as 98.4%), followed by laptop (58.4%) and television (43.6% – a slight decrease).

Graph 23. What devices do you use to stay informed? (in %)



Graph 24. On which social networks do you have profiles? (in %)

7. YOUTH AND THE LABOR MARKET

According to the official data of the National Employment Service⁴⁰, the number of young people who are unemployed in April 2021 is 115,533, which represents 21.04% of the total number of unemployed. More than one fifth of the unemployed in the Republic of Serbia are young people aged 15 to 30. Compared to last year, youth unemployment increased by 10,831 young people or 10.34%.

Table 11. Percentage share of unemployed youth by regions in relation to the total number of unemployed young people

Region	Number of unemployed young people (15–30 years)	Percentage of unemployed young people in relation to the total number of unemployed young people
Belgrade region	12 449	10.8%
Vojvodina region	22 593	19.6%
Central and West Serbia region	40 279	34.9%
South and East Serbia region	32 673	28.3%
Kosovo and Metohija region	7 539	6.53%
Total	115 533	100%

Source: National Employment Service

40 National Employment Service, Monthly Statistical Bulletin – April 2021, http://www.nsz.gov.rs/live/digitalAssets/15/15962_nsz_bilten_april_2021.pdf

The data show that **more than a third of unemployed young people are from the region of Central and West Serbia**, as was the case in previous years. A slightly smaller percentage of unemployed youth is from the region of South and East Serbia, and even smaller percentage of unemployed young people is from the Vojvodina region. The lowest percentage of unemployed youth are from Belgrade and the Kosovo and Metohija region.

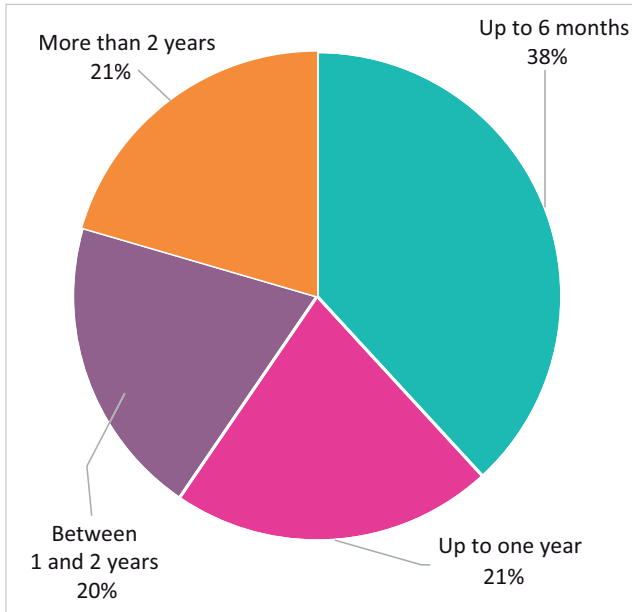
According to a Department Manager at the NES, the program “My First Salary” was planned to include 10,000 young people. 23,014 young people opened an account on the “My First Salary” portal. Of that number, 17,061 candidates successfully applied for one of 12,559 positions with 7,524 employers. The Department Manager at the NES states that the program included a total of 8,453 unemployed persons, namely 5,541 persons with secondary education and 2,912 persons with higher education, or 66% of persons with secondary education and 34% of persons with higher education.

Ilija Knežević, the Department Manager, also gave us an overview of employers: the largest number of individuals joined the private sector, 7,165 or 85% (4,790 with secondary education and 2,375 with higher education), while 1,288 individuals or 15% were employed in the public sector (751 with secondary education and 537 with higher education).

More than 10,000 employers have expressed interest in participating in the program, registered on the “My First Salary” portal and reported the need for over 17,000 positions for 28,000 jobs. Out of the total number of registered employers, 8,540 met the requirements of the public invitation to participate in the program, with 14,294 positions approved for hiring 22,740 unemployed persons.

Upon completing the process of selecting the candidates, which was carried out in several cycles due to the large number of registered participants, a total of 5,177 employers were included in the “My First Salary” program.

Statistically speaking about 1% of young people left the program before its completion.

