

ALTERNATIVE REPORT

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

2022



National Youth Council of Serbia

NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL OF SERBIA
ALTERNATIVE REPORT ON THE POSITION AND NEEDS
OF YOUTH IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA – 2022

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IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA – 2022

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NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL OF SERBIA

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OF SERBIA – 2022**

Belgrade
2022

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1. ABOUT KOMS

National Youth Council of Serbia (KOMS) is an association of youth and for youth organizations founded on 12 March 2011. It – Analyze public policies (laws, strategies, budgets ...) and propose amendments thereto,

- Cooperate with similar foreign organizations and represent young people from Serbia in the field of international cooperation,
- Engage in public advocacy at the national level,
- Contribute to building organizational capacities of member organizations.

Mission of the National Youth Council of Serbia (KOMS):

KOMS is an advocacy platform that represents the interests of young people, ensures active participation and develops systemic solutions in order to improve the position of young people through developing strategic partnerships, cross-sectoral and international cooperation, as well as capacity building of member organizations and other youth policy actors.

Vision of the National Youth Council of Serbia (KOMS):

A stimulating environment in which young people represent their interests and actively participate in the development of society. You can read more about KOMS, current projects and activities on the official KOMS website www.koms.rs or on the page we launched to promote and establish a structured dialogue with young people www.dijalog.rs.

Its membership currently includes 110 youth and for youth organizations. KOMS is the highest independent representative body of youth in Serbia, whose mission is to develop youth policy by representing the interests of young people, developing partnerships with institutions, intersectoral and international cooperation, as well as to encourage active youth participation and organizational development of its members.

In accordance with Article 14 of the Law on Youth, on 21 July 2020, the National Youth Council of Serbia was recognized as an umbrella association, which gave the association the legal status to represent the interests of its members, propose candidates for the Youth Council and participate in the process of drafting and implementing the Strategy and other documents in the field of youth policy.

KOMS carries out its mission by advocating the development of mechanisms for youth participation in decision-making processes and creating proposals for practical policy in areas of importance for young people, but also by encouraging, supporting and promoting youth participation, youth organization and networking, as well as capacity building and organizational sustainability of youth and for youth associations. KOMS is a full member of the European Youth Forum (EYF).

Roles of KOMS are to:

- Recognize the needs and represent the interests of young people,
- Represent a platform for dialogue and cooperation, a forum for the exchange of information, experiences and views of member organizations,
- Promote, encourage and support youth organization,
- Encourage cooperation of institutions with youth and participate in institutional decision-making processes that are important for young people, according to the principle of co-management.

2. RESEARCH METODOLOGY

The research was conducted in the period from May to July 2022. 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 2017/2018/2019/2020/2021. 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](#), [Alternative Report on the Position and Needs of Youth in the Republic of Serbia – 2020](#) and [Alternative Report on the Position and Needs of Youth in the Republic of Serbia – 2021](#).

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. A total of two interviews were conducted on the following topics:

1. Work and functioning of the Youth Council (structured interview: Mihajlo Matković, member of the Youth Council);
2. Functioning, process and development of “My First Salary” program in the second year of the realization (structured interview: Ilija Knežević, Head of the Education and Training Department at the National Employment Service).

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. Open-ended and closed-ended questions (possible responses, multiple response questions and rating scales) were combined, and the questionnaire consisted of 99 questions. None of the questions was mandatory for the participants to answer. A total of 1,117 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: 1.117
Research technique – data collection technique: online survey	Research period: May and June 2022.
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:

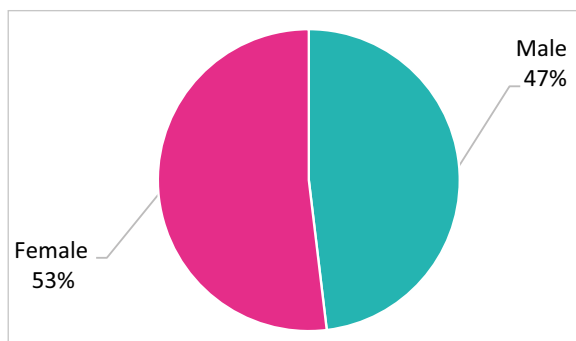
The questionnaire was filled out by young people of all age groups according to the age of the participants. For ease of presentation, young people were divided into three groups based on their age:

Table 2. Sample with regard to age

Groups:	Age range	Percentage of participants (%)
Group 1	youth from 15 to 19 years of age	34,6
Group 2	youth from 20 to 24 years of age	34,2
Group 3	youth from 25 to 30 years of age	31,2

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)	44,4
Town	22,7
Municipality with a population over 30.000	9,1
Municipality with a population under 30.000	11,1
Municipality with a population under 10.000	12,26

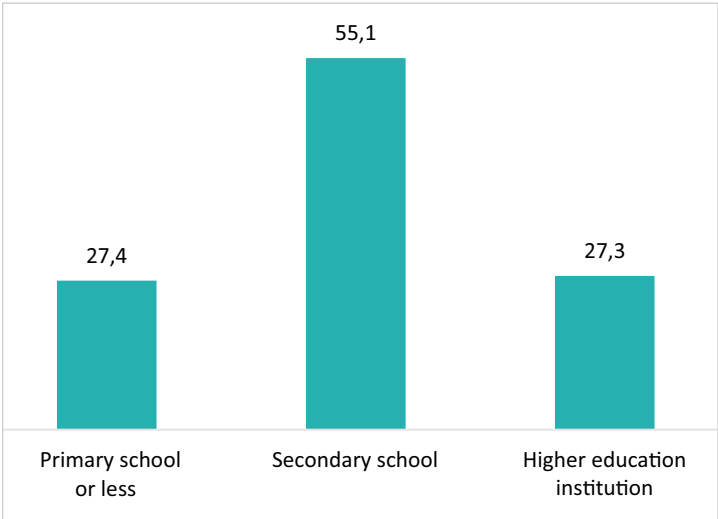
With regard to the region in which the participants live, they come from:

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

Region	Percentage of participants (%)
Belgrade region	27,7
Vojvodina region	25,9
West and Central Serbia	23,8
East and South Serbia	22,6

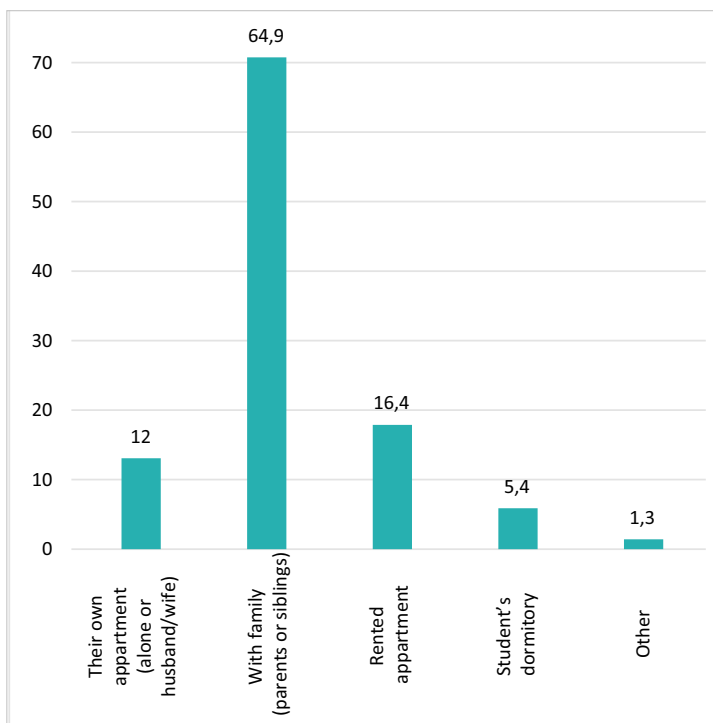
According to the level of education acquired, participants were divided into the following categories:

Graph 2. Sample with regard to acquired education



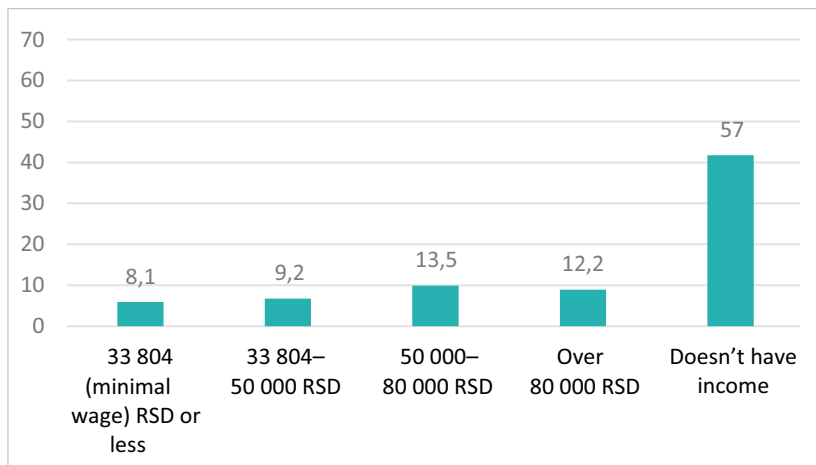
According to the type of housing, participants live in:

Graph 3. Sample with regard to the type of housing



Research shows that just 12% of youth live in their own apartment, and that most of the young, 64,9% of them, live in the family apartment, and more than 15% live in the rented one. This fact certainly affects the creation of an environment in which young people will later become independent and grow up, create their families, and it is also an indicator that the issue of housing for youth is one of the priorities in the youth policy, but also another important state issue. This certainly has a direct impact on the phenomenon of young people leaving the country, which is definitely one of the biggest problems facing Serbia as a society. Policies that would encourage earlier independence, would certainly reduce the motivation of young people to leave the country.

According to the monthly income, the participants were divided in the following categories:

Graph 4. Sample with regard to monthly income

As many as 8.1% of young people receive the minimum wage or less, an additional 9.2% earn less than RSD 50,000, and even 57% do not earn at all. It should be emphasized here that, although a large part of young people are in the process of education (secondary schools and colleges), the data obtained are still worrying. Low wages or their absence affect the late independence of young people from their parents, which directly affects the quality of life of young people in Serbia.

According to the family status, it can be concluded that it is particularly difficult for young people to enter into family relationships, which can be connected to the previous two issues, lack of the independent life and low earnings.

Table 5. Sample with regard to the family status

Family status	Percentage of participants (%)
Married/Cohabitation	10,2
Single	88,8
Divorced	1

According to the some kind of disability, research shows that 1,2% of young people has some kind of the disability.

Table 6. Sample with regard to the existence of some kind of disability

Disability	Percentage of participants (%)
Yes	1,2
No	98,8

3. NORMATIVE FRAMEWORK

3.1. Law on Youth

On July 27, 2021, the Minister of Youth and Sports issued a decision on the establishment of a Special Working Group for preparing the Draft Law on Amendments to the Law on Youth.¹ The working group is composed of 26 members, among whom are representatives of the state administration, as well as youth and for youth organizations, including two representatives of the National Youth Council of Serbia (hereinafter referred to as KOMS). The deadline for execution of the task of the Special Working Group was set for September 30, 2021. The first meeting of the Special Working Group was held on August 2, the same day as the first meeting of the Special Working Group for drafting the proposal of the National Youth Strategy (see next section).²

On September 27, 2021, the Minister of Youth and Sports issued a decision that moved the deadline for the execution of the Special Working Group task to December 1, 2021, citing the epidemiological situation as a cause of delay.³ The deadline was officially postponed two more times – to January 31 based on the decision dated December 1⁴ and to March 15 based on the decision dated

1 MoYS, <https://www.mos.gov.rs/storage/2021/08/resenje-zom.pdf>

2 MoYS, <https://www.mos.gov.rs/vest/odrzani-prvi-sastanci-posebne-radne-grupe-za-izradu-nacrta-zakona-o-izmenama-i-dopunama-zakona-o-mladima-i-posebne-radne-grupe-za-izradu-predloga-nacionalne-strategije-za-mlade>

3 MoYS, <https://www.mos.gov.rs/vest/resenje-o-izmeni-resenja-o-osnivanju-posebne-radne-grupe-za-izradu-nacrta-zakona-o-izmenama-i-dopunama-zakona-o-mladima>

4 MoYS, <https://www.mos.gov.rs/vest/resenje-o-izmeni-resenja-o-osnivanju-posebne-radne-grupe-za-izradu-nacrta-zakona-o-izmenama-i-dopunama-zakona-o-mladima2>

January 28⁵, after which the deadline was no longer officially extended.

Work on amending the Law on Youth was a topic on the agenda of the 18th and 19th Youth Council sessions, which were held on December 2, 2021 and June 7, 2022. In December, the Minister of Youth and Sports, Vanja Udovičić, emphasized that “a broad consultative process will not be avoided.”⁶ In June 2022, according to the KOMS announcement, Udovičić said that at that moment, the adoption of the National Strategy had priority over the Law. It was clarified that the process of developing the Strategy should also contribute to the process of amending the Law, because based on the collected comments, it would be decided again whether it would be sufficient to draft an amendment proposal or it would be necessary to pass a new Law on Youth.⁷ This caused the youth representatives to be concerned that the necessary changes to the National Strategy would not be grounded in Law, because it would not be amended before the Strategy.

3.2. National Youth Strategy (NYS) 2015–2025

In July 2021, in response to the previously submitted initiative of the Youth Council, the Minister of Youth and Sports issued a decision on the establishment of a Special Working Group for Drafting the Proposal for a National Youth Strategy, which included 27 members, among whom were two KOMS representatives.⁸ The deadline for the working group to complete the task was set for November 8, 2021. The work on drafting the National Strategy Proposal initial-

5 MoYS, <https://www.mos.gov.rs/vest/resenje-o-izmeni-resenja-o-osnivanju-posebne-radne-grupe-za-izradu-nacrta-zakona-o-izmenama-i-dopunama-zakona-o-mladima2>

6 KOMS, <https://koms.rs/2021/12/03/koliko-smo-odmakli-sa-izmenama-zakona-o-mladima-i-nacionalne-strategije-za-mlade-odrzana-18-sednica-saveta-za-mlade-vlade-republike-srbije/>

7 KOMS, <https://koms.rs/2022/06/08/19-sednica-saveta-za-mlade-vlade-republike-srbije-a-pitanje-isto-koliko-smo-odmakli-sa-izmenama-zakona-o-mladima-i-strategije-za-mlade/>

8 MoYS, <https://www.mos.gov.rs/storage/2021/08/resenje-nsm.pdf>

ly took place in parallel with the preparation of the Draft Law on Youth, and, as in the case of the Law, the deadlines were extended, usually at the same time (see previous section). It is questionable what consequences this pace of work on strategic documents had on the implementation of the open call for support in drafting of public policy documents and regulations, which was announced in April 2021, with a deadline of December of the same year.

In the meantime, the drafting of the National Strategy Proposal had gone further than the drafting of the Law on Youth, and in February 2022, the Ministry published an Open Call for submitting comments on the *Draft National Youth Strategy 2022–2030*, which had been prepared in the meantime.⁹ The Open Call lasted from February 8 to 16. The second and third sessions of the Special Working Group were held in February and June 2022, respectively. At the third session, the final Strategy Proposal was adopted and a decision on extending the deadline for the completion of the task until June 30 was delivered.¹⁰ At the 19th session of the Youth Council on June 7, 2022, Minister Udovičić announced that the public debate on the Strategy would be launched soon. Until the conclusion of this report, no official details about this process were published on the website of the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

3.3. Action Plans for Implementation of the “National Youth Strategy 2015–2025”

The evaluation for 2020 showed that, after the good results in 2019, the realization of the activity indicators foreseen in the Action Plan remained at a high level. Both years represent a significant improvement compared to 2018, which was the first year of the Action Plan implementation. Strategic Goal 9 – Improved use and participation of youth in the creation of cultural content had the highest level of

9 MoYS, <https://www.mos.gov.rs/vest/javni-poziv-za-dostavljanje-komentara-zainteresovane-javnosti-na-nacrt-strategije-za-mlade-u-republici-srbiji-za-period-od-2022-do-2030-godine>

10 MoYS, <https://www.mos.gov.rs/vest/odrzana-treca-sednica-posebne-radne-grupe-za-izradu-nacrta-strategije-za-mlade-za-period-od-2022-do-2030-godine>

realization in 2020 with 93.28%, while Strategic Goal 4 – Improved health and well-being of young women and men had the lowest realization with 83.03%. In contrast to 2019, all activity indicators had a level of realization over 80%. **The total level of realized indicators was 89.56%.**

In recommendations for subsequent evaluations, it was stated that there are a large number of specific goal indicators for which, although they are foreseen by the current strategy, there are no adequate sources or there is no practice of regular data collection. In terms of preparing the subsequent Action Plan, the evaluator recommended that it is necessary to simplify the Action Plan itself, by reorganizing and checking all specific objectives and indicators.

3.4. Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan and Laws on Volunteering and Internship

By the decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia dated January 14, 2022,¹¹ a Coordination Body was established to prepare and monitor the implementation of the Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan, with the task of supervising the preparation of this document and directing the work of other state bodies with regard to the necessary reforms. Darija Kisić Tepavčević, Minister of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs, was appointed as the Head of the Coordination Body. Members of the coordination body also include representatives of youth and for youth organizations, including KOMS. The coordination body is obliged to submit a report to the Government every six months, and more frequently if necessary.

The last information about the progress of work on this document within the reporting period was the news published on the Ministry's website on June 13, 2022.¹² According to the statement of Min-

11 Legal and information system of the Republic of Serbia, <https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/odluka/2022/4/5>

12 Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs, <https://www.minrzs.gov.rs/sr/aktuelnosti/vesti/u-toku-rad-na-izradi-plana-implementacije-programa-garancije-za-mlade>

ister Kisić Tepavčević, “active work” was being done on the Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan. The Minister reminded that the “Youth Guarantee” program implies that young people receive a quality job offer, continued education, internship or training within four months of entering the unemployment status or completing formal education.

During the reporting period, the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs worked on two legislative proposals – the Law on Volunteering and the Law on Internship.

3.5. Keynote address and Government measures

Until conclusion of this report, the National Assembly has not yet been constituted after the elections held on April 3, 2022.

Ana Brnabić’s keynote address from 2020 highlighted the intention to continue providing financial and housing support to young married couples. At the session held on December 23, 2021, the Government adopted the proposal of the Law on Amending the Law on Financial Support for Families with Children (which was first adopted in 2017).¹³ The novelty in the Law was the increase of parental allowance for the first child born on January 1, 2022 and later, which amounts to RSD 300,000 and is paid once. According to the previous legal solution, the parental allowance in the amount of RSD 240,000 was paid in installments after the birth of the second child.

Another novelty in the Law was the introduction of the right to funds for construction, participation in the purchase, i.e. purchase of a family-residential building or apartment based on the birth of a child, if the child was born on January 1, 2022 or later. The right to these funds is exercised by the child’s mother, and a Government Decree which was issued at a later date set the conditions for receiving the assistance in more detail.¹⁴ The Law was adopted by the National Assembly on December 29, 2021.

