



REPUBLIC OF SERBIA
MINISTRY OF YOUTH AND SPORTS



KEY INDICATORS OF THE SITUATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN SERBIA

- COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS WITH
OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES
AND TRENDS -



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Belgrade, 2020



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NOTE:

This analysis does not represent the official position of the Government of the Republic of Serbia.

All terms used in the analysis in the masculine grammatical gender include both the masculine and feminine genders of the persons to whom they refer.

We thank UNICEF for providing translation of this research analysis into English.

PREFACE

The comparative analysis of the situation of young people in Serbia and other European countries was conducted as a result of the need to systematize and publish in one place the statistical data on young people from the databases of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, Statistical office of the European Union and data of various institutions and authorities related to the relevant objectives from the National Youth Strategy 2015-2025. I hope that the analysis will be useful to policy-makers to get a better insight into the situation and needs of young people and the priority areas of action in working with and for young people in Serbia.

At the same time, I would like to express my gratitude to Vanja Udovičić, the Minister of Youth and Sports, for enabling me to do this work. Special gratitude goes to Dr Gordana Čaprić, Deputy Director of the Institute for Education Quality and Evaluation and Borislava Maksimović, an expert in education and training for their assistance during the preparation and finalization of the analysis and for useful suggestions and comments that have improved the quality of this document. I would also like to thank my husband Branislav for his continuous support and patience during the time I spent doing the analysis.

In Belgrade, November 2020

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. K...'. The signature is written in a cursive style.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	1
INTRODUCTION.....	2
I KEY INDICATORS OF THE SITUATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN SERBIA – COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS AND TRENDS	5
1. DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS	5
2. EDUCATION	10
3. LABOUR MARKET	22
4. ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY.....	31
5. HEALTH.....	44
6. SOCIAL INCLUSION.....	52
II CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	56
SOURCES AND LITERATURE USED	63
ANNEX 1 GLOSSARY.....	67
ANNEX 2 EUROSTAT TABLE DATA FOR SELECTED COUNTRIES.....	70

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

LFS	Labour Force Survey
EUROSTAT	Statistical office of the European Union
EU	European Union
EHIS	European Health Interview Survey
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
BMI	Body mass index
LGBTI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer persons
MoYS	Ministry of Youth and Sports
ILO	International Labour Organization
MoESTD	Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development
MoLEVSA	Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
NYS	National Youth Strategy 2015-2025
NEET	Persons not in education, employment or training
p.p	Percentage point
SORS	Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia
SILC	Survey on Income and Living Conditions
YPA	Youth policy actors
WHO	World Health Organization
CeSID	Centre for Free Elections and Democracy

INTRODUCTION

In order to monitor the situation of young people in the Republic of Serbia (hereinafter: Serbia) in accordance with the *National Youth Strategy 2015-2025* (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, no. 22/15, hereinafter: NYS) the analysis included the key statistical data for young people available in October/November 2020 on the website of Statistical office of the European Union (EUROSTAT¹, hereinafter: Eurostat) and on the website of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia², as well as data available on the websites of ministries and various institutions in Serbia whose scope of work is important for the implementation of youth policy. Other data on young people used were data of the European Commission³, Council of Europe⁴, as well as other international organizations.

Different countries have different ways of defining the age that covers the category of young people. In Serbia, according to the *Law on Youth* (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, no. 50/11), youth or young people are people from 15 to and including 30 years of age. This document analyses the data for young people aged 15 to 29, since they are monitored in this way in Eurostat, thereby enabling the comparability of data. Where possible, data for young people in Serbia aged 15 to 30 are also given.

Although most of the data are given for 2018 and 2019, data from previous years were also considered for some fields (depending on the data available in Eurostat).

The Eurostat youth section contains data for most of the fields taken into account in the most important strategic documents of the European Union (hereinafter: EU) in the youth field, primarily in the *Council Resolution on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018)*⁵ and the new *European Union Youth Strategy 2019–2027*⁶. There are also data that are important for most of the NYS strategic goals as well as for the *achievement of the goals of the Council of Europe Youth sector strategy 2030*,⁷ *Youth 2030: The United Nations Youth Strategy*⁸ and *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.⁹

Since the last population census in Serbia was in 2011, these data were also taken into account. Generations of young people in Serbia who were 15 in 2011 were born in 1996, and young people who are 15 in 2019 were born in 2004, so they grew up in different social contexts and countries: the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, then the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro since 2003, and the Republic of Serbia since 2006.

¹ [Statistical office of the European Union](https://www.stat.gov.rs/)

² <https://www.stat.gov.rs/>

³ https://ec.europa.eu/youth/node_en

⁴ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth>

⁵ Council Resolution of 27 November 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018), OJ C 311, 19.12.2009. p. 1–11 available at: [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32009G1219\(01\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32009G1219(01))

⁶ Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on a framework for European cooperation in the youth field: The European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027, OJ C 456, 18.12.2018, p. 1–22 available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:C:2018:456:FULL>

⁷ Council of Europe youth sector strategy 2030, Resolution CM/Res (2020)2 on the Council of Europe youth sector strategy 2030 (Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 22 January 2020 at the 1365th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies) available at: <https://rm.coe.int/0900001680998935>

⁸ Youth 2030: The United Nations Strategy on Youth, available at: https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/18-00080_UN-Youth-Strategy_Web.pdf

⁹ Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015, A/RES/70/1 General Assembly Distr.: General 21 October 2015, available at: https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E

The NYS defines nine (9) strategic goals as desired changes to be achieved with respect to young people in the areas of interest to young people. The successful implementation of the NYS in the next 10 years will result in the improvement of:

- employability and employment of young women and men;
- quality and opportunities for acquiring qualifications and development of competencies and innovation of young people;
- active participation of young women and men in society;
- health and well-being of young women and men;
- conditions for the development of youth safety culture;
- support to social inclusion of young people at risk of social exclusion;
- mobility, scope of international youth cooperation and support for young migrants;
- system of informing young people and knowledge about young people;
- consumption of culture and participation of youth in the creation of cultural programmes;

Eurostat provides data for young people in nine different fields for all European Union member states, as well as the EU-27 average, and for most fields, the data are available for some other countries as well, most often for the countries of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA / Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland) and candidate countries for membership in the European Union. That is why in the analysis we state the number of countries for which the data are available for each field.

The Eurostat youth section contains data for the following fields: population, education, employment, participation, volunteering, health, culture and creativity, social inclusion and youth in the digital world. In this document, we have systematized this data into six chapters: demographic trends, education, labour market (employment), active participation in society, health and social inclusion. For the wider field: active participation in society, we have decided, since there are no data for participation and volunteering activities for Serbia, and the amount of data in these two fields is small: in the field of culture and creativity, to give data only for the participation of young people in cultural and sports events and in the field of youth in the digital world, to give data that mostly relate to the use of information and communication technologies for participation in society and leisure. Employment was considered more broadly within the labour market situation.

In addition to the analysis of the situation of young people in Serbia in relation to the European Union (EU-27) average, special attention was paid to comparisons with young people in countries of Southeast Europe and selected European countries, EU member states, important partners of Serbia in the field of youth policy (Austria, Hungary, Germany, France and Switzerland). Nine out of the 12 countries in Southeast Europe were analysed, as there were no data for Bosnia and Herzegovina for any parameter, and only one part of demographic data was available for Albania and Moldova without other fields of analysis, so, apart from Serbia, the focus was on 13 selected countries for which the data were available: Austria, Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Germany, Romania, North Macedonia, Slovenia, Turkey, France, Croatia, Montenegro and Switzerland (hereinafter: selected countries).

To gain a broader insight into the situation of young people in relation to the rest of the population, we also considered the data on the implementation of the main ten-year strategic document of the European Union: *Europe 2020: A strategy for smart, sustainable and*

*inclusive growth*¹⁰ (hereinafter: *Europe 2020 Strategy*) which lists priority areas important for the development of both member states and candidate countries for the EU accession process. The *Europe 2020 Strategy* represents the vision of the European social market economy in the 21st century. This document was one of the starting points in planning the desired objectives and outcomes of both the *Strategy for Education Development in Serbia 2020* (“Official Gazette of Republic of Serbia”, no. 107/12) and the *Action Plan for its implementation* (“Official Gazette of Republic of Serbia”, no. 16/15), and the *National Employment Strategy 2011-2020* (“Official Gazette of Republic of Serbia”, no. 37/11) and the NYS. Since Serbia uses the Open Method of Coordination in the process of accession to the European Union, when it comes to the fields of youth, education and culture, the EU strategic documents are only a recommended framework for the development of national policies.

The three mutually reinforcing priority areas in the *Europe 2020 Strategy* are: 1. Smart growth – developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation (scientific and technological research and development, innovation, education and digital society). 2. Sustainable growth – simultaneously promoting competition and more resource-efficient production. 3. Inclusive growth – better participation in the labour market, fight against poverty and social cohesion.

Five main targets of the *Europe 2020 Strategy* are:

1. Increase the employment rate of the population aged 20-64 from 69% to 75% through the greater participation of young people, older workers and non-qualified workers and better integration of legal migrants;
2. Increase the percentage of GDP invested in R&D from 1.9% to 3%;
3. Meet the “20/20/20” climate/energy target – reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20% compared to 1990 levels (or even by 30%, if the conditions are right), increase the share of renewable energy sources in the final energy consumption to 20%, and increase the energy efficiency by 20%;
4. Reduce the share of early school leaving to under 10% from the current 15%, whilst increasing the share of the population having completed tertiary education from 31% to at least 40%;
5. Reduce the number of people living below the poverty line by 25%, lifting over 20 million people out of poverty.

Eurostat monitors the indicators from this strategy. The publication “*Smarter, greener, more inclusive? – Indicators to Support the Europe 2020 Strategy*”¹¹ presents the progress of the EU and its Member States towards the targets of the Europe 2020 Strategy, so this publication was also used as a relevant source of data.

¹⁰ Guide through the Europe 2020 Strategy, European Movement Serbia, 2011, available at: <http://www.mpn.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/EU-2020.pdf>

¹¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/3217494/10155585/KS-04-19-559-EN-N.pdf/b8528d01-4f4f-9c1e-4cd4-86c2328559de>

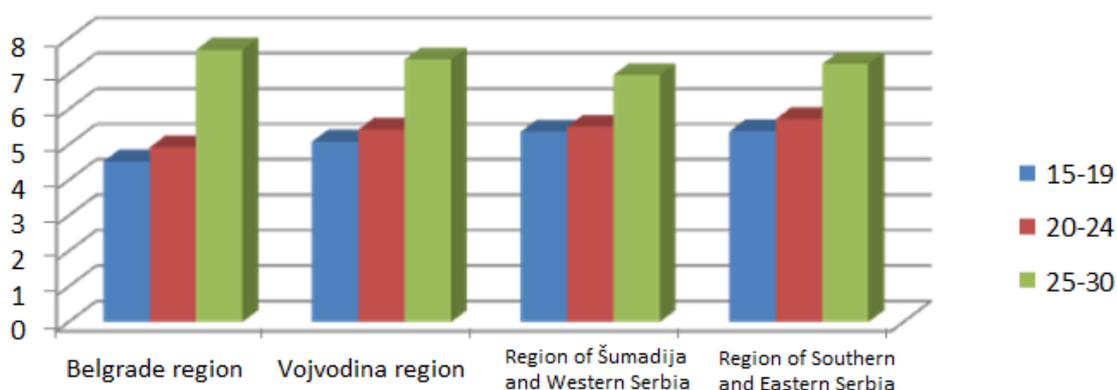
I KEY INDICATORS OF THE SITUATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN SERBIA – COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS AND TRENDS

1. DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

The three key factors important for the demographic future of each country are: birth rate, death rate and emigration. Unfortunately, all three factors in Serbia have negative trends. The total population of Serbia in the 21st century is constantly decreasing.

According to the data of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia¹², the estimated population in Serbia in 2019 was 6,945,235. Observed by sex, 51.3% are women (3,561,503) and 48.7% are men (3,383,732). The region with the largest population is the region of Šumadija and Western Serbia, with 1,908,641 people. It is followed by the region of Vojvodina with 1,852,093 people, then the Belgrade Region with 1,694,056 inhabitants. The region with the smallest population is the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia, with 1,490,445 people. The estimated number of young people aged 15 to 30 is 1,237,628 (17.8%). Women make up 48.7% (602,212) and men make up 51.3% (635,416) of this group. Data show that there is a smaller percentage of women in the younger than in the older population, which is a negative trend from the demographic point of view. Observed by statistical regions (Chart 1.1), the region with the most young people aged 15-30 is the region of Šumadija and Western Serbia with 340,772 (27.5%), followed by the region of Vojvodina with 332,217 (26.8%) and then the Belgrade region with 290,386 (23.5%). The region with the smallest young population is the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia, with 274,253 young people. The largest share of young people aged 15-19 in the population of a certain region is in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia with 5.38%, the same applies for young people aged 20-24 with 5.73%, while the share of young people aged 25-30 is the highest in the Belgrade region with 7.68%.

Chart 1.1 Distribution of young people (15-30) and share in the total population by groups and regions, 2019



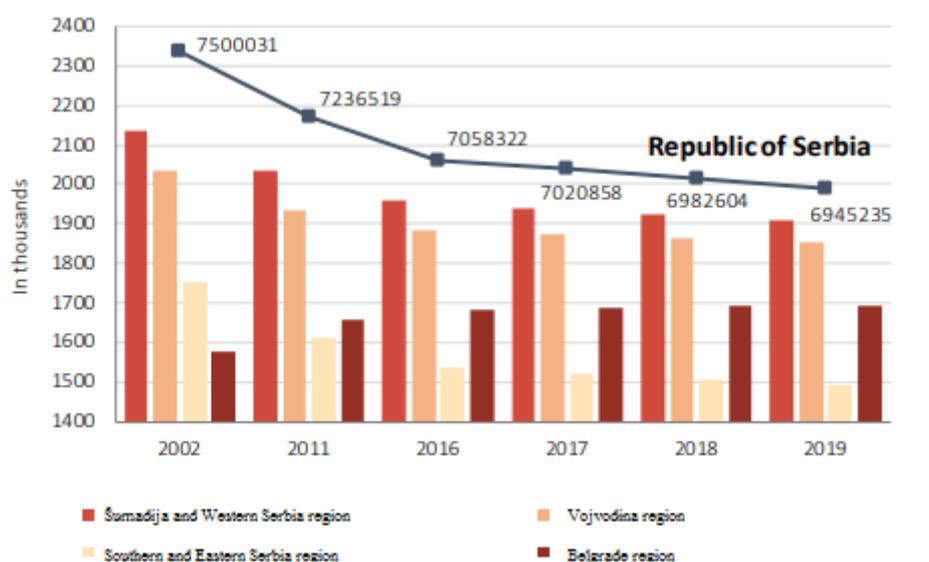
Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, <https://www.stat.gov.rs/oblasti/stanovnistvo/procene-stanovnistva/>

¹² Estimates of population, 2019, no. 172 - year LXX, 1 July 2020. Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia <https://www.stat.gov.rs/oblasti/stanovnistvo/procene-stanovnistva/>. Since 1999, SORS does not have certain data for the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija, so they are not included in the coverage of data for the Republic of Serbia (total)

According to the results of the 2011 Census, there were a total of 7,186,862 people in Serbia, of which 1,419,328 (19.7%) were young people aged 15-30. This shows that the number of young people in Serbia decreased by 1.9 percentage points (hereinafter: p.p.) in the last nine years. The estimated number of young people aged 15 to 29 in 2019 is 1,148,812, i.e. the share of young people in the total population is 16.5%. Women make up 48.6% (558,840) and men make up 51.4% (589,972) of this group.

The population of Serbia is continuously decreasing. In the period from 2010 to 2019, the number of people in Serbia decreased by 364,607 only based on the negative natural population growth. The rate of natural population growth in Serbia in 2019 was -5.3‰ (live births 9.3‰ and deaths 14.6‰). The lowest negative value of the natural population growth rate (-2.1‰) was recorded in the Belgrade region, while the highest negative value of the natural population growth rate was recorded in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia (-7.8‰). In the period 2002-2019, only the Belgrade region recorded an increase in population, while the most pronounced decline was in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia¹³.

Chart 1.2 Estimated population (annual average), 2002–2019, by regions



Source: Taken from Estimates of population, 2019, no. 172 - year LXX, 1 July 2020.

¹³ Vital events, 2019, number 173 - year LXX, 1 July 2020. Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia

The average age of women at childbirth in 2019 is 30.1, while the average age at the birth of the first child is 28.7.

The process of demographic ageing of the population is manifested by a low and constantly decreasing share of young people and a high and continuously growing share of the elderly in the total population. According to the data for Serbia in 2019, the share of people aged 65 and over is 20.7%, and the share of people under the age of 15 is 14.3%. In the period from 2002 to 2019, the share of people under the age of 15 decreased from 16.1% to 14.3%, while at the same time the share of the elderly (65 and over) increased from 16.6% to 20.7%.

The average age in Serbia is continuously growing. In the period 2002-2019, it increased by three years, from 40.2 to 43.3. Mid-20th century Serbia was a country with a very young population (in 1950, the average age was 29.15), and today, with the average age of 43.3 and ageing index of 144.1, it shares the fate of most European countries. The average age of the EU-27 population in 2019 was 43.7. Of the 48 countries for which Eurostat has data on the average age in 2019, the highest age was in Italy (46.7) and Germany (46), and the lowest in Turkey (32), Azerbaijan (32.3) and Armenia (35.4), and when it comes to the EU countries, in Ireland and Cyprus (37.7).

In addition to the negative natural population growth that occurs as a consequence of the low birth rate (each new generation is smaller than the previous one) and high mortality, there is also a continuous emigration of the population. According to the results of the 2011 Census, over 150,000 citizens of the Republic of Serbia moved abroad, their average age is 28.7, and 19% of them have a college or university degree. Serbia does not have the exact statistical records on emigration. The Organization for European Cooperation and Development (OECD) estimates that 598,200 people have emigrated from Serbia in the last 20 years, and this number is only for people who immigrated to the countries members of this organization. The average annual number of emigrants in the period from 2005 to 2014 was 31,000.¹⁴

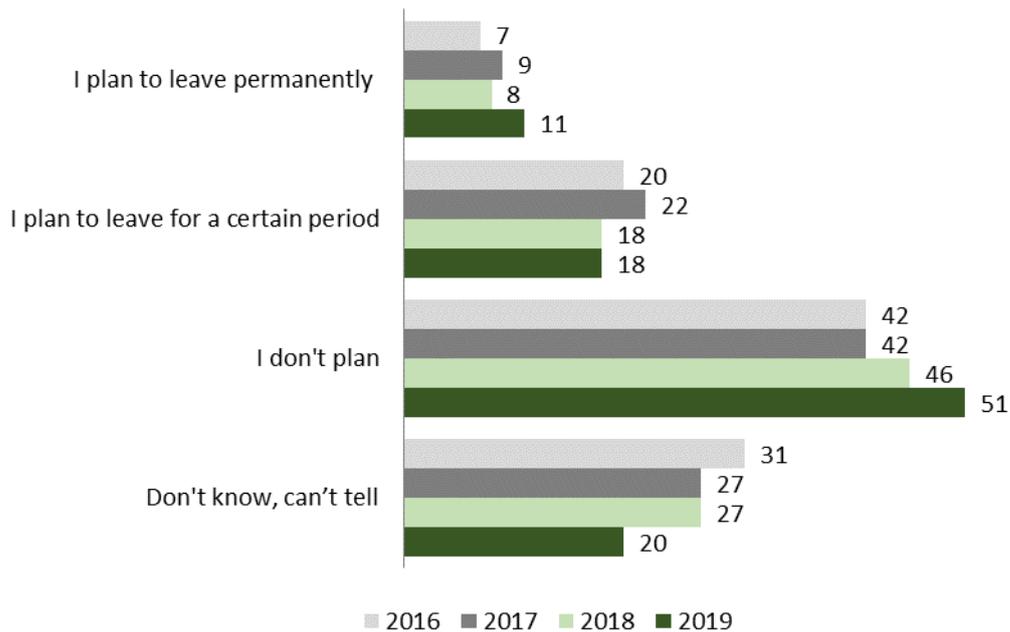
According to the results of the *Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia*¹⁵ prepared for the Ministry of Youth and Sports (hereinafter: MoYS) by CeSID in 2019, 11% of young people plan to emigrate, i.e. to leave the country permanently (7% in 2016), 18% plan to leave the country for a certain period (20% in 2016), while 51% do not plan to leave the country at all (42% in 2016). Chart 1.3 shows the results of young people related to the intention to emigrate.

In 2019, the number of people in Belgrade and South Bačka District increased compared to the previous year, while the largest decline was recorded in the Bor District. Observed at the level of municipalities/cities, the largest increase in population occurred in seven Belgrade municipalities and in Novi Sad, but also in Novi Pazar, Tutin and Preševo, and the largest decline was in Crna Trava, Gadžin Han and Babušnica.

¹⁴ Strategy on Economic Migration of the Republic of Serbia 2021-2027

¹⁵ Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia, CeSID, 2019
<https://www.mos.gov.rs/dokumenta/omladina/istrazivanje>

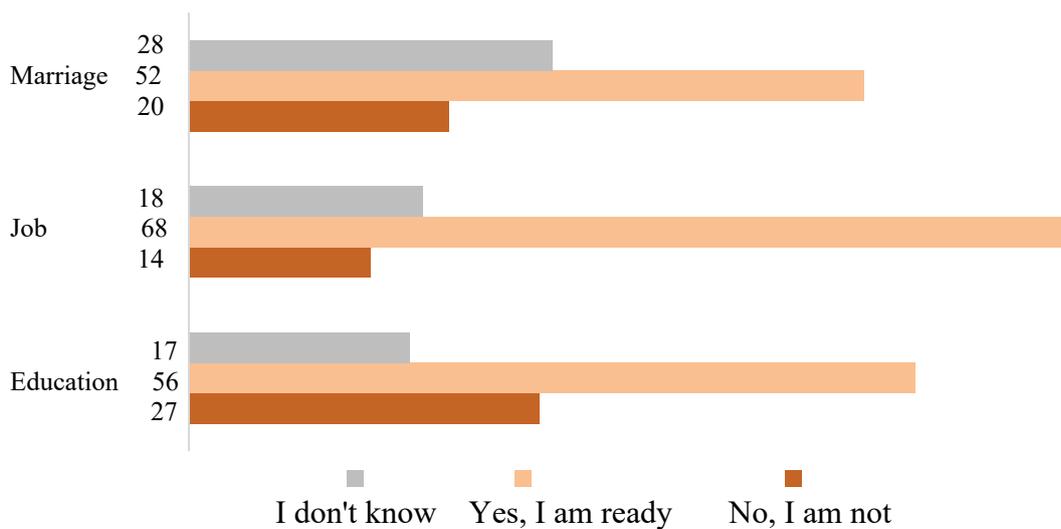
Chart 1.3. Do you plan to move out of the country for a longer period in the next 2 years? Comparison of 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 in %



Source: Taken from the *Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia*, prepared by CeSID, 2019, p. 75.

When we talk about migration, the same research found that 52% of young people are ready to leave their place of residence for marriage, 56% for education and 68% for work. Chart 1.4 shows the results related to the reasons for migration of young people.

Chart 1.4 - Are you ready to change your place of residence for...? 2019 in %



Source: Taken from the *Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia*, prepared by CeSID, 2019, p. 73.

According to Eurostat¹⁶ data for 2019, in 46 countries the share of young people (aged 15-29) in the total population for the EU-27 is 16.6%, while in 2011 it was 18.1%. In Serbia, the average share of young people in the total population in 2019 is at the level of the of EU countries average, i.e. 16.6%, and in 2011 it was 18.6%, which means that it dropped by two p.p. Albania has the highest share of young people in the total population in the region of Southeast Europe (23.8%), while Slovenia and Bulgaria have the lowest share (14.9%). In 2011, Moldova had the highest share of young people (26.9%), but there are no data for this country after 2015. Italy had the lowest share of young people in 2011 (15.6%), with this rate dropping by only 0.5 p.p. in 2019 (15.1%). Azerbaijan had the highest share of young people in 2011 with 29.2%, but this country also has the highest decline in young people (5.9 percentage points). It is followed by Ukraine with a drop of 5.5 percentage points, Belarus with 5.3 p.p., Poland with 4.9 p.p., and Latvia with 4.9 p.p. Norway and Andorra are the only countries with no change in the share of young people in the total population in the observed period. The smallest drop is in Iceland with 0.3 p.p. (from 22% to 21.7%). An increase in the share of young people was recorded in Denmark by 1.3 p.p., the Netherlands by 0.5 p.p. and Luxembourg by 0.3 p. p.

Regarding the age when young people leave the family, data for 13 countries are available. Data are missing for Switzerland and Albania. In relation to Serbia, young people leave family later in Montenegro (33.1), Croatia and North Macedonia (31.8), while young people in 9 countries become independent earlier. In all countries analysed, women leave the family earlier. The biggest difference between sexes is in North Macedonia (7.6 years) and Serbia (5.3 years).