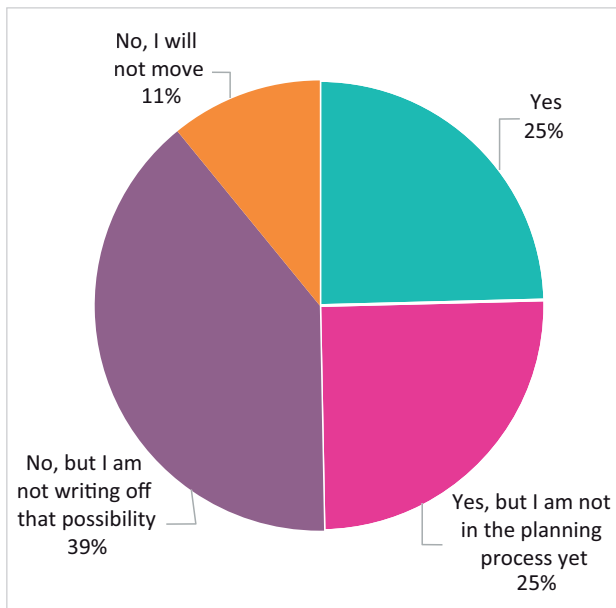
Graph 25. How long have you been unemployed?

We asked young people what is important to them when it comes to employment – the most important thing is earnings with 90.3%, and all the answers are shown in the table below:

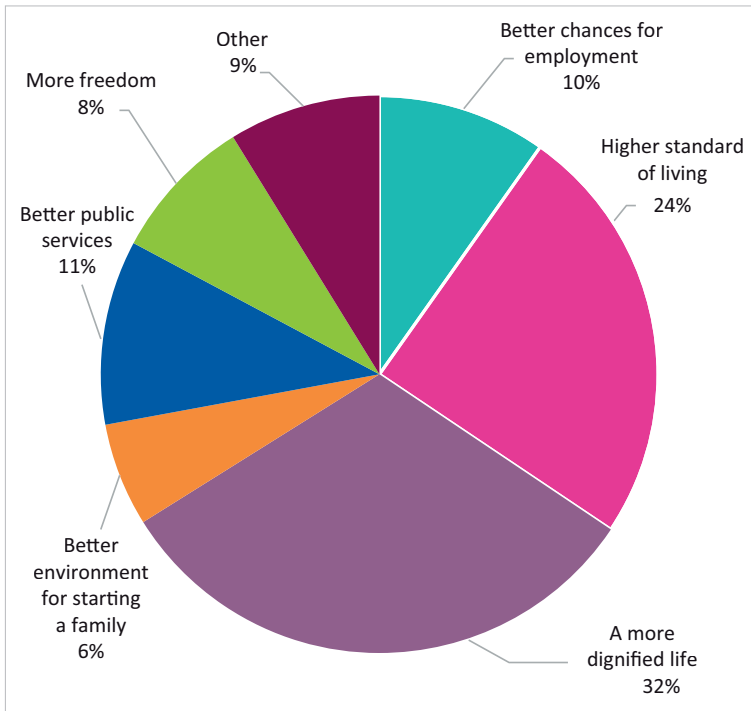
Table 12. What is important to you when it comes to employment?

Importance	2020 (in %)	2021 (in %)
Earnings	90.3	90.9
Opportunity for advancement	78.2	77.4
Working hours	63.4	70.8
Learning opportunities	55.7	60.3
Good relations with superiors (bosses)	*	61,1
Good relations with colleagues		71.9