13 Government of the Republic of Serbia, <https://www.srbija.gov.rs/pri-kaz/601198>

14 Government of the Republic of Serbia, <https://www.paragraf.rs/propisi/zakon-o-finansijskoj-podrsци-porodici-sa-decom.html>

These measures were first publicly announced by the President of the Republic, Aleksandar Vučić, in November 2021.¹⁵ In December, he announced another financial aid measure: 100 euros for young people in Serbia between the ages of 16 and 29.¹⁶ In the same month, the Government adopted the Draft Law on the Temporary Register of Citizens of the Republic of Serbia aged 16 to 29, to whom financial aid is paid to mitigate the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. The law was adopted by the National Assembly on January 11, 2022.

The explanation of the Law stated the need to increase aggregate demand and improve the social position of the 16–29 age group due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Part of the public interpreted this measure in the context of presidential, parliamentary and local elections held on April 3, 2022, which the government representatives denied. On February 14, 2022, the day before its dissolution, the National Assembly adopted amendments to the Law, which provided for additional assistance to young people in the amount of 100 euros, which was paid in June.

15 Danas: Vučić: *Od januara 300.000 za prvorodeno dete, za studente sa decom ne važe ispitni rokovi*, <https://www.danas.rs/vesti/drustvo/vucic-od-januara-za-svako-prvorodjeno-dete-po-300-000-dinara-umesto-dosadasnjih-100-000/>

16 Danas: Vučić: *Prijava za 100 evra pomoći za mlade od 16 do 29 godina od 15. januara*, <https://www.danas.rs/vesti/ekonomija/vucic-prijava-za-100-evra-pomoci-za-mlade-od-16-do-29-godina-od-15-januara/>

4. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

4.1. Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS)

For the last nine years (since September 3, 2013), the Minister of Youth and Sports has been Vanja Udovičić. He remained in that position even after the election of the second Government of Ana Brnabić on October 28, 2020. This is the fifth consecutive government in which Udovičić has held this position, which currently makes him the longest serving Minister within the same Ministry. Until the conclusion of this report, it is not yet known who will head this Ministry in the Government that will be formed after the April 2022 elections.

Youth sector:

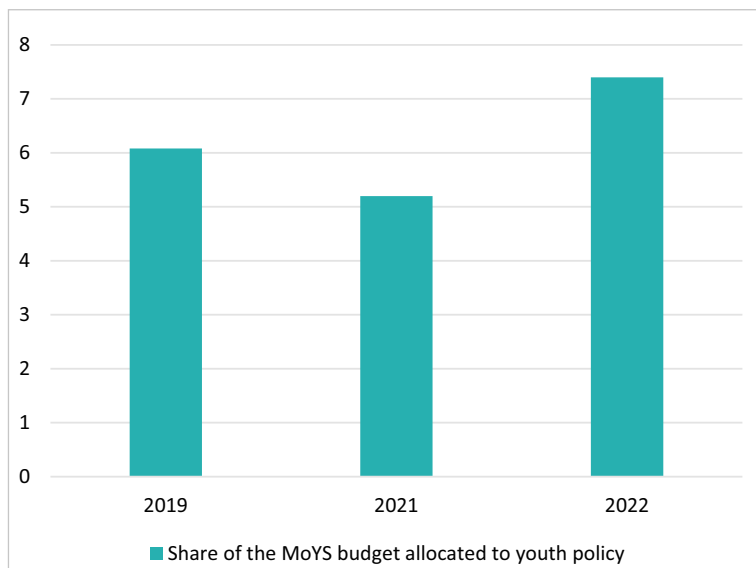
Number of employees in the Youth Sector and their structure:

According to the Fact Sheet, which was last updated in March 2022, there are **10 employees out of a total of 15 planned employees in the Youth Sector. The situation is unchanged compared to last year's report. Out of ten employees, one holds an official position, eight are civil servants – executive officers (out of the planned 13) and one other employee.**

The total budget for youth policy envisaged in the revised budget for 2021 amounted to RSD 1,400,232,000, of which social protection benefits from the budget within the Fund for Young Talents amounted to RSD 928,180,000. The rest of the budget for the Youth Sector was RSD 472,052,000. **Compared to the previous year, the percentage of the budget allocated to youth policy increased to 22% and returned to the level of 2020. This is primarily the effect of a decrease in the absolute amount of funds allocated to sports, and a much less an increase in the absolute amount allocated to youth.**

The percentage allocated to youth policy excluding the Fund for Young Talents increased from 5% to 7%.

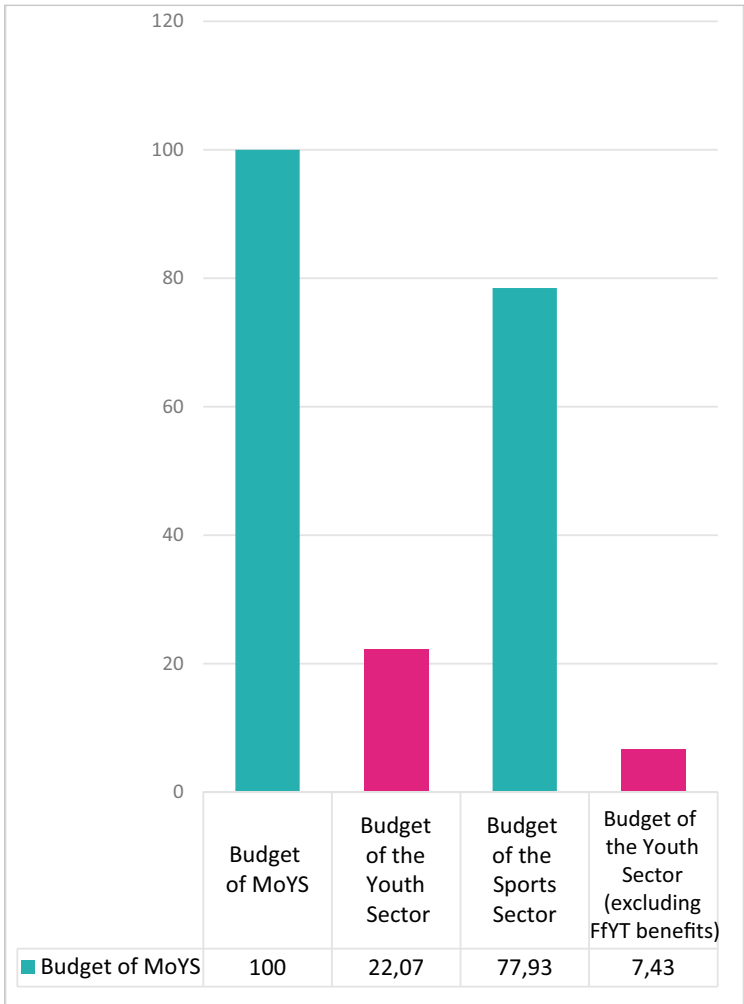
Graph 5. Share of the budget of the Ministry of Youth and Sports for youth policy, excluding Fund for Young Talents



If we take a look at the previous budget of the Republic of Serbia, the percentage of the budget allocated to youth through MoYS amounted to 0.08% of the annual republic budget, and if social protection 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%.¹⁷ **These findings are unchanged compared to the previous year.**

¹⁷ Law on the Budget of the Republic of Serbia for 2022, Official Gazette of the RS", No. 110/2021

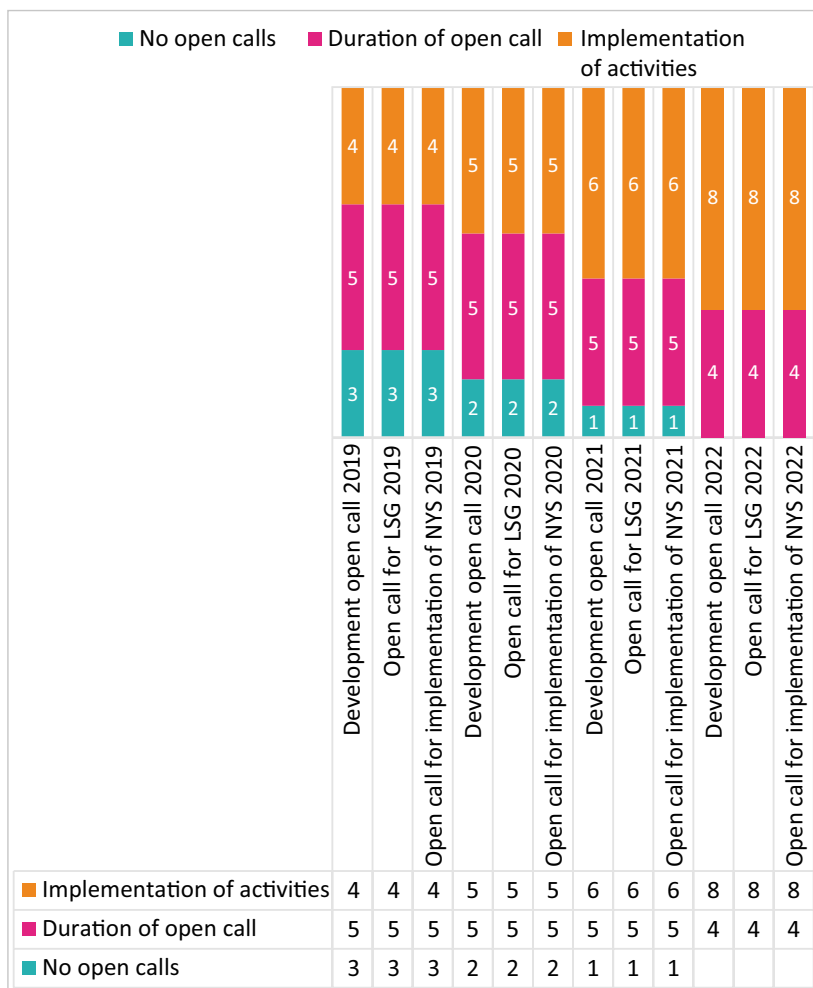
Graph 6. Budget of the Ministry of Youth and Sports for 2022



Previous editions of the Alternative Report (2019, 2020) highlighted the issue of the dynamics of publishing open calls related to youth policy by the ministry. The main problem identified was that the MoYS does not have the capacity to announce and implement open calls on time, that a large part of the year is spent on the process of announcing and waiting for the results of open calls, while a very

short period of time is left for the actual implementation of the projects. **The situation improved slightly in this aspect in 2021, and the positive trend continued in 2022.** The results of this year's open calls were announced at the end of April, the fastest in the last few years, which means that there is more time left for their implementation than before.

Graph 7. Implementation of MoYS projects 2018–2022



Despite the improvement, it is necessary to point out that, regardless of the lack of capacity and human resources, MoYS needs to create project cycles that will last throughout the year, with a maximum deviation from projects of two months, which is still not the case. In addition, it is necessary to enable program (in addition to project) funding in order to support development activities over a years-long period.

It is still a valid conclusion that the current project cycle dynamics significantly affects the sustainability of youth and for youth organizations and their associations, problems regarding the implementation of continuous activities and the impossibility of long-term planning, as well as the planning of programs that will have long-term effects in the field of youth policy. This particularly precludes advocacy campaigns or adoption of youth plans and strategies at the local or national level, which require more time.

Analysis of the open calls of the Ministry of Youth and Sports in 2022.

Since 2020, the National Youth Council has been analyzing results of open calls of MoYS for programs and projects of public interest in the areas of the youth sector.¹⁸ The analysis of the 2022 open calls was published by KOMS on May 31.¹⁹

This analysis included, as in previous years, the open call for financing and co-financing of programs and projects for the implementation of the objectives of the National Youth Strategy and the “Youth are Law” program, as well as the open call for stimulating various forms of employment, self-employment and youth entrepreneurship.

The following aspects were included in the analysis: regional representation of projects, years that have passed since the establishment of CSOs, their visibility (websites, social media) and mechanisms of communication of project results, as well as annual income of organizations.

18 See: <https://koms.rs/2021/06/07/analiza-konkursa-za-finansiranje-i-sufinansiranje-programa-i-projekata-ministarstva-omladine-i-sporta/>

19 KOMS, <https://koms.rs/2022/05/31/analiza-konkursa-ministarstva-omladine-i-sporta-2022/>, accessed May 31, 2022.

Regional representation

Table 7. Total number of open calls by regions

Region	Number of granted projects
Belgrade	33
Vojvodina	25
Other	19
Total:	77

Graph 8. Distribution of projects in total, in percentages

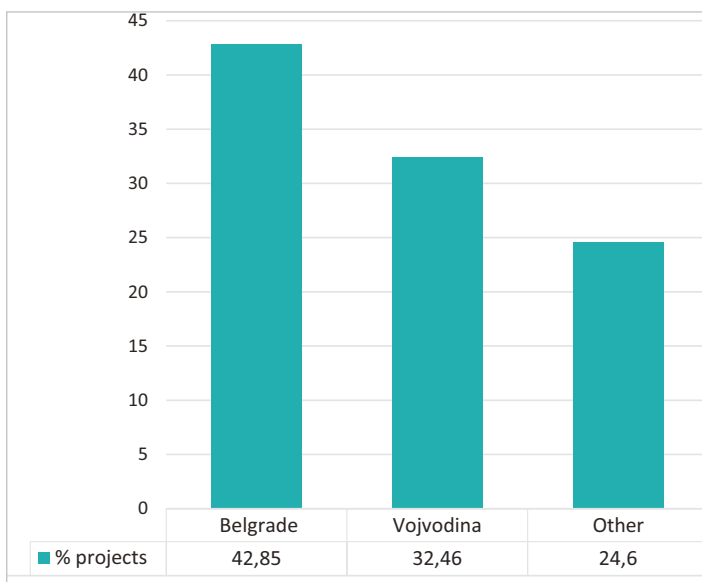


Table 8. Open call for implementation of NYS by regions

Region	Number of granted projects
Belgrade	19
Vojvodina	16
Other	5
Total:	35

Graph 9. Distribution of projects for the implementation of NYS by regions in percentages

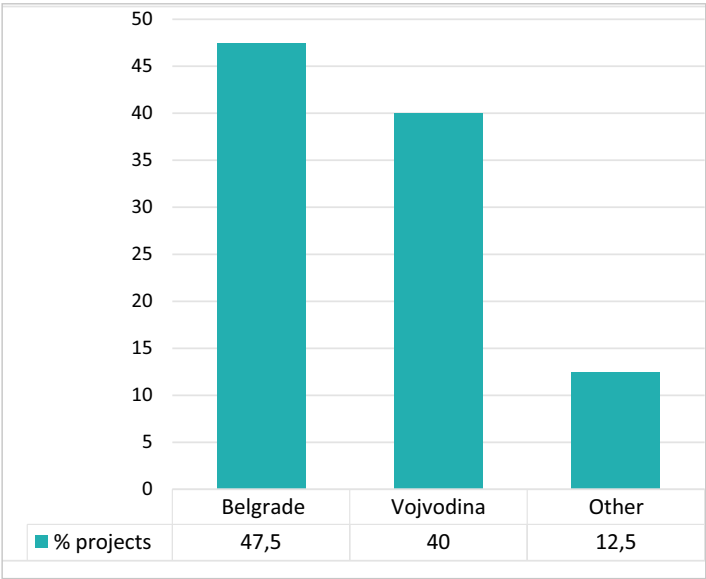
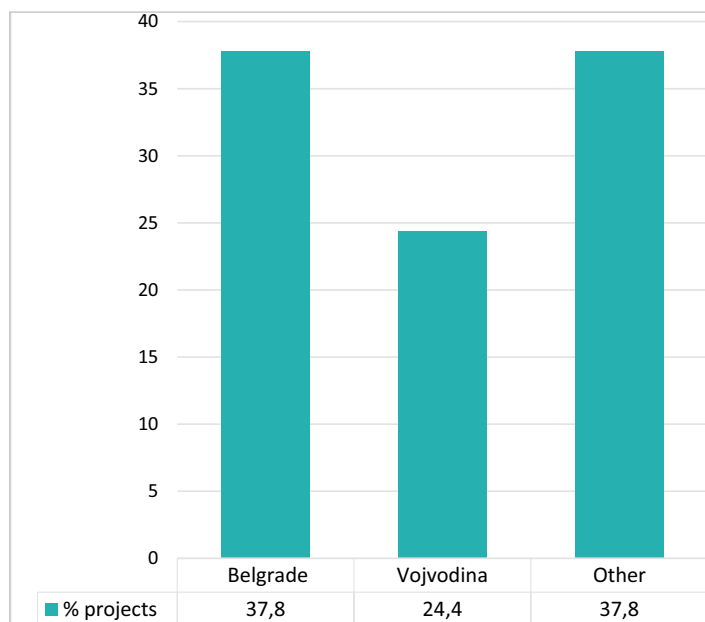


Table 9. Open call for employment by region

Region	Number of granted projects
Belgrade	14
Vojvodina	9
Other	14
Total:	37

Graph 10. Distribution of employment projects by region in percentages

KOMS analysis pointed out that, although to a lesser extent than the previous year, the total number of projects awarded to CSOs based in Belgrade is still too high. Out of a total of 77 granted programs and projects, organizations from Belgrade were granted 33 (43%). The number of granted projects in the Vojvodina region is 24 out of 77. Out of all 77 granted projects, as many as 45 (58.4) were awarded to organizations from Belgrade and Vojvodina.

In terms of finances and allocated funds, in the case of the open call for the implementation of the National Youth Strategy, CSOs from Belgrade received more than RSD 63 million, which represents 61.2% of the total of RSD 103 million.

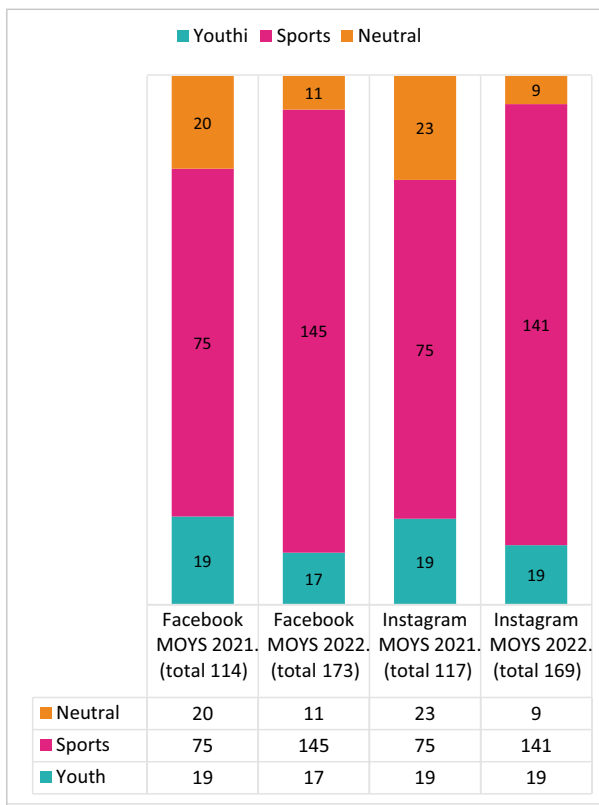
In the case of the open call for employment, Belgrade CSOs received RSD 34.1 million out of a total of RSD 88 million, and the Belgrade and Vojvodina regions received RSD 55.1 million in total, which represents 62.6% of the total of 88 million.