On average, young people in the EU-27 leave the family at the age of 26.2 (men at the age of 27.1 and women at the age of 25.2) and young people in Serbia do the same at the age of 31.1 (men at the age of 33.7, women at the age of 28.4). Of the 32 countries for which data are available, young people leave family the latest in Montenegro (aged 31.1), Croatia and North Macedonia (31.8), Serbia (31.1) and Slovakia (30.9), and the earliest in Sweden (17.8), Luxembourg (20.1), Denmark (21.1), Estonia (22.2) and Germany (23.7). Data for Serbia cover the period 2014-2019 and indicate a longer stay with the family compared to 2014 (30.6), while young people in the EU-27 would leave the family at the average age of 26.5 in 2014, i.e. they leave the family 0.3 years earlier than in 2014. In all countries except Luxembourg, men leave the family later.

If we look at the demographic data for only 14 selected countries and for Albania, Serbia has the same share of young population in the total population as Germany (16.6%), a higher share of young population than Slovenia and Bulgaria (14.9%), Greece (15.5%) and Romania (16.4%), and a lower share than the remaining 9 countries. The highest shares of young population in the total population are in Albania (23.8%), Turkey (23.5%), North Macedonia (19.8%), Montenegro (19.3%) and France (17.4%).

2. EDUCATION

According to the SORS data, in the last *Population Census from 2011*¹⁷, there were 6,161,584 people aged 15 and over (2,971,868 men and 3,189,716 women).

¹⁶ <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>, Chapter: Population and Social conditions/Youth population

a) Population without educational attainment, with incomplete primary school and with completed primary school

Although compulsory and free primary education was introduced in Serbia back in 1958, 13.7% (842,383) of the population aged 15 and over are still without educational attainment or with incomplete primary education, of which 67.7% are women. Of the total population without education or with incomplete primary education, 9.3% are women and 4.4% are men. 2.7% of the population (164,884) is without educational attainment, of which 81.4% are women, and 11% (677,499) have incomplete primary school, of which 64.4% are women. 20.8% of the population (1,279,116) have completed primary education as the highest level of educational attainment, of which 53.6% are women.

b) Population with secondary education, tertiary, college and higher education

48.9% of the population aged 15 and over (3,015,092) have completed secondary education as the highest level of educational attainment, of which 46.5% are women. 16.2% of the population aged 15 and over (1,000,569) have completed tertiary education – 7.8% of men and 8.4% of women in relation to the total population aged 15 and over. Of the total number of people with completed tertiary education, 51.8% are women. 5.65% (348,335) of the population has college education, of which 50.3% are women, and 10.6% (652,234) has higher education, of which 52.6% are women. For 0.4% of the population (24,424), the data were unknown. The data show that men had a higher share only when it comes to secondary education, and women have a higher share in all other categories.

Education of young people: educational attainment, sex, type of settlement

When we talk only about young people, according to the 2011 Census¹⁷, there were 1,322,021 young people aged 15-29, of which 677,110 were men and 644,911 were women. In terms of the level of education, most young people had completed secondary education as the highest educational attainment with 56.6%, followed by primary education with 28.4%, while the share of people with college and higher education in this age group was 11.9%. There were 2.9% of young people without educational attainment or with incomplete primary education. Observed by sex, there are more men in all categories except when it comes to college and higher education, where we have 96,970 women and 60,184 men. In urban areas, there are 15.3%, and in other areas only 6.6% of people with college or higher education. The ratio is reversed in terms of the percentage of people with primary education and lower attainment, because there are 27.4% of them in urban areas, and 37.3% in other areas. Table 2.1 gives data on young people according to educational attainment.

¹⁷ Population aged 15 and over by educational attainment and sex, by municipalities and cities, SORS, http://popis2011.stat.rs/?page_id=2162

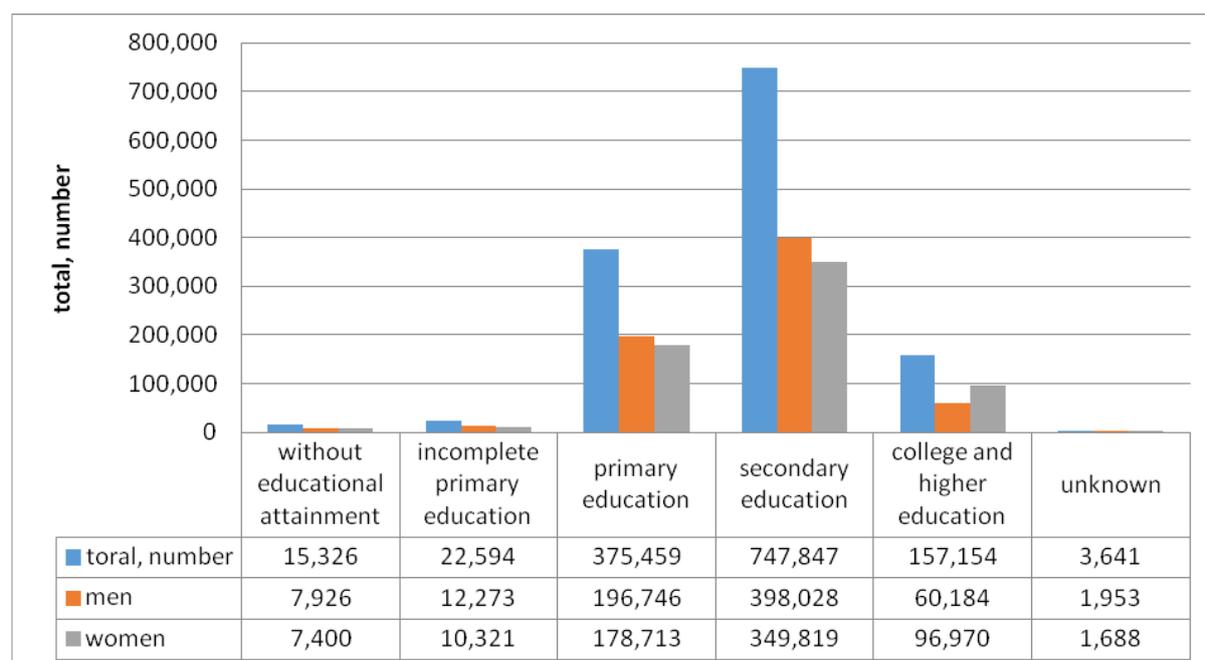
¹⁸ Млади у Србији почетком 21. века [Young people in Serbia at the beginning of 21st century], Milka Bubalo Živković and Tamara Lukić, 2015, SORS

Table 2.1 Young people in Serbia by educational attainment and the 2011 Census

educational attainment of young people (aged 15-29)	total/number of young people	total %	men	women	urban %	other %
Without educational attainment	15.326	1.2	7.926	7.400	1	1.3
Incomplete primary education	22.594	1.7	12.273	10.321	1.3	2.4
Primary education	375.459	28.4	196.746	178.713	25.1	33.6
Secondary education	747.847	56.6	398.028	349.819	57.1	55.8
College and higher education	157.154	11.9	60.184	96.970	15.3	6.6
Unknown	3.641	0.3	1.953	1.688	0.2	0.3
Total	1.322.021	100%	677.110	644.911	100%	100%

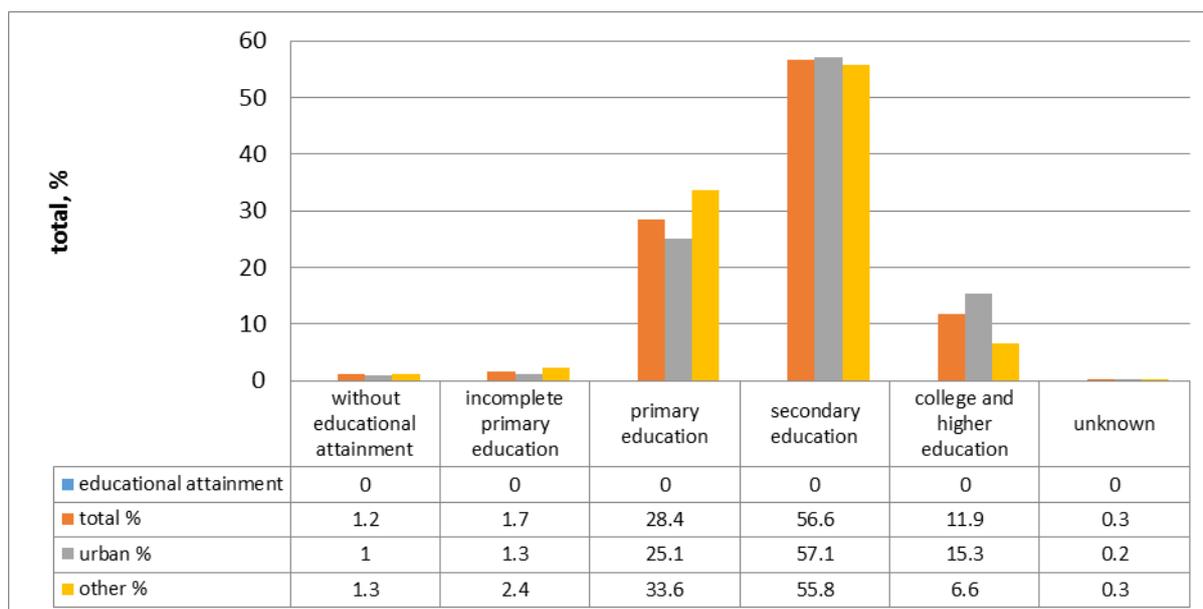
Chart 2.1 shows the data on young people by educational attainment and sex, and Chart 2.2 by educational attainment and type of settlement.

Chart 2 1. Young people in Serbia by educational attainment and sex, 2011



Source: SORS Population aged 15 and over by educational attainment and sex, by municipalities and cities

Chart 2.2. Young people in Serbia by educational attainment and type of settlement, 2011



Source: SORS Population aged 15 and over by educational attainment and sex, by municipalities and cities

SORS data¹⁹ from the 2011 Census show that there were 4,015,611 people aged 15 and over with at least secondary education completed (65.2%). Out of this number, 2,095,312 were men (70.5%) and 1,920,349 were women (60.2%).

At the end of the 2018/19 academic year, there were 3,317 regular primary schools in Serbia, of which 1,133 main schools and 2,184 satellite classrooms.²⁰ Classes were attended by a total of 524,518 students (469,652 in main schools and 54,866 in satellite classrooms). At the beginning of the 2019/2020 academic year, the number of regular primary schools decreased by 49 compared to the previous academic year, and the number of students reduced by 6,692.²¹ In total, 465,907 students attended classes in main schools, and 51,919 in satellite classrooms (48.6% are female students). Primary schools for students with disabilities were attended by a total of 4,494 students (34.4% were female students), while the number of those in schools for adults' education was 6,328 (48.9% were female students).

In the 2018/19 academic year, 249,455 students (49.6 girls and 50.4 boys) attended the classes in 515 regular secondary schools²². 86.5% of students completed secondary school lasting for four years (26.3% gymnasium and 60.2% four-year vocational school). 13.4% of students completed a three-year vocational secondary school. Observed by sex, 60.8% of girls completed a four-year vocational secondary school, 31.2% completed gymnasiums and only 7.9% completed a three-year vocational school. Boys complete gymnasiums in a

¹⁹ Population aged 15 and over by educational attainment and sex, by municipalities and cities, SORS, http://popis2011.stat.rs/?page_id=2162

²⁰ Education statistics, Press release 164 - year LXX, 29 June 2020, SORS, data in this press release refer to the education levels ISCED 1 and ISCED 2 according to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011). Since 1999, SORS does not have certain data for the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija, so they are not included in the coverage of data for the Republic of Serbia

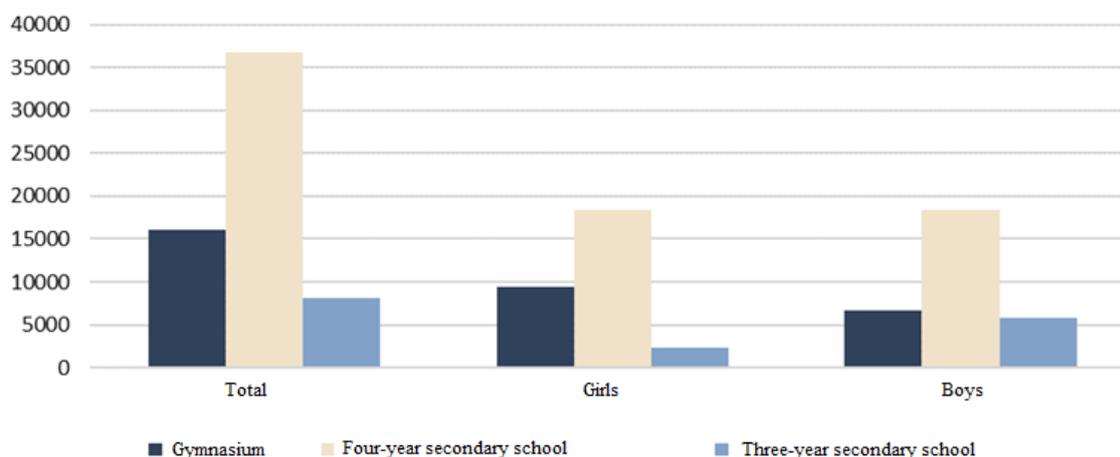
²¹ Education statistics, Press release 173 - year LXX, 25 March 2020, SORS

²² Education statistics, Press release 159 - year LXX, 29 June 2020, SORS, data in this press release refer to the education level ISCED3, according to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011).

somewhat lower percentage than the girls (21.4%), but they complete three-year vocational schools in a much higher percentage than the girls (18.7%). 1,965 students attended schools/departments for children with disabilities (41), of which 753 girls (38.3%) and 1212 boys (61.7%).

Chart 2.3 shows the data about students who completed regular secondary school.²³

Chart 2.3 Students who completed regular secondary school by type of programme and sex



Source: Taken from Education statistics, Press release 159 - year LXX, 29 June 2020, SORS

Enrollment, completion and dropping out

According to the SORS data²⁴, the net primary school enrollment rate in 2019 was 93.9%, and the primary school completion rate was 97.1%, while the primary school dropout rate was 0.6%. The coverage of children with secondary education (2019) is 87.4%, and the rate of completion of secondary education is 87%, the dropout rate in secondary education is 1.1%.

In the 2019/20 academic year, 241,968 students (43% men and 57% women) were enrolled at all higher education institutions and at all levels of studies.²⁵ 204,627 students were enrolled at universities and 37,341 students were enrolled at vocational colleges. Observed according to the manner of financing the studies, there were 41.4% of students financed from the budget and 58.6% self-financing students. In the 2019 calendar year, 42,499 students in the Republic of Serbia (41.2% men and 58.8% women) graduated from all levels of studies and at all higher education institutions.²⁶ Out of the total number of graduates, 38% were financed from the budget, 48% were self-financing students and 14% were both financed from the budget and self-financing.

²³ Taken from Education statistics, Press release 159 - year LXX, 29 June 2020, SORS

²⁴ DEVINFO database, June 2020, SORS, <http://devinfo.stat.gov.rs/vitalna/libraries.aspx/Home.aspx>

²⁵ Education statistics, Press release 165 - year LXX, 24 June 2020, SORS, data in this press release refer to the education level ISCED 6, 7, 8, according to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011)

²⁶ Education statistics, no. 166 - year LXX, 24 June 2020, SORS

Data from the *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS5)*²⁷ indicate high rates of enrollment and completion of primary education, but also large inequalities between the general population and vulnerable groups of children. As much as 31% of children from Roma settlements do not enrol in primary school on time, and one in three children from the poorest households and from Roma settlements do not complete it on time. The percentage of enrollment in primary school was 97%, but for children from Roma settlements it was 69.1%. Primary school net attendance rate was 98.5% (84.9% for Roma children). Primary school completion rate was 93.4% (64% Roma children). Children from Roma settlements (22%) and the poorest children (74%) are significantly less likely to attend secondary school compared to the national average (89%).

Early school leaving

In the *Strategy for Education Development in Serbia 2020*²⁸, it is envisaged that by the end of 2020 all school-age children (minimum 98% of the generation), regardless of their social, economic, health, regional, national, linguistic, ethnic, religious and other backgrounds, will be covered by quality primary education with the dropout rate not greater than 5%. It is also envisaged that a minimum of 95% of enrolled students should complete four-year vocational secondary schools.

Within the field of education²⁹, Eurostat monitors data for young people that are important for achieving the priority goal of the Europe 2020 Strategy, which is to reduce the early school leaving rate to below 10% (it was 15% in 2010), while increasing the percentage of the population with a degree from a higher education institution from 31% (in 2010) to 40% (in 2020). Regarding early school leaving, the indicator is expressed as the percentage of the population aged 18 to 24 with lower secondary education as the highest educational attainment, who have not been involved in further education or training in the four weeks preceding the research.

Data from Eurostat's annual monitoring report on the fulfilment of the Europe 2020 Strategy indicators published in 2019³⁰ show that the dropout rate for the EU-28 in 2018 was 10.6%, while in 2008 it was 14.7%. Women are less

Regarding the dropout rate, Serbia has fulfilled the goal from the Europe 2020 Strategy, which refers to reducing the drop-out rate to below 10%, since this rate in Serbia is 6.6%. Serbia has a lower dropout rate than the EU-27 average and 8 selected countries, and a higher rate than 4 selected countries – Slovenia, Croatia, Montenegro and Switzerland. Turkey has the largest difference between sexes among these 14 countries, at 4.1% (men 24.5% and women 28.6%). Serbia, as well as Romania, North Macedonia and Turkey, has a higher dropout rate in the female population, but the difference by sex in Serbia is only 0.2 p.p. In the other 10 countries, as well as in the EU-27, men leave education more often than women.

²⁷ Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey in Serbia (MICS5) 2014, SORS and UNICEF. The survey was conducted by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia and UNICEF, in the period from 1 February to 30 April 2014, on a nationally representative sample of 7,351 households and a sample of 1,976 households in Roma settlements, with the household response rate for both surveys of over 90%, available on the website http://www.unicef.rs/files/MICS5_Srpski-v2.pdf

²⁸ Strategy for Education Development in Serbia 2020, p. 8 and 9.

²⁹ Eurostat database available at <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>, Youth education and training participation

³⁰ Eurostat's annual monitoring report on the Europe 2020 strategy 'Smarter greener, more inclusive? - Indicators to support the Europe 2020 strategy', 2019

likely to leave education (8.9% in 2018 and 12.7% in 2008) than men (12.2% in 2018 and 16.7% in 2008). As many as 53.8% of those who leave education early are unemployed or inactive. Also, at the end of 2018 in the EU-28, 40.7% of people aged 30-34 had a degree from a higher education institution (31.1% in 2008), of which women made up 45.8% (34.3% in 2008) and men made up 35.7% (28% in 2008). In the EU-27, 39.4% of people aged 30-34 had a degree from a higher education institution, of which 44.8% were women and 34.1% were men.

According to Eurostat data for 2019 available for 35 countries, the dropout rate of young people (18-24)³¹ in the EU-27 was 10.2% (11.9% men and 8.4% women) and in Serbia, it was 6.6% (6.5% men and 6.7% women). The highest dropout rates are in Turkey at 28.7%, Iceland at 17.9%, Spain at 17.3%, Malta at 17.7% and Romania at 15.3%, and the lowest are in Croatia at 3%, Lithuania at 4%, Greece at 4.1%, Switzerland at 4.4% and Montenegro at 5%. Observed by sex, out of all 35 countries, Turkey has the highest dropout rate for both men (28.9%) and women (28.6%), while Croatia has the lowest rate for both women (3%) and men (3.1%). Men have a higher dropout rate in 31 countries, and women only in four: North Macedonia by 2.5 p. p., Romania by 0.9 p.p. and the Czech Republic and Serbia by 0.2 p.p. Iceland has the biggest gender gap of 13.7 p.p. (24.5% men and 10.8% women), followed by Portugal with 6.3 p. p., Denmark with 4.5 p. p., Belgium with 4.3 p. p., and Greece with 3.9 p.p. In the past 10 years, the dropout rate in the EU-27 has decreased by 3.6 p.p. In 2010, it was 13.8% in the EU-27, 11.1% for women and as much as 15.9% for men. In 2010, there were 8.3% of young people in Serbia who were leaving education early (7.3% women and 9.2% men), which shows an improvement of 1.7 p.p. The improvement for men in this period was 2.5 p.p., and for women, it was 0.6 p.p. Gender differences in Serbia have also been reducing in the last 10 years, from 1.9 p.p. to 0.2 p.p.

Acquiring higher education

Regarding the second important indicator from the *Europe 2020 Strategy* about the increase in the percentage of the population aged 30-34 with a degree from a higher education institution (tertiary education level) from 31% to 40% by 2020, data in Eurostat are given for 35 countries. In the EU-27 in 2019, 40.3% of people aged 30-34 had tertiary education. This percentage is higher for women by 10.5 p.p. and amounts to 45.6%, while for men it is 35.1%. In Serbia in 2019, 33.5% of people aged 30-34 had tertiary education, with 13.5% more women than men (40.4% women and 26.9% men). In 2010, 20.5% of people of the observed age (26.3% of women and 15.1% of men) had a degree from a higher education institution, and in 10 years the percentage of persons with higher education of the observed age increased in Serbia by 13 p.p. In the *Strategy for Education Development in Serbia 2020*³², it is envisaged that the share of people aged 30-34 with higher education from 2020 will be at least 35%, and most likely 38.5%. The highest percentage of the population aged 30-34 with higher education is in Cyprus at 58.8%, Lithuania at 57.8%, Luxembourg at 56.2%, Switzerland at 56.1% and Ireland at 55.4%. Ireland is also the only country that had the education rate of over 50% (51.6%) even back in 2010, which was 11.6 pp more than the desired goal of EU countries in 2020. The countries with the lowest number of people with

³¹ Eurostat database <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>, Youth education and training participation, in Eurostat, the term young people who have dropped out of education and training is defined as the percentage of the population aged 18 to 24 with lower secondary education as the highest educational attainment (in Serbia this is completed primary school), who have not been involved in further education or training in the four weeks preceding the research.

³² Strategy for Education Development in Serbia 2020, p. 9.

higher education are Romania at 25.8%, Italy at 27.6%, Turkey at 31.4%, Bulgaria at 32.5% and Croatia at 33.1%.

The greatest progress in the period 2010-2019 was made by Austria with 19 p.p., North Macedonia with 18.6 p.p., Slovakia with 18 p.p., Turkey with 15.9 p.p. and Malta with 15.7 p.p., and the smallest progress was made by Finland with 1.6 p.p., Norway with 1.8 p.p., Spain with 2.7 p.p., Iceland with 4 p.p. and France with 4.3 p.p. However, all these countries had over 40% of the population with higher education in the observed age group even back in 2010 and achieved the goal from the *Europe 2020 Strategy*. There was small progress in Romania with 7.5 p.p. and Italy with 7.7 p.p. Of the 35 countries for which data are available, 22 countries, or 63%, have already reached the target value of 40% of the population with higher education in 2019, which is encouraging. However, there are large gender differences. When it comes to the male population, only 12 countries have reached that value (34.3%), and at the same time, all 12 have reached a level of at least 40% of women with higher education. The target value in 2019 for the female population is reached in 27 countries (77.1%), including Serbia. The highest percentage of men with higher education is in Switzerland (55.1%), and Lithuania has the highest percentage for women (69.5%). Only Turkey has a higher percentage of men than women with higher education (32.7% vs 30%). Estonia has the largest difference in the percentage of people with higher education by sex with 26.5 p.p., followed by Iceland with 24.4 p.p., Lithuania and Slovenia with 22.6 p.p. and Latvia with 22 p.p. The smallest difference is Germany with 0.8 p.p., Switzerland with 2 p.p., Montenegro and Turkey with 2.7 p.p. and Luxembourg with 3.4 p.p.

In 2019, with 33.5% of people aged 30-34 with higher education, Serbia has still not achieved the target value from the *Europe 2020 Strategy* of 40% of people with higher education, and also has not reached the minimum desired value envisaged in the Strategy for Education Development in Serbia 2020 of at least 35%. However, observed by sex, this value was achieved for women (40.4%), while it is low for men and amounts to only 26.9. For this indicator, 7 selected countries have a better result than Serbia, and the same number of countries have a worse result. Out of 14 countries, only 5 had 40% or more people aged 30-34 with tertiary education, namely Switzerland (56.1%), France (47.5), Slovenia (44.9%), Greece (43.1) and Austria (42.4%). In all observed countries except Turkey, there are more women with tertiary education at the observed age than men.

At least secondary education completed – number and structure

According to the data from the 2011 Census³³, there were 4,015,611 people aged 15 and over with the least secondary education completed (65.2%). Out of this number, 2,095,312 were men (70.5%) and 1,920,349 were women (60.2%).