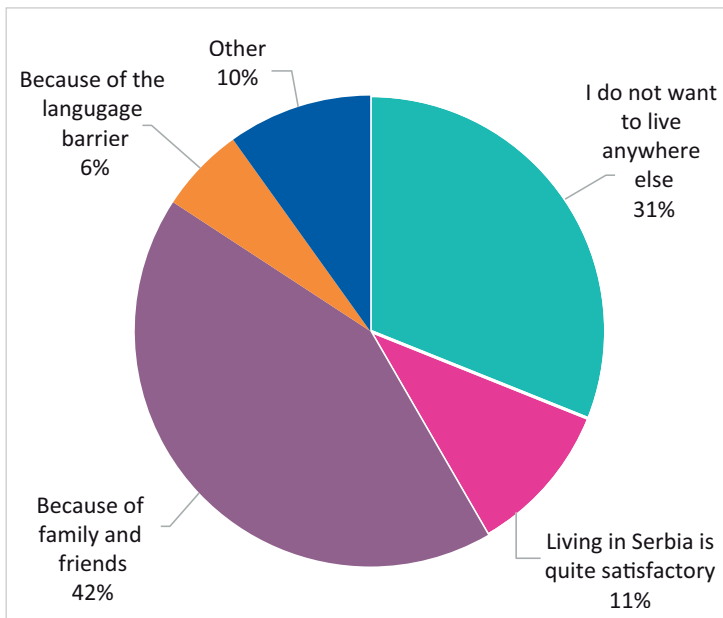
Graph 26. Are you planning to move out of the country?



Graph 27. Why would you move out of the country?



Graph 28. Why would you not move out of the country?

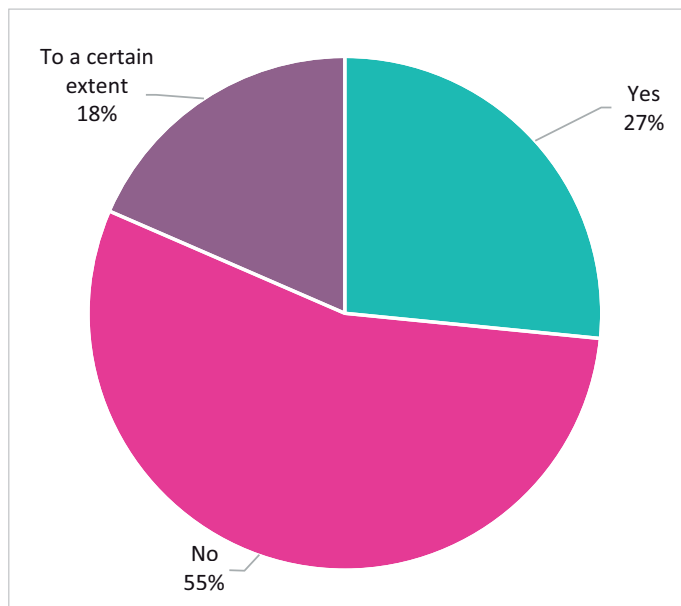


8. YOUTH AND EDUCATION

In the calendar year 2020, in the Republic of Serbia, 41,331 students graduated at all levels of studies and from all higher education institutions, which is about 1,000 less than in the calendar year 2019. Of the total number of graduated students, **16,488 or 39.9% are male and 24,843 or 60.1% are female**. A total of 32,680 students graduated from state and private universities – **of which 78.9% or 25,794 students graduated from state and 21.1% or 6,886 students from private universities**. 8,651 students graduated from public and private higher vocational schools – 86.6% of them from state, and 13.4% from private higher vocational school.⁴¹

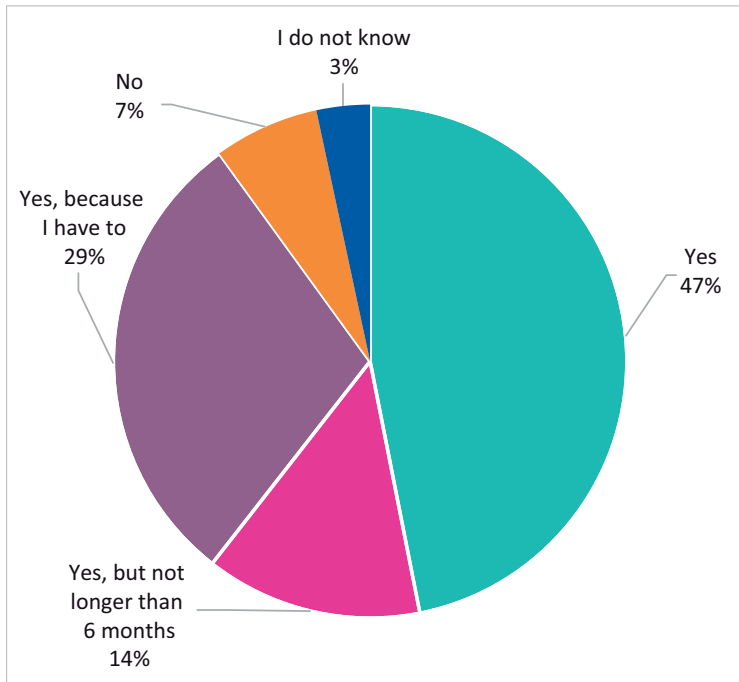
41 Graduated students 2020, Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, <https://publikacije.stat.gov.rs/G2021/Pdf/G20211164.pdf>