KOMS concludes that such regional allocation of projects does not contribute to reducing unemployment among young people, if we take into considerations that the number of unemployed young people in Belgrade is significantly lower compared to the number of unemployed young people in other regions, especially Central and Western Serbia and Southern and Eastern Serbia.

MoYS Communication – Social Media

In terms of communication of the Ministry of Youth and Sports through official accounts on social media (Facebook and Instagram), **topics related to sports dominated again this year compared to topics related to youth – even more so than in 2021.**

Graph 11. Communication of MoYS and the Minister on social media



4.2. Youth Council

Previous Alternative Reports on the position and needs of youth include analyses of the first 17 sessions of the Youth Council, and from these analyses we could notice that the Youth Council is an advisory body that meets much less often than at the very beginning, when it was founded. One or two sessions a year, and especially towards the end of the year, do not speak about the effectiveness of the Youth Council and the functioning of this body as a creator of public policies and measures for youth. The situation has been slightly better since 2021, when the Youth Council started meeting much more often. Since the previous year and the previous report, two sessions of the Youth Council were held.

At the eighteenth session of the Youth Council,²⁰ according to the announcement of the National Youth Council of Serbia, it was discussed about working groups for amending the Law on Youth and for developing a new Youth Strategy, about youth health and vaccination, as well as about reporting on the work of the Youth Council. The minutes of this session have not yet been published on the website of the Ministry of Youth and Sports (the last published minutes are from the seventeenth session).

At the nineteenth session of the Youth Council,²¹ it was discussed about amendments to the Law on Youth and the revision of the Youth Strategy (the issue of public discussion and its optimality in the summer months), about the work and activities of the competent ministry, about the intention of the youth representative in the Youth Council to make recommendations for improving the implementation of open calls of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and about the establishment of a platform for informing young people by the Ministry. Research on the position and needs of youth was also presented.

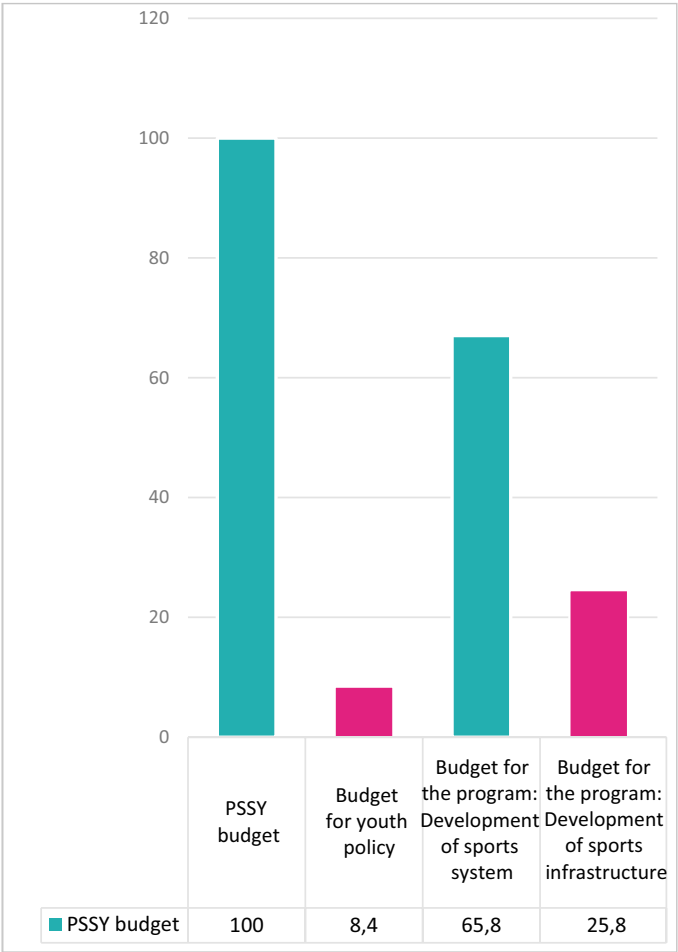
20 KOMS, December 2, 2021, Announcement on the occasion of the Youth Council session: <https://koms.rs/2021/12/03/koliko-smo-odmakli-sa-izmenama-zakona-o-mladima-i-nacionalne-strategije-za-mlade-odrzan-18-sednica-saveta-za-mlade-vlade-republike-srbije/>

21 KOMS, June 8, 2022, Announcement on the occasion of the Youth Council session: <https://koms.rs/2022/06/08/19-sednica-saveta-za-mlade-vlade-republike-srbije-a-pitanje-isto-koliko-smo-odmakli-sa-izmenama-zakona-o-mladima-i-strategije-za-mlade/>

4.3. Provincial Secretariat for Sports and Youth (PSSY)

The total funds in the APV budget for youth policy in 2022 amount to RSD 39,000,000, **which represents a significant increase compared to 2021**. Also, as in the case of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, there was a slight increase in the share of youth policy in the total budget of PSSY.

Graph 12. Budget for youth policy within the PSSY budget



4.4. Local Youth Policy

In the context of this topic, in the period since the publication of the last Alternative Report for 2021, two surveys have been published.²²

However, these surveys were conducted on a sample of municipalities and cities and were performed for earlier periods (2018/2019), although they were published in the last year.

Given that the data from these surveys are not relevant to us or are out of date, **we will again present the most important data from the survey on local youth policy from the previous year (2021)**, which was carried out by the National Youth Council of Serbia and the Group for Analysis and Creation of Public Policies.

As part of the survey on local youth councils, carried out by the National Youth Council of Serbia and the Group for Analysis and Creation of Public Policies²³ data was also collected on other instruments of local youth policy. In this report, we will present all the instruments individually, and with regard to local self-government unit (LSG) youth councils, we will only list the numerical findings. All local youth policy surveys were carried out for all municipalities and cities (except for the territory of Kosovo and Metohija, due to a different territorial and organizational structure, in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244).

Local youth policy funding:

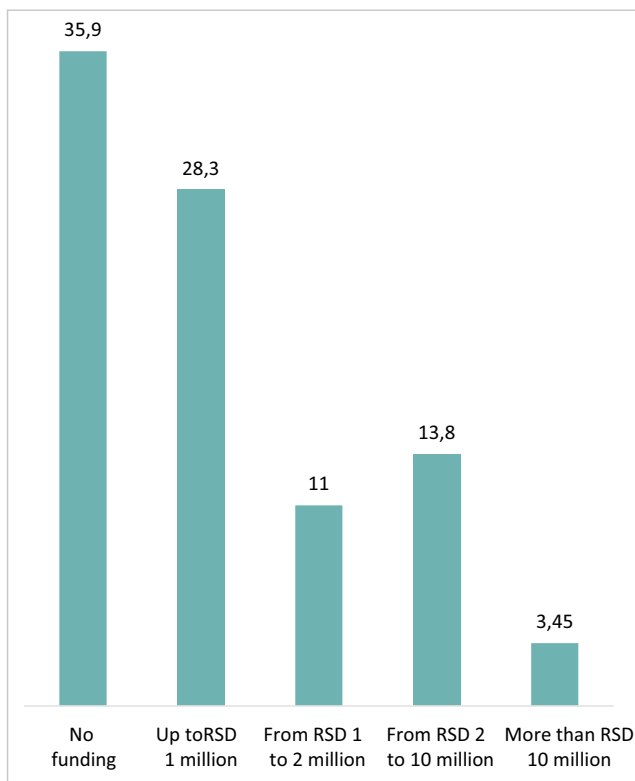
The research showed that 52 local self-government units (35.9%) out of 145 do not have funds allocated for local youth policy funding.

22 Nenad Jevtović – ed, “Budžetska izdvajanja za omladinu i organizovanje omladinskog sektora na lokalnom nivou u Republici Srbiji”, Westminster Foundation for Democracy and Institute for Development and Innovation, Belgrade, 2021; Mihajlo Đukić, “Preduzetništvo mladih, zapošljivost NEET mladih i veštine upravljanja karijerom kod mladih u Srbiji”, Council for Regional Cooperation, Sarajevo, 2022.

23 All data based on: Boban Stojanović, *Lokalna omladinska politika: Saveti za mlade jedinica lokalne samouprave*, National Youth Council of Serbia and the Group for Analysis and Creation Public Policies, Belgrade, 2021, <https://koms.rs/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Lokalna-omladinska-politika-u-RS-FINAL-1.pdf>

Out of 93 local self-government units that have budgeted funding for local youth policy, as many as 41 (28.3% of the total) local self-government units allocate less than one million dinars for local youth policy. Five local self-government units allocate more than 10 million dinars for local youth policy.

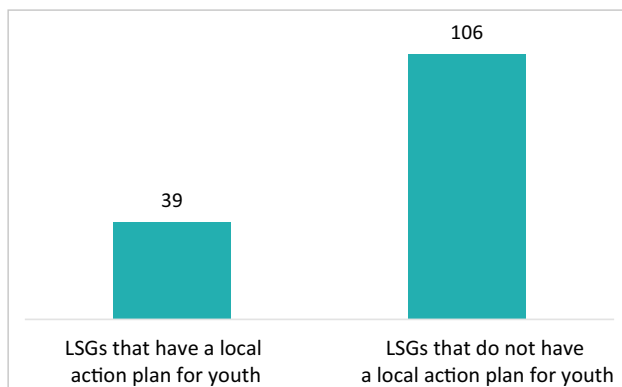
Graph 13. Local youth policy funding in % of local self-government units



Local Action Plans for Youth – LAPY:

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

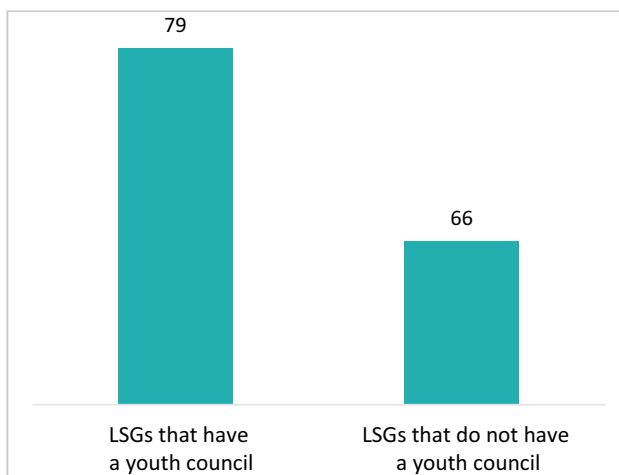
Graph 14. Number of LSGs in relation to having a local action plan for youth



Youth councils in local self-government units:

The survey on local youth councils showed that as many as 66 out of 145 (45.5%) local self-government units do not have a youth council.

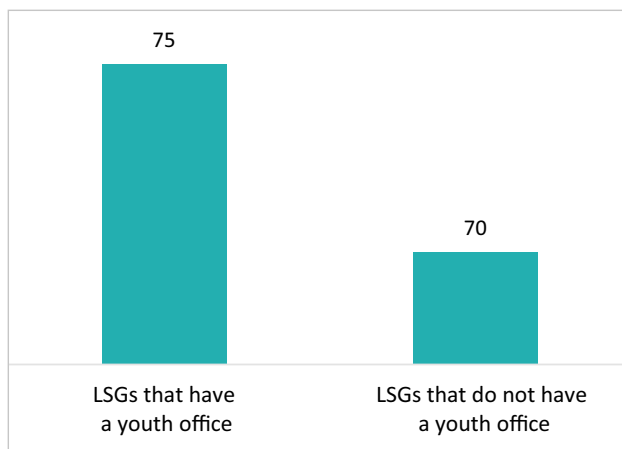
Graph 15. Number of LSGs in relation to having a youth council



Youth offices:

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

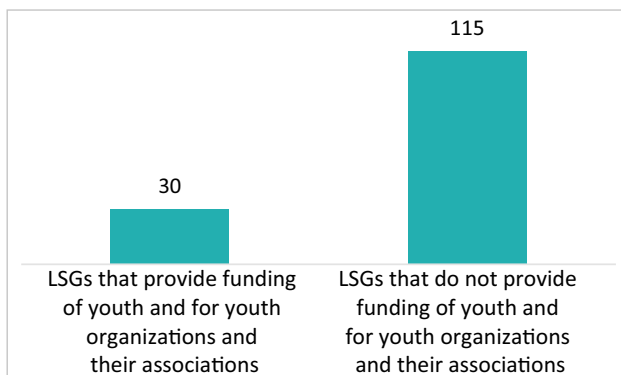
Graph 16. Number of LSGs in relation to having a youth office



Involvement of youth and for youth organizations and their associations in the implementation of local youth policy:

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

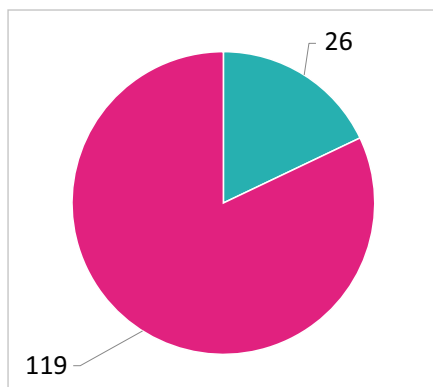
Graph 17. Number of LSGs in relation to funding of youth and for youth organizations and their associations



Youth clubs (clubs for young people, youth centers):

The survey showed that as many as 119 (82.1%) out of 145 local self-government units do not have a youth club.

Graph 18. Number of LSGs in relation to having a youth club



Since 2021, OPENS has coordinated the preparation of a document entitled “Standards of youth spaces – youth clubs, youth centers and youth resource centers”. This document was created as a result of the consultative process of youth policy actors: the youth umbrella

organization, National Youth Council of Serbia, other organizations, the National Association of Youth Workers, the National Association of Youth Offices, OPENS and their members, as well as the Ministry of Youth and Sports and other relevant youth and for youth organizations.

This document tries to respond to the growing needs for providing space for young people, which should provide support to young people but also to youth policy actors to implement measures and programs for youth with the aim of achieving the well-being of young people. In this process, youth spaces are defined as places where programs and services for youth are implemented which improve the position of young people, their employability and employment, prevent brain drain and migration, social exclusion and poverty, and support the general health and well-being of young people.

The working group has defined the following standards for obtaining a license/designation of a youth space:

1. Youth space has a primary mission to serve the youth sector and young people
2. Youth space promotes cooperation
3. Youth space has competent staff
4. Youth space has a functional, safe, secure area for young people
5. Youth space provides a tolerant, healthy and safe work environment
6. Youth space contributes to the development of the quality of youth work and implements quality youth work programs
7. Youth space enables and encourages involvement of young people, youth and for youth organizations
8. Youth space contributes to the development of youth policy
9. Promotion of value
10. Youth space promotes and implements programs
11. Transparent financial procedures and organizational policies
12. Youth space is user-oriented

In 2022, four local self-government units announced the establishment of youth centers: Subotica, Sombor, Mionica and Niš.

The survey showed that only six (4.2%) out of 145 local self-government units have all the instruments of local youth policy, while 23 of them (15.9%) do not have any instruments of local youth policy.

4.5. Youth and for Youth Organizations

According to the last available database of registered organizations, on May 23, 2022, a total of 1,751 youth and for youth organizations and their associations were entered in the unified register.²⁴

24 Register of youth and for youth organizations and their associations, <https://www.mos.gov.rs/o-ministarstvu/sektor-za-omladinu/evidencija-udruzenja>

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

5.1. Youth in Political Institutions

Although the new convocation of the National Assembly (after the elections held on April 3, 2022) has not yet been constituted, according to the election results, there will be 14 young MPs in the Parliament.

After a large increase in the number of young MPs in the 2020 National Assembly Convocation, the number of young MPs is again lower than 20% following these elections, but still significantly higher than in the period 2012–2022.

As before, the Youth Committee was not formed in the previous convocation of the National Assembly.²⁵

In the previous (currently caretaker Government) Government of the Republic of Serbia, no minister or member of the Government was in the category of young people.

5.2. Youth in the 2022 Campaign²⁶

National Youth Council of Serbia monitored the addresses of all election participants during the campaign for the regular presidential and early parliamentary elections in the Republic of Serbia. The Patriotic Bloc and its presidential candidate Boško Obradović addressed the

25 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)

26 Summary of research and monitoring of the 2022 election campaign, Boban Stojanović – ed, “Youth in the 2022 Campaign - Monitoring Report”, National Youth Council of Serbia, Belgrade, 2022, p. 5–10.

youth the most in the campaign (47 times), followed by the coalition around the SNS and its presidential candidate Aleksandar Vučić (37 times) and the electoral list Marinika Tepić – United for the Victory of Serbia and its presidential candidate Zdravko Ponoš (21 times). The most talked about topics in the campaign were youth education, young people leaving the country, political participation of young people, housing for young people, youth support measures, and the financial assistance for young people in the amount of 100 euros.

5.3. Political Participation of Youth

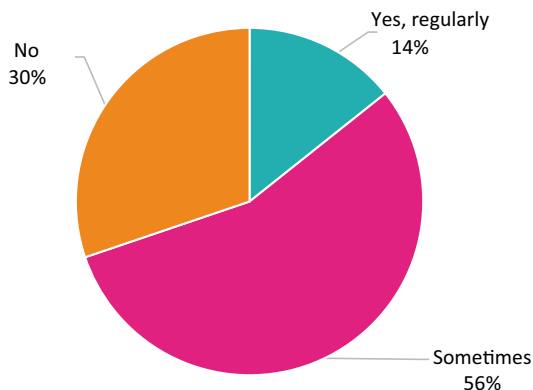
This year, we asked the respondents, if they followed political events, which topics interested them the most, and the answers show that young people are most interested in environmental topics (53.4%), followed by economic topics – employment, investments, etc. (46.7%) and national topics – Kosovo, situation in the region, Serbia's foreign policy (45.9%).