Eurostat also provides data for 35 countries on young people aged 20-24 with at least secondary school completed.³⁴ In the EU-27 countries in 2019, 83.5% of young people aged 20-24 have completed secondary school (81% of men and 86.2% of women). In Serbia, this

³³ Population aged 15 and over by educational attainment and sex, by municipalities and cities, SORS, http://popis2011.stat.rs/?page_id=2162

³⁴ Eurostat database <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>, Youth education and training participation, data given for levels 3-8 according to the International Standard Classification of Education ISCED11

percentage is higher and amounts to 92.5% (92.7% of men and 92.4% of women). In Serbia in 2010, there were 89.8% of young people aged 20-24 who have completed at least secondary school, which increased by 2.7 p.p. in 2019. The progress made in this period was 4.2 p.p. for men and 1.2 p.p. for women. Croatia has the highest percentage of young people aged 20-24 with at least secondary education completed with 97.3% (97.5% men and 97.1% women), followed by Montenegro with 95.2%, Greece with 94.5%, Ireland with 94.1% and Serbia and Lithuania with 92.5%. Turkey has the lowest percentage with 62.0% (60.5% men and 63.4% women), followed by Iceland with 66.7%, Denmark with 75.6%, Germany and Luxembourg with 77.5%. Observed by sex, in 29 countries there are more men of the observed age with at least secondary school completed, in 5 countries there are more women (Croatia, Serbia, Romania, North Macedonia and Luxembourg), while Slovakia is the only country where there are no gender differences in this regard. The largest gender gap is in Iceland with 17.3 p.p., Spain with 11.2 p.p., Denmark with 9.9 p.p., Estonia with 9.4 p.p. and Portugal with 8.6 p.p. In all these countries there are more women with completed secondary school. The lowest gender gap is in Montenegro with 0.2 p.p., Serbia with 0.3 p.p., the Czech Republic with 0.5 p.p., Romania with 0.8 p.p. and Bulgaria and Hungary with 1.8 p.p.

In Serbia, 92.5% of young people aged 20-24 have at least secondary school completed, which is more than the EU-27 average of 83.5%. Serbia has a higher percentage of young people aged 20-24 with at least secondary school completed than 10 selected countries and lower only than Croatia (97.3%), Montenegro (95.2%) and Greece (94.5%). In 11 countries this percentage is higher for women, and only in Romania, Serbia, North Macedonia and Croatia it is higher for men.

The participation rate of adults in Serbia in some form of formal or informal education or training is 19.8%, which is below the average of EU member states which stands at 45.1%.

Informal education and informal learning

When it comes to informal education, it is monitored in Serbia primarily through the Adult Education Survey, which is conducted in all EU member states, EFTA countries and EU candidate countries, according to a unified methodology prescribed by Eurostat, which ensures international comparability of data. Adult Education Survey collects data on the participation of adults (persons aged 25–64) in education and training (formal and informal education as well as informal learning), i.e. in lifelong learning. It is conducted every five years, and the observation period is 12 months preceding the survey. Adult Education Survey was conducted in the Republic of Serbia in 2011 and 2016.

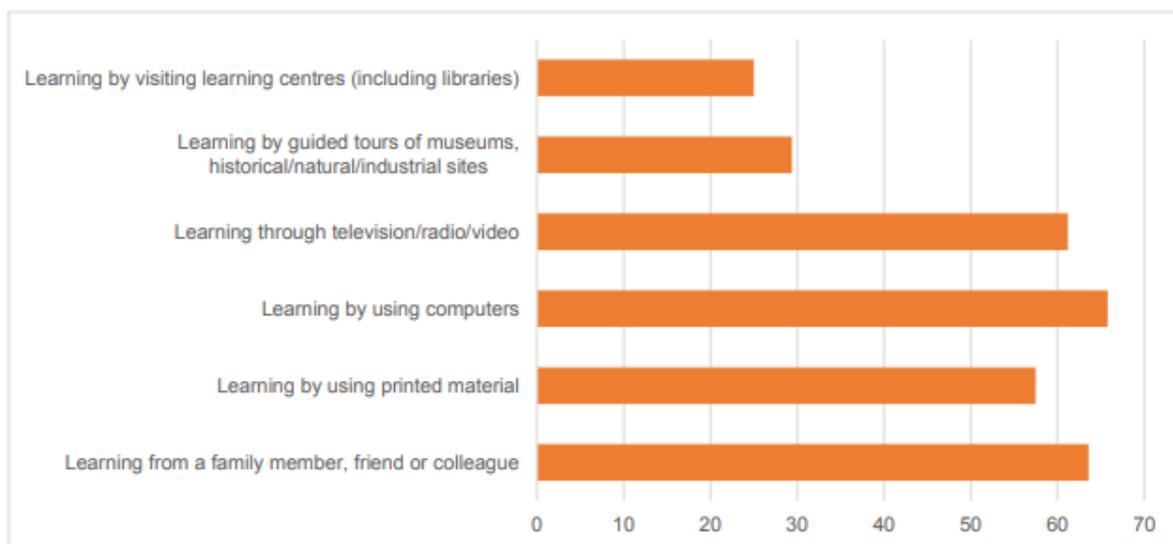
*Adult Education Survey*³⁵ conducted in 2011 on a sample of 4,138 individuals aged 25 to 64 shows that during the 12 months preceding the survey, 16.5% of adults aged 25–64 participated in some form of formal or informal education and training. 4% participated in formal and 13.6% in informal education and training. Of all those who participated in education and training, 39.6% attended courses and private tutoring classes. Over 76% of informal education programmes in which adults participate are job-related (employment opportunities, job advancement, keeping the existing or getting a new job, etc.). 33.8% of the population with higher education, 14.26% of the population with secondary education and only 1% with primary education participated in education and training. 19.1% of adults aged 25-64 acquire new knowledge and skills through informal learning, i.e. they learn from

³⁵ Adult Education Survey, 2013, SORS

family members, colleagues, relatives, friends, use computers, books and printed material, learn from TV, etc. More than half (51.7%) of adults who did not participate in education and training, but wanted to, cite the high costs of education as a reason for non-participation, and family-related obligations and reasons are cited by 29.2%.

The second *Adult Education Survey* was conducted in 2016 and published in 2018.³⁶ The results show that the participation rate of adults in some form of formal or informal education or training is 19.8%, which is 3.3% more than in 2011, but significantly below the average of EU member states (45.1%). Women (21.4%) were more represented than men (18%) when it comes to participating in some form of education and training in the 12 months preceding the survey. The participation rate is the highest among the population aged 25-34 (29.2%). Employed people participate in education and training the most (32.5% of all employed people). People who have attended a course, workshop or private tutoring lessons are generally people with higher education. Approximately 80% of respondents did not participate in any form of formal or informal education. Almost half of the respondents (47%) wanted to participate in some form of education, but were prevented primarily due to the costs of education/training, family-related reasons, training schedule, i.e. overlapping with working hours and inadequate training offered. Most respondents participate in some form of informal learning. About two in three acquire new knowledge by using a computer (65.8%). 63.6% learn from family members, friends or colleagues, and around 60% from TV/radio. A significant number of respondents (57.5%) also learns from printed materials (books, professional journals, etc.), and a smaller number by visiting museums, libraries, learning centres, etc. Chart 2.4 shows the results related to the manners of informal learning among the surveyed population.

Chart 2.4. Manner of informal learning (%)

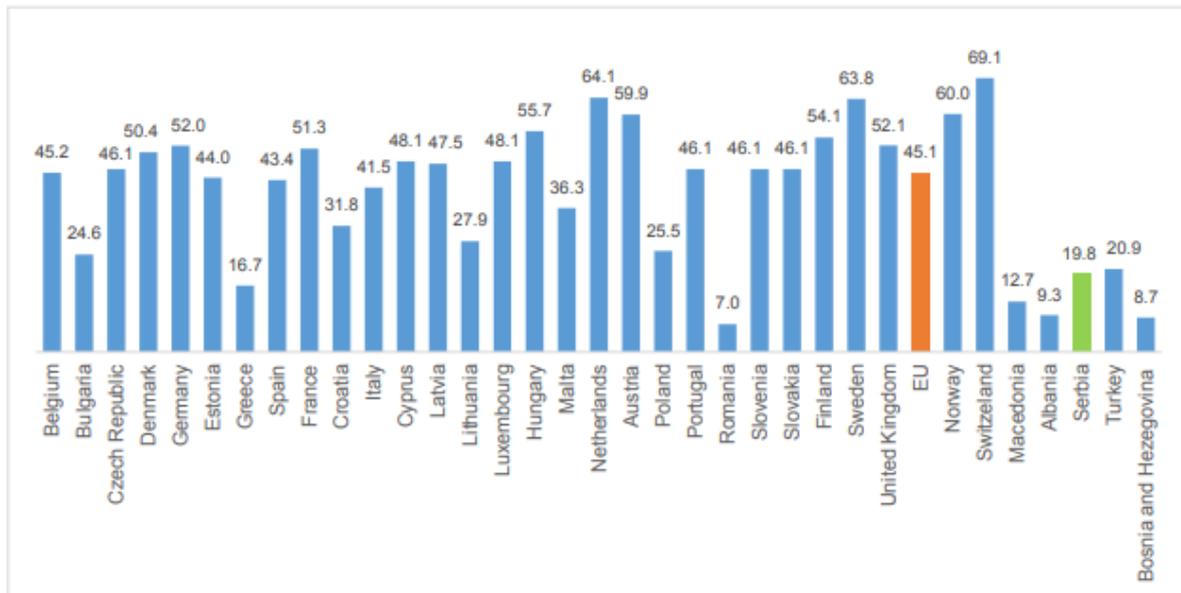


Source: Adult Education Survey 2016, Education statistics, Press release 131 - year LXVIII, 30 May 2018, SORS

³⁶ Adult Education Survey 2016, Education statistics, Press release 131 - year LXVIII, 30 May 2018, SORS

The rate of participation in lifelong learning in Serbia³⁷, despite the increase compared to the previous survey cycle (2011), is still significantly lower than the average of the EU countries (45.1%). Among the EU member states, only Greece and Romania have a lower rate of participation in lifelong learning than Serbia. However, compared to non-EU countries in the region that have conducted the survey (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, North Macedonia), adults in Serbia participate in education and training more. Chart 2.5 shows adult participation rates in lifelong learning.

Chart 2.5 - Adult participation rate in lifelong learning by country (%)



Source: Adult Education Survey 2016, Education statistics, Press release 131 - year LXVIII, 30 May 2018, SORS

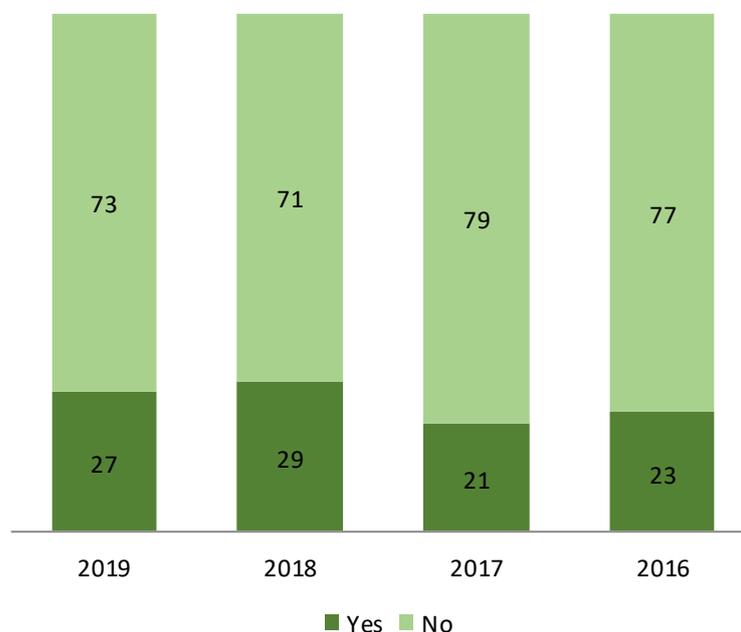
Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia³⁸ shows that 27% of young people aged 15-30 participated in informal education. In the last four years, this percentage has ranged from 21% to 29%. Chart 2.6 shows the participation of young people in informal education.

³⁷ Adult Education Survey 2016, Education statistics, Press release 131 - year LXVIII, 30 May 2018, SORS

³⁸ Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia, CeSID, 2019

Chart 2.6 Have you completed any additional courses and training not related to school/study programmes so far?

Comparison of 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019

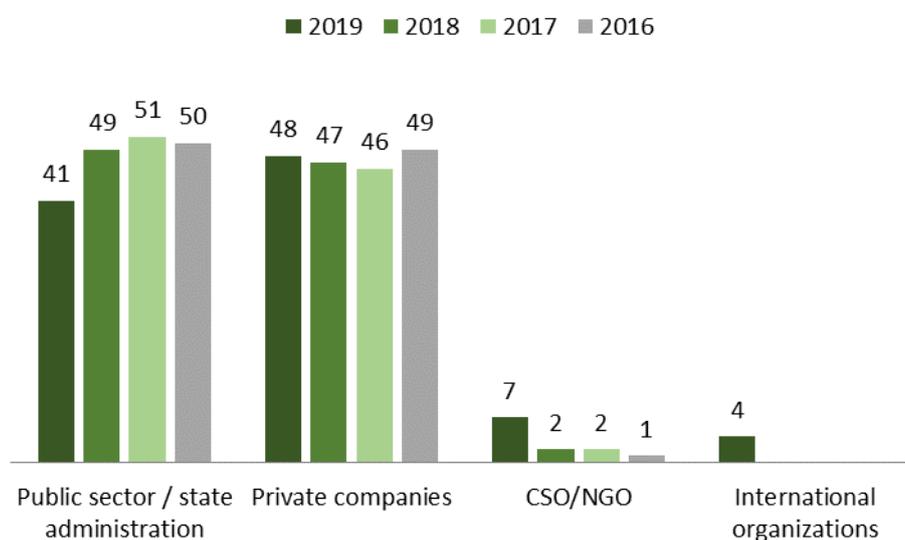


Source: Taken from the Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia, prepared by CeSID, 2019, p. 20.

Although two in three young people think that additional development through extracurricular training is important or very important, less than one in four (17%) participate in such training. In 2019, young people were most interested in training and courses covering topics of personal development (22%), employment (17%), health (15%), entrepreneurship (14%), security (9%), ecology (7%), tolerance and social inclusion (7%) and democracy and human rights (6%). In the past four years, the interest increased for health-related and decreased for entrepreneurship-related training. The most important thing for young people is that the training contributes to their personal and professional development (36%), that it is free (22%) and that they receive a certificate of attendance (16%). In 2019, 26% of young people participated in professional internship programmes. 45% of young people had a contract for a professional internship in all or some programmes, while 32% were receiving financial compensation. 48% of young people had their professional internship in private companies and 41% in public institutions. In 2019, there was a noticeable increase in the number of young people who had a professional internship in civil society organizations³⁹. Chart 2.7 shows in which organizations young people had a professional internship in four survey cycles.

³⁹ Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia, prepared by CeSID, 2019, p. 24

Chart 2.7 In which organizations have you had the opportunity for a professional internship so far? Comparison of 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019, in %

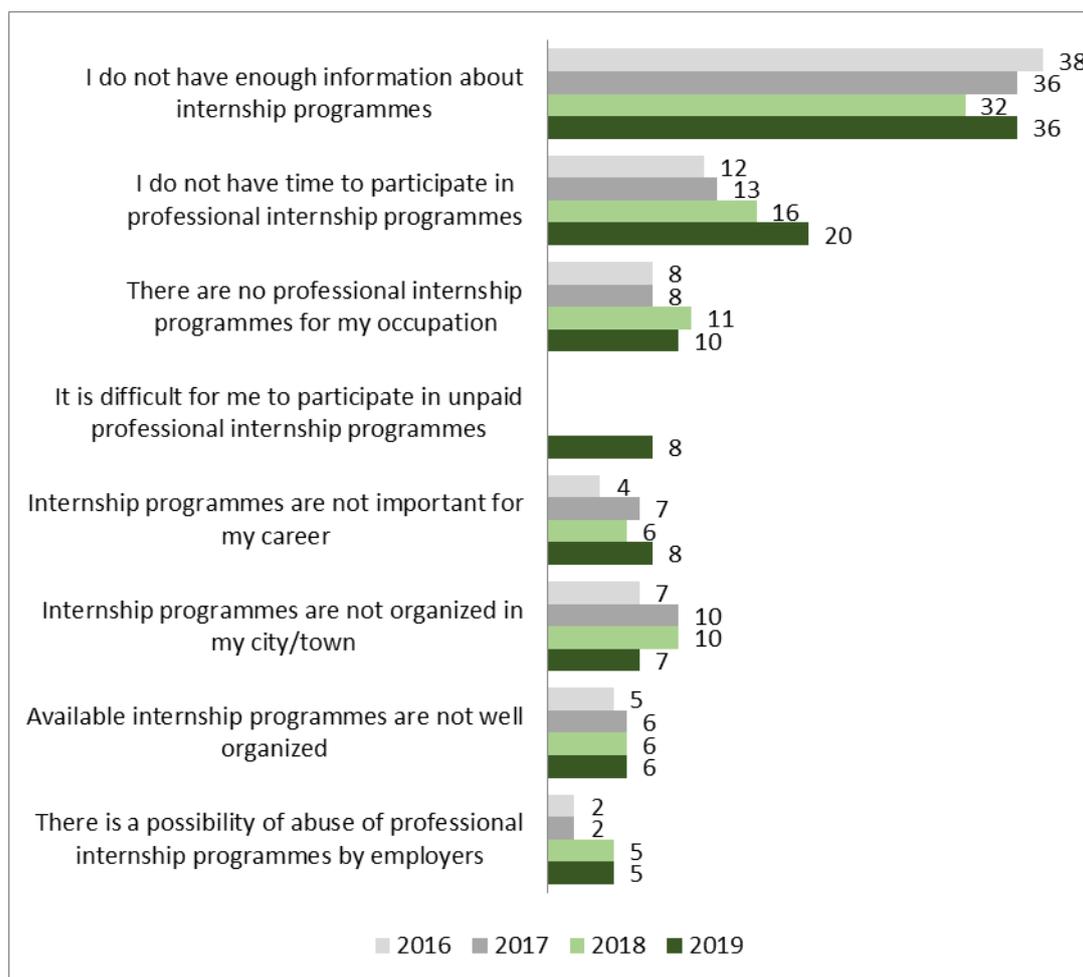


Source: Taken from the Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia, prepared by CeSID, 2019, p. 24.

One in three young people (33%) agree that a professional internship is useful to acquire the knowledge and skills needed for the job, while 37% believe that it should be mandatory during education. More than half of young people (51%) believe that a professional internship was or would be useful for getting a job. The main reasons for not participating in a professional internship programme are insufficient information about internships with 36% and lack of time with 20%. Chart 2.8 shows other reasons cited by young people for not participating in a professional internship programme.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia, prepared by CeSID, 2019, p. 29.

Chart 2.8 What are the main reasons for not participating in a professional internship programme? Comparison of 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019, in %



Source: *Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia*, prepared by CeSID, 2019, p. 29.

For informal youth education, Eurostat provides only data for the percentage of women aged 15-19 who participated in the past 4 weeks in some form of informal education, without the data for the total population. Data are available for 29 countries, not including Serbia, so they were not considered in this document.

3. LABOUR MARKET

Employment policy is one of the most important topics in both Serbia and other countries. The efforts of most countries on improving the standards of citizens are aimed primarily at better linking education with the needs of the labour market, encouraging self-employment and introducing incentives for hard-to-employ categories of citizens. The issue of youth employment is defined as the most important issue for young people in Serbia and is on the list of priorities of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, which implements systemic measures to improve the situation in this area in cooperation with the business and non-governmental sector. The main public policy documents in Serbia important for youth employment are: *National Employment Strategy 2011-2020* (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia” no. 37/11) with the annual national employment action plans; NYS with accompanying action plans; *Strategy for Education Development 2020* (“Official Gazette of

the Republic of Serbia” no. 107/12); *Strategy for Supporting the Development of Small and Medium Enterprises, Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness 2015-2020*, (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia” no. 35/15); *Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development 2014-2024* (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia” no. 85/14), *Strategy for the Development of Artificial Intelligence in the Republic of Serbia 2020-2025* (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia” no. 96/19) and the action plan for the period 2020–2022 for its implementation (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia” no. 81/20); *Industrial Policy Strategy of the Republic of Serbia 2021-2030* (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia” no. 35/20); *Strategy on Economic Migration of the Republic of Serbia 2021-2027* (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia” no. 21/20); *Revised Fiscal Strategy for 2020 with projections for 2021 and 2022* (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia” no. 80/19) and *Smart Specialisation Strategy of the Republic of Serbia 2020-2027* (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia” no. 21/20).

Improved employability and employment of young women and men is one of the strategic goals of the NYS, and the four specific goals are:

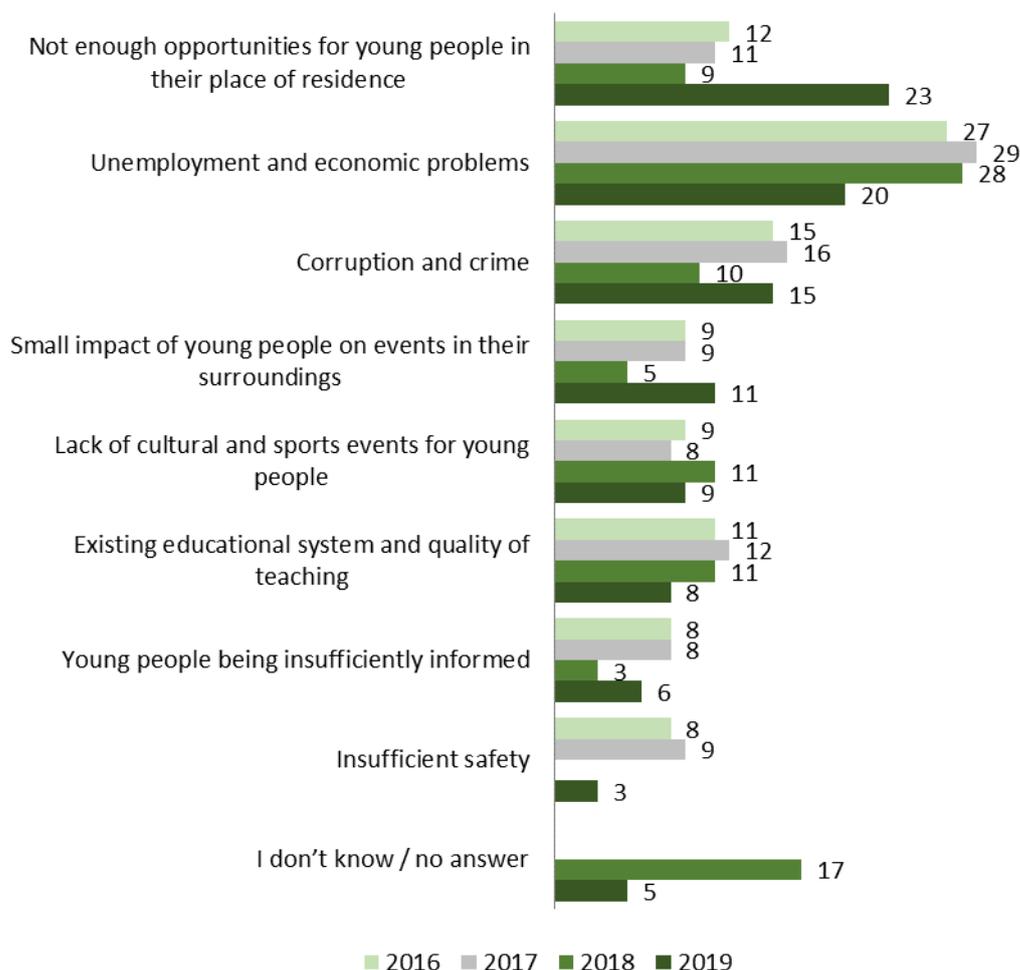
1. Developed services and mechanisms that foster employability and employment of young people through cross-sector cooperation;
2. Better harmonisation of knowledge, skills and competencies acquired in the process of lifelong learning with the needs of the labour market;
3. Provided favourable conditions for the development of youth entrepreneurship and
4. Developed functional and sustainable system of youth career guidance and counselling.

In the annual national employment action plans adopted in accordance with the National Employment Strategy for the period 2011-2020, there is a special package of measures for young people. All other mentioned strategic documents also consider the improvement of the position of young people in the labour market.

The Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia conducted by the MoYS on the annual basis in cooperation with research agencies shows that unemployment and economic problems have been the biggest challenge for young people in Serbia for years. For the first time in 2019, young people put insufficient opportunities for young people in their place of residence (23%) in the first place, and unemployment (20%) in the second place, which may be a consequence of a series of activities offered to young people in order to improve their position in the labour market. Chart 3.1 shows the biggest problems that young people are facing at the moment.⁴¹

⁴¹ Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia, prepared by CeSID, 2019

Chart 3.1 - In your opinion, what is the biggest problem you are facing at the moment?
Comparison of 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019, in %



Source: Taken from the Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia, prepared by CeSID, 2019, p. 10.

Data from this research also show that long-term youth unemployment in Serbia still remains one of the challenges. In 2019, one in five young people were looking for a job for more than 6 months and slightly more than one in four (26%) for more than a year.