Graph 29. Employment in the position for which young people were educated



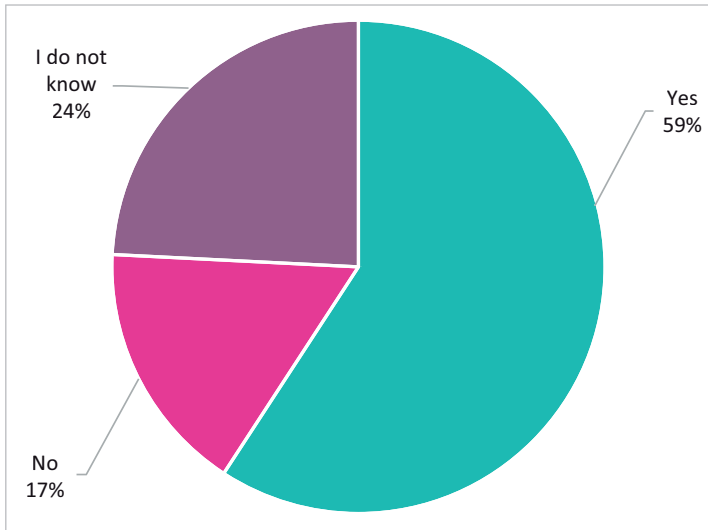
We also asked young people if they are willing to do other jobs until they find a job in their profession. Most of them, **as many as 90%, are willing to do other jobs until they find an adequate one in their profession**, stating that they would work because they have to – 29%, and 14% of them would not work for more than six months. Only 7% would not work, and 3% do not know, which points, as in the previous report, to the conclusion that young people in Serbia are not picky when it comes to work and that they would work anywhere if they are presented with an opportunity.

Graph 30. Are you willing to do other jobs?



We asked whether young people are willing to retrain if there is no need in the labor market for their educational profile, and three fifths of young people responded positively. The impression that young people are **willing to adapt to market conditions, from working outside the profession to willingness to retrain, wait for a job, etc.**, remains unchanged.

Graph 31. Would you be willing to retrain if there is no need in the labor market for your educational profile?



9. ACTIVISM AND VOLUNTEERING

Table 13. The biggest problems of young people (in %)

Problem	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Unemployment	89.1	83.1	74.7	80.3	74
Education system	77.9	69.0	70.2	69.1	71.6
Value system	76.4	79.6	76	75.5	73.9
Corruption	50.4	55.9	54.7	51.7	51.8
Small influence on decision making	47.5	48.5	39.7	55.1	56.7
Hopelessness	41.8	48.3	43.1	43.7	47.1
Lack of cultural events	35.1	34.2	44.3	43.8	43.4
Safety	18.4	26.7	31.2	26.8	31.8
Lack of solidarity	*	*	*	47.9	48.6
Lack of tolerance in society	*	*	*	56.2	60.2
Insufficient freedom of expression in society	*	*	*	48.7	53.2