Table 10. Interest in political topics

Topics	2020	2021	2022
National topics (Kosovo, situation in the region, Serbia's foreign policy)	54.3	45.6	45.9
Economic topics (employment, government economic policy, investments)	56.8	48.6	46.7
Corruption and crime	44.9	51	43.6
Functioning/non-functioning of democracy in Serbia	50.6	47.3	41
Safety	36.5	33	32.1
European integration	21.3	21.8	22.4
Youth policy	38.9	41.4	39.9
Environment	43.7	50.6	53.4
Dealing with the past (war crimes, reconciliation)	30.4	22.7	22.7
I don't follow politics			15.6

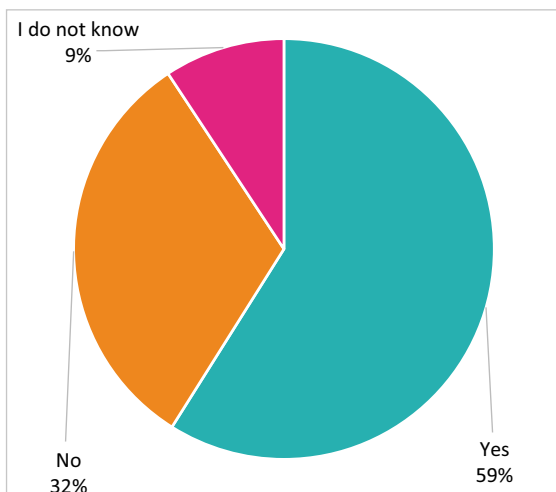
When asked if they followed politics at the local level, only 14.3% responded that they followed it regularly.

Graph 19. Do you follow politics at the local level?



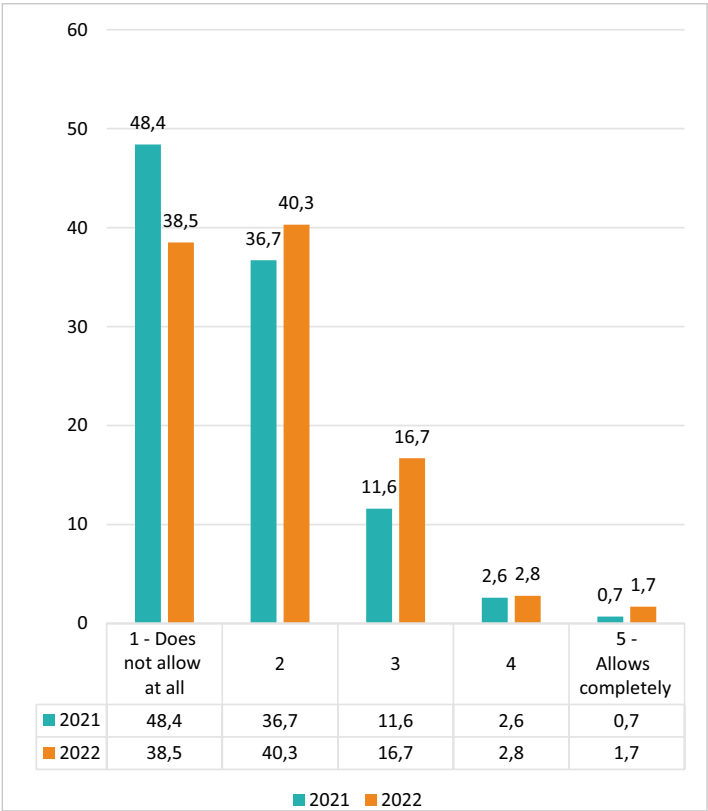
This year, we asked young people whether civic education should be compulsory in secondary schools. The majority of young people (59%) believe that it should be compulsory, slightly less than a third (31.8%) believe that it should not be compulsory, and 19.3% stated that they did not know.

Graph 20. Compulsory civic education in schools



When asked “How much does the political system in Serbia allow young people to influence political processes and decisions?”, on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 – Does not allow at all; 5 – Allows completely) the average answer of the respondents was 1.89, which is a slightly higher average score compared to 2021 (1.71).

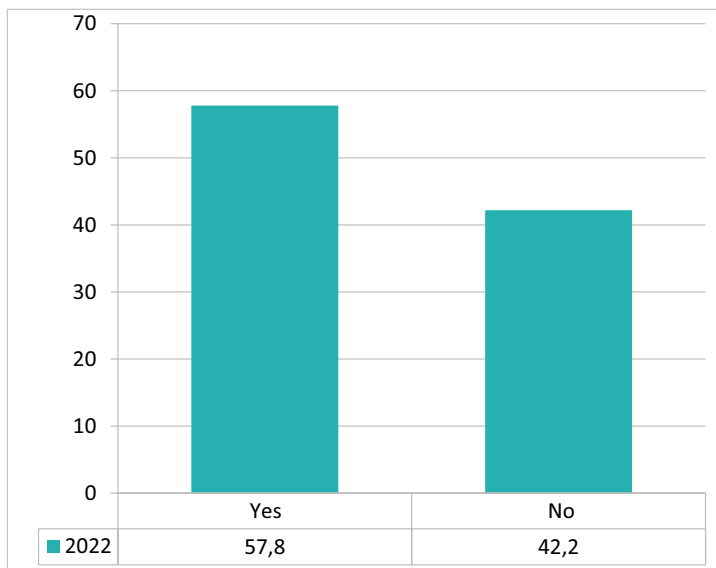
Graph 21. Influence of young people on political processes and decisions (%)



When asked “Did you vote in the 2022 elections”, 57.8% of respondents answered that they voted, while 42.2% of respondents did not vote. Compared to the last election cycle (2020), when only 40% of young people answered that they had voted, this year, we notice a

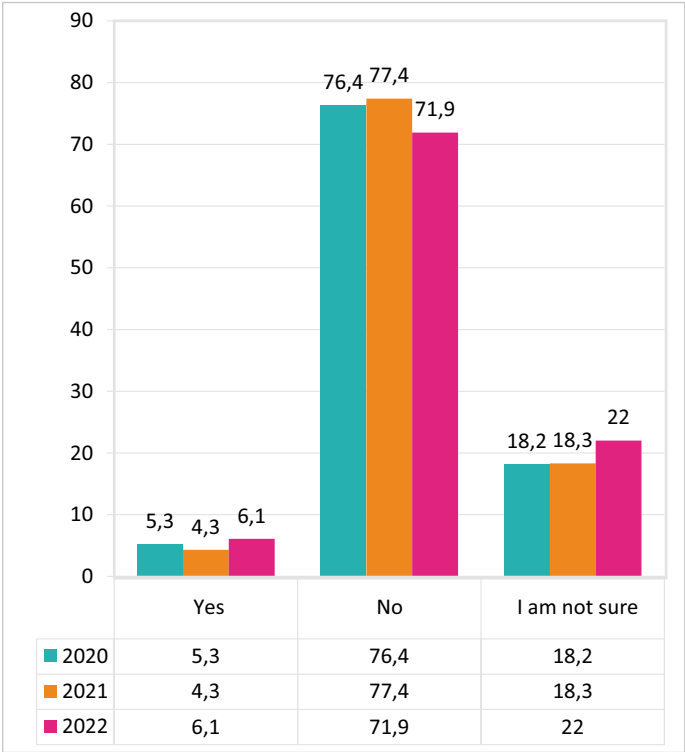
significant increase in turnout. However, it should be borne in mind that a certain number of young people (18.6%) did not vote in the previous elections due to the boycott of certain political entities.

Graph 22. Did you vote in the 2022 elections (in %, those who have the right to vote)?



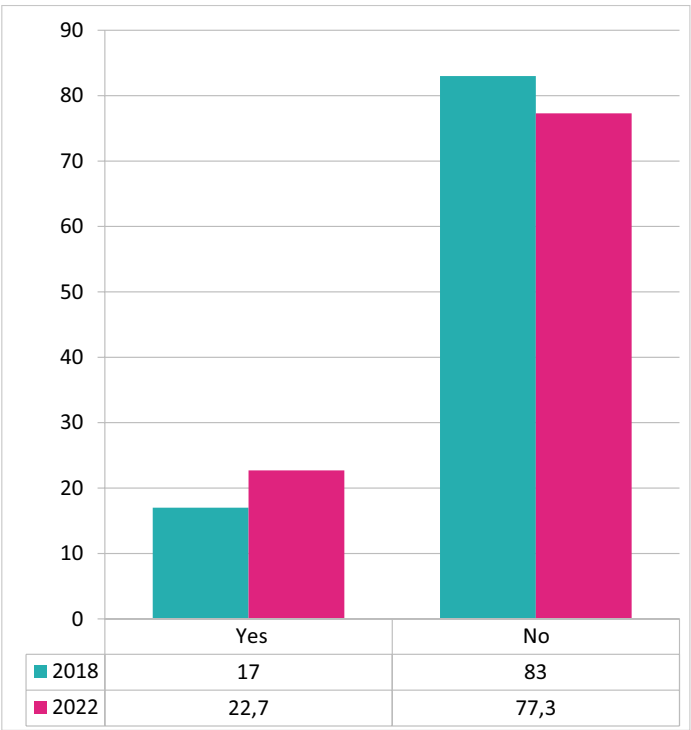
We asked young people whether they think that the elections in Serbia are free and fair. The percentage of those who answered in the affirmative has increased to 6.1% this year compared to 2021 (4.3%).

Graph 23. Are the elections in Serbia free and fair?



Majority of young people (almost 4/5) in Serbia clearly does not trust any politician. When asked if they trusted any politician, the answers were as follows:

Graph 24. Do you trust any politician?



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

Table 11. Trust of young people in institutions

Institution	2018	2022
Army	2.8	2.88
Police	2.3	2.03
Media	1.6	1.47
Youth offices	2.55	2.33
Ministry of Youth and Sports	2.1	2.15
Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development	1.9	2.06
Ministry of Health	*	2.03
Church	2.1	2.72
Head of Municipality/Mayor	1.9	1.61
National Assembly	1.7	1.61
Government of the Republic of Serbia	1.7	1.59
President of the Republic	1.6	1.62
Political parties	1.5	1.44

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

The media and political institutions are the least trusted (the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister, the Government of the RS, the National Assembly, the mayors and heads of municipalities from which the respondents come from).

The ministries that are important for young people (MoYS, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health) have a slightly higher average score. It is important to note that the score for MoYS increased to 2.15 compared to last year (1.97).

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 12. Trust of young people in individuals

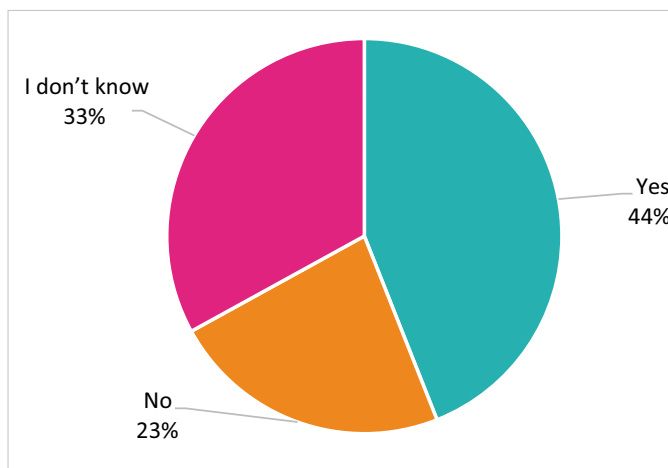
Individual	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Patriarch Porfirije	*	*	*	2.71	2.71
Ivica Dačić	*	*	*	1.42	1.58
Ana Brnabić	1.6	1.6	1.57	1.42	1.46
Aleksandar Vučić	1.7	1.6	1.56	1.46	1.59
Vanja Udovičić	2	2	1.92	1.65	1.62

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 individual are very small in almost all cases, except in relation to the Ministry of Youth and Sports and Minister Vanja Udovičić, who is in charge of this Ministry.

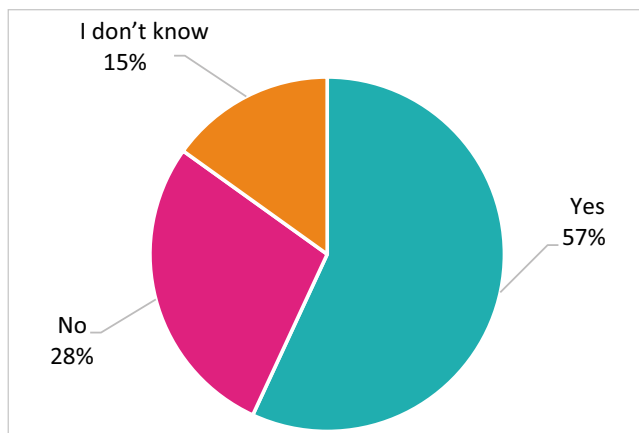
6. VALUES OF YOUNG PEOPLE

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

Graph 25. Attitude of young people towards democracy



We asked young people whether they think that Serbia needs a strong leader whom the people will follow, and the results are as follows:

Graph 26. Attitude of young people towards leadership and leaders

19.5% of young people answered in the affirmative, and 45.1% in the negative.

We asked young people how important certain values in a society are to them on a scale of 1 (not important to me at all) to 5 (very important to me), and the results are as follows:

Table 13. Importance of values in a society

Value	2021	2022
Absence of corruption	4.38	4.27
Political pluralism	3.55	3.51
Personal freedom	4.63	4.72
Solidarity and helping the economically disadvantaged	4.30	4.45
Family and family values	4.03	4.25
Nation and belonging to the nation	3.29	3.49
Religion and belonging to religious groups	2.71	2.95
Environmental protection	4.55	4.57
Inclusion and non-discrimination	4.26	4.29
Gender equality	4.27	4.30

Young people value personal freedom the most (4.72), followed by environmental protection (4.57), and then solidarity and helping the economically disadvantaged (4.45). The first two values, in the same order, had the highest ranking in 2021. Religion and belonging to religious groups (2.95), nation and belonging to the nation (3.49) and political pluralism (3.51) received the lowest scores.

We wanted to examine the attitude towards gender equality among young people through attitudinal statements from: 1 – Completely disagree, to 5 – Completely agree:

Table 14. Agreeing with statements about gender equality

Statement:	Average response score:	Women	Men
It is more difficult for young women to get a job than for young men	3.25	3.79	2.63
It is more difficult for young women to engage in politics because of the existing prejudices	3.57	4.12	2.94
Women should not do jobs that are considered male-gendered jobs	2.22	2.02	2.45
In cases of rape, women also have some responsibility	1.43	1.24	1.64
It is important that young men are educated about contraception and reproductive health	4.69	4.55	4.82

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 15. Agreeing with statements regarding the LGBTQ population

Statement:	Average score 2020	Average score 2021	Average score 2022
If a member of the LGBTQ population was your child's teacher?	2.48	2.20	2.35
If a member of the LGBTQ population was your neighbor?	1.82	1.86	1.91
If members of the LGBTQ population were more present in the media?	2.64	2.48	2.50
If a gay parade was held in your city/town?	3.05	2.93	2.87
If same-sex marriages became legal?	2.74	3	2.49
If same-sex couples were allowed to adopt children?	2.98	3.12	2.64

This year, none of the categories has a score above three, which indicates a slightly more positive attitude towards the LGBTQ population.

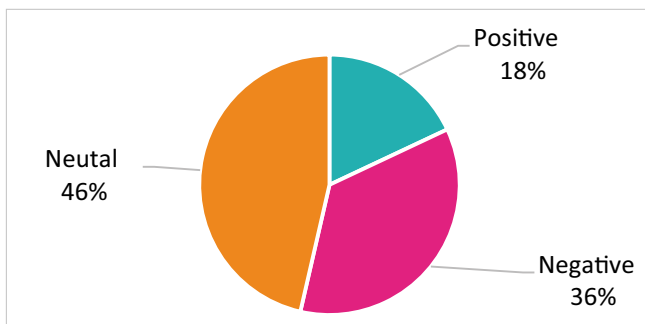
For the first time, we wanted to check the attitude of young people in Serbia towards members of different nationalities. We asked them to choose on a scale from 1 to 4 how they feel about the different nationalities in the territory of Serbia and in the surrounding area, with a score of 1 meaning "We have always had close and friendly relations with them", 2 – "A citizen like everyone else", 3 – "I don't mind them, but I wouldn't be friends with them", 4 – "I don't like them".

Table 16. Attitude towards people of different nationalities.

Nationality	Average answer score:
Hungarian	1.94
Romanian	1.95
Bulgarian	2.09
Macedonian	1.75
Albanian	2.52
Montenegrin	1.68
Bosnian	1.82
Croatian	2.04

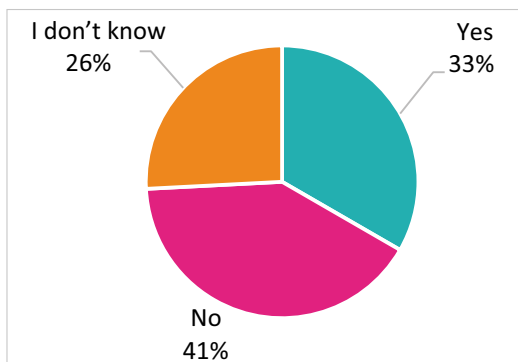
It is noticeable that young people have the most positive attitude towards members of Montenegrin and Macedonian nationality, while they have the most negative attitude towards Albanian nationality. The differences between the demographic groups that occur are not statistically significant.

We asked young people what their first reaction was to the concept of the European Union, and the answers show that it is mostly neutral with 49%, then negative with 30%, while positive is still in last place, with only 21%.

Graph 27. Attitudes of young people towards the EU

When asked whether they support Serbia's entry into the EU, 33% of young people answered in the affirmative, 41% answered in the negative, while 26% of young people did not know.

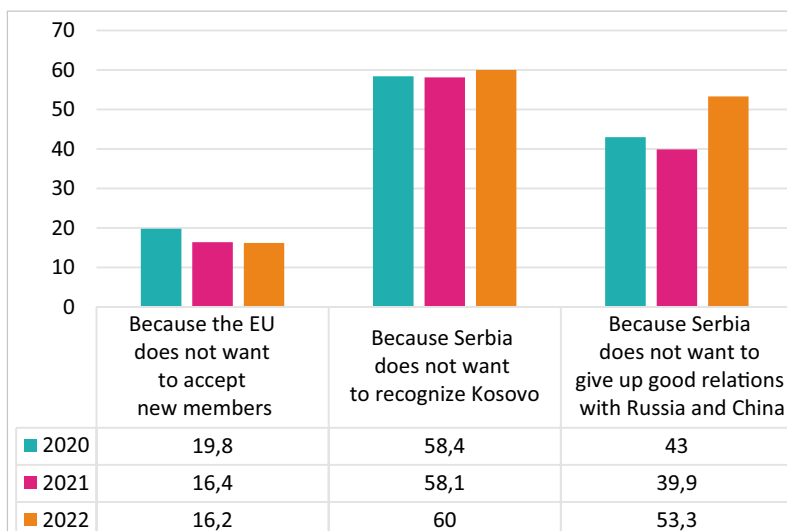
Graph 28. Attitudes of young people towards Serbia's path to the EU



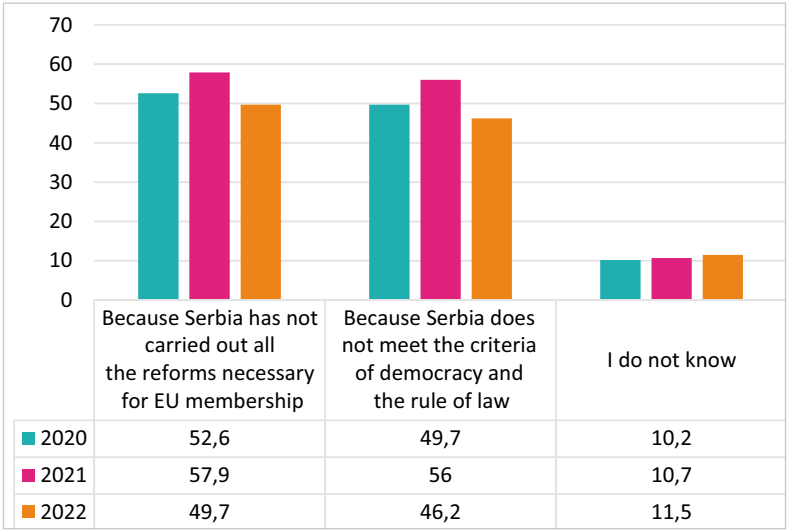
This is a significant increase in opposing the membership, by 8% compared to 2021. The number of young people who do not support EU membership is once again higher than those who support it.