There are two main sources of data on employment:

1. Data kept by the National Employment Service (hereinafter: NES) and published in monthly bulletins. The NES keeps data only for persons who are in the unemployment register.
2. Labour Force Survey (hereinafter: LFS) conducted by SORS and published on a quarterly and annual basis. The LFS is the most comprehensive internationally comparable instrument for monitoring labour market trends, which registers the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the population over the age of 15. The LFS classifies as unemployed all persons older than 15 who do not work, but are seeking a job, regardless of whether they are in the NES unemployment register.

In the National Employment Action Plan for 2020⁴² (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, no. 94/19) there is a special section is dedicated to hard-to-employ categories of people⁴³, including young people. This document contains a special package of services for young people, and the analysis of the position of young people on the labour market gives a comparative overview of the position of young people (aged 15-29) on the labour market from 31 December 2017 to 30 September 2019. So, according to the unemployment register of the National Employment Service, on 30 September 2019, there were 46.6% of unemployed young people who have been looking for a job for more than 12 months, and in 2017, there were 51.6% of them. Table 3.1 shows the structure of unemployed young people in the NES unemployment register.

Table 3.1 – Unemployed young people in the NES unemployment register – structure

	2017/31 December	2018/31 December	2019/30 September
Total	138,391	117,078	102,895
Sex			
Men	47.8%	46.4%	45.1%
Women	52.2%	53.6%	54.9%
Education			
Persons with no/low qualifications (I and II)	20.9%	21.3%	22.0%
Secondary education (III-V)	56.4%	55.9%	57.2%
College and higher education (VI-VIII)	22.7%	22.8%	20.8%
Age			
15-19	10.7%	11.2%	13.4%
20-24	38.2%	37.6%	35.9%
25-29	51.1%	51.2%	50.7%
Job seeking length			
Up to a year	48.4%	51.8%	53.4%
Long-term unemployed (12+ months)	51.6%	48.2%	46.6%
Very long-term unemployed (2+ years)	32.7%	31.4%	29.3%

Source: Taken from the National Employment Action Plan for 2020, p. 23

⁴² National Employment Action Plan for 2020 <https://www.minrzs.gov.rs/sr/dokumenti/predlozi-i-nacrti/sektor-za-rad-i-zaposljavanje/nacionalni-akcioni-planovi-zaposljavanja-0>

⁴³ In accordance with the Law on Employment and Unemployment Insurance (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, no. 36/09, 30/10, 88/10, 38/15, 113/17), hard-to-employ persons are unemployed persons for whom it is more difficult to find a job due to their health condition, insufficient or inadequate education, socio-demographic characteristics, regional or professional mismatch between the supply and demand in the labour market, or other objective circumstances.

The same document also states that the total long-term unemployment⁴⁴ of persons older than 15 was 68.7% in 2017 and 68.4% in 2018. According to the LFS data⁴⁵, in 2019 there were 335,900 unemployed people in the NES unemployment register, of which 58,900 were young people aged 15-24. There were 195,800 long-term unemployed people over the age of 15, i.e. 58.29% (55,400 from 12-24 months, 78,900 from 2 to 6 years and 61,500 over 7 years). According to the LFS data⁴⁶, the long-term unemployment rate of the population aged 15 and over in the Q2 of 2020 was 4.3%, which is a decrease of almost 2 p.p. compared to the Q2 of 2019 when it was 6.1%.

According to the SORS data⁴⁷, the unemployment rate of young people aged 15-24 in 2019 was 27.5%, while it was 20.4% for young people aged 15-30. Since in 2014 it was 47.5% for young people aged 15-24 and 35.6% for young people aged 15-30, there is an evident decrease in the unemployment rate by 15.2 p.p. to 20 p.p. depending on the age we observe. Inactivity rate of young people aged 15-24 was 71.5% in 2014 and 70.4% in 2019, while for young people aged 15-30 it was 51.5% in 2014 and 50.5% in 2019, i.e. there are small improvements in this parameter. The rate of young people aged 15-24 who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET) was 20.4% in 2014⁴⁸ and 15.3% in 2019. The same rate for young people aged 15-30 in was 25.7% in 2014 and 19.3% in 2019. The data show that the unemployment rate of NEET youth has decreased, but that it also remains high, especially for the age group 15-30. Taking into account all of the above, as well as the fact that the unemployment rate of young people aged 15-30 in 2019 was twice as high as the total unemployment rate (10.4%), a lot of effort is still needed to improve the position of young people in the labour market.

According to the LFS for Q2 of 2020⁴⁹, in order to monitor the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the labour market, special attention was paid to the indicators related to the total labour market slack, absence from work and work from home. **Labour market slack** represents the share of the following 4 categories in the extended workforce, where the extended workforce includes all employed and unemployed persons and the potential workforce (those who can work but are not seeking work and those who are seeking work but cannot start working immediately): 1) unemployed people; 2) employed people who work part-time and would like to work more; 3) those who are seeking work but cannot work and 4) those who can work but are not seeking work. Labour market slack in Q2 of 2020 was 19.9%. Compared to the same period last year, it is up by 0.4 p.p. **Absence from work** is measured by the share of employed people absent from work in the total number of employed people. In Q2 2020, 11.4% of employed people were absent from work, which is up by 2.4 p.p. compared to Q1 of 2020 and up by 6.0 p.p. compared to the same period last year. Work from home, measured by the share of employed people who worked from home in the total number of employed people, was 12.1% in Q2 of 2020, which is up by 2.9 p.p. compared to Q1 of 2020 and up by 4.0 p.p. compared to the same period last year. Unemployment rate of the population aged 15 and over was 7.3% – 7.0% for men and 7.6% for women. Observed by regions, this rate had the lowest value in the region of Vojvodina (6.0%), the Belgrade

⁴⁴ Long-term unemployment rate according to the definition used in the Labour Force Survey represents the share of persons unemployed for more than one year in the workforce (employed and unemployed people) aged 15 and over

⁴⁵ Labour Force Survey in the Republic of Serbia, 2019, Bulletin no. 658, SORS, p. 52. available at <https://publikacije.stat.gov.rs/G2020/Pdf/G20205658.pdf>

⁴⁶ Labour Force Survey in the Republic of Serbia, Q2 2020, Press release no. 237 - year LXX, 31 August 2020, SORS

⁴⁷ Labour Force Survey in the Republic of Serbia, 2019, Bulletin no. 658, SORS, p. 12.

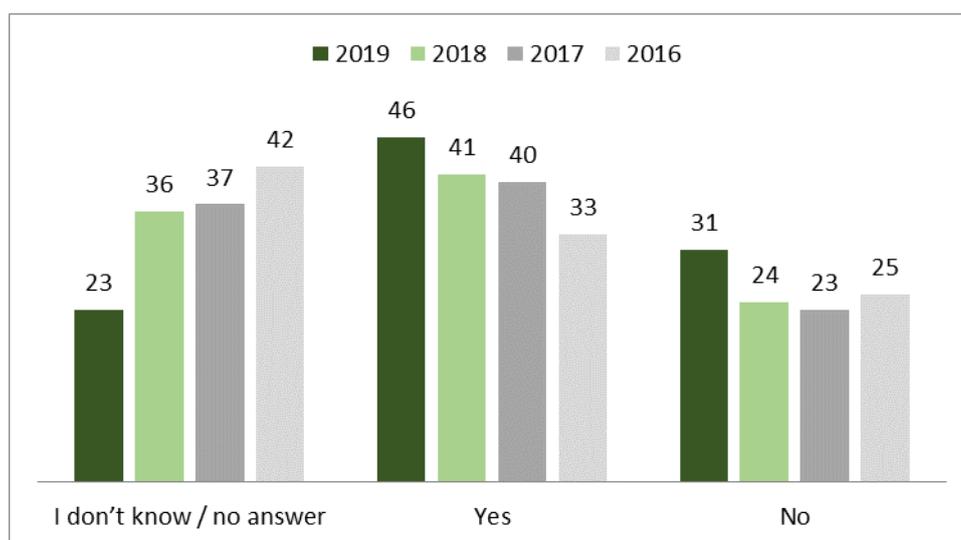
⁴⁸ Labour Force Survey in the Republic of Serbia, 2019, Bulletin no. 658, SORS, p. 59.

⁴⁹ Labour Force Survey, Q2 2020. Press release no. 237 - year LXX, 31/08/2020, SORS

region (6.1%) and the region of Šumadija and Western Serbia (7.8%). The region of Southern and Eastern Serbia continues to record the most unfavourable situation in the labour market, which is shown by the highest unemployment rate of 9.6%. The rate of informal employment in the mentioned quarter at the level of all activities was 15.2%. The rate of informal employment in agriculture was 56.9%, while this rate in non-agricultural activities was 5.4%.

Special attention in Serbia is paid to the development of entrepreneurship, so the Government of the Republic of Serbia declared 2016 the year of entrepreneurship, and during 2017 this programme grew into the Decade of Entrepreneurship, which continued the systemic support to the sector of small and medium enterprises and entrepreneurs which makes up 99.80% of the Serbian economy and employs 67% of workers in the Republic of Serbia. On the Entrepreneurship Portal <https://preduzetnistvo.gov.rs/>, you can find all the state programmes for support to entrepreneurship in general, but also for youth entrepreneurship. Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia⁵⁰ shows that the number of young people who want to start their own independent business is growing. In 2019, there were 46% of them, in 2016 there were 33%, but only 4% started a private business, while 18% are thinking about it intensively. Among those thinking about it intensively, there is an above-the-average share of men from urban settlements aged 25-30. Chart 3.2 shows the results of young people's interest in starting an independent business.⁵¹

Chart 3.2 - Would you like to start an independent business?
Comparison of 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019, in %



Source: Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia, CeSID, 2019, p. 38.

⁵⁰ Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia, CeSID, 2019

⁵¹ Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia, CeSID, 2019, p. 38.

According to Eurostat data for 2019⁵² available for 35 countries, the unemployment rate of young people (15-29) is 11.9% in the EU-27 (12% for men and 11.8% for women) and 21.5% in Serbia (20.8% for men and 22.5% for women). North Macedonia has the highest unemployment rate at 30.5%, followed by Greece at 28.9%, Spain at 24.7%, Italy at 22.4% and Montenegro at 22.3%. The Czech Republic has the lowest unemployment rate at 3.7%, followed by Germany at 4.9%, the Netherlands at 5.4%, Malta at 6.1% and Poland and Switzerland at 6.6%. Observed by sex, the data show that men have a higher unemployment rate in the EU-27 and in 20 other countries, while women have a higher unemployment rate in 15 countries. The biggest gap in the unemployment rate between men and women is in Turkey, where the unemployment rate for women is higher by 7.1 p.p. (19.4% for men and 26.5% for women), followed by Malta and Croatia where the unemployment rate for women is higher by 6.3 p.p., North Macedonia where the unemployment rate for women is higher by 4.3 p.p. and Lithuania where the unemployment rate for men is higher by 3.5 p.p. The smallest difference in the unemployment rate between men and women is in Denmark at 0.1 p.p. (9.8% men and 9.7% women) and Slovakia at 0.1 p.p. (9.6% men and 9.7% women), Spain at 0.4 p.p. Cyprus at 0.5 p.p. and Montenegro at 0.6 p.p. In the EU-27, the unemployment rate for men is 0.2 p.p higher than for women, while in Serbia, the unemployment rate for women is 1.7 p.p higher than for men.

Compared to 14 selected countries, in 2019, Serbia had a lower youth unemployment rate than North Macedonia (30.5%), Greece (28.9%), Montenegro (22.3%) and Turkey (22.0%) and a higher rate than 9 countries. The lowest unemployment rate is in Germany (4.9%), Switzerland (6.6%), Bulgaria (6.9%), Hungary (7.3%) and Slovenia (7.5%) and the highest is in North Macedonia (30.5%). In the period 2011-2019, Serbia made the greatest progress in reducing the unemployment rate of young people aged 15-29 out of all selected countries. All countries reduced the unemployment rate during this period, except for Turkey, which has the largest gap in the unemployment rate between men and women. The unemployment rate is higher for women in 6 countries, including Serbia, and higher for men in 8 countries.

In the period 2011-2019, the largest decrease in the youth unemployment rate among the 35 countries for which data were available was in Serbia, i.e. the unemployment rate was reduced by 20.9 p.p. (from 42.4% to 21.5%), followed by North Macedonia by 16.5 p.p., Ireland by 15.3 p.p., Croatia by 15.1 p.p., Lithuania by 14.5 p.p. and Latvia by 13.7 p.p. In the EU-27, the youth unemployment rate in 2011 was 17.3%, i.e. it decreased in 2019 by 5.4 p.p. In the same period, the unemployment rate increased in four countries, in Turkey by 7.8 p.p. (from 22% to 14.2%), Italy by 1.9 p.p. (from 20.5% to 22.4%), Luxembourg by 1 p.p. (from 9.8% to 10.8%) and Norway by 0.2 p.p. (from 7.1% to 7.3%). In the other 31 countries, the unemployment rate has improved.

⁵² Eurostat database available at <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>, Chapter:Population and Social conditions/ Youth employment

Regarding long-term unemployment in 2019, Eurostat provides data for young people aged 15-29 from 33 countries who have been seeking work for more than 12 months (data for 2 countries as of 2018). In the EU-27 there are 3.4% of long-term unemployed young people (3.6% of men and 3.2% of women), while this number in Serbia is 8.7% (8.3% of men and 9.3% of women). North Macedonia has the highest unemployment rate at 21.1%, followed by Greece at 17.1%, Spain at 13.8 %, Italy at 10.9% and Montenegro at 8.7%. Young people in Finland, Sweden and the Netherlands at 0.6% in Denmark at 0.7% and in the Czech Republic and Norway at 0.8% have the shortest periods of waiting for a job. Gender-disaggregated data for all years are available for 29 countries. North Macedonia has the highest long-term unemployment rate for both men 21% and women 21.3%. Denmark has the same long-term unemployment rate for both men and women (0.7%). 17 countries have a higher long-term unemployment rate for men and 11 countries for women. The largest gender gap in long-term unemployment is in Greece at 4.2 p.p. (15.2% for men and 19.4% for women).

With 8.7% of long-term unemployed youth, Serbia has a better result compared to three selected countries, North Macedonia (21.1%), Greece (17.1%) and Montenegro (13.8%), and worse result than ten countries. Men are likely to wait longer for work in 7 countries and women in 6, while there is no gender difference in Turkey.

In comparison with selected countries, Serbia has a lower percentage of long-term unemployed youth than North Macedonia (21.1%), Greece (17.1%) and Montenegro (13.8%), and a higher percentage than ten countries. Men are likely to wait longer for work in 7 countries and women in 6, while there is no gender difference in Turkey.

In the period 2011-2019, the greatest progress in terms of long-term youth unemployment was made Serbia with the reduction of 18.5 p.p. (27.2% in 2011 and 8.7% in 2019), followed by North Macedonia with 12.8 p.p., Croatia with 11.1 p.p., Ireland with 10.5 p.p. and Montenegro with 9.5 p.p. Out of 33 countries, three have an increase in the long-term unemployment rate. Turkey has an increase of 1.6 p.p. (2.9% in 2011 and 4.5% in 2019), Italy by 1.1 p.p. and Greece by 0.7 p.p. The only country with no change in the long-term unemployment rate in 2019 compared to 2011 is Austria (1.1% in both observed years). In the EU-27, the progress in the observed period was 2.5 p.p. (from 5.9 % to 3.4 %). In the EU-27 in 2019, 22.4% of young people work part-time, while in Serbia this percentage is 9.4%. Data for 35 countries show that the largest number young people working part-time are in the Netherlands with 64.5%, Denmark with 47.2%, Norway with 42.7%, Iceland with 36.5% and Sweden with 33.9%. The lowest number is in Bulgaria with 3.7%, Montenegro with 4.3%, Slovakia with 4.6%, Hungary with 4.8%, Croatia with 5.5% and North Macedonia with 5.6%. Observed by sex for 34 countries for which data are available for all years and for both sexes, the Netherlands has the largest number of men working part-time with 53.7%, followed by Denmark with 38.3%, Norway with 31.8%, Iceland with 26.5% and Ireland with 25.4%, while the smallest number is in Croatia with 2.8%, Malta and Bulgaria with 2.9%, Slovakia with 3.3% and Poland with 5.4%. The average for the EU-27 is 16.1%, and in Serbia, 9% of men work part-time. Just like for men, the largest number of women working part-time is also in the Netherlands, only the number is much higher at 75.6%, followed by Denmark with 56.7%, Norway with 54%, Iceland with 47.2% and Sweden with 44.1%, while the smallest number is in North Macedonia with 4%, Bulgaria with 4.7%, Slovakia with 6.6%, Hungary with 7.4% and Romania with 8.1%. The EU-27 average for women higher by as much as 13.7 p.p. than for men at 29.8%, and in Serbia, 10% of women work part-time, i.e. 1 p.p.

more than men. In all countries except North Macedonia, women are more likely to work part-time. The largest gender gap is in Norway with 22.2 p.p., the Netherlands with 21.9 p.p., Sweden with 20.1 p.p., Iceland with 20.7 p.p. and Finland with 19.4 p.p. and the smallest is in Romania with 0.4 p.p., Latvia with 0.7 p.p., Serbia with 1 p.p., Bulgaria with 1.8 p.p. and Malta with 2.2 p.p.

In the EU-27 in 2019, 2,019,600 young people aged 15-29 were self-employed, of which 1,343,700 were men and 758,800 women. In Serbia in 2019, 39,800 young people were self-employed, 30,600 men and 9,200 women, which indicates a large gender gap (23.1% of the self-employed are women and 76.9% are men). In the past 10 years, the number of self-employed people in the EU-27 decreased by 223,500 people (from 2,243,100 in 2011 to 2,019,600 in 2019), and in Serbia it increased by 1,800 people (from 38,000 to 39,800). Unfortunately, Eurostat does not provide data in percentages that would give more information about the tendencies in Europe when it comes to self-employment.

According to Eurostat data for 2019 for young people aged 15-29, 35.5% of young people (34.3% of men and 36.9% of women) in the EU-27 have temporary employment, while this is the case with 44.6% of young people in Serbia (45% of men and 44.2% women).

Countries with a higher percentage of young people working part-time than Serbia are Montenegro with 66.2%, Spain with 56%, Italy with 48.8% and Portugal with 48.4%, while all other analysed countries have a lower percentage. The lowest percentages are in Romania with 3.7% Lithuania with 3.8%, Latvia with 5.5%, Bulgaria with 7.1% and Estonia with 7.2%. According to the data for the last 10 years in the EU-27, there were no changes in the percentage of young people with temporary employment between 2011 and 2019, while in Serbia in 2019, there were 14.1 p.p. more young people with temporary employment compared to 2011 (from 30.5% to 44.6%).

Observed by sex, Montenegro has the highest number of men with temporary employment with 64%, followed by Spain with 54.4%, Italy with 46.7%, Portugal with 45.6% and Serbia with 45%, and Lithuania has the lowest number with 3.3%, followed by Romania with 4.3%, Latvia with 5.8%, Estonia with 6.6% and Bulgaria with 8.1%. Montenegro has the highest number of women with temporary employment with 68.9%, followed by Spain with 57.8%, Italy with 51.6%, Portugal with 51.4% and Slovenia with 50%, and Romania has the lowest number with 2.9%, followed by Lithuania with 4.4%, Latvia with 5.1%, Bulgaria with 5.7% and Estonia with 8%.

The number of self-employed young people is higher in 2019 compared to 2011 in 9 countries and it is lower in 5 countries (Bulgaria, Greece, Germany, Turkey and Croatia). Out of the total number of young entrepreneurs in Serbia, only 23.1% are women, although compared to 2011, more women than men became self-employed.

In Serbia, 44.6% of young people have temporary employment, and this percentage is higher for men compared to women by 0.8 p.p. Only Montenegro (66.2%) has a higher percentage than Serbia among the selected countries. Compared to 2011, the number of young people with temporary employment in Serbia has increased (14.1 p.p.). In five countries, there has been a reduction in temporary employment (Austria, Hungary, Germany, Slovenia and Switzerland). 9.4% of young people in Serbia work part-time. Six countries have a lower percentage of young people working part-time than Serbia. In all countries except North Macedonia, women are more likely to work part-time, and in Serbia there are 1 p.p. more women than men engaged in part-time work.

4. ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY

The main pillar of any international, national or local youth policy is the support to young people for their active participation in society for personal and social well-being. The NYS includes two principles that directly indicate the importance of active participation of young people in society and voluntary activities⁵³:

a) Active youth participation and cooperation: Everybody, and especially youth policy actors, shall ensure a stimulating environment and offer active support in the implementation of youth activities for young people, in their taking initiative and in their meaningful involvement in decision-making processes and processes of implementation of decisions that contribute to personal and social development, while young people shall receive complete information. Freedom of association, cooperation with peers and intergenerational cooperation at the local, national and international level shall be supported and encouraged.

b) Social responsibility and solidarity: The responsibility of those who work with young people, as well as the responsibility of young people arising from their obligations in society shall be encouraged and developed. Young people should actively contribute to the development and fostering of social values and to the development of their community, particularly through various forms of volunteering activities, and they should express intergenerational solidarity and work actively to create conditions for equal and full participation, in all aspects of social life, of young people with disabilities, members of ethnic minorities and all other persons and social groups that may be at risk of discrimination or discriminatory treatment. Intergenerational solidarity shall be developed and the role of youth in building a democratic civil society based on the culture of non-violence and tolerance shall be recognised.

Also, one of the strategic goals of the NYS refers to **enhanced active participation of young women and men in society**. Four specific goals are the following:

1. Improved legal and policy framework for the mainstreaming of young women and men's perspective and youth participation in decision-making processes and youth policy development;
2. Established conditions for capacity building and synergy in the activities of YPA, sustainable development and inclusion of a greater number of youth activity associations;
3. Improved conditions for volunteering of young people and for young people;
4. Increased participation of young people in environmental protection and sustainable development.

The *Strategy of Digital Skills Development in the Republic of Serbia 2020-2024* ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", no. 21/20) leans on the Digital Agenda for Serbia which is made up of the *Information Society Development Strategy in the Republic of Serbia until 2020* ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", no. 52/10) and the *Strategy for the Development of Electronic Communications in the Republic of Serbia 2010-2020* ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", no. 68/10). Together with the *Strategy for Development of Information Security in the Republic of Serbia 2017-2020* ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", no. 53/17), it contributes to increasing the access of citizens and the economy to information and communication technologies, openness and accessibility of the internet, as

⁵³ Source: National Youth Strategy 2015-2025, p. 7.

well as the creation of an information society by developing e-business, e-government, e-commerce, e-justice, e-health and digital education. Development of digital skills leads not only to the improvement of the quality of life of citizens, but also to the strengthening of local initiatives, regional development and the development of society as a whole. Adequate use of information and communication technologies is an excellent mechanism for more active participation of young people in society.

According to the SORS data, the 2011 Census⁵⁴ introduced the topic of the computer literacy of the population for the first time. Computer literacy⁵⁵ is defined as a person's ability to use basic computer applications in performing everyday tasks (at work, in school, at home). In relation to this, data were collected on whether the person is able to perform text processing, create spreadsheets, send and receive electronic mail, as well as whether they know to use the internet. Partially computer literate people are those who can perform one to three of the listed activities on a computer, and computer illiterate people are those who do not know how to perform any of the activities on a computer. In 2011, only 34.2% of the population of Serbia was computer literate (2,108,144), of which 17% women (1,046,019) and 17.2% men (1,062,125). 14.8% (910,586) were partially computer literate, and as many as 51% (3,142,854) were computer illiterate, of which 27.5% women (1,696,891) and 23.5% men (1,445,963). Observed by types of settlements, of the total number of computer literate people, 76.4% (1,610,356) were in urban areas and 23.6% (497,788) were in other areas. Out of computer illiterate people, 47.4% (1,489,983) were in urban areas and 52.6% (1,652,871) in other areas.

The SORS monitors the use of information and communication technologies in Serbia on an annual basis. According to the data for 2018⁵⁶, 72.1% of households in Serbia have a computer, 78.2% in urban areas and 61.8% in other areas, while 72.9% of households are connected to the internet. In the last three months, 70.7% of people used a computer, 93% of people with college or higher education, 80.5% of people with secondary education and 41.1% of people with lower than secondary education. Observed by sex, 74.5% of men and 67% of women have used a computer in the last three months. 22.8% of people have never used a computer. In the last three months, 73.4% of people used the internet, 76.8% of men and 70.1% of women. 24.2% of people have never used the internet. Of those who have the internet, 96.4% of young people aged 16-24 have an account on social networks (Facebook, Twitter). 77.6% of the internet population uses a smartphone. The research showed that 37.3% of the internet population uses internet services instead of physical contacts for interaction with public institutions and administrative bodies.

*Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia*⁵⁷ shows that very few young people in the last four years observed belonged to an organization. Thus, in 2019, only 8% of young people were members of a cultural and artistic society, 7% of an association, 9% of a political party, and 18% of a sports club. And young people are usually inactive members, except when it comes to sports clubs. If we look at the interest of young people to get information about sociopolitical events in the country, 20% of young people are

⁵⁴ Educational Attainment, Literacy and Computer Literacy, SORS. 2013.