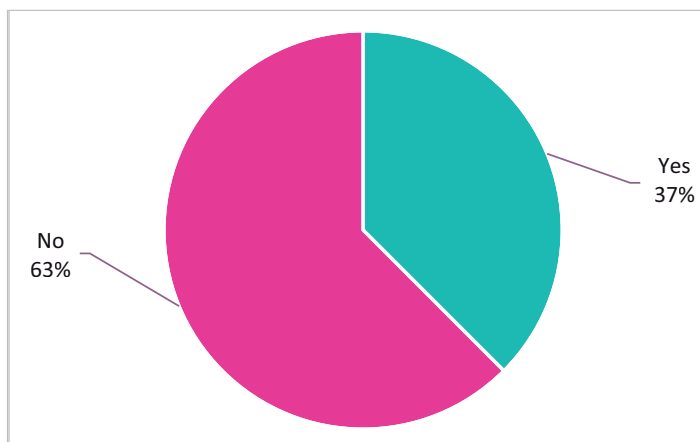
Table 14. Youth activism

Activity	2020 (in %)	2021 (in %)
Protest organized by a political party	14,2	11
Protest organized by associations	28.5	26.8
Signing a petition	69.7	78.8
Participation in forums	36.1	24.9

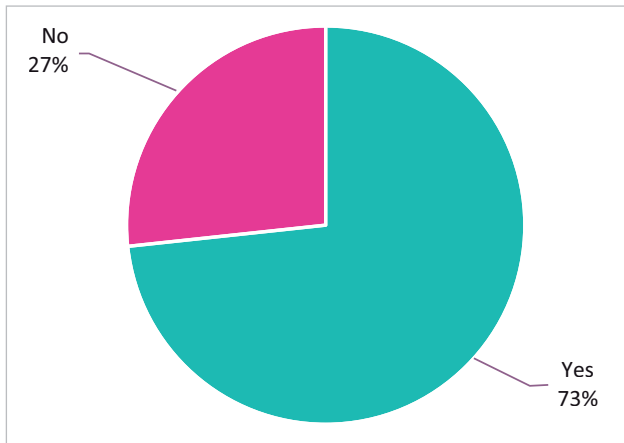
10. SAFETY AND HEALTH OF YOUNG PEOPLE

In the questionnaire, we asked young people whether they are exposed or were exposed to any form of violence, and according to the results **more than a third of young people suffered physical and digital violence, and almost three quarters suffered verbal violence.**