We asked young people why, in their opinion, Serbia has not yet become an EU member.

Graph 29. Why has Serbia not become a member of the EU (Part one)

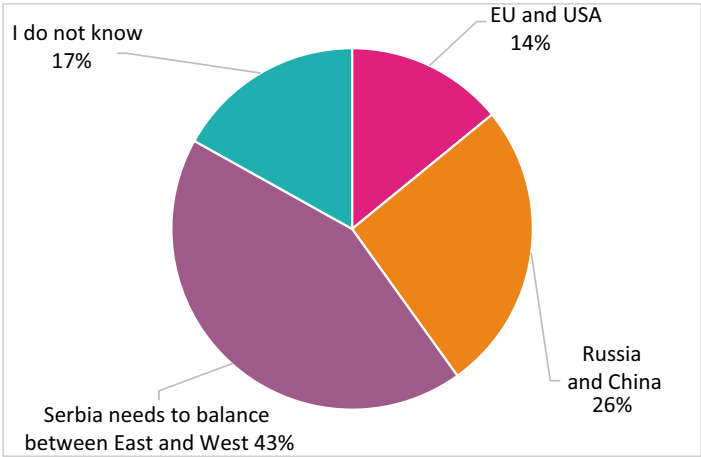


Graph 30. Why has Serbia not become a member of the EU (Part two)



We asked young people for their opinion on who should Serbia mostly rely on when it comes to creating its foreign policy, and the answers are as follows:

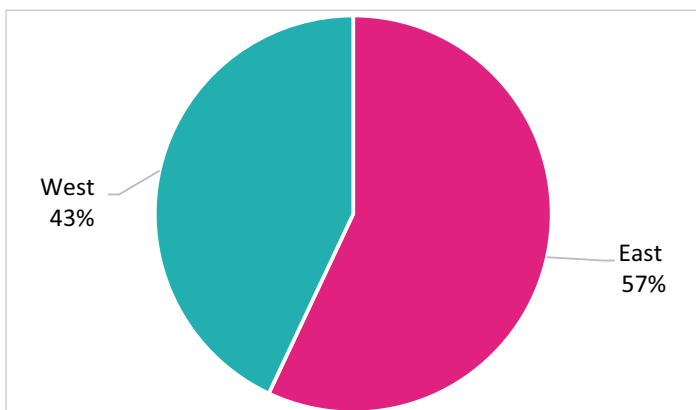
Graph 31. Attitudes of young people towards Serbia's foreign policy



The answers show that the policy of balancing is by far the most popular among young people. There are no drastic changes compared to the previous year.

We also wanted to check what young people would support in a hypothetical situation in which the policy of balancing would not be available, i.e. in which Serbia would have to choose between the East and the West. This year, young people are slightly more inclined towards the East than last year (57% compared to 52%):

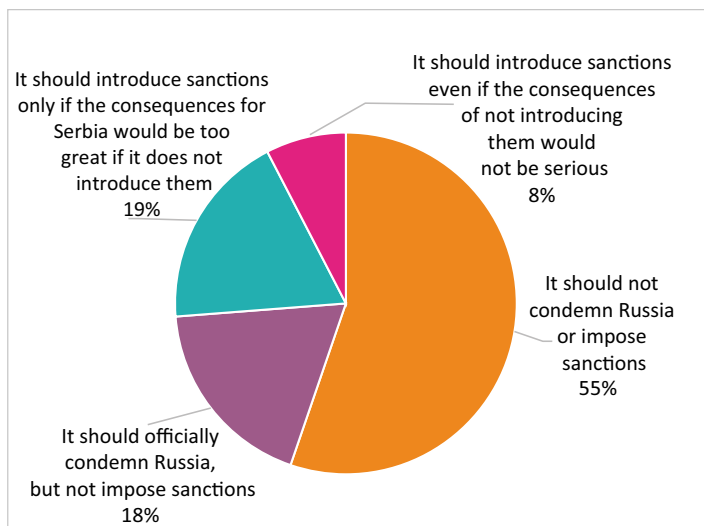
Graph 32. Attitudes of young people towards choosing a side with regard to Serbia's foreign policy



There is no significant difference in answers to this question when it comes to gender and age of the respondents.

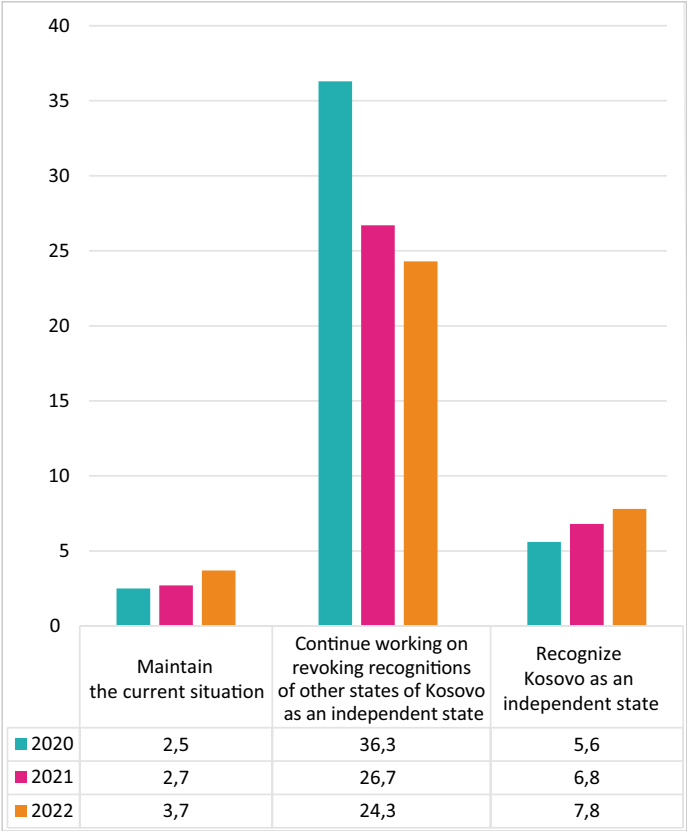
This year, we asked another question about foreign policy, namely, what should be Serbia's position regarding the war in Ukraine. The answers are as follows:

Graph 33: The attitude of young people regarding the war in Ukraine

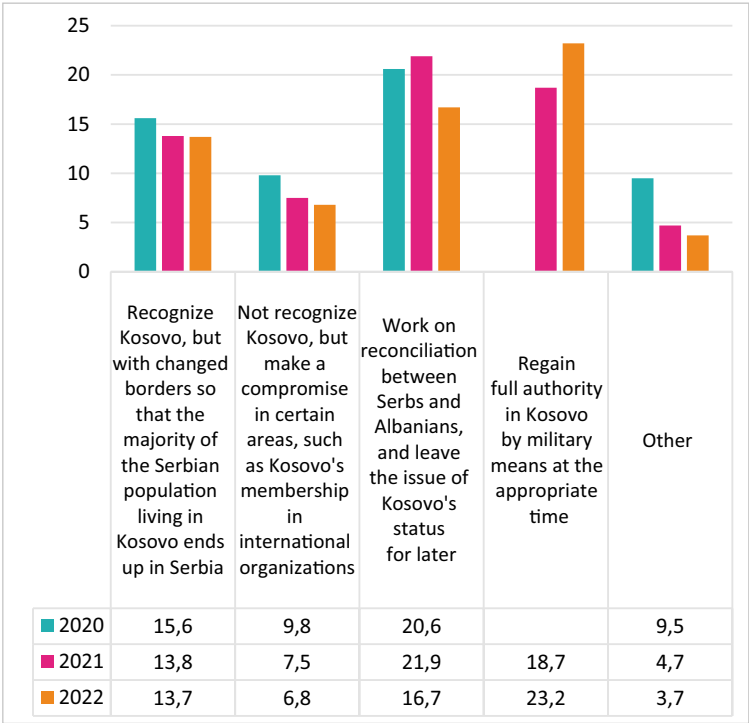


This year, we repeated the questions about Kosovo, as well as about NATO. We asked young people about their opinion on what should Serbia do regarding Kosovo, and this year we also added the option of “regaining authority in Kosovo by military means”, and the answers are as follows:

Graph 34. Attitudes towards Kosovo (Part one)

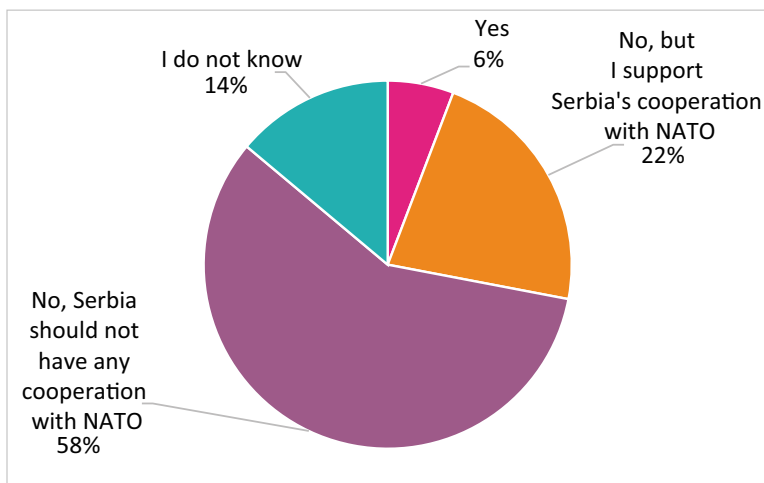


Graph 35. Attitudes towards Kosovo (Part two)



We also asked young people whether Serbia should join NATO, and the answers are as follows:

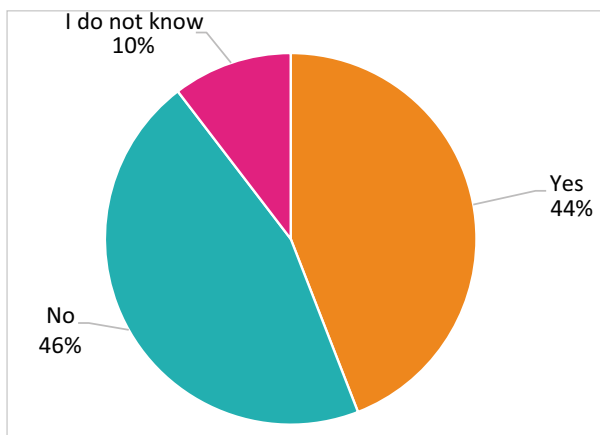
Graph 36. Attitudes of young people towards joining NATO



Opposing any cooperation with NATO increased compared to 2020 (from 51% to 58%).

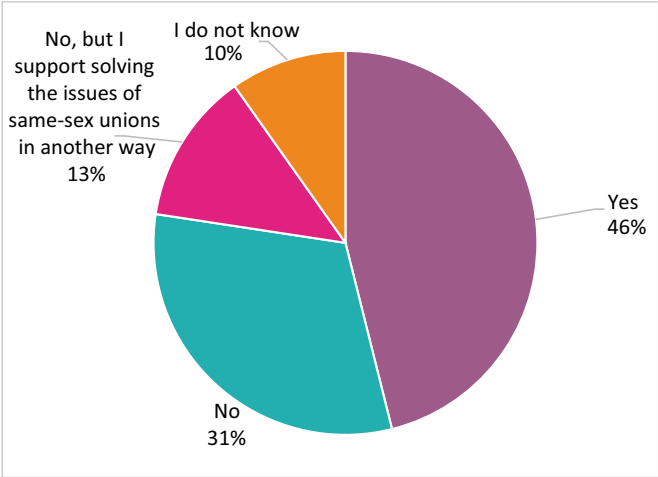
When it comes to reintroducing compulsory military service, 44% of young people support this initiative, while 46% are against it. These are marginal changes compared to 2021.

Graph 37. Attitudes of young people towards the introduction of military service for men



When asked about the potential adoption of the Law on Same-Sex Unions, the opinion of young people is still divided, but the percentage of support is higher compared to last year (from 38% to 46%).

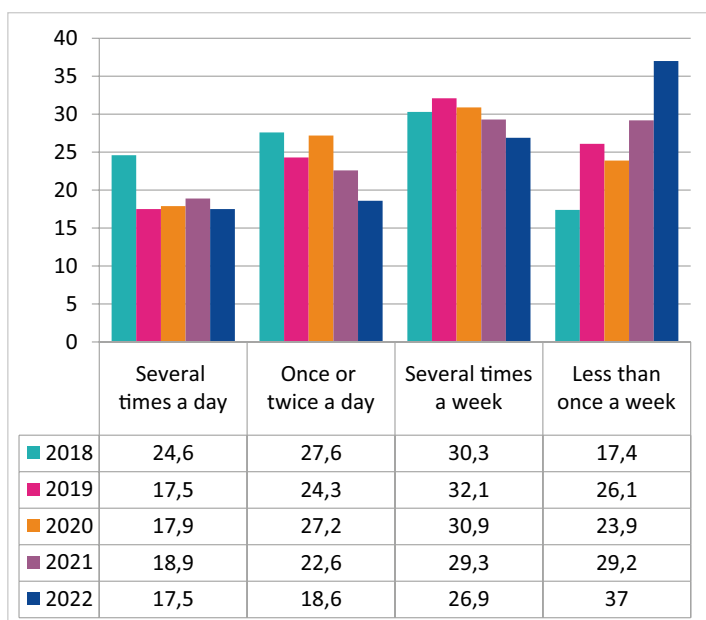
Graph 38. Attitudes of young people towards the adoption of the Law on Same-Sex Unions



7. MEDIA, SOCIAL NETWORKS AND APPLICATIONS

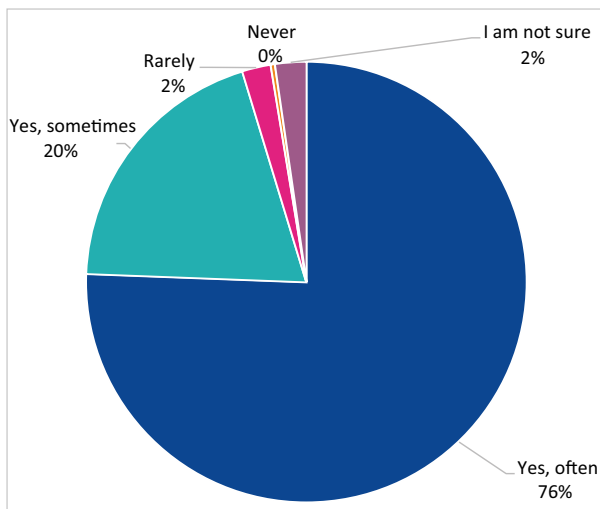
We asked young people how often they visit news websites and applications, and the fact is that more than half of them get information only a few times a week or less than once a week through news websites and applications.

Graph 39. How often do you visit news websites/applications? (in %)

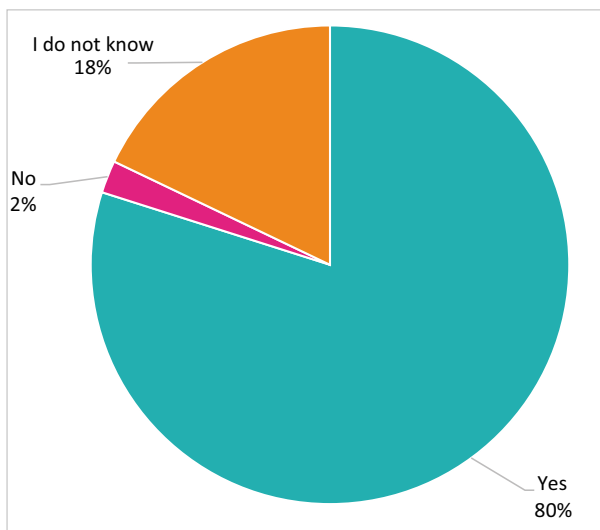


We also asked young people whether they encounter any news and information that they consider false. We also asked them if they think they are able to identify fake news. The answers are as follows:

Graph 40. Encountering fake news



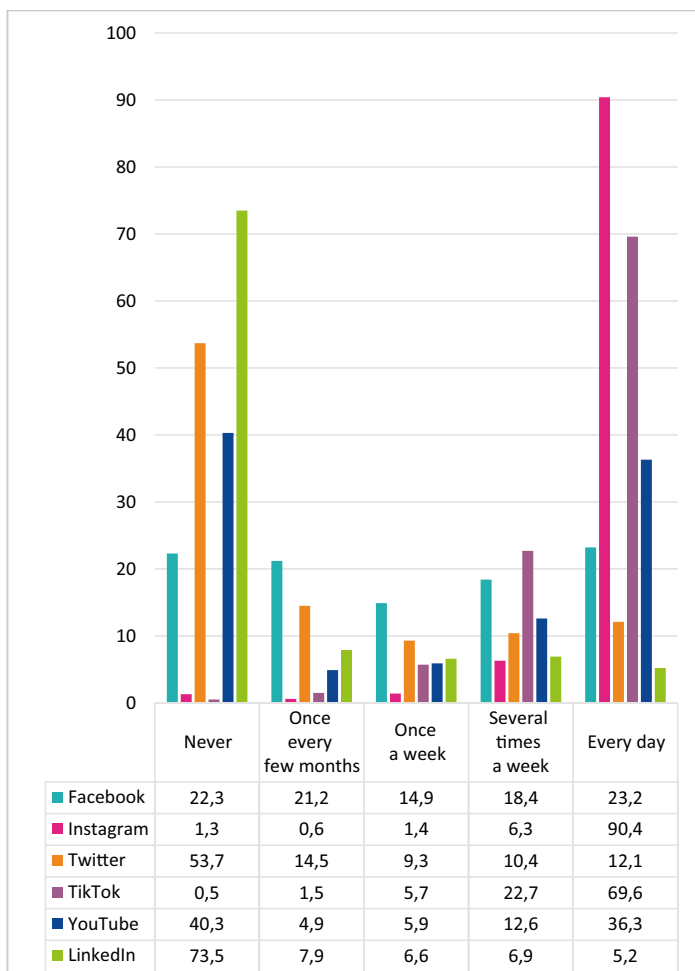
Graph 41. Identifying fake news



Four fifths of young people think they can identify fake news, 2% say they are not able to identify fake news, and 18% say they don't know if they can identify fake news. The percentages are almost the same as in 2020 and 2021.