<https://pod2.stat.gov.rs/ObjavljenePublikacije/Popis2011/Skolska%20sprema,%20pismenost%20i%20kompjuterska%20pismenost-Educational%20attainment,%20literacy%20and%20computer%20literacy%20.pdf>

⁵⁵ Educational Attainment, Literacy and Computer Literacy, SORS. 2013, p. 19.

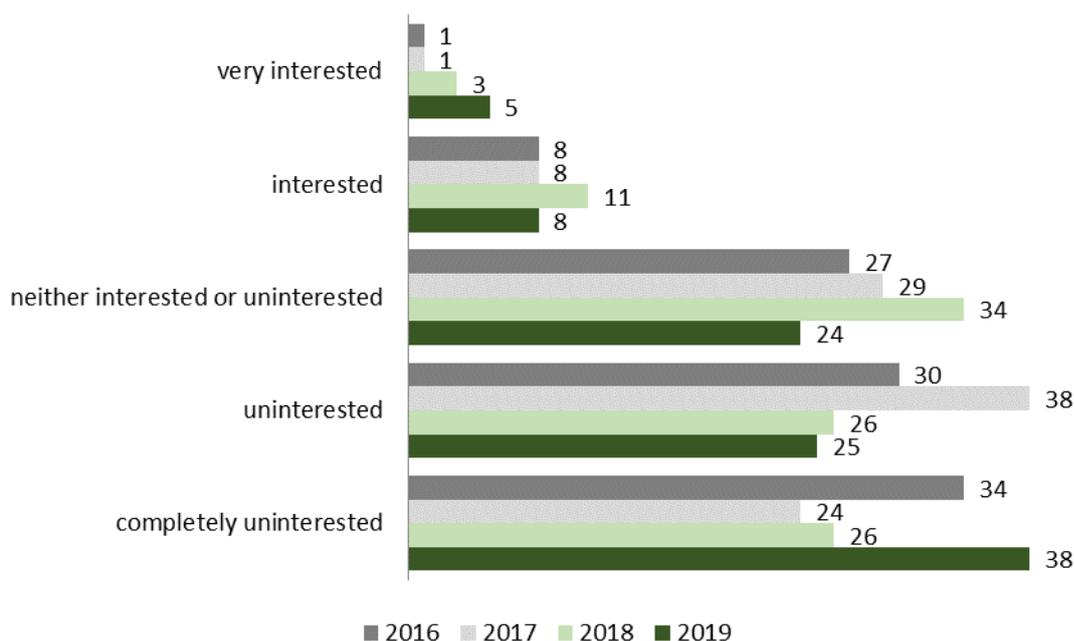
⁵⁶ Usage of information and communication technologies in the Republic of Serbia, 2018, SORS

<https://www.stat.gov.rs/publikacije/>

⁵⁷ Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia, CeSID, 2019

interested or very interested in getting information, while 51% of young people are uninterested or completely uninterested. Having in mind these data, it is not surprising that only 13% of young people are interested or very interested in active participation in sociopolitical events, while almost two in three are uninterested or completely uninterested (63%). Chart 4.1 gives a graphic presentation of the degree of interest of young people in active participation in sociopolitical events.⁵⁸

Chart 4.1 To what extent are you interested in active participation in sociopolitical events in Serbia? Comparison of 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019, in %



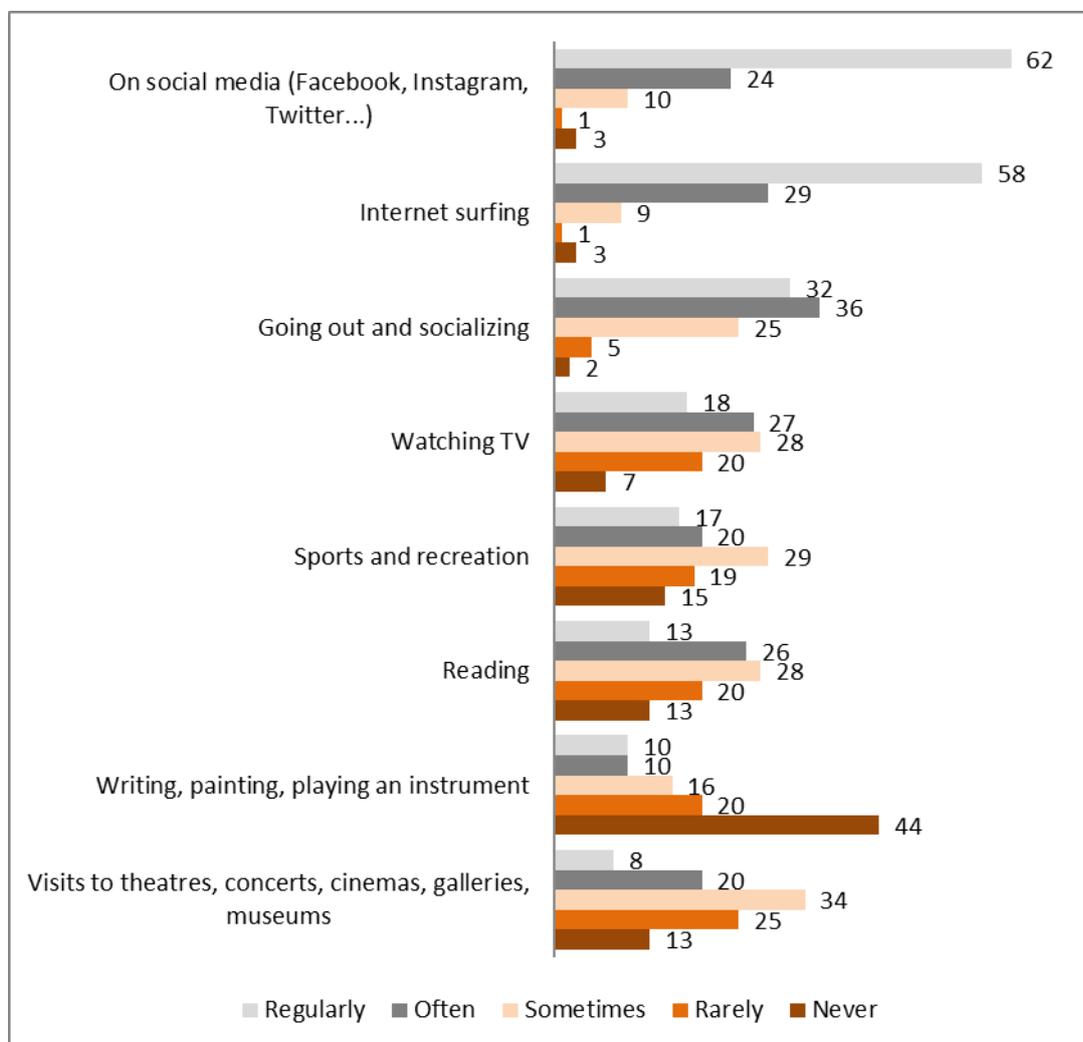
Source: *Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia*, CeSID, 2019, p. 77

Over half of young people (59%) said they would not be willing to engage in the work of a body that initiates or makes decisions relevant to young people. Of those who are willing, the largest percentage is willing to be engaged in the students' parliament (13%) and one in ten young people is willing to be engaged in local youth councils. 9% are willing to be engaged in associations, 6% in political parties and only 3% in other bodies at the local self-government level. The most common reason for non-inclusion is the lack of sufficient information about the work of these bodies (36%) and the opinion that these bodies do not work in the interest of citizens but to achieve their own goals (22%). One in five young people doubts that something would change with their inclusion. A total of 15% of respondents do not know where to apply and 6% believe that these bodies are closed for the admission of new members. Also, 57% of young people are not ready to be more actively involved in initiatives aimed at positive changes in social life, mainly due to lack of time (26%), while 18% are fully ready to get involved. In 2019, 20% of young people were involved in the decision-making process in their schools, 14% at the local level and 13% at the national level. These percentages are higher than in previous years.

⁵⁸ Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia, CeSID, 2019

The same research⁵⁹ indicates that young people mostly spend their free time on social networks – 62%, surfing the internet – 58%, going out and socializing – 32%, and they spend the least time in cultural and artistic creative activities – 10% and at cultural and artistic events – 8%. Chart 4.2 shows how young people spend their free time.

Chart 4.2 In which of the following ways do you spend your free time and how often do you practice such activities? 2019 in %



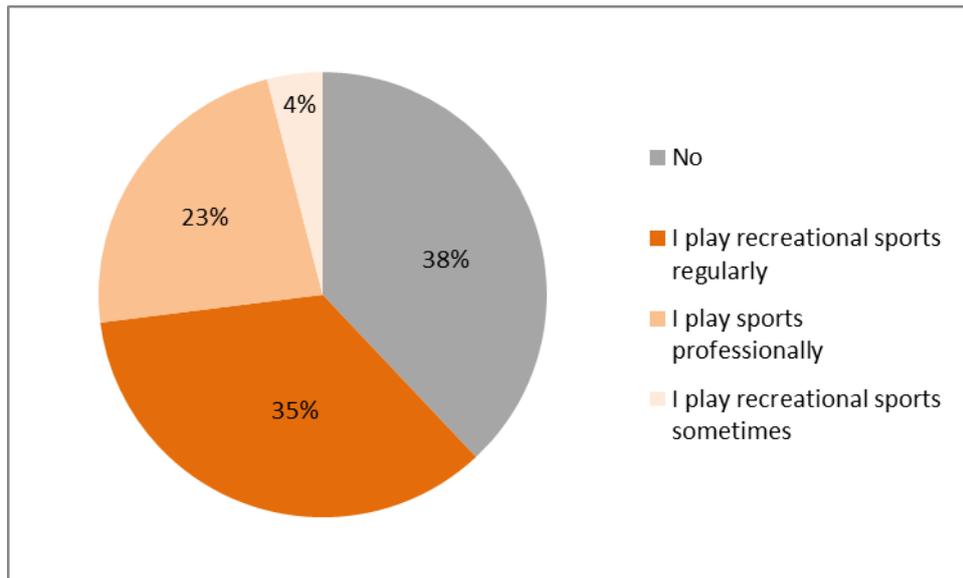
Source: Taken from the Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia, prepared by CeSID, 2019, p. 65.

It is interesting that when asked directly whether they practice sports, 38% of respondents said that they do not, while 62% of young people practice sports professionally or recreationally. Among those practising sports, 35% do it only occasionally, 23% regularly but recreationally, and 4% practise sports professionally. Chart 4.3 shows the degree and reasons for the involvement of young people in sports activities.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia, CeSID, 2019

⁶⁰ Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia, CeSID, 2019

Chart 4.3 Do you practice sports and if so, in what way? 2019, in %



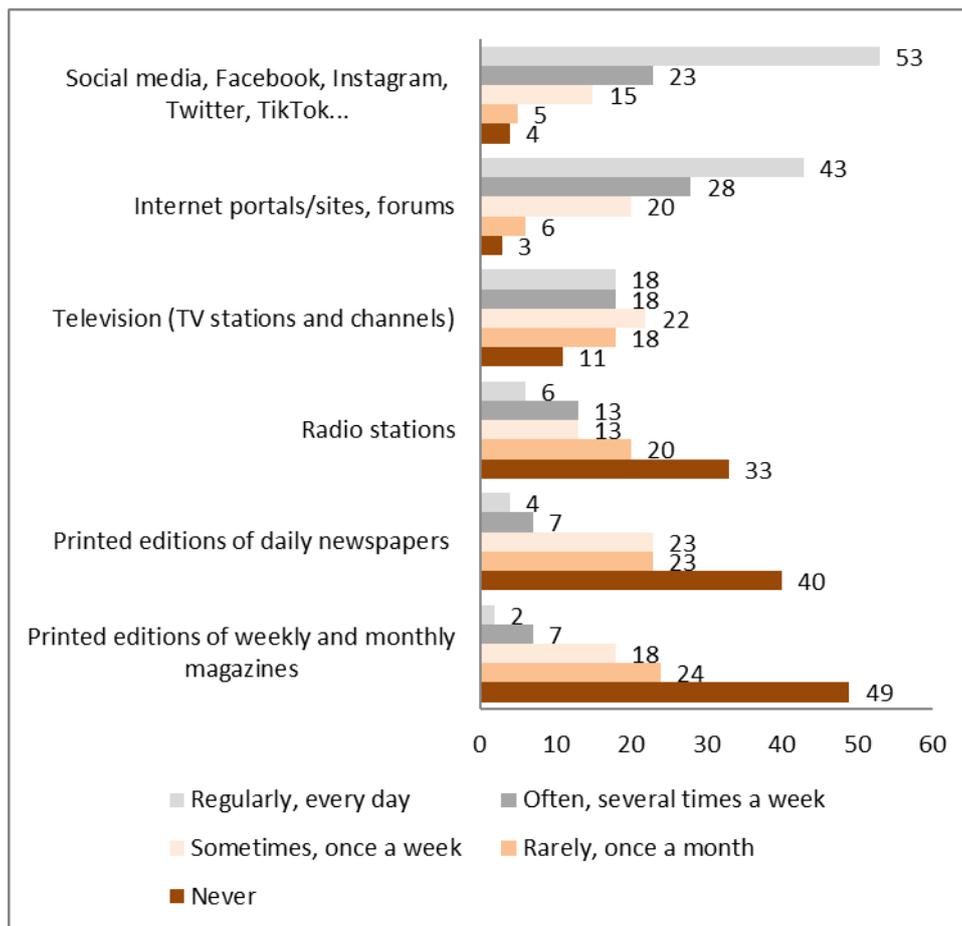
Source: Taken from the *Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia*, CeSID, 2019, p. 50.

Younger respondents practice sports more often than older respondents, both recreationally and professionally. The older the respondent, the more likely it is they will not practice sports, and the younger they are, the more likely it is they will, and it is also more likely they will do it professionally.

The research data indicate a low level of participation of young people in sociopolitical events, in the work of associations, cultural and artistic societies, political parties, as well as poor participation in cultural and artistic events and cultural and artistic creative activities. Young people show the most activism when it comes to recreational sports.

In line with the way they spend their free time, in 2019 young people got their information on a daily basis through social networks – 53% did it every day, 43% got their information through internet portals and 18% from TV, while 40% of young people never read printed editions of daily newspapers. Chart 4.4 gives an overview of how and through which media young people are getting their information.

Chart 4.4 How often do you get information through these media? 2019, in %

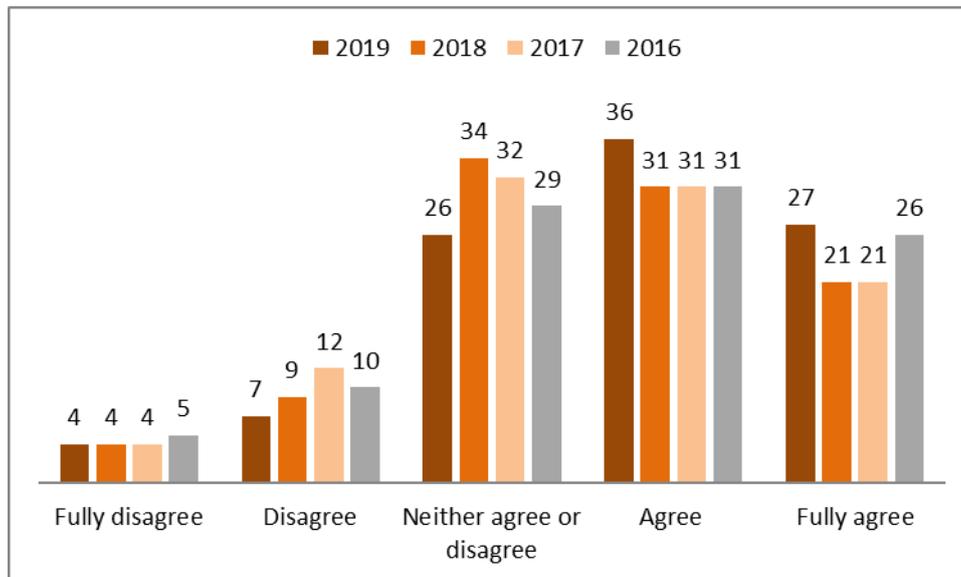


Source: Taken from the Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia, prepared by CeSID, 2019, p. 76.

Almost two in three young people (63%) have a positive attitude towards volunteering in 2019, and 60% believe that young people should be more involved in such activities, and over the years young people have shown an increasingly positive attitude towards volunteering activities. Chart 4.5 shows the attitudes of young people towards volunteering.⁶¹

⁶¹ Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia, CeSID, 2019

Chart 4.5 - Volunteering activities are useful for young people, comparison of 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019, in %



Source: Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia, CeSID, 2019, p. 95.

One in three young people participated in volunteering activities in 2019 and that number is increasing compared to the previous three years. 95% of young people had family support for volunteering and this support is also increasing compared to previous years. In times of crisis, such as the 2014 floods and the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of active participation in society and volunteering activities becomes even more pronounced. In the report published by UNICEF in June 2020 on their response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Serbia⁶², it is said that the COVID-19 messaging reached more than 820,000 young people through social media, that 5 U-Report surveys on the impact of the pandemic on young people were conducted and that Online Volunteers campaign⁶³ was launched with 600 young volunteers providing online support and investing over 7,650 volunteer hours since the beginning of the initiative.

Since there is no data for Serbia in Eurostat when it comes to youth participation and volunteering⁶⁴, we only made a comparison between the 28 countries for which data were available. We compared data for the following indicators in these fields: getting together with family and relatives; socialising and contacts with relatives or friends, participation in activities of churches, participation in voluntary activities. Data are provided for young people aged 16-29. In the field of youth in the digital world⁶⁵, data were provided for 33 countries, including Serbia. We analysed data indicating the use of IT technologies for participation in policy-making processes, communication with public authorities and friends, for the use of various services for citizens and for public expression of views and opinions.

In terms of **getting together with family/relatives**, the highest percentage out of 28 countries that the data exist for is recorded in Malta, as 43.5% of young people get together with

⁶² UNICEF's response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Serbia, June 2020, available at: <https://www.unicef.org/serbia/publikacije/unicef-ov-odgovor-na-pandemiju-covid-19-u-srbiji>

⁶³ <https://www.unicef.org/serbia/volonteri-na-mrezi>

⁶⁴ Eurostat database available at <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>, Youth participation, Youth volunteering

⁶⁵ Eurostat database available at <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>, Youth in the digital world

family/relatives every day, followed by Cyprus with 42.5%, Portugal with 37.3%, Greece with 35.9% and the Czech Republic with 29.4%. The average for the EU-27 (2007-2013) is 17.6%. The percentage of young people who get together with their families every day or at least once a week is the highest in Malta with 79.6%, Portugal with 72.8%, Cyprus with 70%, Iceland with 69.9% and Belgium with 64.4%. The average for the EU-27 is 52.7%. Among young people who never get together with their family, the highest percentage is in Bulgaria with 5.3%, followed by Luxembourg with 2.8%, Austria and the United Kingdom with 2.7% and in Spain, Italy and the Netherlands with 2.3%. The lowest percentage of young people who socialize with their families is in Luxembourg with 21.9% of young people being with their family/relatives never or only once a year. The EU-27 average is 14.7% (1.8% never and 12.9% once a year). If we look at **contacts with family**, 50.7% of young people in Cyprus maintain them on a daily basis, followed by Greece with 42.8%, Malta with 41.8%, the Czech Republic with 40.6% and Finland with 33.1%. The EU-27 average is 22.6%. 80% of young people in Cyprus maintain contacts with their families every day or at least once a week, followed by 77.2% in the Czech Republic, 74.3% in Denmark, 74% in the Netherlands and 73.6% in Malta. The average for the EU-27 is 61.9%. 22.6% of young people in Bulgaria don't have any contacts with their family or relatives, followed by 8.9% in Luxembourg, 6.1% in Spain, 5.7% in Belgium and Malta. In the EU-27, this is the case with 4.3% of young people. 25.5% of young people in Bulgaria never have contacts with their family or have contacts once a year, followed by 17.2% in Luxembourg, 14.5% in Lithuania, 14.2% in Poland and 13.7% in Spain. The EU-27 average is 10.7 % (4.3% never and 6.4% once a year).

When it comes to **socializing / getting together with friends** 78.5% of young people in Cyprus do it every day, followed by 63.2% in Portugal, 60.1% in Bulgaria, 56.7% in Luxembourg and 53.2% in Finland. The EU-27 average is 41.7%. The percentage of young people who see friends every day or at least once a week is the highest among young people in Cyprus with 95.3%, Portugal with 91.7%, Norway with 91.3%, Spain with 89% and Finland with 88.9%. The average for the EU-27 is 81.5%. 3.6% of young people in Malta never socialize with their friends, followed by 2.6% in Bulgaria, 1.8% in the United Kingdom, 1.4% in the Netherlands and 1.2% in Spain. The average for the EU-27 is 1%. The highest percentage of young people who never socialize with their friends or see them once a year is in Malta with 6.9% (3.6% never and 3.3% once a year), Poland with 5.5%, the United Kingdom with 3.9%, Bulgaria with 3.6%, France with 3.4%. The EU-27 average is 3% (never 1% and once a year 2%).

85.4% of young people in Cyprus, 76.7% in Greece, 69.9% in Norway, 63.8% in Finland and 58.7% in Ireland are in daily **contacts with their friends**. The average for the EU-27 is 49.2%. 96.1% of young people in Norway and Cyprus, 94.5% in Greece, 93.5% in Sweden and 92.7% in Finland are in contact with their friends every day or at least once a week. The average for the EU-27 is 83.2%. 18.5% of young people in Bulgaria are not in contact with their friends, followed by 6.2% in Malta, 3.6% in Luxembourg, 3.3% in Portugal and 3.2% in the United Kingdom. The EU-27 average is 2.1%. The highest percentage of young people who never contact their friends or do it once a year is in Bulgaria with 19.1%, Malta with 8.9%, Poland with 5.9%, Portugal with 4.8% and Luxembourg with 4.5%. The EU-27 average is 3.5% (2.1% never and 1.4% once a year).

One of the important indicators of young people's participation in social life is their attitude towards **volunteering**. Eurostat data for 27 countries show that 31.7% of young people in the EU-27 participated in voluntary activities. Young people from Slovenia volunteer the most with 75.4%, followed by Iceland with 74.6%, Cyprus with 67.4%, Norway with 65.8% and

the Netherlands with 54%, while young people from Denmark and Bulgaria with 2.3%, the Czech Republic with 3.5%, Malta with 8.6% and Hungary with 10.5% volunteer the least. Observed by sex in the EU-27, 29.9% of men and 33.6% of women have volunteering experience. Young men from Slovenia volunteer the most with 79.4%, followed by Iceland with 76.9%, Norway, with 69.2% Cyprus with 67.7% and the Netherlands with 51.1% while they volunteer the least in Bulgaria with 0.9%, Denmark with 2.2%, the Czech Republic with 3%, Hungary with 8.9% and Lithuania with 10.2%. These are also the countries where women are the most active when it comes to volunteering, only the order is a little different. Young women from Iceland volunteer the most with 72.2%, followed by Slovenia with 71%, Cyprus with 67.2%, Norway with 62.1% and the Netherlands with 56.8% while they volunteer the least in Denmark with 2.4%, Bulgaria with 3.8%, the Czech Republic with 4.1%, Hungary with 8.3% and Belgium with 11%. The largest difference in the level of volunteering by sex is among young people in Ireland at 12.1% (11.3% men and 23.4% women), Luxembourg at 9.5%, Slovakia at 8.9%, Slovenia at 8.4% and Poland at 7.8%. Of the 27 countries for which data are available, men volunteer more in 8 and women in 19 countries. In the EU-27, the difference is 3.7% (women volunteer more).

In order to further develop youth volunteering, the EU has developed the European Solidarity Corps programme.⁶⁶ This programme stems from the activities of the European Voluntary Service, which was implemented under the auspices of the Erasmus+ programme⁶⁷. Currently, young people from Serbia can volunteer in the countries that are full participants in this programme (EU) and in Turkey.

The comparison of data on youth participation and volunteering available for six selected countries with the EU-27 (no data for Serbia) shows that young people in Hungary see their families the most (58.1% daily or once a week) and that all other countries have a lower frequency on this topic from the average of the EU countries (52.7%). Young people in Austria (18.6% never or once a year) and Germany (18%) spend the least time socializing with their families. Young people in Greece (93.4%) socialize with their friends the most, while in comparison with the EU-27 (81.5%), only young people in Hungary (75.6%) and France (74%) have a lower percentage of daily/weekly socializing with friends. In the EU-27, 3% of young people never see their friends or see them once a year, and this percentage in the selected countries is higher only in Bulgaria (3.6%) and France (3.4%).

Of the selected countries, young people in Germany volunteer the most (31.9%) and they are the only ones with a higher average than the EU-27 (31.7%). Extremely small participation in volunteering activities is recorded in Bulgaria (2.3%) and Hungary (8.6%).