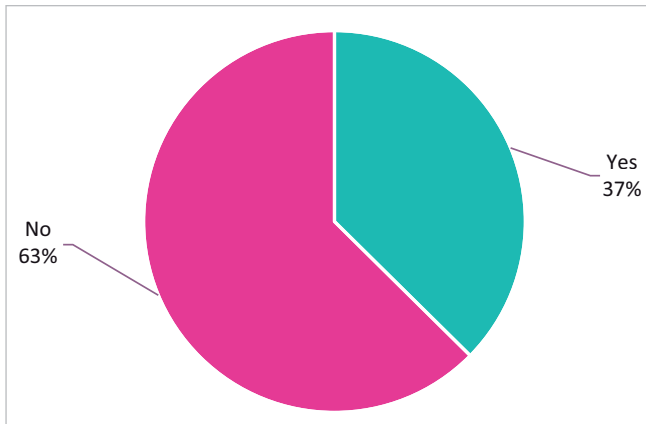
Graph 32. Exposure to physical violence



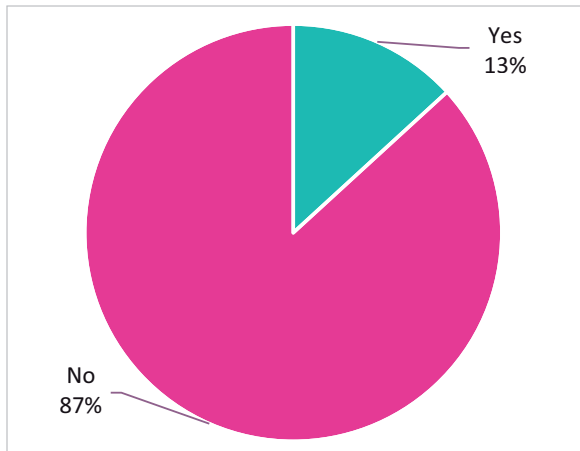
Graph 33. Exposure to verbal violence



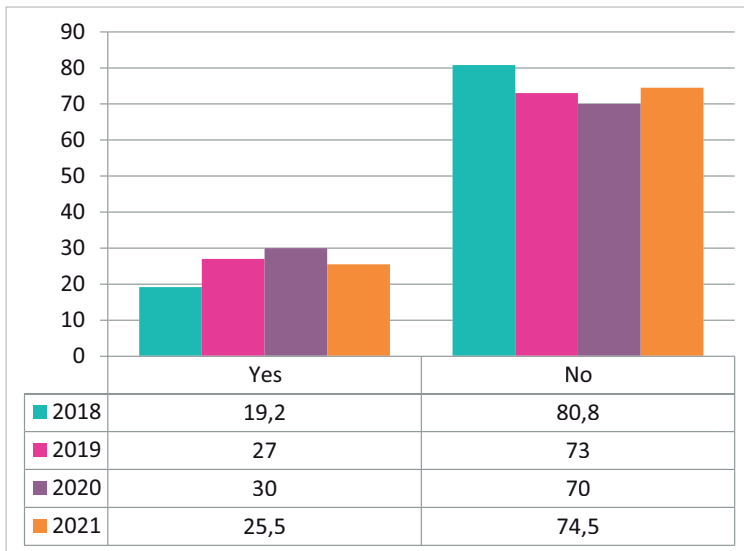
Graph 34. Exposure to digital violence



Graph 35. Exposure to sexual violence (all young people)



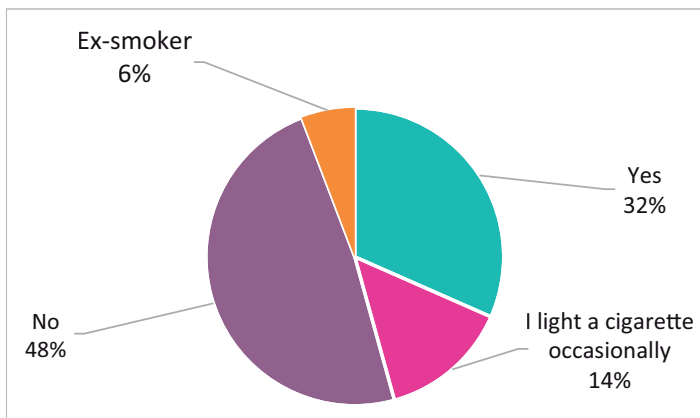
Graph 36. Can violence be justified?



This year, we had several questions regarding health and habits of young people regarding consumption of psychoactive substances.

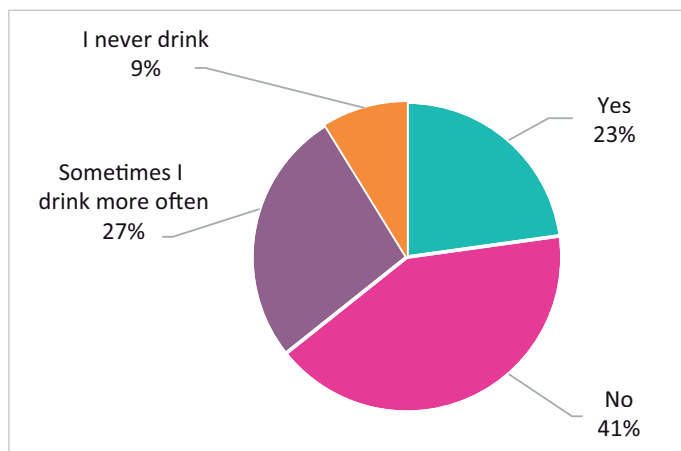
So, we asked young people if they are smokers, and about a third of them said that they are active smokers.

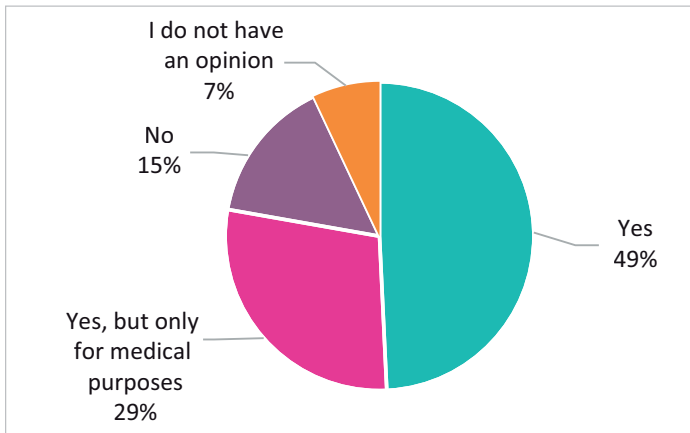
Graph 37. Are you a smoker?