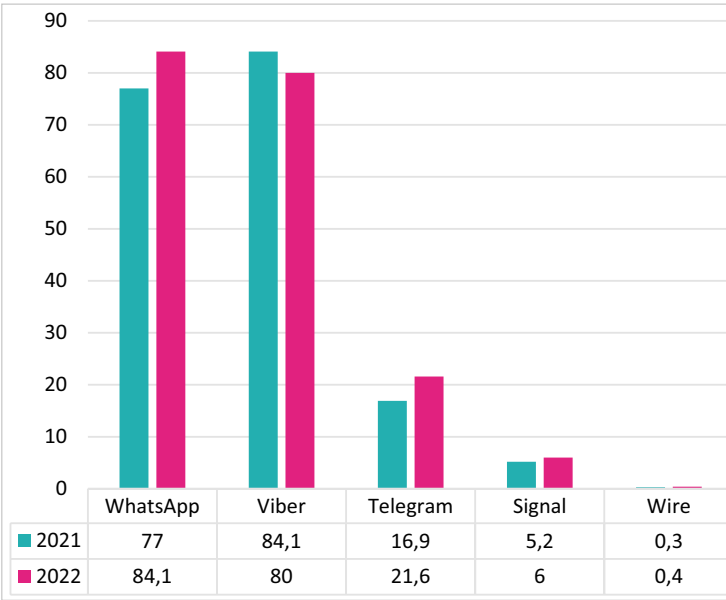
We asked young people how often they use social networks if they have accounts on them. Instagram is used daily by 9/10 respondents, and Tik Tok by 7/10 respondents. LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter are used daily by less than 1/5 of respondents.

Graph 42. How often do you use social networks

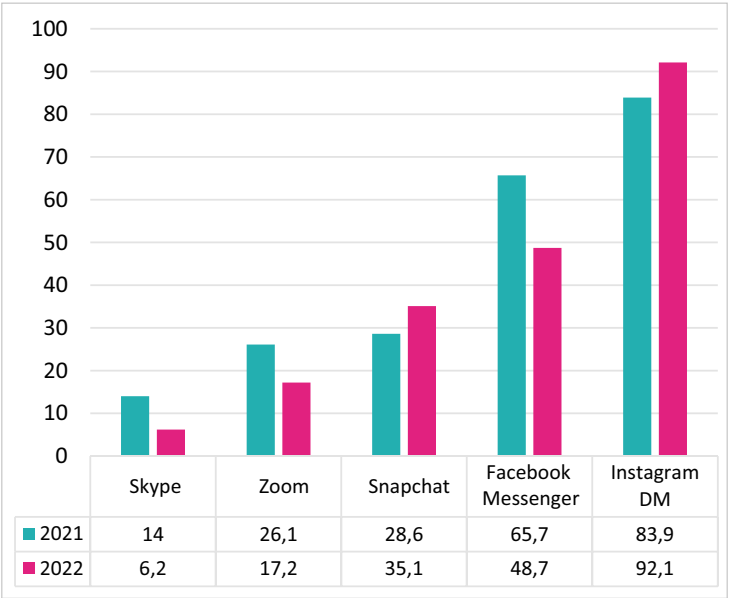


We asked young people which communication applications they use, and most of them use Instagram direct messages (92.1%) and WhatsApp (84.1%), followed by Viber (80%). The use of Facebook Messenger, as well as the social network as a whole, is on the decline, while the application which recorded the greatest relative growth is Telegram.

**Graph 43. What applications do you use to communicate?
(Part one)**



**Graph 44. What applications do you use to communicate?
(Part two)**



8. YOUTH AND LABOUR MARKET

According to official data of the National Employment Service²⁷, the number of young people who are unemployed in May 2022 is 86,575 (last April it was 115,533), which represents 19.20% of the total number of unemployed. Almost one-fifth of the unemployed persons in the Republic of Serbia are young people between the ages of 15 and 30. Compared to last year, youth unemployment decreased by 28,958 young unemployed persons or 25.06%. Since 2014, youth unemployment has decreased by 110,000 young people.

Table 17. Number of unemployed young people since 2014 by age structure

Year	Number of unemployed young people	Age 15–19	Age 20–24	Age 25–29
2014	196 260	20 666	77 484	98 110
2015	183 602	19 242	72 973	91 387
2016	171 245	17 765	66 919	86 561
2017	146 843	14 472	56 569	75 802
2018	123 686	12 934	46 654	64 098
2019	114 679	10 979	43 690	60 010
2020	104 702	10 711	38 902	55 702
2021	115 533	13 844	44 295	57 394
2022	86 575	10 703	33 475	42 397

Source: National Employment Service

27 National Employment Service, Monthly Statistical Bulletin – May 2022, <https://www.nsz.gov.rs/filemanager/Files/Dokumenta/Statisti%C4%8Dki%20bilteni/2022/Bilten%20NSZ%20-%20maj%202022.pdf>

Table 18. Number of unemployed young people in May 2022 by gender and age

Total number of unemployed young people in May 2022 – 86,575	Age 15–19		Age 20–24		Age 25–29	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
	5,726	4,977	15,686	17,789	17,474	24,913

Source: National Employment Service

The data show that slightly more young women (aged 20 to 24) are unemployed than men, and that there is a much higher number of unemployed young women than men aged 25 to 29.

Table 19. Number of unemployed young people by region and share of unemployed young people in the total unemployment in %

Region	Number of unemployed young people (aged 15–30)	Percentage of unemployed young people in the total unemployment by region	Percentage of unemployed young people in relation to the total number of unemployed young people
Belgrade region	7,454	13.8%	8.6%
Vojvodina region	16,628	18.1%	19.2%
Central and Western Serbia region	31,165	19.5%	36%
Southern and Eastern Serbia Region	24,414	19.87%	28.2%
Kosovo and Metohija region	6,906	30.8%	7.98%

Source: National Employment Service

The data show that **more than a third of unemployed youth are from the Central and Western Serbia region**, as was the case in previous years. The percentage of unemployed young people is slightly lower in the Southern and Eastern Serbia region, and even lower in the Vojvodina region. The lowest percentage of the total number of unemployed young people is in Belgrade and in the Kosovo and Metohija region.

The latest labour market indicators for young people (aged 15–29) from 2016 to 2018 show the following percentages of activity, employment, informal employment, unemployment and NEET rate among both young men and women.

Table 20. Youth labour market indicators (Source: National Employment Action Plan for 2020)²⁸

	2016	2017	2018	+/-
Activity rate	47.2	47.6	48.1	0.9
– Men	53.0	53.6	54.4	1.4
– Women	41.0	41.2	41.5	0.5
Employment rate	33.1	34.9	36.3	3.2
– Men	38.4	40.3	41.9	3.5
– Women	27.5	29.1	30.5	3.0
Gender gap	10.9	11.2	11.4	0.5
Informal employment rate	26.3	21.9	20.9	-5.4
– Men	29.7	25.1	23.2	-6.5
– Women	21.5	17.4	17.5	-4.0
Unemployment rate	29.8	26.7	24.5	-5.3
– Men	27.5	24.8	23.0	-4.5
– Women	32.8	29.3	26.6	-6.2

28 National Employment Strategy 2011–2020, Official Gazette of RS, no. 37/11, Available at: https://www.osobesainvaliditetom.rs/attachments/016_Nacionalna%20strategija%20za%20zaposljavanje.pdf

	2016	2017	2018	+/-
NEET rate	22.3	21.7	20.1	-2.2
– Men	20.3	19.9	17.8	-2.5
– Women	24.5	23.7	22.5	-2.0

Youth Employment – “My First Salary” Program

Based on the conclusions of the Dialogue with the Prime Minister organized by the National Youth Council of Serbia, on August 13, 2020, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Regulation on Youth Employment Promotion Program “My First Salary”.²⁹ The aim of the program was to provide first employment for 10,000 high school and university graduates (up to 30 years of age) without work experience who are registered with the National Employment Service. With the adoption of the Regulation on Amending the Regulation on Youth Employment Promotion Program “My First Salary” dated August 20, 2021, this program entered its second year of implementation.³⁰

For additional understanding and evaluation of the success of the “My First Salary” program, as in the previous year, we conducted a structured interview with Ilija Knežević, Head of Department at the Employment Support Division of the National Employment Service.

Mr. Ilija Knežević³¹ informed us that in the second year of the “My First Salary” program, a total of 8,743 unemployed persons, as well as 5,193 employers, were involved, and that the total funds planned for the program amounted to RSD 2.25 billion. He also talked about the process itself and the development of the program.

29 See: Official Gazette of RS, no. 107/2020, <http://demo.paragraf.rs/WebParagrafDemo/?did=553536>

30 See: Official Gazette of RS, no. 79/2021, <https://aktivasisistem.com/uredbe/Uredba-O-Programu-Podsticanja-Zaposljavanja-Mladih-PI.pdf>

31 Structured interview, Ilija Knežević, Head of Department, Employment Support Division of the National Employment Service, June 8, 2022.

Based on the Regulation on Amending the Regulation on the Youth Employment Promotion Program “My First Salary”, on August 20, 2021, the National Employment Service announced a Public Call for the implementation of the “My First Salary” Youth Employment Promotion Program in 2021. The implementation of the program was organized in four phases:

Employer registration – Over 9,500 employers showed interest in participating in the program, registered on the “My First Salary” portal and reported the need for over 17,000 positions for nearly 28,000 jobs. Out of the total number of registered employers, 8,788 met the requirements of the Public Call for participation in the program, with 15,681 positions approved for hiring 25,497 unemployed persons. The largest number of people were needed for filling positions in the following areas: Processing industry (agronomist, technologist, chemist, biotechnologist, microbiologist, mechanical engineer, locksmith, welder, mechanical technician, electrician); Wholesale and retail trade; Repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (salesman, sales associate, car mechanic, electrician, car painter, tinsmith); Administrative and auxiliary services (administrative associate, bookkeeper, economist, administrative clerks); Health and social care (medical doctor, medical technician, social worker).

Candidate registration – 17,555 young people opened an account on the “My First Salary” portal. Of that number, 12,967 candidates successfully applied for one of 11,925 positions with 7,606 employers.

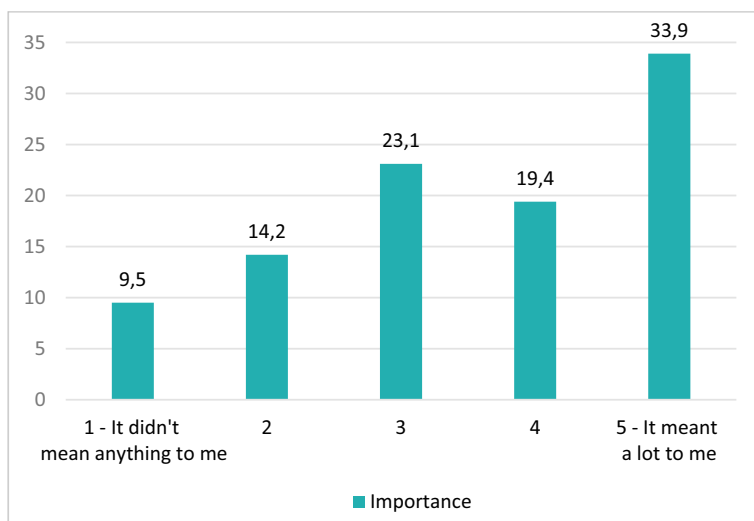
Screening and selection of candidates and matching employers and candidates – After completing the process of matching employers and candidates, a final list of approved employers was created. A total of 5,358 employers and 9,015 candidates were approved for 6,926 advertised positions.

Conclusion of the contract – After the candidate screening and selection process was completed, a total of 8,743 unemployed persons and 5,193 employers were included in the “My First Salary” program in the reporting period. Of the total number of persons involved, 5,305 were women. In terms of the educational structure of the program participants, the program included 6,108 unemployed people who completed secondary education (69.86%) and 2,635 un-

employed people who completed higher education (30.14%). The largest number of people joined the private sector, 6,227 (71.22%), while 2,516 unemployed persons (28.78%) were employed in the public sector.

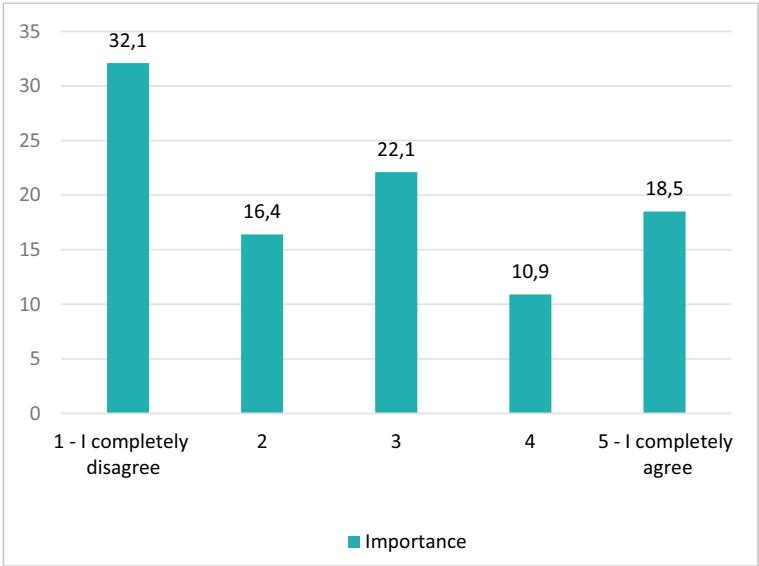
When asked how much the financial aid in the amount of EUR 100 meant to them, young people gave an average score of 3.54 (on a scale from **1 – It didn't mean anything to me** to **5 – It meant a lot to me**). A total of 23.7% of young people responded that this aid did not mean anything to them (scores 1 and 2), while 53% of young people gave a score of 4 and 5, that is, they stated that the financial aid was important to them.

Graph 45. How much did the financial aid in the amount of EUR 100 mean to you?

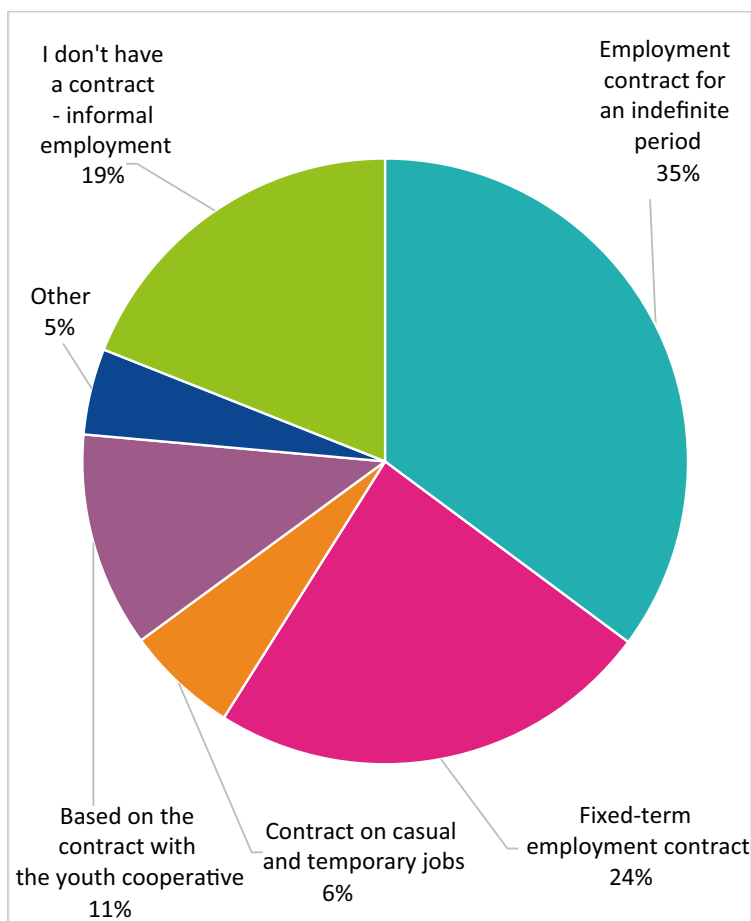


We also asked young people if this financial aid was a positive step forward by the government (agreement with the statement: The payment of financial aid in the amount of EUR 100 was a positive step forward by the government, which thus demonstrated its commitment to the position of young people). The average answer is 2.67 (on a scale of **1 – I completely disagree at all** to **5 – I completely agree**).

Graph 46. Financial aid in the amount of EUR 100 as a positive step forward by the government



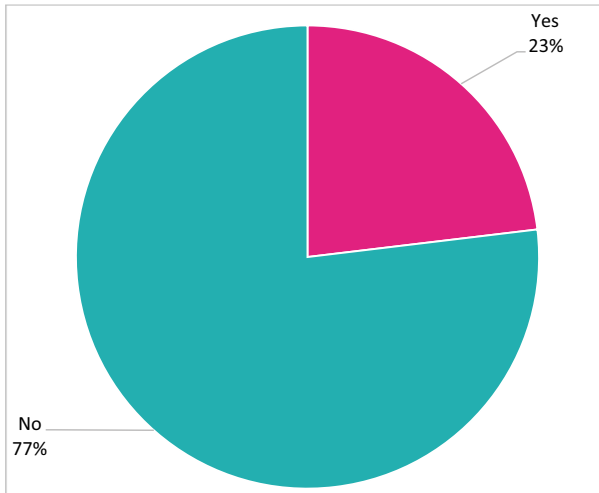
This year, we asked young people about the type of contract under which were they employed. The results are as follows:

Graph 47. Types of youth employment contracts

The largest number of employed young people have a contract for an indefinite period of time (35%), but the large number of young people working without a contract is a cause for concern.