⁶⁶ European Solidarity Corps is a new initiative of the European Union that enables young people to volunteer for or work in their own country or abroad on projects that benefit communities and people across Europe. The programme also aims to provide support to organizations addressing social and natural challenges. See more at https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity_en

⁶⁷ Erasmus+ is a European Union funding scheme to support cooperation projects in three fields: education, youth and sport. The Government's conclusion from March 2016 prescribes that the Tempus Foundation shall perform the role of an independent agency responsible for the decentralized implementation of the Erasmus+ programme in Serbia. Young people from Serbia aged 17-30 can participate in volunteering projects within the KA Capacity Building project, Erasmus+ programme and in the volunteering activities of the European Solidarity Corps. See more at <https://erasmusplus.rs/esc/>

When it comes to the **field of culture and creativity**⁶⁸, data are provided for young people aged 16-29 in 2015 for 33 countries, including Serbia. For the **frequency of participation in cultural or sports activities** in 2015, 85.2% of young people have participated at least once in the last year in the EU-27 (member states since 2020), while this percentage in Serbia is 69.3%. The largest number of young people participate in cultural and sports activities in Iceland with 97.4%, Denmark with 97.2%, Norway with 97%, the Netherlands with 96.5% and Sweden with 95.7%. The lowest numbers are among young people in Romania with 50.7%, North Macedonia with 56%, Bulgaria with 56.2%, Serbia with 69.3% and Cyprus and Malta with 76.6%. In all countries, the percentage of participation in sports and cultural activities increases with the level of education.

The average participation in these activities for the EU-27 for young people with primary education as the highest educational attainment is 77.4%, with secondary education it is 86.3% and with tertiary education it is 93.5%. In Serbia, 62.9% of young people who have completed primary school as the highest educational attainment attend sports or cultural activities at least once a year, while this is the case with 68.6% of young people with secondary school and 81.6% of young people with college and higher education. If we look at the type of activity, 82.5% of young people in the EU-27 participate **in cultural activities** (cinema, theatre, concerts, ballet, street performances, visiting cultural and artistic sites, museums, archaeological sites, etc.) and 45.1% participate in sports events. Young people in Serbia are far less likely to participate in cultural activities than their peers in the EU-27 (56.8%), while 43.3% participate in sports events, i.e. only for 1.8 p.p. less than the EU average. The country where young people participate the most in cultural events is Iceland with 97%, followed by Denmark with 96%, the Netherlands with 95.3%, Norway with 94.9% and Finland with 94.3%, while countries where they participate the least are North Macedonia with 43.9%, Bulgaria with 52.1%, Serbia with 56.8%, Croatia

Compared to the 11 selected countries for which data on participation in cultural and sports activities are available, young people in Serbia have a higher participation rate (69.3%) compared to Bulgaria, Romania and North Macedonia, and lower compared to the other 8 countries. The lowest participation is in Romania (50.7%). Serbia has a 15.9 p.p lower share than the EU-27 average (85.2%). If we observe participation only in cultural activities, young people in Serbia (56.8%) have a higher degree of participation compared to Bulgaria, Romania and North Macedonia and lower participation compared to the other 8 countries. Of all the selected countries, young people in North Macedonia have the lowest level of participation (43.9%). Serbia's average participation in cultural activities is lower by 25.7 p.p. compared to the EU-27 (82.5%). In terms of participation only in sports events, young people from Romania, North Macedonia and France participate less in comparison to Serbia (43.3%) and young people from the other 8 countries participate more. Serbia's average participation in sports events is lower by 1.8 p.p. compared to the EU-27 (45.1%). On the other hand, 56.7% of young people in Serbia have never participated in sports activities, which is 1.8 p.p. lower than in the EU-27 and at the same time lower than in seven observed countries, and better than in Bulgaria, Romania, North Macedonia and France. Romania has the largest number of young people who never participated in sports events (71.7%). 7.2% of young people participate in artistic activities every day in Serbia and the EU-27, while young people in Austria, Bulgaria, Greece, Germany and North Macedonia have a higher rate of participation.

⁶⁸ Eurostat database available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>, Youth-culture and creativity.

with 70.5% and Malta with 72.8%. Only the reasons for not going to the cinema were examined.

In the EU-27 countries, 29.5% of young people are not interested in cinema, 28.3% cite financial reasons and 9.8% do not have a cinema nearby. A total of 32.4% cite reasons other than those listed. In Serbia, more than one in four young people are not interested in cinema (28.4%), 22.4% of young people don't have one nearby, while 19.2% do not attend cinema for financial reasons. In the past 12 months, **sports events** were visited by 62.1% of young people aged 16-29 in Latvia, 61.9% in Switzerland, 61.8% in the Netherlands, 61.5% in the Czech Republic and 58.5% in Finland. Young people are the least likely to visit sports events in Romania with 28.3%, Italy with 33.3%, Bulgaria with 35.4%, Malta with 36.5% and North Macedonia with 37.6%. The average for EU-27 countries is 45.1%, and the average for Serbia is 43.3%.

The same number of young people from EU-27 and Serbia participate in artistic activities every day – 7.2%. The country with the highest percentage of young people who participate in artistic activities every day is Malta with 17.3%, followed by Finland with 15.4%, Iceland with 14.7%, Denmark with 13.9% and Norway with 12.9%. 15.8% of young people from EU-27 and 7.2% of young people from Serbia participate in artistic activities once a week. 58.3% of young people from EU-27 and as many as 74.4% of young people from Serbia did not participate in any artistic activities in the last 12 months. The country with the highest percentage of young people who did not participate in any artistic activities in the last 12 months is France with 80.7%, followed by Belgium with 78.4%, Portugal with 77.8%, Romania with 76.3% and Bulgaria with 75.6.

Regarding the field of youth in the digital world, we analysed data on the use of computers and the internet on a daily basis, as well as on interaction with public authorities and other various forms of internet use for active participation in society and expression of views and opinions. According to Eurostat data for 2017 for 33 countries, 76% of young people aged 16-29 used a computer every day⁶⁹ in the EU-27, and 83% did so in Serbia, while in 2017, the internet was used every day by 91% of young people in the EU-27 and 93% of young people in Serbia.

According to Eurostat data for 2019 for 33 countries, 94% of young people aged 16-29 used the internet every day in the EU-27 (the same percentage of both young men and women), and in Serbia, this number was 96% (97% for young men and 94% for young women). The countries where young people use it the most on daily basis are Ireland and the United Kingdom with 99%, while 98% of young people use the internet every day in 11 countries. It is used the least in Turkey with 85%, Romania with 86%, Bulgaria with 87%, Italy with 89% and Greece and France with 92%. 100% of men in Croatia and the United Kingdom and 100% of women in Estonia and Malta use the internet daily.

According to data for 33 countries, 88% of young people in the EU-27 used the internet to send and receive e-mails in the last three months, 88% of men and 87% of women. In Serbia, only 57% of young people in 2019 used the internet for this purpose, 60% of men and 55% of women.

According to data provided for 35 countries, 57% of young people in the EU-27 and 33% in Serbia used the internet **in the last 12 months of 2019 for interacting with public authorities**. In Serbia, this percentage was the highest in 2015 at 46%, and it was the lowest in 2017 when it amounted to only 26%. In the EU, the highest percentage was in 2019, and

⁶⁹ Eurostat database available at <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>, Youth in digital world

the lowest in 2013, when it was 46%. The country where young people used the internet for interacting with public authorities the most was Finland with 95%, followed by Denmark and Estonia with 92%, Iceland with 88% and Sweden with 85%, and they interacted the least in Romania with 11%, Italy with 24%, Montenegro with 29% and Serbia and Bulgaria with 33%. In 2019, 12% of young people in the EU-27 (13% of men and 12% of women), and 4% in Serbia (no difference by sex) **used the internet to participate in public debates, consultations, voting, petitions.** This type of social activism is expressed the most by young people in Estonia at 35%, Iceland at 28%, Malta, Germany and Croatia at 19% and Finland and Sweden at 18%, and it is the least expressed in Serbia at 4%, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania and North Macedonia at 5%. Observed by sex, in 16 out of 33 countries young women are more active in terms of participation in online voting, public debates, petitions, etc., and young men are more active in 14 countries. There are no gender differences in Belgium, Ireland and Serbia. The largest gender differences are in Norway with 12% (9% men and 21% women), Finland with 11%, the Netherlands and Germany with 8% and in Malta with 7%.

In 2019, 15% of young people aged 16-29 in the EU-27 (16% men and 13% women) and 10% in Serbia (11% men and 9% women) **expressed their opinions on civil and political issues on websites** (blogs, social networks, etc.). Data are available for 33 countries. The country where the highest percentage of young people participated in the social life in this manner is Turkey with 23%, followed by Poland with 21%, Denmark with 20%, Croatia and the United Kingdom with 19%, and the lowest percentage is in Slovenia with 4%, Austria with 6%, Belgium with 7%, France with 9% and Serbia and Finland with 10%. Observed by sex, men participate more in this activity in 24 countries, women participate more in 7, while there is no difference between sexes in Greece and the United Kingdom. The largest gender gap is in Cyprus at 10 p.p. (23% men and 13% women), the Netherlands at 9 p.p. (16% men and 7% women), North Macedonia at 8 p.p. (16% men and 8% women), Turkey at 7 p.p. (26% men and 19% women) and Denmark at 6 p.p. (23% men and 17% women). There is no difference between sexes in the United Kingdom and Greece. The lowest difference between sexes is among young people in the Czech Republic, Iceland, Romania, Finland and Croatia.

According to data for 33 countries, in 2019, the internet was used to communicate via social networks by 84% of young people aged 16-29 in the EU-27 (83% of men and 86% of

In 2019, 96% of young people in Serbia use the internet every day, which is 2 p.p. more than the EU-27 average and at the same time more than in 9 selected countries for which data are available. The percentage of use is the same in North Macedonia, and it is higher in Austria, Germany and Croatia. 88% of young people from Serbia participate in social networks, which is 4 p.p. more than the EU-27 average, but it is also higher than in 6 of the selected countries, while the same as in Greece. Serbia has the lowest percentage of young people who participate in public debates, consultations on the internet (4%), which is 8 p.p. lower than in the EU-27. Germany and Croatia have the highest percentage (19%). 10% of young people in Serbia express their opinions on civil and political issues through social networks, which is 5 p.p. lower than in the EU-27 and higher than in Hungary, Slovenia and France. Croatia has the highest percentage out of the selected countries (23%). Only 33% of young people in Serbia and Bulgaria use the Internet to interact with public authorities, while the EU-27 average is 55%. Lower percentage of young people use the internet for this purpose in Romania (11%) and Montenegro (29%).

women), and in Serbia, this number was 88% (the same percentage for men and women). The countries where young people used social networks the most were Iceland with 98%, Norway with 97%, Cyprus and Denmark with 96% and Croatia, the United Kingdom and Portugal with 95%, while they were used the least in Italy with 71%, France with 72%, Turkey and Bulgaria with 80% and Romania with 83%.

Internet use to publish content created by young people themselves on websites in 2019 is available for 33 countries for the age group 16-29. In the EU-27, the share was 49% (men 47% and women 51%), while this percentage in Serbia was 70% (men 67% and women 74%). Countries where young people publish content on websites the most are North Macedonia with 95%, the Czech Republic with 79%, Greece with 74%, Iceland with 73% and Serbia with 70%. Internet is used the least for this activity by young people from Romania with 28%, Belgium with 32%, Finland and Bulgaria with 38% and Italy with 39%.

The percentage of young people who sought jobs on the internet in 2019 in the EU-27 was 29% (men 28%, women 30%), and in Serbia, it was 22% (men 16%, women 27%). Young people in Finland use the internet for seeking jobs the most with 59%, followed by Denmark with 51%, Sweden with 50%, Norway with 45% and the United Kingdom with 43% and it is used the least for this purpose in Romania with 10%, the Czech Republic with 14%, Turkey and Bulgaria with 16%, and Poland with 17%. Observed by sex, in 6 out of 33 countries men are more likely to search for jobs on the internet than women (Belgium, Portugal, Poland, Romania, United Kingdom and Turkey), in 24 countries women are more active than men, while in Estonia, Ireland and Cyprus the percentage of men and women is the same. Croatia has the largest gender gap (women are 20 p.p. more active than men in searching for jobs on the internet).

Percentage of young people who used internet banking in 2019 in the EU-27 was 59% (58% men, 59% women), and in Serbia it was 18% (19% men, 17% women). Mobile banking is used the most by young people in the Netherlands and Iceland with 96%, in Norway and Denmark with 95% and in Estonia with 94% and the least in Romania and Bulgaria with 9%, Serbia with 18%, North Macedonia with 20% and Greece with 33%. Observed by sex, in 12

A total of 22% of young people in Serbia use the internet to seek work, with women doing it more often, which is 7 p.p. lower than the EU-27 average. In relation to the selected countries, this percentage is higher than in Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, the same as in North Macedonia, and lower than in 7 countries. Young people in France seek work over the internet the most (32%). Young people in Serbia rarely use internet banking services (18%), which is 41 lower than the EU-27 average. Only young people in Bulgaria and Romania (9%) use e-banking less than young people in Serbia. 13% of young people in Serbia use the internet to sell goods and services, which is 8 p.p. lower than in the EU-27 and higher than in Bulgaria, Greece, Romania and North Macedonia. Young people in Croatia use the internet for this purpose the most (31%), while young people in Greece use it the least (3%). 11% of young people in Serbia and Germany attend online courses, which is 2% lower than in the EU-27, while being higher than in all other countries except Austria, North Macedonia and France. Young people in France attend online courses the most (16%), while young people in Romania, Slovenia and Turkey attend them the least (5%).

countries men use mobile banking more, women do in 20, and there are no differences between sexes in Norway.

In 2019, the internet was used for **information about goods and services** by 77% young people in the EU-27 (77% men, 78% women), and by 65% of young people in Serbia (67% men, 63% women).

In 2019, the internet was used for selling goods and services by 21% young people in the EU-27 (22% men, 20% women), and by 13% of young people in Serbia (15% men, 12% women). Interestingly, this percentage is decreasing in Serbia, as it was 33% in 2015. Out of the 33 countries for which the Eurostat has data available, the highest percentage is in Malta with 49%, the United Kingdom with 36%, the Netherlands with 34%, Finland with 32% and Norway and Croatia with 31%, and the lowest is in Greece with 3%, Romania and Cyprus with 4%, North Macedonia with 7% and Italy and Bulgaria with 10%. Observed by sex, in 5 out of 33 countries women use the internet more for this activity (Germany, France, Latvia, Austria and Norway), while men are more active in 25 countries. There is no difference between sexes in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

In 2017, 44% of young people (41% men, 46% women) aged 16-29 in the EU-27 **used the internet for organizing travel and accommodation**, while this is the case with 40% of young people in Serbia (39% men, 41% women). Data are available for 33 countries. The data for 2015 were also available for Serbia, and the percentage then was only 22%. Young people use the internet for this activity the most in Luxembourg with 64%, Finland with 62%, Norway with 61%, the Czech Republic with 60% and Germany and Malta with 57%, and the least in Turkey with 12%, North Macedonia with 13%, Romania and Bulgaria with 15% and in Latvia with 23%. Observed by sex, in 5 out of 33 countries young men use internet more for this activity (Greece, Ireland, Belgium, Estonia and the United Kingdom), while young women are more active in 26 countries. In Poland and Croatia, there are no differences between sexes. The biggest gender gap is in Luxembourg, where women are more active by 19% (54% for men and 73% for women).

Internet use for online courses in 2019 by young people aged 16-29 is available for 33 countries. The average in the EU-27 was 13% (men 13%, women 12%) and in Serbia, it was 11% (men 9%, women 14%). Young people use online courses the most in Finland with 40%, Spain with 20%, Iceland and Malta with 28% and the United Kingdom with 27% and the least in Turkey, Romania and Slovenia with 5%, Bulgaria with 6% and in Poland, Croatia and Latvia with 8%. Observed by sex, men have a higher percentage of using online training in 15 countries, women in 9, while there are no gender differences in 6 countries: Ireland, Spain, Latvia, Poland, Portugal and Romania. The biggest gender gap for online training is in Luxembourg and Iceland at 9%, Switzerland at 8% and Denmark, Germany, the United Kingdom and Serbia at 5%. Observed by years, the use of online courses increased by 5% compared to 2015 in EU-27 and by 4% in Serbia.

5. HEALTH

World Health Organization (hereinafter: WHO)⁷⁰ defined health back in 1946 as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

The main strategic documents related to health and youth are: NYS with action plans; *Strategy on Sports Development in the Republic of Serbia 2014-2018* ("Official Gazette of

⁷⁰ Available at: <https://www.who.int/about/who-we-are/constitution>

the Republic of Serbia”, no. 1/15); Public Health Strategy of the Republic of Serbia 2018-2026 (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, no. 61/18); *Mental Health Protection Programme in the Republic of Serbia 2019-2026 with the action plan* (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, no. 84/19); *HIV and AIDS Prevention and Control Strategy of the Republic of Serbia 2018-2025* (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, no. 61/18); *Occupational Safety and Health Strategy of the Republic of Serbia 2018-2022 with the Action Plan for its implementation* (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, no. 96/18) and *Regulation on the National Programme for Prevention of Obesity in Children and Adults* (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, no. 9/18).

In the NYS, one of the strategic goals relates to improved health and well-being of young women and men. It contains three specific goals directly aimed at improving the health of young people. In other strategic documents in the field of health, young people are not listed as a separate group. In the *Public Health Strategy of the Republic of Serbia*⁷¹, it is stated that it “supports the improvement of health, prevention of diseases and prolongation of the quality of life of the population. Good health is essential for sustainable economic and social development and is the main concern in the life of every person, family and society”. In order to prevent obesity in children and adults, in February 2018 the Government of the Republic of Serbia passed the *Regulation on the National Programme for Prevention of Obesity in Children and Adults*⁷² which highlights that “overweightness and obesity, both in the adult population and in the population of children and adolescents, represent health disorders of great epidemiological and clinical importance and are one of the biggest public health problems today”. Today, obesity is the most common eating disorder and the WHO declared it the biggest unrecognised public health problem. It is estimated that by 2025, 50% of the world's population will be obese unless decisive measures are taken to reduce, prevent and treat obesity⁷³. In widespread use today is the classification of adult obesity, provided by the WHO in 1997, which expresses obesity based on the value of the Body Mass Index (hereinafter: BMI)⁷⁴.

In Serbia, national health surveys are conducted every six years by the Ministry of Health and the Institute of Public Health "Dr Milan Jovanović Batut" in accordance with international standards (European Health Interview Survey – EHIS). The surveys provide data comparable at the international level on how people perceive their health, to what extent they use health care services and how they take care of their health by accepting certain lifestyles or relying on preventive and other health services. We currently have data available from 2013, and data from the last survey conducted in 2019 are also expected. The 2013 survey covered 6,500 households in Serbia with 19,079 members. The subject of the survey is the adult population aged 15 and over, and a special focus was on children aged 5 to 14. According to the 2013 survey⁷⁵, 57.8% of the population in Serbia assessed their health as good, 64.4% of men and 51.5% of women. As far as mental health is concerned, 4.1% of the population has symptoms of depression, 5.3% of women and 2.9% of men. In the age group 15-24, 0.3% of people have symptoms of depression. In the age group 25-34, 1.5% of people have them. 21.2% of

⁷¹ Public Health Strategy of the Republic of Serbia 2018-2026, “Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, no. 61/18, p. 1.

⁷² Regulation on the National Programme for Prevention of Obesity in Children and Adults, “Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, no. 9/18, p. 1.

⁷³ Regulation on the National Programme for Prevention of Obesity in Children and Adults, “Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, no. 9/18, p. 3.

⁷⁴ BMI is defined as a person's body mass in kilograms divided by the square of the person's body height in metres $BMI (kg) / BH (m^2)$.

⁷⁵ Results of the National Health Survey of the Republic of Serbia 2013, Institute of Public Health of Serbia “Dr Milan Jovanovic Batut” 2014, p. 29.

the population had a BMI of over 30 (obese), and 3.2% had a BMI under 18.5 (malnourished). 40.4% of the population were in the normal weight category, while 35.1% were pre-obese. Between the two national surveys (2006 and 2013), the percentage of obese people in Serbia increased from 17.3% to 21.2%.

Every year, the Institute of Public Health of Serbia “Dr Milan Jovanovic Batut” publishes the “*Health Statistical Yearbook of Serbia*” which presents key data on population, births, illnesses and deaths, the impact of environmental factors on health, the use of health care, the organization and operation of the health care service and national surveys. The *Health Statistical Yearbook of Serbia for 2018*⁷⁶ also provides data from the last national survey in 2013. According to data from 2013, the population of Serbia sits for an average of 5 hours a day, and the numbers are the highest among the people from Belgrade (5.8 hours), urban settlements (5.3 hours), people aged 15-24 (5.5 hours), as well as those with college and higher education (5.8 hours). Fitness, sports or recreation were practised at least three times a week by 8.8% of the population – 12.1% of men and 5.7% of women. 11.3% of the population spends at least 90 minutes a week in recreation, 15.9% of men and 5.3% of women. The data show that practising sports and recreation is more prevalent among men. In 2013, 34.7% of the population of Serbia smoked daily or occasionally, and the age group with the highest percentage was 35-44 with 47%. The percentage of smokers is also high among persons aged 25-34 at 44.1%, and among young people aged 15-24, it is 26%. 29.2% of the population smoked every day (32.6% of men and 26% of women). More than half of the population (54.4%) over the age of 15 was exposed to indoor tobacco smoke, and almost as many (47.1%) non-smokers were concerned about the harmful effects of tobacco smoke on their own health. In 2013, 53.9% of the population of Serbia consumed alcohol occasionally or daily. The highest percentage of those who consumed alcohol was in the age group 25-34 (66%). There is also a very high percentage in the age group 15-24 (61%). 4.7% of the population drank daily (0.6% in the age group 15-24 and 1.9% in the age group 25-34). There is a higher percentage of men who drink daily, as much as six times more than women. Just like the general population, young people also have more problems with alcohol than cigarettes consumption, and alcohol consumption being perceived as socially acceptable behaviour is a special problem.

In addition to the mentioned regular surveys, another important survey is the *National Survey on Life Styles of Citizens in Serbia 2014*⁷⁷ conducted by the Institute of Public Health of Serbia “Dr Milan Jovanovic Batut”. The survey was conducted on a representative sample of 5,120 respondents aged 18 to 64, not including residents of Kosovo and Metohija. The questionnaire was developed based on the European Model Questionnaire (EMQ), developed by the EMCDDA (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction). The data showed that 64.5% of the population of Serbia aged 18 to 64 smoked cigarettes during their lifetime, while 40.2% of them smoked cigarettes in the last 30 days (44.3% of men and 36.2% woman). A total of 36.4% of the adult population (40.9% of men and 32% of women) are daily smokers. In the previous twelve months, a total of 72.2% of adult respondents consumed alcohol (82.1% of men and 62.4% of women). Everyday smoking of cigarettes and other tobacco products is almost equally widespread among the sexes and age groups. High-risk alcohol consumption is much more prevalent among men, with an almost equal distribution among the age groups. Drugs from the group of sedatives and hypnotics were used by 22.4% of respondents in the previous year (13.9% of men and 30.9% of women), and

⁷⁶ Health Statistical Yearbook of Serbia 2018, Institute of Public Health of Serbia “Dr Milan Jovanovic Batut”, 2019 <http://www.batut.org.rs/index.php?content=77> (p. 531, 533 and 545)

⁷⁷ National Survey on Life Styles of Citizens in Serbia 2014, “Dr Milan Jovanovic Batut”, 2014, p. 11.

14.6% of respondents used them in the last month (8% of men and 21.2% of women), with a higher frequency of use among the older population.

In 2013, the association Centre for Research, Education and Development conducted the research "*Mental Health of Youth in Serbia*"⁷⁸ within the project "Support to the Mental Health of Youth in Serbia" funded by the MoYS in order to improve the mental health of young people. The research was conducted in 40 secondary schools in Serbia on a sample of 1,000 third-grade students (46% boys and 54% girls). The main results indicate that more than half of the students have experienced at least one stressful life event in the last two years. Criticism of others and negative attitude towards the surroundings are the most common mental states and discomforts that young people have cited. About 10% of young people experience a condition that indicates increased anxiety (panic, fear without a reason, intense restlessness, etc.). More than one in five students have relatively frequent states of negative moods and sadness. A feeling of constant worry is cited by 45% of respondents and 28% say that they often cry. Depressed states are more common among students of lower economic status, those with low self-esteem and those who have more pronounced problems with the social environment. Based on the results, the authors of the research singled out a group of respondents who may be considered more sensitive in terms of mental health and who need additional support. They make up 16% of the total sample. This group is less likely to practice sports and spends more time at the computer and reading books compared to their peers. The research showed that 40% of students regularly practice sports, but also that there are significant differences in terms of economic status and sex. Students of wealthier economic status are significantly more likely to practice sports, while only 27% of those with poorer economic status do so. 57% of young men and 28% of young women actively practice sports. Since moderate physical activity is important for health and weight control, the WHO recommends 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity every day.