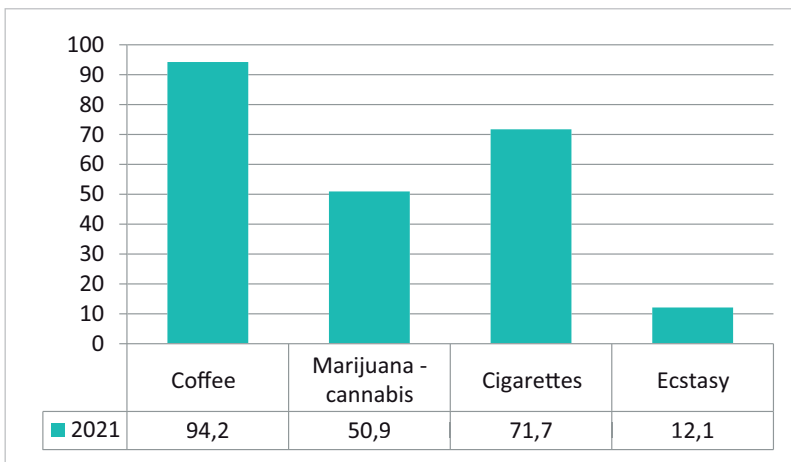
We asked young people if they drink more than once a week on average.

Graph 38. Do you drink more than once a week?

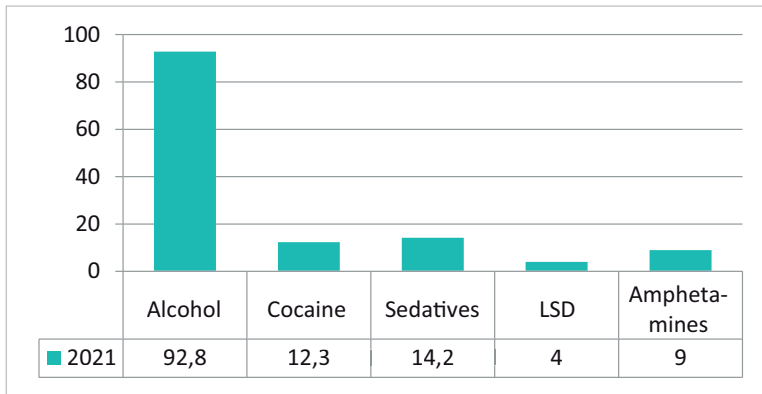


Graph 39. Support for marijuana legalization

We also asked young people to list the substances they have used at least once:

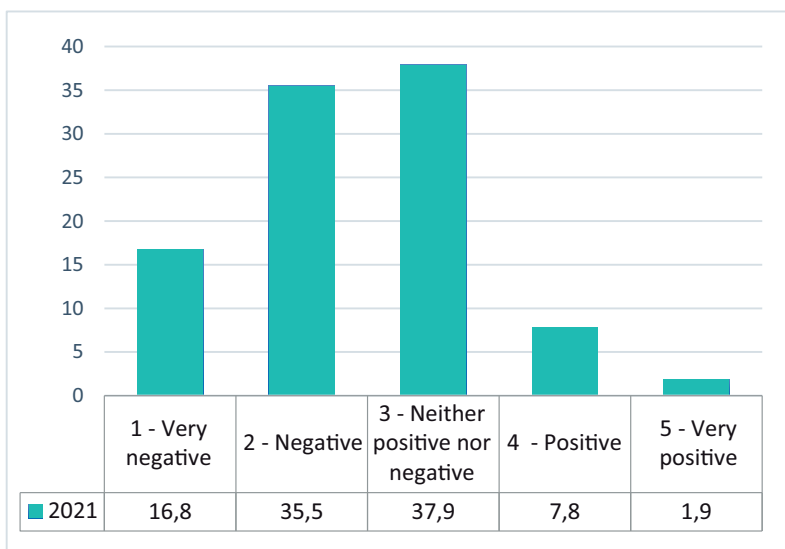
Graph 40. Substances that young people have tried at least once (part one)