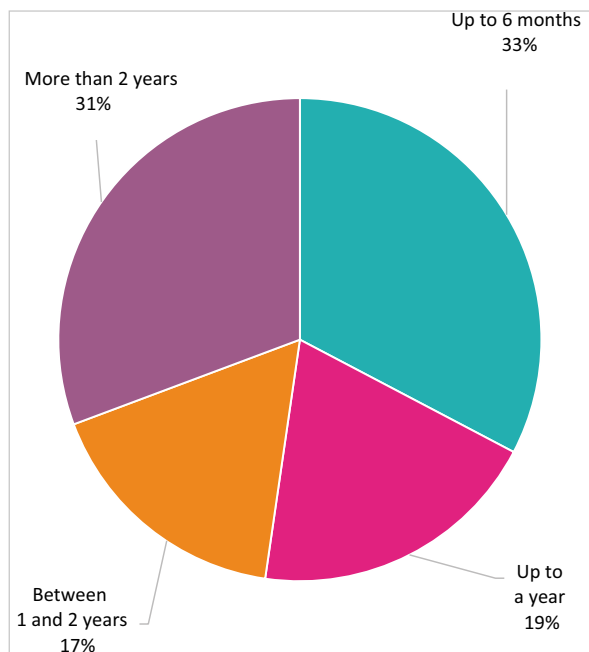
We asked unemployed young people if they were registered with the National Employment Service (NES). The results are as follows:

Graph 48. Registration of unemployed youth with the National Employment Service



Less than $\frac{1}{4}$ of unemployed youth stated that they were registered with the National Employment Service.

We asked unemployed young people how long they have been in this status. Close to a third of unemployed youth have been unemployed for more than two years.

Graph 49. How long have you been unemployed?

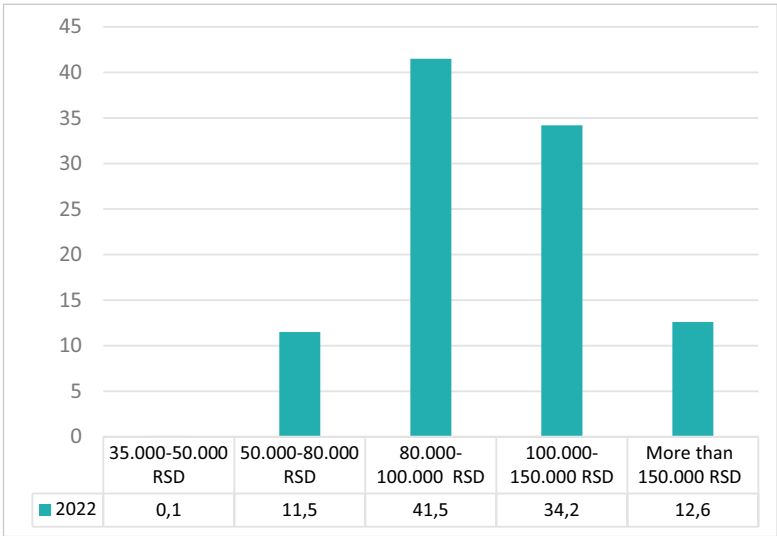
We asked young people what is important to them with regard to employment – the most important is salary, with 92.8%. All responses are shown in the table below:

Table 21. What is important to you with regard to employment?

Importance	2020 (in %)	2021 (in %)	2022 (in %)
Salary	90.3	90.9	92.8
Advancement opportunity	78.2	77.4	76
Working hours	63.4	70.8	73.3
Learning opportunities	55.7	60.3	54.2
Good relationship with superiors (bosses)	*	61.1	56.8
Good relationships with co-workers		71.9	69.6

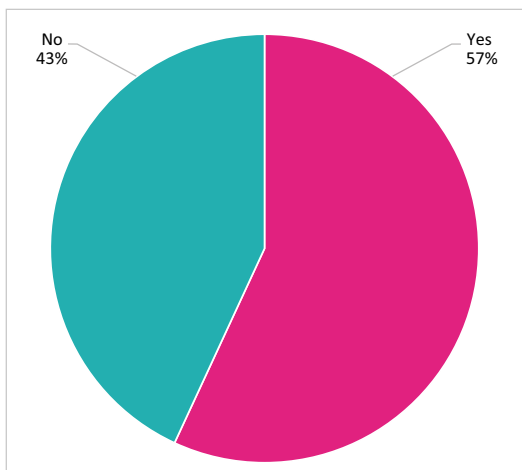
Given that, unsurprisingly, salary is the most important factor, it is also important to see what salary young people consider sufficient for a decent living in Serbia. **The largest percentage (41.5%) of young people believe that a salary of RSD 80,000 to 100,000 is sufficient for a decent life. On the other hand, 34.2% of young people believe that a salary of RSD 100,000 or 150,000 is necessary for a decent life. However, in April 2022, the average salary in Serbia was RSD 73,012.³² Only 11.6% of young people believe that the average salary is sufficient for a decent life.** Differences between young people’s expectations and reality are an important explanatory factor for their dissatisfaction with the standard of living in Serbia.

Graph 50.What salary is sufficient for a decent living?



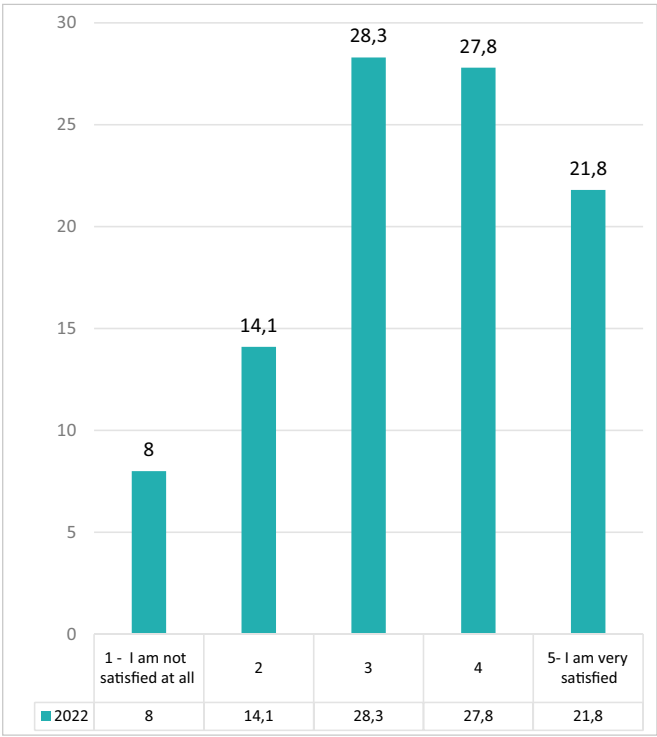
This was followed by a series of questions related to internship. First, we asked young people if they had ever done an internship. Almost half of the young people (56.9%) had done an internship program.

32 Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, <https://www.stat.gov.rs/sr-latn/vesti/statisticalrelease/?p=8728&a=24&s=2403?s=2403>

Graph 51. Young people in internship

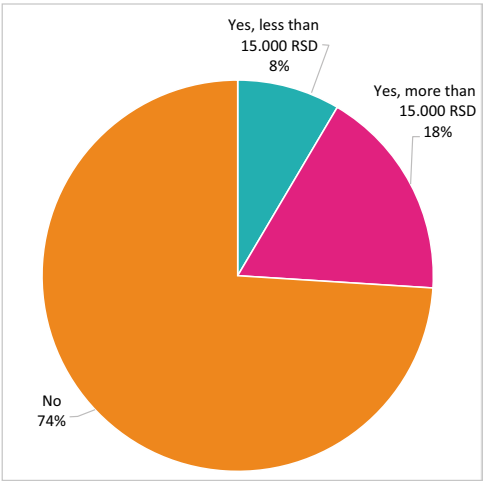
We also asked young people how satisfied they were with their internship. The average response of young people was 3.41 (on a scale of 1 – I am not satisfied at all to 5 – I am very satisfied).

Graph 52. Satisfaction with internships



Lastly, we asked young people whether their internship was paid or not. We received the following responses:

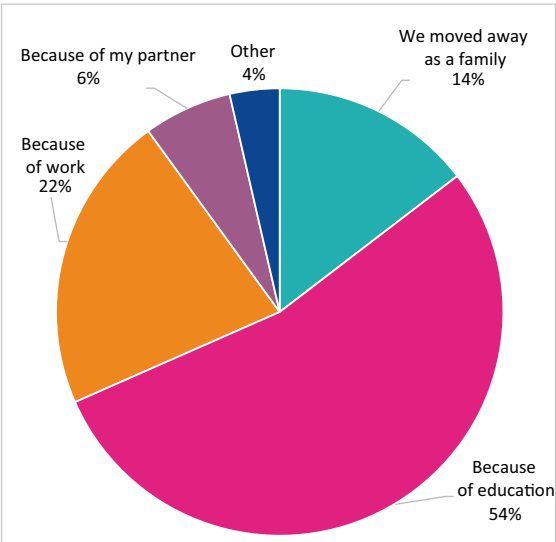
Graph 53. Paid internship



The fact that almost **¾ of young people was not paid** for their work at the internship is worrying.

We asked young people who moved away from their hometown what was the reason for that. The results are as follows:

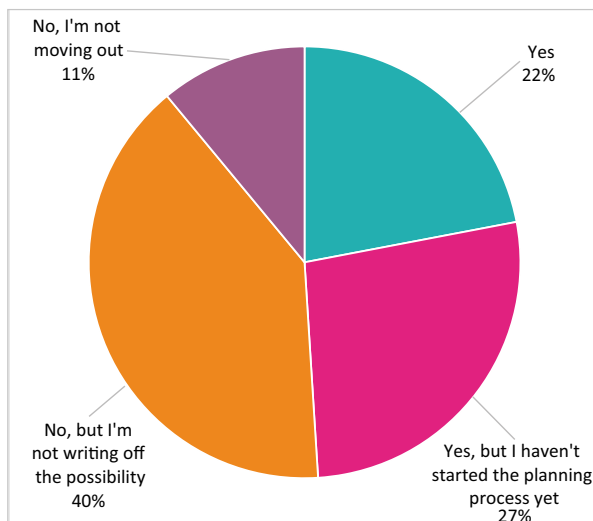
Graph 54. Reasons for young people to move



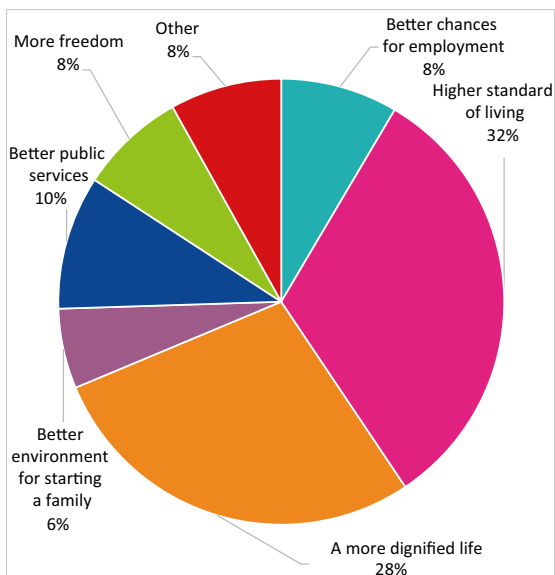
The largest number of young people moved away for education (54%), followed by work (22%) and family relocation (14%).

We asked young people if they plan to move out of the country, and according to the results, 22.3% of them are already planning to do so, while 26.7% responded that they had been thinking about it but have not yet started the actual planning process.

Graph 55. Are you planning to move out of the country?

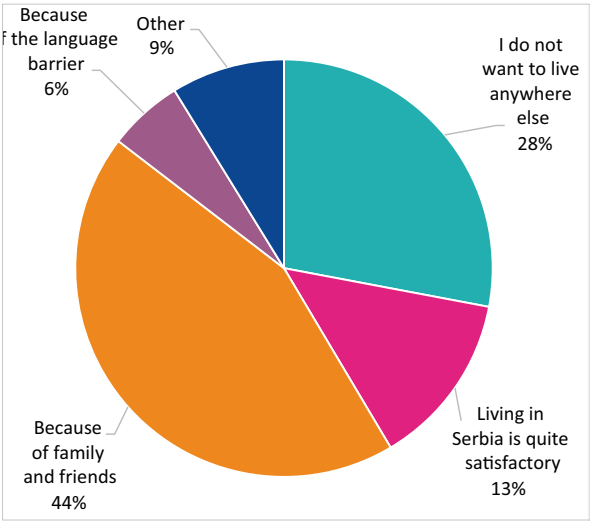


We asked young people why they would move out of Serbia. Unlike last year, when the largest number of young people answered that they would move out of the country for a more dignified life (31.7%), this number dropped to 28.1%. As the main reason, young people now point to a higher standard of living, 32.1% (last year's result was 24.6%).

Graph 56. Why would you move out of the country?

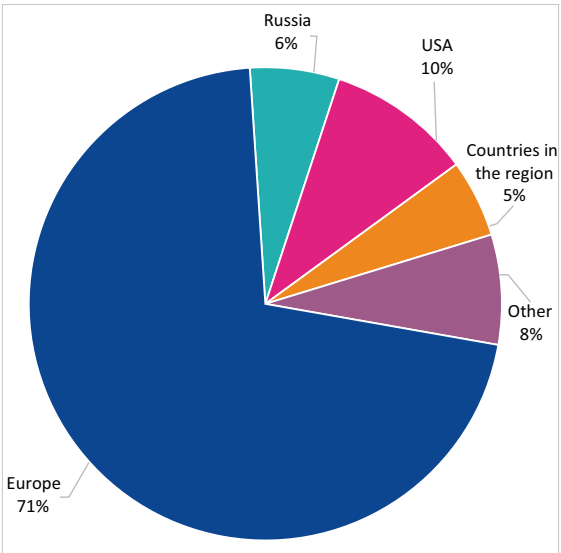
We also asked young people why they would not move out of the country, and the largest number of them responded that they would not do so because of family and friends (44%).

Graph 57. Why would you not move out of the country?



When asked where they would move, countries of Western Europe were at the top of the list in 71.1% of cases, followed by the USA in 9.9% of cases.

Graph 58. Where would young people move to?



9. 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.**³³

Table 22. Number of graduated students by gender in the period from 2017 to 2020.

Year	Total number of graduates	Male	Female
2017	45,119	18,548	26,571
2018	45,221	18,488	26,733
2019	42,499	17,497	25,002
2020	41,331	16,488	24,843
2021	48,508	21,216	27,292

Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia³⁴

In the 2021/22 academic year, 243,730 students were enrolled in all higher education institutions and at all levels of study in the Republic of Serbia, which is about two thousand more than the previous

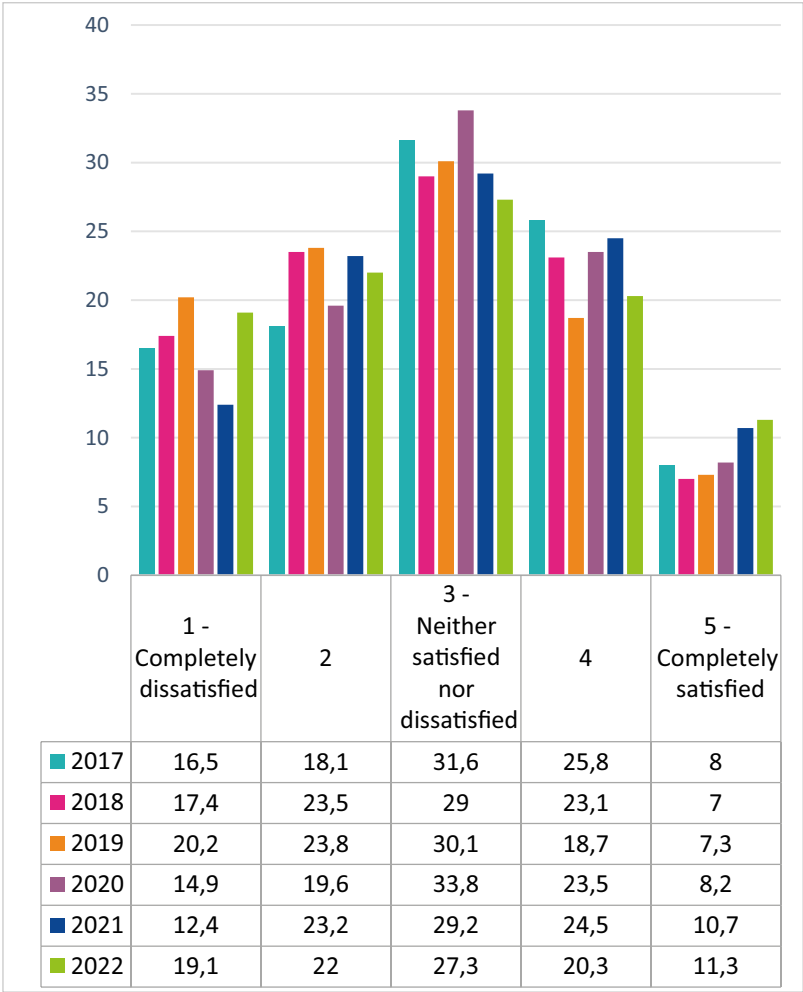
33 Graduated students 2020, Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, <https://publikacije.stat.gov.rs/G2022/Pdf/G20221165.pdf>

34 SORS, <https://www.stat.gov.rs/oblasti/obrazovanje/>

year. Of the total number of students enrolled, **102,527 students (42.06%) are male, and 141,203 (57.94%) are female.**

This year's KOMS questionnaire showed that, when asked whether young people are satisfied with the educational program in which they are studying or have studied, on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 – Completely dissatisfied with the program; 5 – Completely satisfied with the program), **the average response score was 2.83**, which is a slightly lower percentage compared to last year (2.98). **The general conclusion is that dissatisfaction with the educational program has slightly increased.**

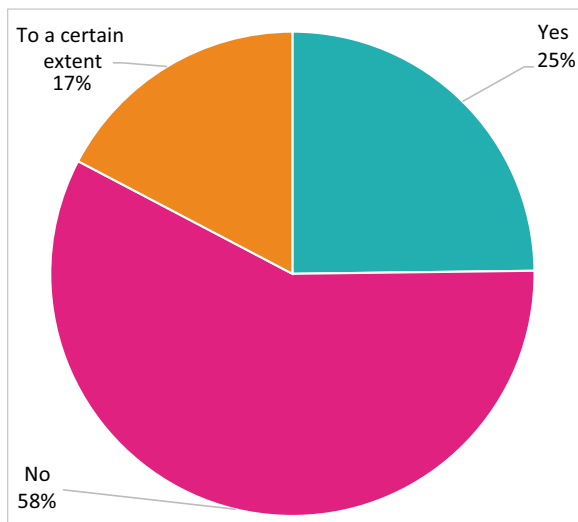
Graph 59. Satisfaction of young people with the educational program (%)



When asked if they are employed in the position for which they were educated, 58% of young people answered that they are not, 17% of them are to some extent employed in the position for which they were educated, **and only 25% of young people work in the**

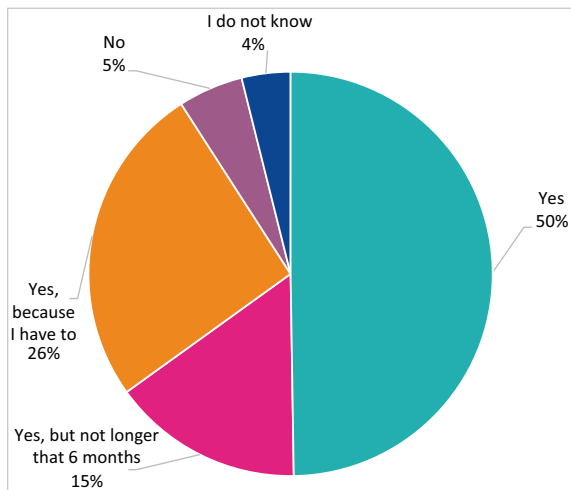
position for which they have acquired adequate education, which is slightly less than last year. The conclusion about the mismatch between the labour market and the education system, poor processes of professional orientation of young people is still valid.