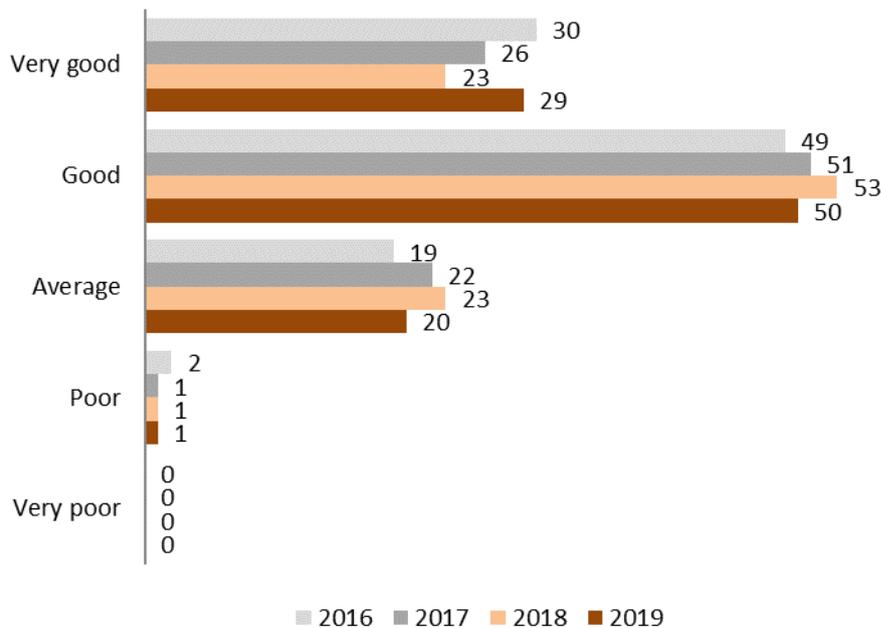
One of the strategic goals of the NYS is the improved health and well-being of young women and men. It contains three specific goals directly aimed at improving the health of young people:

1. Programmes of health promotion and prevention of risky behaviour among the youth are improved and accessible to a greater number of young women and men. Expected results include: health prevention and promotion of healthy lifestyle programmes and services are developed and standardised; increased accessibility of programmes of prevention of youth addiction; increased availability of programmes on the prevention of sexually transmitted infections, HIV/AIDS, and on reproductive health and increased availability of youth programmes for the preservation of mental and general health.
2. Created conditions for the development of healthy lifestyles of young women and men. Expected results include: policies and programmes to promote healthy lifestyles among young women and men are improved and enhanced capacity of young women and men to spend quality leisure time, and take part in sports and recreational activities.
3. Improved conditions for working with youth at health risk. Expected results include: Support to youth at health risk is improved and sensitisation in the institutions dealing with youth at health risk is increased.

⁷⁸ Mental Health of Young People in Serbia, Centre for Research, Education and Development, 2014, available at: <https://www.mos.gov.rs/public/documents/upload/test/Mentalno%20zdravlje%20mladih.pdf>

Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia⁷⁹ also contains topics related to youth health. 29% of young people assess their health as very good, and 50% as good. Only 1% of young people assess their health as poor. Chart 5.1 shows how young people assessed their health.

Chart 5.1 - In general, how would you assess your health? Comparison of 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019, in %

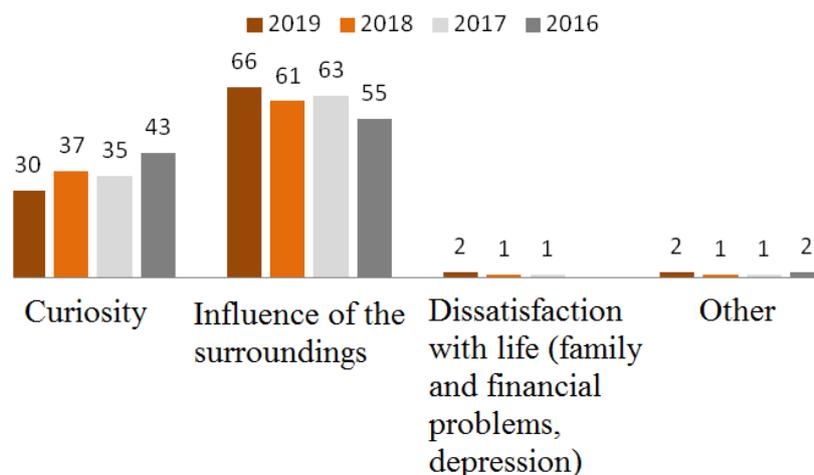


Source: Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia, prepared by CeSID, 2019, p. 51.

Data from 2019 show that young people go to the doctor mainly when they have a problem – 70%, while 22% go to preventive or regular general check-ups. 5% of young people had never been to a doctor. When it comes to cigarette and alcohol consumption, young people have a more negative attitude towards smoking than towards alcohol consumption. There are 21% of active smokers and 19% of young people smoke occasionally, while 60% of young people do not smoke cigarettes (55% have never smoked and 5% have quit smoking). On the other hand, 30% of young people do not consume alcohol (29% of young people never consume and 1% have quit drinking), 29% rarely consume it, 36% do consume it when they go out with friends and 5% consume it several times a week (4%) or each day (1%). Sedatives are not used by 92% of young people and 4% use them occasionally or several times a week. The use of sedatives increases with age. Among young people using alcohol or sedatives, men are more likely to use alcohol and women are more likely to use sedatives. In terms of narcotics and drugs, the largest percentage of young people have used or use marijuana (9%). Chemical drugs, ecstasy and speed have been used or are used by 1% of young people, and 4% said that they have used or are using sedatives. According to 76% of respondents, psychoactive substances are easy or very easy to obtain. The main reason why young people experiment with psychoactive substances is the influence of the surroundings with 66% and curiosity with 30% (Chart 5.2).

⁷⁹ Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia, CeSID, 2019

Chart 5.2 What is the main reason for young people experimenting with psychoactive substances? Comparison of 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019, in %



Source: Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia, prepared by CeSID, 2019, p. 48.

The main reason why young people experiment with psychoactive substances is the influence of the surroundings, since over 60% of young people in the period from 2016 to 2019 cited the influence of the surroundings as the main reason for experimenting with psychoactive substances. Curiosity is in second place, it was cited by over 30% of young people in the last three research cycles, while in 2016 this reason was cited by 43% of respondents. A total of 2% of respondents in 2019 cited dissatisfaction with life (family and financial problems, depression) as the main reason, while in previous years this answer was less frequent (1%).

67% of young people think that they have the appropriate body weight. A total of 20% of young people assess themselves as overweight and 11% as underweight, while 6% cannot assess their body weight. Women are more likely, above the average, to think they are overweight, while the same applies to men thinking they are underweight.

The *Eurostat Youth health field*⁸⁰ contains data on health problems and long-standing illnesses, self-perceived limitations in usual activities due to health problem, cigarette consumption, psychological distress and obesity. The data provided for Serbia include only health problems and long-standing illnesses and self-perceived limitations in usual activities.

⁸⁰ available at <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>, Chapter: Population and Social conditions/ Youth

According to Eurostat data for 2018 available for 35 countries based on the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC)⁸¹, 17% of young people aged 16-29 in the EU-27 have a long-standing illness or health problem, while this number in Serbia is only 3.6%. The highest percentage is in Estonia with 25.2%, Norway with 24.6%, Finland with 24.3%, the United Kingdom with 23.3% and Germany with 21.8%. On the other hand, young people in North Macedonia have the least health problems with 1.6%, followed by Romania with 2.1%, Italy with 2.7%, Serbia and Greece with 3.6% and Bulgaria with 3.8%. Data for Serbia exist from 2013 and show that the percentage varies between 3.1% (2014) to 5.3% (2017). Data for Montenegro also exist from 2013, but only until 2017, when there were 2.6% of young people with long-standing illnesses and health problems. In the same year, the percentage in North Macedonia was 1.4%, and 5.3% in Serbia. The EU-27 average in 2017 was 17.3%.

There are three groups of data in Eurostat for the **degree of limitation in daily activities due to illness**: some limitation due to illness, severe limitation or no limitations due to illness. Data are available for 35 countries for young people aged 16-29. In 2018, 91.8% of young people in the EU-27 assessed that they have no limitations, while 6.4% had some and 1.8% had severe limitations due to illness. The situation in Serbia is better because 97.6% of young people assessed that they have no limitations due to illness, 1.8% had some and 0.6% of young people had severe limitations. The country with the highest percentage of young people who assess that they have no limitations due to illness is in North Macedonia with 98.9%, followed by Serbia with 97.6%, Malta with 96.9%, Greece with 96.7% and Bulgaria with 96.3% and the lowest percentage is in Finland with 81.2%, Estonia with 81.3%, Denmark with 82.5%, Slovenia with 82.6% and the Netherlands with 83.6%. The last data from Montenegro are from 2017 when there was 96.1% of young people with no limitations due to illness, North Macedonia had 98.8% that year, Serbia had 96.5%, Croatia had 93.8% and the EU-27 had 92%. The country with the highest percentage of young people with severe limitations in usual activities due to illness is the United Kingdom with 5.8%, followed by Estonia with 4.5%, Luxembourg with 3%, Austria with 2.9%, the Netherlands and Belgium with 2.7% while the lowest percentage is in Malta with 0.5%, Serbia and Spain with 0.6%, North Macedonia with 0.7% and Bulgaria and the Czech Republic with 0.8%.

In Serbia, 3.6% of young people aged 16-29 had a long-standing illness or health problems in 2018 which is 13.4 p.p. less than the EU-27 average (17%) and 1.1 p.p. less than in 2014. In comparison to the selected countries, 9 countries in 2018 had a higher percentage of young people with long-standing illness than Serbia, in Greece the percentage is the same and it is lower in Romania, North Macedonia and Montenegro. The country with the highest number of young people with a long-standing illness is Germany with 21.8%, and the country with the lowest number is North Macedonia (1.6%). In comparison to the selected countries, Serbia has the lowest percentage of young people with severe limitations due to illness with 0.6%. The highest percentage is in Austria at 2.9%, while the percentage in the EU-27 is 1.8%. 97.6% of young people in Serbia have no limitations due to illness, which is the highest percentage after North Macedonia (98.9%), while the percentage in the EU-27 is 91.8%. The data indicate a good perception of health by young people in Serbia and a small percentage of young people with severe limitations due to illness.

⁸¹ European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC)

Data for the smoking of cigarettes are given for young people aged 15-29 for 2014 for 30 countries, not including Serbia. 19.3% of young people of this age smoke cigarettes daily. The percentage is the highest in Hungary at 30.2%, Austria at 29.9%, Cyprus at 27.2%, Bulgaria at 27% and France at 25.4%. Daily smoking of cigarettes is the lowest among young people from Norway at 6.1%, Sweden at 7.3%, Iceland at 8.6%, Denmark at 10.3% and Finland at 13.7%.

For obesity in young people aged 18-29, Eurostat contains data for 2014 for 31 countries, not including Serbia. There are 6.6% obese young people in the EU-27. The largest percentage is in Ireland with 17.3%, Malta with 15.3%, the United Kingdom with 12.5%, Iceland with 11% and Finland with 9.8%. The lowest percentage of obese youth is in Romania with 2.3%, Lithuania and Italy with 3.8%, Slovakia with 4.5% and Croatia with 4.6%.

For the **mental health of young people**, there are data for young people aged 15-29 for only 14 countries, not including Serbia or the EU average. Data available are from 2008 and refer to the presence of psychological distress of young people. Psychological distress is most often faced by young people in Bulgaria with 83.9%, Cyprus with 82.1%, Austria with 82%, Spain with 81.8% and Slovakia with 81.7% and the least often in Turkey with 62.4%. Men are more likely to be in psychological distress, so the percentage of men is higher than women's in 12 countries. The exceptions are Bulgaria, which has a higher percentage of women suffering from psychological distress, and Slovakia, where there is no difference between sexes.

To consider the impact of the COVID-19 disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus on youth in the field of education, employment, mental health and activism, an international survey⁸² was conducted from 21 April to 21 May 2020 by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in cooperation with the UN Major Group for Children and Youth, UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, Council of Europe, European Youth Forum, European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa and the International Association of Students in Economic and Commercial Sciences (AIESEC). This online survey in 23 languages covered 12,605 people aged 18-34 from 112 countries. The main analysis took into account only data for young people aged 18-29. There were 11,130 respondents of this age, of which 53.5% were women and 46.5% were men, 7,354 young people were from the age group 18-24, and 3,776 were from the age group 25-29. Although this research covered several fields of importance for young people and not only health, we will present the main results of all of them because they directly or indirectly affect the health of young people. The main results of the research indicate the high impact of COVID-19 on the lives of young people. Observed by segments, 17% of young people are likely to be

Eurostat does not contain data on obesity and mental health for Serbia. In 2018, there were 6.6% of young people aged 18-29 in the EU-27 who were obese. Among the selected countries for which data are available, the largest percentage of the obese is in Germany (8%), Austria and France (7.8%), Slovenia (6.4%) and Turkey (5.8%), and the lowest is in Romania (2.3%).

Psychological distress of young people aged 15-29 in the selected countries was the most prominent in Bulgaria (83.9), Hungary (82%), Greece (82%), Slovenia (80.7%) and Romania (75.4%) and it was the least prominent in Turkey (62.4%).

⁸² Youth and Covid-19 impacts on jobs, education, rights and mental well-being, Survey Report 2020 ILO, available at: https://www.decentjobsforyouth.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Youth-and-COVID-19-Survey-Report_English.pdf

affected by anxiety or depression (Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale); among young people who assess their health as poor, there are twice as many those whose work or study is affected by the pandemic; mental health is more at risk in women and young people aged 15-24; 17% of young people stopped working and young workers aged 18-24 were affected the most (23%); 42% of young people say that their incomes have decreased, and 61% of young people say that their productivity has decreased; 13% of young people did not participate in any formal or non-formal educational activities; 44% attended various courses; 65% of young people studied less than before the pandemic, and 60% believe that their studies will be prolonged (51%) or unsuccessful (9%) due to the pandemic; online learning is most prevalent among young people from the most economically developed countries; 24% of young people said that misinformation about the pandemic affected their right to access information; 31% of young people participated in voluntary activities in relation to the pandemic; 27% participated in charitable activities, and 66% were in contact with friends and family in order to exchange experiences about dealing with the pandemic.

6. SOCIAL INCLUSION

In the *Law on Youth* (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, no. 50/11)⁸³, one of the main principles concerns equal opportunities: “Young people shall be entitled to equal opportunities and participation in all spheres of life in accordance with their own choices and abilities”. In line with that, it is necessary to provide additional support to young people at risk of social exclusion with the aim of their equal inclusion in social processes in accordance with their abilities and interests. Supporting young people at risk of social exclusion is a cross-sectoral task involving youth, health, education, social protection and employment institutions. The key strategic documents in this field refer to the entire population, with young people sometimes being singled out as a special target group in certain measures/activities. In addition to the already presented documents in the fields of education, employment and health, the main strategic documents in the field of social protection and gender equality are also important: *National Gender Equality Strategy 2016-2020* (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, no. 4/16), *Strategy for Improving the Position of Persons with Disabilities in the Republic of Serbia 2020-2024 with the Action Plan for its implementation for 2020 and 2021* (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, no. 44/20), *Strategy for Social Inclusion of Roma Men and Women in the Republic of Serbia 2016-2025* (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, no. 26/16) with the accompanying action plans, etc. In addition to the NYS, as the only comprehensive strategy dealing with young people and having a special strategic goal related to social inclusion, the *Strategy for Prevention and Protection of Children from Violence 2020-2023 with the action plan for its implementation* (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, no. 80/20) was also adopted and it refers directly to children and youth.

For the implementation of the NYS’s strategic goal of Support to social inclusion of young people at risk of social exclusion, the following three specific goals are envisaged with measures, activities and expected results: The necessary system pre-conditions are created for youth at risk of social exclusion to be adequately recognised and supported in their inclusion in the economic, social and cultural currents; Increased availability and scope of activities designed to prevent social exclusion of young people at risk and Increased coverage and inclusion in available programmes of youth at risk of social exclusion who are beneficiaries of local services and support programmes.

⁸³ Law on Youth “Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, no. 50/11, p. 2.

With the aim of monitoring the implementation of the *Europe 2020 Strategy* in the field of social inclusion and poverty reduction, a new indicator was created: Population at risk of poverty or social exclusion. This indicator is used to monitor the implementation of the Strategy in the field of poverty and social exclusion. This indicator is a combination of three indicators – at-risk-of-poverty rate, severe material deprivation rate and low labour intensity rate.

In Serbia in 2018, the absolute poverty line was at 12,286 dinars per month per consumption unit⁸⁴, and 7.1% of the population consumed less than this amount (7% of men and 7.2% of women), which is an improvement of 0.5 p.p. compared to 2014 when it amounted to 7.6%. However, it is still 1.7 p.p. better compared to 2008 when the poverty rate in Serbia was 8.8%. There are large regional differences, so the highest poverty rate is in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia with 11.9%, and the lowest is in the Belgrade region with 3.9%. In urban areas, the rate is 4.8%, and in other areas, it is as much as 10.4%. Observed by the level of education, persons with incomplete primary school have the highest poverty rate at 21.3%. Observed by age, young people aged 19-24 have the highest poverty rate at 8.6%. The relative poverty rate in 2018 was 14.6%, which is 0.3 p.p. better than in 2014, and 0.2 p.p. worse compared to 2008 when it was 14.4%.

In December 2018, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the *Third National Report on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2014-2017*.⁸⁵ The report includes: an overview of the legal, strategic and institutional framework relevant to the processes of social inclusion and poverty reduction, analysis of the current situation in relevant areas, overview of implemented measures and programmes, conclusions and main directions of action for the upcoming period. The report states that according to the SILC (2016)⁸⁶, the at-risk-of-poverty rate in Serbia was 25.5% and remained practically unchanged during the reporting period, and that it increased slightly compared to the previous period when, according to the SILC (2013), it amounted to 24.5%. According to the same survey, 15.7% of the population in Serbia in 2016 was at permanent risk of poverty, which is higher than in most EU countries, except in Romania (20.2%). Children (up to 18 years of age) are more at risk of poverty (30%) compared to other age groups. The risk of poverty is significantly higher in rural areas and among the population with lower levels of education.

According to the results of the Survey on Income and Living Conditions⁸⁷, the at-risk-of-poverty rate in Serbia in 2019 was 23.2% (22.7% for men, 23.6% for women) and compared to 2018 it is 1.1 p.p. lower. The risk of poverty or social exclusion rate was 31.7%, and compared to 2018 it is 2.6 p.p. lower. Children up to the age of 18 were the most exposed to the risk of poverty (28.9%), along with young people aged 18 to 24 (25.6%). The at-risk-of-poverty threshold (monthly average) in 2019 was 19,381 dinars, while in 2016 it was 14,680 dinars. The at-risk-of-poverty threshold for a four-member household with two adults and two children up to the age of 14 amounted to 40,700 dinars. According to the results of the *Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia*⁸⁸, most

⁸⁴ Assessment of Absolute Poverty in Serbia in 2018, available at

http://sociojalnouljucivanje.gov.rs/wpcontent/uploads/2019/10/Ocena_apsolutnog_siromastva_u_2018_cir.pdf

⁸⁵ Third National Report on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction in the Republic of Serbia 2014–2017,

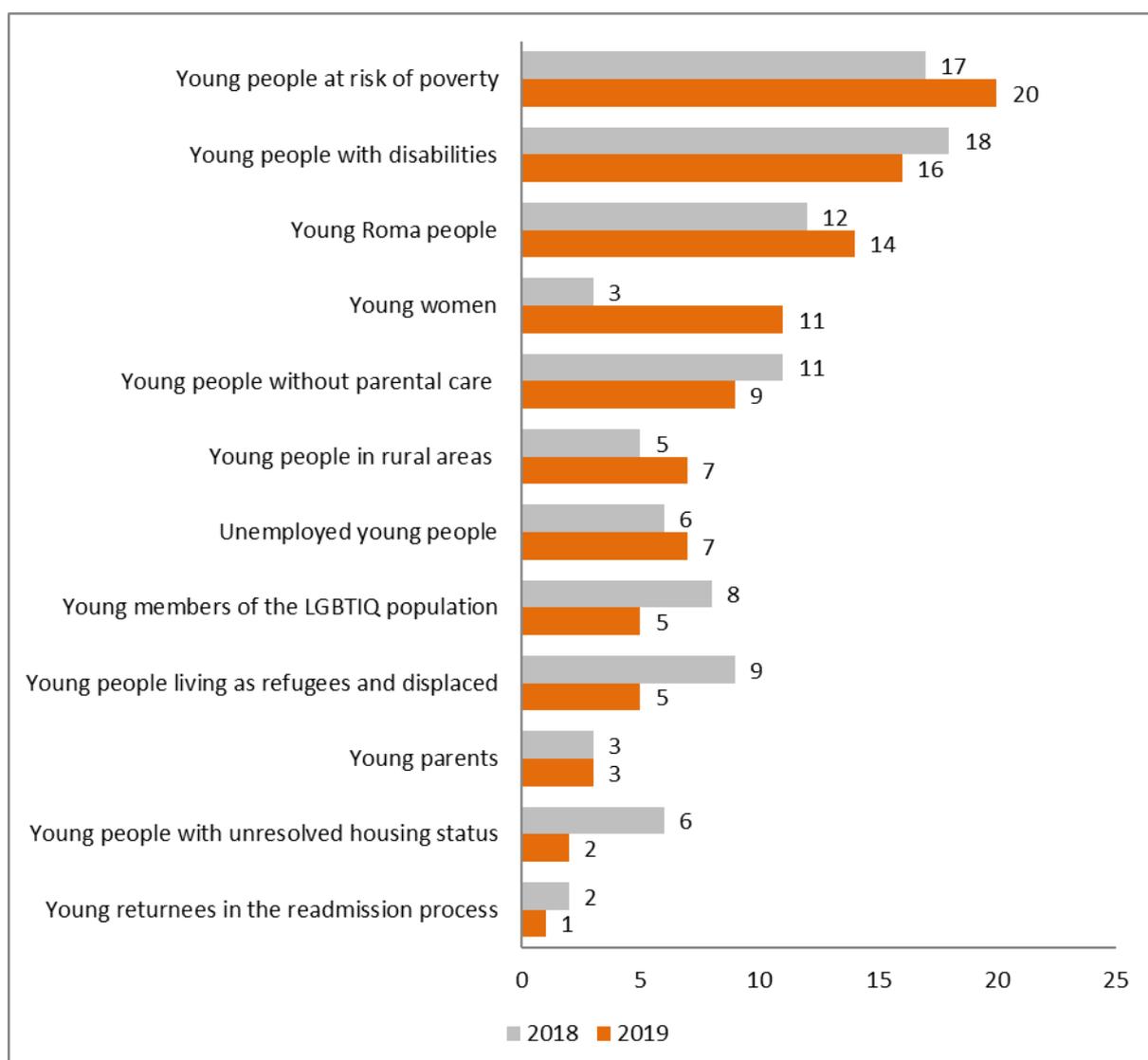
available at http://sociojalnouljucivanje.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Treci_nacionalni_izvestaj_o_sociojalnom_ukljucivanju_i_smanjenju_siromastva_2014%E2%80%932017.pdf

⁸⁶ Third National Report on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction in the Republic of Serbia 2014-2017, SILC (Survey on Income and Living Conditions) p. 24.

⁸⁷ Survey on Income and Living Conditions, SORS, number 283 - year LXX, 15/10/2020.

young people in Serbia do not feel threatened or discriminated against – 88% in 2019, 96% in 2018, 91% in 2017 and 92% in 2016, while 7% of respondents in 2019 feel discriminated against, 4% did in 2018, 9% in 2017 and 8% in 2016. Respondents believe that young people at risk of poverty, young people with disabilities and young Roma people are exposed to discrimination the most. The comparison of findings from 2018 and 2019 shows that the percentage of young people who recognize young women as a vulnerable social group is increasing (by 9 p.p), but also shows the decline of the percentage of young people who believe that young people living as refugees or displaced and young people with unresolved housing issues (by 4 p.p.) and young members of the LGBTI population (by 3 p.p.) are exposed to discrimination the most. Chart 6.1 shows data on the exposure of young people from vulnerable groups to discrimination.

Chart 6.1 - Which of the most vulnerable groups of young people are exposed to discrimination in society the most, comparison of 2018 and 2019, in %



Source: *Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia*, CeSID, 2019, p. 61

⁸⁸ Source: *Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia*, CeSID, 2019, p. 61

Serbia's full commitment to improving youth networking in the region has resulted in the signing of the Agreement on the Establishment of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office in the Western Balkans⁸⁹, which represents a sustainable and efficient mechanism for youth cooperation in the Western Balkans based on mobility, learning about other cultures, mutual understanding and tolerance through the empowerment of young people for joint activities and peer learning.

At the European level, in addition to the EU strategy Europe 2020: A Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth, there is also the important Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2016-2021 adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in March 2016, and officially in force since the High-Level Conference organized in Sofia in April 2016. The Strategy identifies the main challenges regarding the rights of the child in Europe and identifies five priority areas and measures to overcome these challenges: equal opportunities for all children, participation, a life free from violence, child-friendly justice, rights of the child in the digital environment.

In relation to social inclusion, the Eurostat section on youth contains various data related to the risk of poverty and social exclusion. Data are available for 34 countries.