Graph 41. Substances that young people have tried at least once (part two)

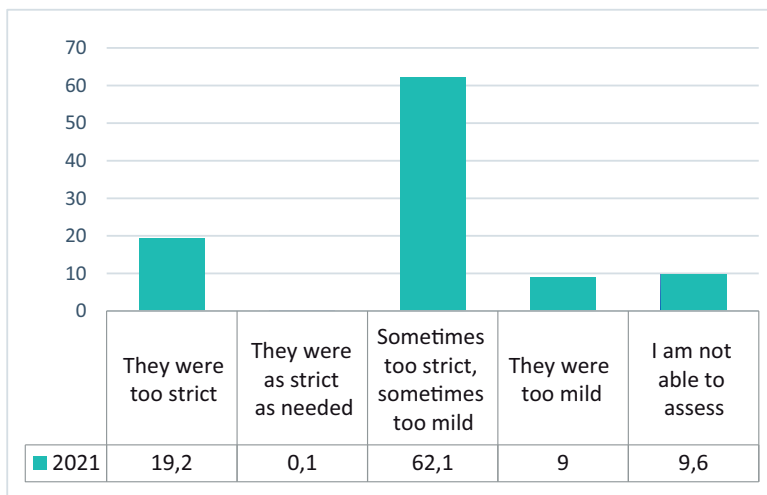


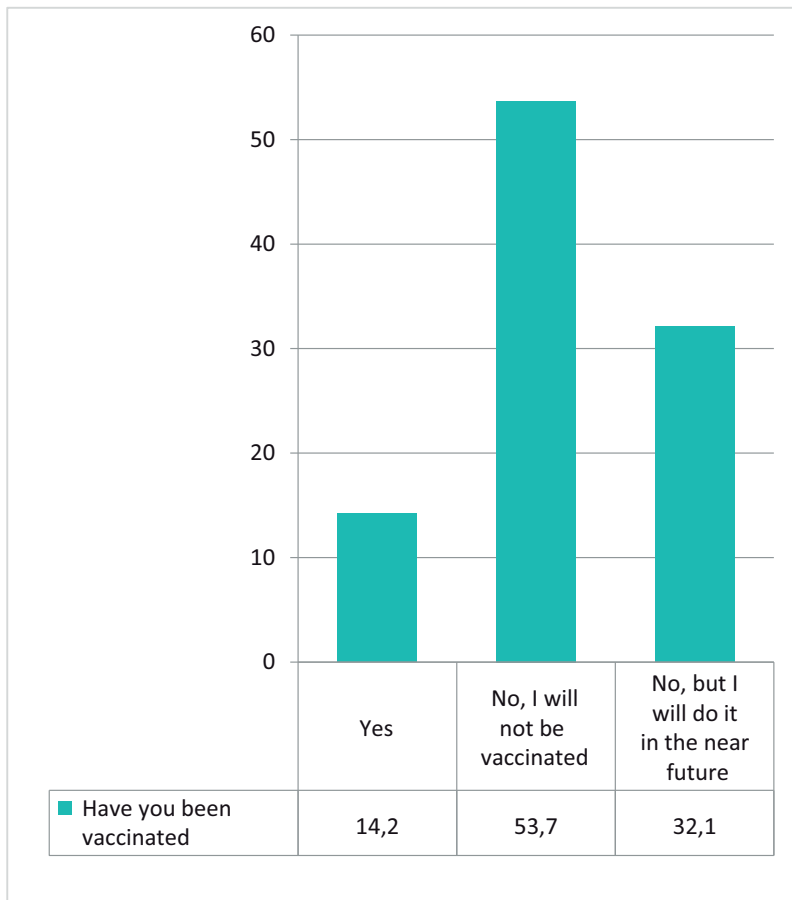
11. YOUNG PEOPLE AND COVID-19

Graph 42. What kind of impact did the pandemic have on you?



Graph 43. Evaluate state measures throughout the coronavirus pandemic.



Graph 44. Have you been vaccinated against coronavirus?



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