Graph 60. Employment in the position for which young people were educated



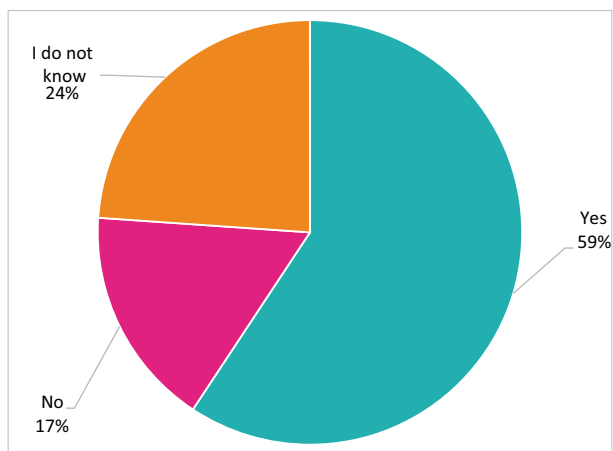
We also asked young people if they were willing to do other jobs until they find a job in their profession. **Again, over 90% of them responded that they were willing to do other jobs until they find an adequate job in their profession.**

Graph 61. Are you willing to do other jobs?



We asked whether young people are willing to retrain if there is no need in the labour market for their educational profile, and three fifths of young people responded in the affirmative. 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 62. Would you be willing to retrain if there is no need in the labour market for your educational profile?



10. ACTIVISM AND VOLUNTEERING

We asked young people about the **biggest problems of the society** they live in. Unemployment was the biggest problem in previous years as well, while education system has been rated as a bigger problem than the value system this year.

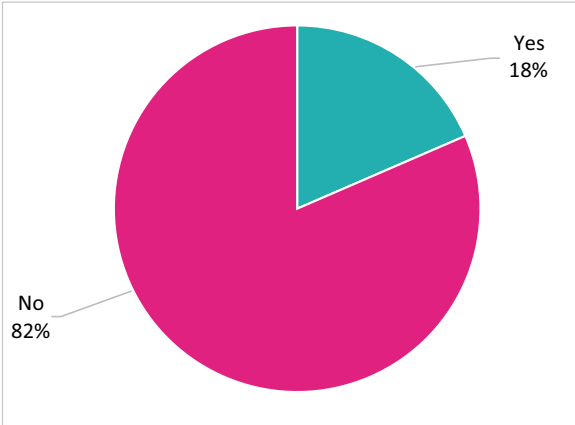
1. Unemployment
2. Education system
3. Value system.

Table 23. The biggest problems of young people (u %)

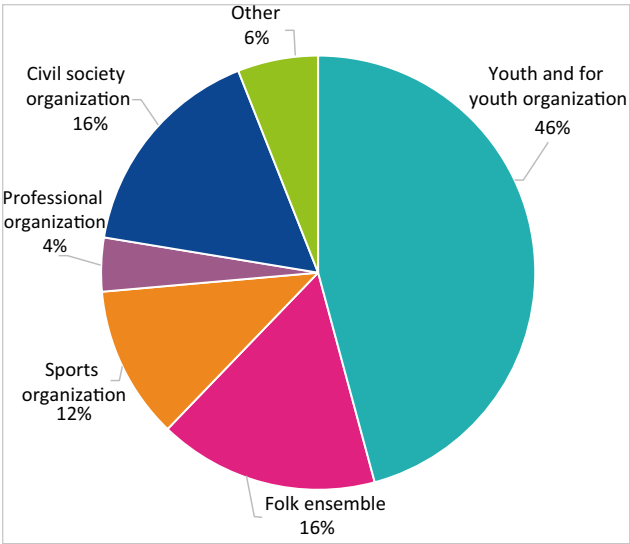
Problem	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Unemployment	89.1	83.1	74.7	80.3	74	73.8
Education system	77.9	69.0	70.2	69.1	71.6	72.6
Value system	76.4	79.6	76	75.5	73.9	70
Corruption	50.4	55.9	54.7	51.7	51.8	50.9
Little impact on decision-making	47.5	48.5	39.7	55.1	56.7	57.4
State of the environment	*	*	*	*	*	51.8
Lack of cultural events	35.1	34.2	44.3	43.8	43.4	41.3
Safety	18.4	26.7	31.2	26.8	31.8	37.4
Lack of tolerance in society	*	*	*	56.2	60.2	59.8
Insufficient freedom of expression in society	*	*	*	48.7	53.2	52.5
Health system						39.4

We asked young people if they are members of any civic society organization, and 18% of them participate in society through organizations, which is almost the same percentage as in 2021. In almost half of the cases, these are youth and for youth organizations.

Graph 63. Membership in organizations



Graph 64. If you are a member of an organization, what type of organization is it?



We also asked young people if they participated in any of the following activities in the last year:

Table 24. Youth activism

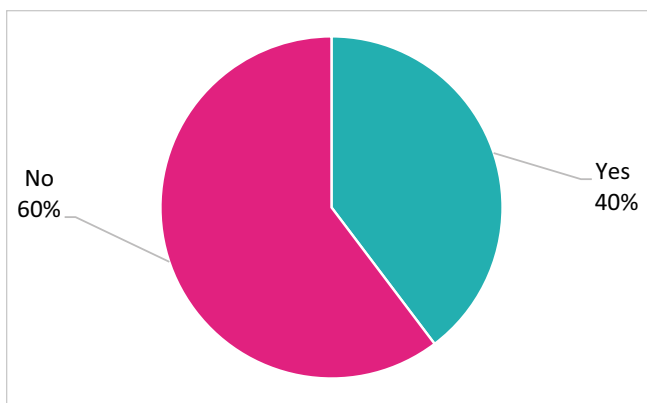
Activity	2020 (in %)	2021 (in %)	2022 (in %)
Protest organized by a political party	14.2	11	14.3
Protest organized by an organization	28.5	26.8	46.5
Signing a petition/popular initiative	69.7	78.8	75
Participation in forums	36.1	24.9	31
Provided support to someone in the elections (participation in the campaign, signature of support)	*	*	12.8
Monitored the elections as an observer	*	*	6.5

11. YOUTH SAFETY AND HEALTH

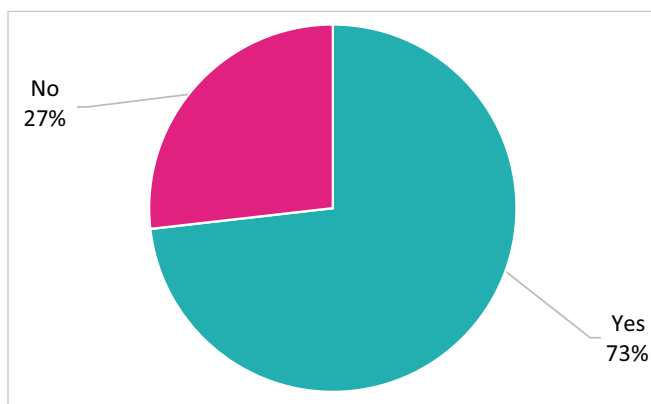
The worrying finding of this chapter is that the share of young people who were exposed to some form of violence and discrimination has not decreased in any category, while in many categories that share has increased.

In the questionnaire, we asked young people whether they are exposed or have been exposed to some form of violence, and the result shows that 40% of young people stated that they have been exposed to physical violence, which is more than last year (37%). Data on verbal violence remain unchanged compared to last year, while the percentage of young people who were exposed to digital violence also increased from 37 to 40%.

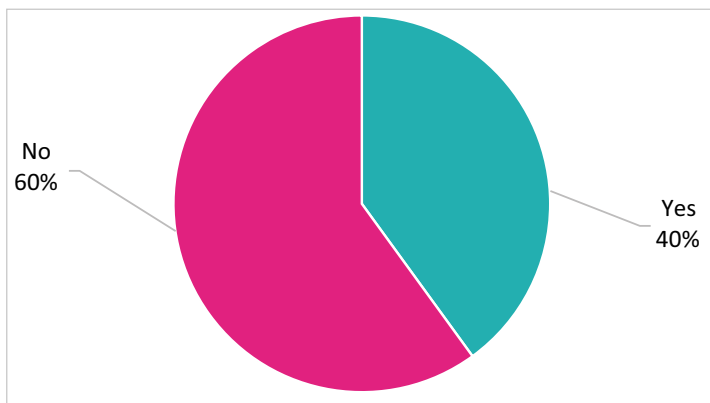
Graph 65. Exposure to physical violence



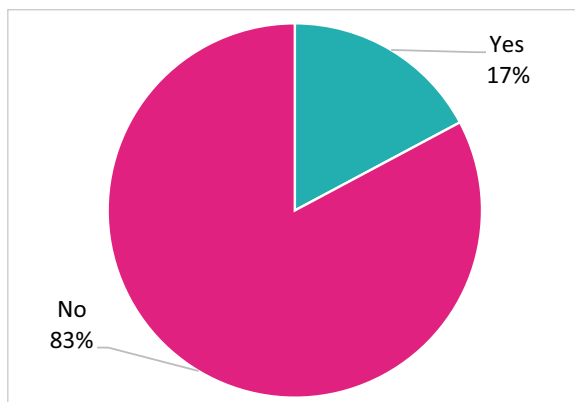
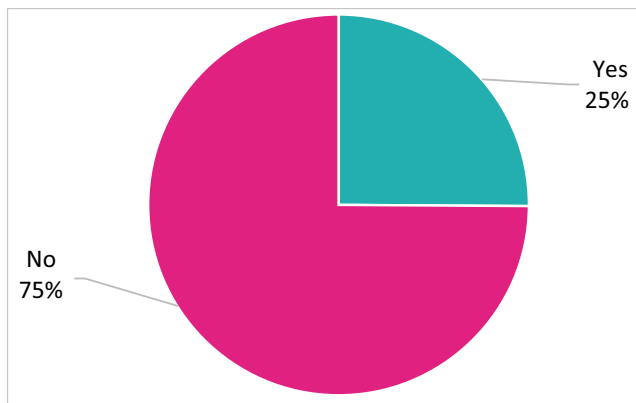
Graph 66. Exposure to verbal violence



Graph 67. Exposure to digital violence



We also asked young people if they had been victims of sexual violence. 17% answered in the affirmative, but that number increases to 25% when it comes to young women. **These are also higher figures compared to 2021, when they were 13% and 21%, respectively.**

Graph 68. Exposure to sexual violence (all young people)**Graph 69. Exposure to sexual violence (women)**

We asked young people how they assess the causes of violence and which of the listed causes, in their opinion, affect the growth of violence among young people on a scale from 1 to 5 (1 – Does not affect at all, 5 – Affects very much).

Same as in 2021, as the causes of violence in Serbia, young people most often identify the following:

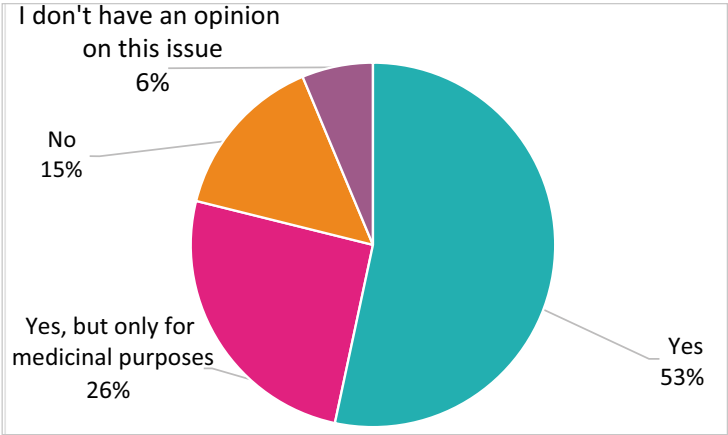
1. Family relationships
2. Poor penal policy
3. Absence and decline of social values in the country

Table 25. Average scores of respondents regarding the causes of violence

Cause	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Promotion of violent people in the media	4.3	4.0	4.0	3.99	3.93	3.83
Family relationships	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.39	4.35	4.33
Poverty	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.95	3.77	3.69
Discrimination against vulnerable groups (LGBT, Roma, etc.)	4.1	3.9	3.9	3.98	3.8	3.84
Alcohol and drug consumption	3.9	3.8	3.9	3.87	3.74	3.79
Weapons	3.7	3.3	3.4	3.47	3.63	3.69
Poor penal policy towards violent people	4.6	4.3	4.2	4.29	4.35	4.32
Repression by the police	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.93	3.86	3.92
Absence and decline of social values in Serbia	4.5	4.3	4.3	4.37	4.29	4.25
Sports club supporters and their groups	*	3.7	3.8	3.79	3.76	3.75

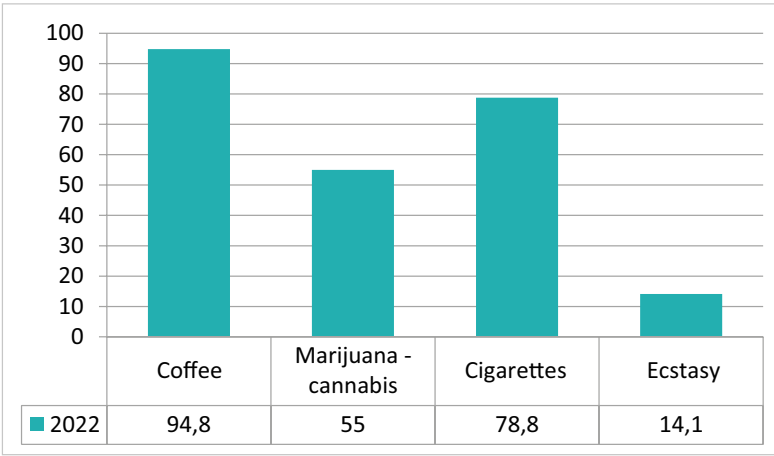
This year we have asked several questions again regarding the health and habits of young people related to consumption of psychoactive substances. We asked young people if they are in favour of legalizing marijuana/cannabis. Support for the legalization of marijuana increased from 49% last year to 53%.

Graph 70. Support for marijuana legalization

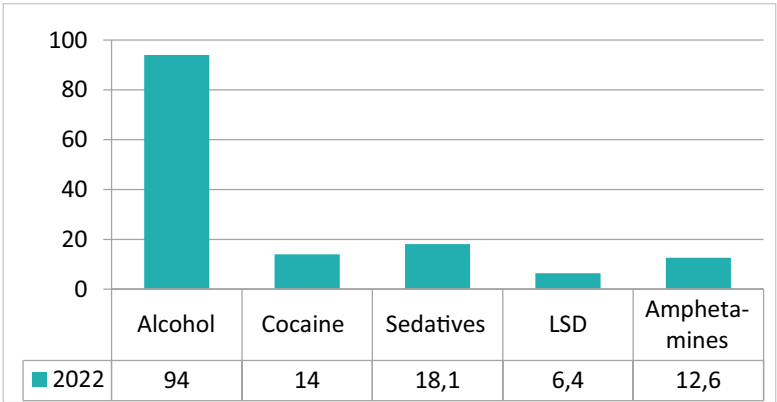


We also asked young people to indicate the substances they used at least once:

Graph 71. Substances that young people have tried at least once (Part one)

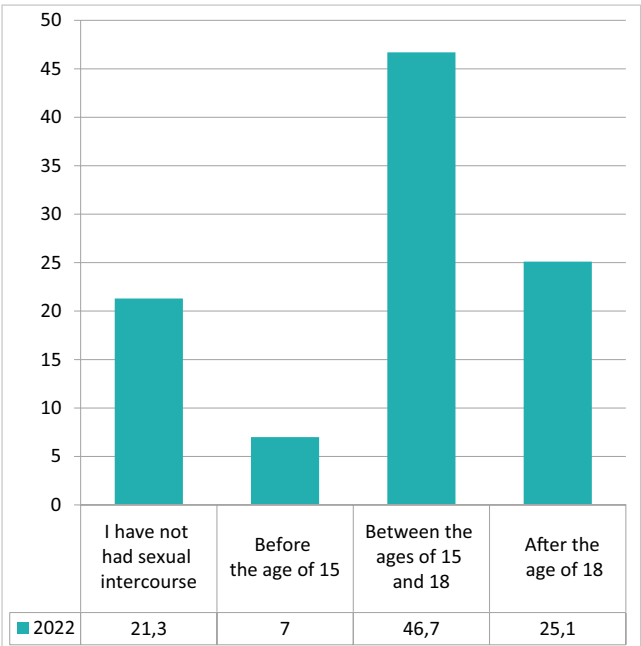


Graph 72. Substances that young people have tried at least once (Part two)

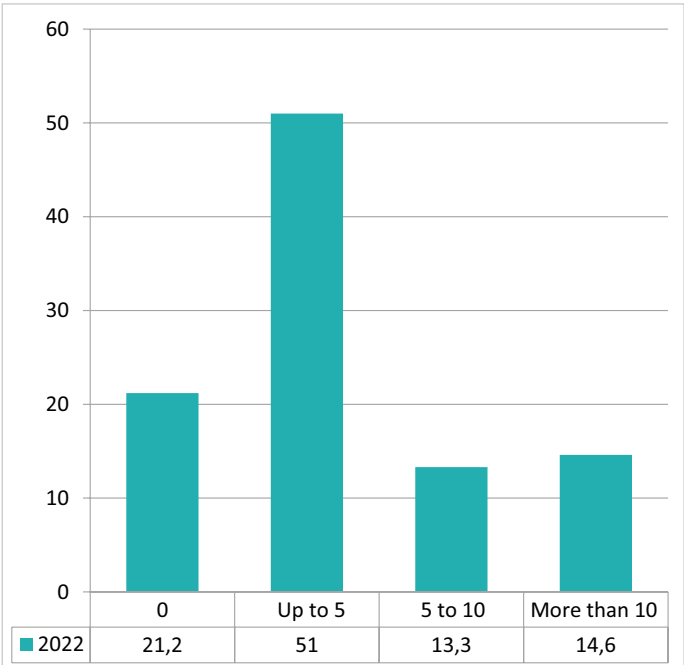


This year, we have asked young people about their age at the time of their first sexual intercourse and how many partners they have had so far. We received the following responses:

Graph 73. First sexual intercourse – age



Graph 74. Number of sexual partners



The values obtained on the basis of these two questions are not unusual, but they show the need to formalize reproductive health education, which has not yet been implemented in Serbia.



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