In the EU-27 in 2018, the risk of poverty or social exclusion rate was 26.2% for young people aged 16-29 (27.3% women and 25.2% men). In Serbia, it was 35.7% (34.7% women and 36.5% men). The highest risk rate is in North Macedonia with 44.4%, Turkey with 40.9%, Greece with 40.2%, Denmark with 35.8% and Serbia with 35.7%. The lowest risk of poverty or social exclusion rate is in the Czech Republic with 11.6%, Malta with 13.1%, Slovenia with 14.7%, Switzerland with 16.4% and Slovakia with 17%. Observed by sex, women are more exposed to the risk of poverty or social exclusion in 22 countries, while men are more exposed in 11 countries (including Serbia). There are no gender differences in Greece. The largest gender gap is in Spain at 6.7% (women 37.2% and men 30.5%).

In 2018, the at-risk-of-poverty rate for young people aged 16-29 in Serbia was 26% and in the EU-27 it was 20.5%. Of the selected countries, only in Romania and Turkey (26.1%) this rate is lower than in Serbia. Men are at a higher risk of poverty in six countries (including Serbia). The risk of poverty or social exclusion rate was 35.7% in Serbia and 26.2% in the EU-27. Young people in Greece, North Macedonia and Turkey are the only of the selected countries to have a higher risk of poverty or social exclusion rate than young people in Serbia. The at-risk-of-poverty rate for young people from Serbia who are living with their parents is 25.7% and is higher than in all selected countries and higher than the EU-27 rate which stands at 17.8%. The risk of poverty or social exclusion rate for young people from Serbia who are living with their parents is 35.7% and it is lower only than in North Macedonia (44.5%) and Romania (38.8%). The EU-27 average is 24.1%. Serbia has 7.1% of in-work young people who are at risk of poverty, which is better than in 8 selected countries and worse than in Hungary, Slovenia, France and Croatia. The lowest risk of poverty of in-work young people is in Croatia (3.3%) and the highest is in Romania (16.2%). In the EU-27 it is 10.4%, which is a 3.3% higher risk than in Serbia.

⁸⁹ Agreement on the Establishment of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office in the Western Balkans, "Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia – International Treaties", no. 4/17.

In 2018, the at-risk-of-poverty rate for young people aged 16-29 in the EU-27 was 20.5% (men 19.4% and women 21.6%), and for Serbia it was 26% (men 26.7% and women 25.2%). The highest at-risk-of-poverty rate among the 34 countries for which the data are available for young people is in Norway with 31.3%, Denmark with 29.8%, Spain with 28.3% Romania and Greece with 24.8%. The lowest rate is for young people in the Czech Republic with 8.9%, Malta with 10.8%, Slovenia with 11.6%, Switzerland with 12.2% and Slovakia with 13.4%. Observed by sex, the at-risk-of-poverty rate is higher for men than for women in 8 countries (Bulgaria, France, Latvia, Sweden, Switzerland, Norway, North Macedonia and Serbia), and lower in 26 countries. The largest gender gap is in Spain at 5.7% (women 25.5% and men 31.2%).

The risk of poverty or social exclusion rate for young people living with their parents in the EU-27 was 24.1% in 2018, and in Serbia, it was 35.6%. The highest risk rate out of the 35 countries for which data exist is in North Macedonia with 44.5%, Greece with 38.8%, Serbia with 35.6% and Spain and Romania with 33.1%. The lowest rate is in the Czech Republic with 10.8%, Slovenia with 11.5%, Denmark with 12%, Norway with 12.7% and Austria with 13.5%. The risk rate in Serbia decreased by 9.6% compared to 2013, when it was 45.2%.

In the EU-27 in 2018, the at-risk-of-poverty rate for in-work youth was 10.4% (10.4% men and 10.5% women), and in Serbia, it was 7.1% (9.9% men and 3.4 % women). Of the 34 countries for which data are available, the highest at-risk-of-poverty rate of employed young people is in Denmark with 18.4%, Spain with 16.3%, Romania with 16.2%, Norway with 16.1% and Germany with 13.5%, and the lowest is in the Czech Republic with 2.6%, Malta with 2.9%, Finland with 3.1%, Croatia with 3.3% and Slovakia with 3.6%. Observed by sex, young men and women in the Netherlands have identical rates of 7.2%, and the largest gap is among young people is in Serbia at 6.5%, Germany at 5.5%, Poland at 4.3%, Macedonia at 3.7% and Slovenia and Romania at 3.6%. Observed by sex, the at-risk-of-poverty rate for in-work women is higher than for men in 17 countries and it is higher for men in 16 countries.

The at-risk-of-poverty rate for young people living with their parents in the EU-27 in 2018 was 17.8%, while it was higher in Serbia and amounted to 25.7%. The highest rate was in Spain with 26.7%, Serbia with 25.7%, North Macedonia with 25.4%, Greece with 23.9% and Romania with 23.6%. The lowest rate was in Denmark with 5.5%, the Czech Republic with 8%, Slovenia with 8.4%, Switzerland with 8.8% and Norway with 9.2%. The risk rate in Serbia decreased by 0.5 p.p. compared to 2013, when it was 26.2%.

II CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the data we analysed in detail in this paper for six chapters: demographic trends, education, labour market, active participation in society, health and social inclusion, we highlighted the main findings and gave recommendations for further work in these fields in order to improve the situation of young people.

1. DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS – According to the results of the 2011 Census, there were a total of 7,186,862 people in Serbia, of which 1,419,328 (19.7%) were young people aged 15-30, while the estimated population in Serbia in 2019 was 6,945,235, of which 1,237,628 (17.8%) were young people, which means that the number of young people in Serbia decreased by 1.9 p.p. in the last nine years. The highest number of young people aged 15-30 in 2019 lived in the region of Šumadija and Western Serbia – 27.5%, and the lowest number lived in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia – 22.2%. According to Eurostat data for 2019 for in 46 countries, the share of young people (aged 15-29) in the total population for

the EU-27 is 16.6%, while in 2011 it was 18.1%. In Serbia, the average share of young people in the total population in 2019 is at the level of the of EU countries average, i.e. 16.6%, and in 2011 it was 18.6%, which means that it dropped by 2 p.p. In the period from 2010 to 2019, the number of people in Serbia decreased by 364,607 only based on the negative natural population growth. The process of demographic ageing of the population is manifested by a low and constantly decreasing share of young people and a high and continuously growing share of the elderly in the total population. According to the results of the 2011 Census, over 150,000 citizens of the Republic of Serbia moved abroad, their average age is 28.7, and 19% of them have a college or university degree. The Organization for European Cooperation and Development (OECD) estimates that 598,200 people have emigrated from Serbia in the last 20 years, and this number is only for people who immigrated to the countries members of this organization. The average annual number of emigrants in the period from 2005 to 2014 was 31,000. Migration management has become one of the most prominent issues of national, regional and global policies.

Demographic data indicate a continuous decline in the number of young people in Serbia in the total population, which, along with the process of demographic ageing, represents a great challenge for the future of Serbia and requires an additional investment of the state in youth in order to create conditions for a better life in the country, especially in the field of education and employment and housing. Many strategic documents adopted by the Government of the Republic of Serbia in the last two years are related to encouraging births, facilitated housing, incentives for young people's entrepreneurship and creating conditions for reducing youth emigration, and it is expected that their successful implementation will improve demographic trends in Serbia.

2. EDUCATION – According to the results of the 2011 Census, out of 1,322,021 young people aged 15-29, most had completed secondary education as the highest educational attainment with 56.6%, followed by primary education with 28.4%, while the share of people with college and higher education in this age group was 11.9%. There were 2.9% of young people without educational attainment or with incomplete primary education. There are more young people with tertiary education in urban areas, while in other areas there are more young people with completed primary education and lower educational attainment. Men are the majority in all categories except for college and higher education. The net primary school intake rate in 2019 was 93.9%, and the primary school completion rate was 97.1%, while the primary school dropout rate was 0.6%. The coverage with secondary education was 87.4%, the completion rate of secondary education was 87%, the dropout rate in secondary education was 1.1%. The data indicate high rates of enrollment and completion of pre-university education, but also large inequalities between the general population and vulnerable groups of children (Roma people, the poor, people with disabilities, etc.). According to Eurostat data for 2019 available for 35 countries, the dropout rate of young people (18-24) in the EU-27 was 10.2% (11.9% men and 8.4% women) and in Serbia, it was 6.6% (6.5% men and 6.7% women). Men have a higher dropout rate in 31 countries, and women only in four: Serbia is among them. In the EU-27 in 2019, 40.3% of persons aged 30-34 had tertiary education, with 10.5% more women than men (45.6% women and 35.1% men). In Serbia in 2019, 33.5% of persons aged 30-34 had tertiary education, with 13.5% more women than men (40.4% women and 26.9% men). In the Strategy for Education Development in Serbia 2020 it is envisaged that the share of people aged 30-34 with higher education from 2020 will be at least 35%, and most likely 38.5%. The data show that the minimum desired value of 35% of people with higher education in 2020 may be achieved because the average annual increase in Serbia is 1.4 p.p. but the 40% Europe 2020 target will almost certainly not be achieved. Of the 35 countries for which data are available, 22 countries (63%) have already reached the

target value of 40% of the population with higher education in 2019, which is encouraging. However, this value was achieved by only 12 countries for the male population, and 27 for the female population, including Serbia. In the EU-27 countries in 2019, 83.5% of young people aged 20-24 had completed secondary school (81% of men and 86.2% of women). In Serbia, this percentage is much higher and amounts to 92.5% (92.7% of men and 92.4% of women). The participation rate of adults in Serbia in some form of formal or informal education or training (Adult Education Survey from 2016) is 19.8%, which is slightly more than in 2011 (16.5%), but significantly below the average of EU member states (45.1%). *Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia* shows that in 2019, 27% of young people aged 15-30 participated in non-formal education. In the last four years, that percentage has ranged from 21% to 29%.

In order to improve the education system in Serbia, it is necessary to reduce the gap in the rate of enrollment and completion of pre-university education between the general population and vulnerable groups of children/young people and increase the percentage of people with higher education, especially among men and vulnerable groups, primarily the Roma people. It is also important to work on increasing the coverage of young people with non-formal education. Since the development of a new *Strategy for Education Development in Serbia until 2027* is underway, it could also contain these measures.

3. LABOUR MARKET – According to the SORS data, the unemployment rate of young people aged 15-30 in 2019 was 20.4%, which is an improvement of 15.2% compared to 2014. The inactivity rate of young people was 51.5%, i.e. 1% better than in 2014. The rate of young people who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET) for the same age group was 19.3% in 2019, i.e. it has reduced by 6.4% compared to 2014. *Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia* shows that the number of young people who want to start their own independent business is growing, since there was 33% of them in 2016, and 46% in 2019. However, only 4% of young people started a private business in 2019. According to Eurostat data for 2019, the unemployment rate of young people (15-29) is 11.9% in the EU-27 (12% for men and 11.8% for women) and 21.5% in Serbia (20.8% for men and 22.5% for women). In the period 2011-2019, Serbia had the largest decrease in the youth unemployment rate, i.e. the unemployment rate was reduced by 20.9 p.p. In the EU-27 in 2019, there were 3.4% of long-term unemployed young people (3.6% of men and 3.2% of women), while this number in Serbia was 8.7% (8.3% of men and 9.3% of women). In the period 2011-2019, Serbia had the greatest progress in terms of long-term youth unemployment and it amounts to 18.5 percentage points. In the EU-27, 35.5% of young people (34.3% of men and 36.9% of women) have temporary employment, while this number in Serbia is 44.6% (45% of men and 44.2% of women). In the EU-27 in 2019, 22.4% of young people work part-time (16.1% men and 29.8% women), while this percentage in Serbia is 9.4% (9% men and 10% women), i.e., the gender gap is far smaller than the EU average. In the EU-27 in 2019, 2,019,600 young people aged 15-29 were self-employed. 66.5% were men and 37.6% were women, while there are 39,800 self-employed young people in Serbia, 76.9% men and 23.1% women.

The issue of youth employment is defined as the most important issue for young people in Serbia and is on the list of priorities of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, which implements systemic measures to improve the situation in this area in cooperation with the business and non-governmental sector, with noticeable results. In the last ten years, Serbia has had the biggest decrease in the youth unemployment rate in Europe. However, the youth unemployment rate in 2019 (20.4%) is twice as high as the unemployment rate of the population aged 15 and over (10.4%), so a lot more effort is still needed to improve the

position of young people in the labour market, with special focus on (self-)employability of women. Taking into account the consequences of COVID-19 on the education and employment of young people, these efforts must be intensified in order not to lose the positive results achieved in this field. In addition to the NYS, it is also important that other strategic documents related to employment promotion have a special focus on young people, as is the case with the *Employment Action Plan for 2020*.

4. ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY – Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia shows that very few young people belong to an organization. Thus, in 2019, only 8% of young people were members of a cultural and artistic society, 7% of an association, 9 % of a political party, and 18% of a sports club. And young people are usually inactive members, except when it comes to sports clubs. Only 13% of young people are interested in active participation in sociopolitical events, while 63% are not interested. In 51% of cases, young people are not even interested in being informed about sociopolitical events in the country, while 20% of young people are interested or very interested. Over half of young people would not be willing to engage in the work of a body that initiates or makes decisions relevant to young people. The research data indicate a low level of participation of young people in sociopolitical events, in the work of associations, cultural and artistic societies, political parties, as well as poor participation in cultural and artistic events and cultural and artistic creative activities. Young people show the most activism when it comes to recreational sports. 33% of young people participated in volunteering activities in 2019 and that number is increasing compared to the previous three years. 95% of young people had family support for volunteering and this support is also increasing compared to previous years. There is no data for Serbia in Eurostat when it comes to participation and volunteering of young people. In the EU-27, almost one in three young people (31.7%) participated in voluntary activities (29.9% of men and 33.6% of women). In the EU-27, 17.6% of young people aged 16-29 see their family and 41.7% see their friends every day. 52.7% of young people see their family and 81.5% see their friends every day or at least once a week. According to Eurostat data for 33 countries in 2015, 85.2% of young people in the EU-27 participated in cultural and sports events (82.5% in cultural and 45.1% in sports) in the last year, and this number in Serbia is 69.3% (56.8% in cultural and 43.3% in sports events). 7.2% of young people from the EU-27 and Serbia participate in artistic activities every day. According to Eurostat data for 2019 for 33 countries, 94% of young people aged 16-29 used the internet every day in the EU-27 (no difference between sexes), and this number in Serbia was 96% (97% for men and 94% for women). In the last 12 months, 57% of young people in the EU-27 used the internet for interaction with public authorities, and 33% did the same in Serbia, while 12% of young people in the EU-27 (13% men and 12% women) used it to participate in public debates, consultations, voting, petitions, and 4% did the same in Serbia (no difference between sexes). In 2019, 15% of young people aged 16-29 in the EU-27 (16% men and 13% women) and 10% in Serbia (11% men and 9% women) expressed their opinions on civil and political issues on websites (blogs, social networks, etc.). 29% of young people in the EU-27 were looking for a job on the internet in 2019 (28% of men and 30% of women), and in Serbia, this number was 22% (16% of men and 27% of women). The internet was used for non-formal education through online courses in the EU-27 by 13% of young people (13% of men and 12% of women) and in Serbia by 11% (men 9% and women 14%). 21% of young people in the EU-27 (22% of men and 20% of women) and 13% in Serbia (15% of men and 12% of women) used the internet for selling goods and services. Internet banking in the EU-27 was used by 59% (58% of men and 59% of women), while this percentage in Serbia was only 18% (19% of men and 17% of women).

Taking into account the continuous increase in the use of the internet in everyday life and the low participation of young people in sociopolitical life and social engagement in general, it is necessary to communicate more with young people through social media and inform them in a timely manner about the offered opportunities for quality leisure time, learning and participating in the decision-making processes for the areas of their interest. The new action plan for the implementation of the NYS should pay special attention to the more active participation of young people in society. In order to further develop youth volunteering, the EU has developed the European Solidarity Corps, where young people from Serbia can participate by volunteering in one of the programme countries in Europe, and for the full use of this programme, it is important for Serbia to join it in full capacity. In times of crisis, such as the 2014 floods and the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of active participation in society and volunteering activities becomes even more pronounced. It is necessary to continue using the UNICEF U-Report as a useful tool for more active participation of young people in society, reaching their views and suggestions on issues of their interest, timely and objective dissemination of information to young people on all topics including COVID-19, online training and volunteering.

5. HEALTH – In the national health survey conducted in 2013 by the Ministry of Health and the Institute of Public Health "Dr Milan Jovanović Batut", 57.8% of the population assessed their health as good, 64.4% of men and 51.5% of women. 4.1% of the population has symptoms of depression, 5.3% of women and 2.9% of men. 0.3% of people in the age group 15-24 and 1.5% in the age group 25-34 have symptoms of depression. 21.2% of the population was in the normal weight category, while 3.2% were underweight. Between the two national surveys (2006 and 2013), the percentage of obese people in Serbia increased from 17.3% to 21.2%. Citizens of Serbia sit for an average of 5 hours a day, and young people aged 15-24 sit for 5.5 hours. Fitness, sports or recreation were practised at least three times a week by 8.8% of the population – 12.1% of men and 5.7% of women. 11.3% of the population spends at least 90 minutes a week in recreation, 15.9% of men and 5.3% of women. According to the results of the Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia, 29% of young people in 2019 assessed their health as very good and 50% as good. Only 1% of young people assess their health as poor. Sedatives are not used by 92% of young people, 60% do not smoke, and 30% of young people do not use alcohol. 9% of young people used marijuana, and 1% of young people used chemical drugs ecstasy and speed, while 4% said that they have used sedatives. Among young people using alcohol or sedatives, men are more likely to use alcohol and women are more likely to use sedatives. Young people have a more negative attitude towards smoking than towards alcohol consumption. Two in three assess themselves as having the appropriate body weight, 20% assess themselves as overweight (more women than men), and 11% assess themselves as underweight (more men than women). The data show that practising sports and recreation is more prevalent among men. In the EU-27 in 2014, there were 6.6% of obese young people aged 18-29, while data for Serbia were not available in Eurostat. In 2018, 17% of young people aged 16-29 in the EU-27 had a long-standing illness or health problem, while this number in Serbia is only 3.6%. In the EU-27 in 2018, 91.8% of young people assessed that they have no limitations in everyday life due to illness, while 6.4% had some and 1.8% had severe limitations due to illness. The situation in Serbia is better because 97.6% of young people assessed that they have no limitations due to illness, 1.8% had some and 0.6% of young people had severe limitations. The international research of the impact of COVID-19 on youth in the fields of education, employment, mental health and activism conducted from 21 April to 21 May 2020 in 112 countries analysed data for 11,130 young people aged 18-29. The main results of the research indicate a high impact of COVID-19 on the lives of young

people. Anxiety or depression affects 17% of young people and mental health is more at risk among women and young people aged 15-24. Among young people assessing their health as poor, there are twice as many those whose work or studies were affected by the pandemic.

In order to improve the health of young people, it is necessary to put more efforts into creating conditions for the development of healthy lifestyles, dissemination of information about the importance of avoiding health risks and protecting the environment. It is important to develop innovative and youth-friendly and accessible risk behaviour prevention programmes with full respect for privacy, as well as programmes aimed at developing awareness of the harmfulness of alcohol consumption and the importance of sports and recreation for health. Since sport promotes healthy lifestyles and moderate physical activity is important for health and weight control, the World Health Organization recommends 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity every day. It is important that playing sports, especially for recreational purposes, is available to all young people, regardless of their financial status and place of residence. It is necessary to have regular monitoring of youth health indicators so that all data can be available in the Eurostat database, especially the data related to the mental health of young people. Continuous monitoring of the implementation of the adopted strategic documents is necessary in order to make adequate decisions on priority activities where more investment is needed. Adoption of the Mental Health Protection Programme in the Republic of Serbia 2019-2026 with the action plan states the general objective: Improved mental health care system for the implementation of prevention, treatment and provision of comprehensive, integrated services, in line with international best practice.

6. SOCIAL INCLUSION – According to the data from the *Survey on Income and Living Conditions* (SILC 2016), the at-risk-of-poverty rate in Serbia was 25.5%, and 15.7% of the population was at permanent risk of poverty, which is higher than in most EU countries. Children are more at risk of poverty (30%) compared to other age groups. The risk of poverty is significantly higher in rural areas and among the population with lower levels of education. According to the results of the *Survey on Income and Living Conditions* (SILC 2019), the at-risk-of-poverty rate in Serbia was 23.2% and the risk of poverty or social exclusion rate was 31.7%, which is an improvement compared to 2016. However, children and young people up to the age of 24 are still the most exposed to the risk of poverty. According to the results of the *Research on the Situation and Needs of Young People in the Republic of Serbia in 2019*, 7% of young people feel discriminated against, and young people believe that young people at risk of poverty, young people with disabilities and young Roma people are exposed to discrimination the most. The comparison of the findings from 2018 and 2019 shows that the percentage of young people who recognize young women as a vulnerable social group is increasing. On the other hand, there is a lower percentage of young people who believe that young people living as refugees or displaced and young people with unresolved housing issues and young members of the LGBTI population are exposed to discrimination the most.

In the EU-27 in 2018, the risk of poverty or social exclusion rate was 26.2% for young people aged 16-29 (27.3% women and 36.5% men), while in Serbia it was 35.7% (34.7% women and 36.5% men). The at-risk-of-poverty rate for young people in the EU-27 was 20.5% (21.6% for women and 19.4% for men) and 26% for Serbia (25.2% for women and 26.7% for men). The risk of poverty or social exclusion rate for young people living with their parents in the EU-27 was 24.1%, and in Serbia, it was 35.6%. The at-risk-of-poverty rate for young people living with their parents in the EU-27 was 17.8%, and in Serbia, it was 25.7%. In the EU-27 in 2018, the at-risk-of-poverty rate for in-work youth was 10.4% (10.5% men and 10.4% women), and in Serbia, it was 7.1% (3.4% men and 9.9% women).

In order to reduce the risk of poverty or social exclusion, it is necessary to provide special support to young people, especially to those in rural areas and those with lower levels of education. To this end, it is necessary to work on creating the conditions for decent work and greater (self-)employability of young people. To reduce discrimination, increase social cohesion and provide equal opportunities to all young people, it is important to continuously work on the social inclusion of young people from vulnerable groups, reducing and overcoming prejudices, both through youth and sports activities.

Based on a comprehensive analysis of data on relevant indicators of the position of young people in Serbia and comparisons with data on young people from other European countries with a special focus on the selected countries (Southeast Europe countries and the EU Member States that are important partners of Serbia in the field of youth policy), the conclusion is that the position of young people in our country ranges from satisfactory and good in some fields, to unfavourable in others. All fields of youth policy require a holistic and innovative intersectoral approach at all levels to further improve the situation of young people, as is the case with other European countries. The MoYS has a key role in this process. In line with the competencies, the MoYS must continue with the proactive and coordinating approach to creating conditions for quality of life of young people in Serbia in cooperation with all youth policy actors and especially with young people, other ministries, civil society, business sector and international partners. The biggest focus should be on improving the employability of young people, especially young people from vulnerable groups, with special emphasis on youth entrepreneurship and increasing the share of women in it, as well as on increasing the activity rate of young people; reducing the risk of poverty or social exclusion rate and more active participation of young people in society and greater involvement in drafting, monitoring and evaluation of public policies. It is necessary to develop integrated services for all young people at the local level while providing safe public spaces for the development of healthy and safe lifestyles, informal education and quality leisure time of young people. All this, together with other measures taken by the Government of the Republic of Serbia to raise the living standards, should contribute to the improvement of demographic trends and more young people staying in Serbia, with their solidarity and responsible attitude towards the community in which they have full confidence.

This analysis is just one of the instruments for a better understanding of the situation and needs of young people in Serbia. Its results can be an evidence-based roadmap for policy-making in areas of importance to young people. A deeper understanding of a number of challenges that young people are facing requires continuous quantitative and qualitative research on their situation, and focus groups should be used to further explore the attitudes and needs of young people. So far, no multi-year research of the young generation has been conducted in Serbia, which would give the most reliable results on their situation and the support they need and which would be very beneficial. It is also important for young people to be active participants in the adoption, monitoring and evaluation of public policies in all fields that concern them. This creates conditions for the voice of young people to be heard and respected and for their greater participation in social life, but also for the understanding of the importance of working with and for young people by all youth policy actors.

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ANNEX 1 GLOSSARY

Active population (workforce) consists of all employed and unemployed persons.

Body mass index (BMI) is the index for assessing the degree of nutrition, which is expressed as body weight expressed in kilograms divided by the square of body height.

Informal learning is learning that is planned, but not organized and structured (not institutionalized). It includes learning within the family, at work or in everyday life, through self-learning, family or social learning. It includes: learning with the help of a family member, friend, colleague; use of various printed materials (books, professional magazines); use of computers, materials from the internet; use of various TV, radio, video or audio materials.

Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) is an international research programme developed by UNICEF, in collaboration with other UN agencies, and is carried out every five years in more than 100 countries around the world to ensure international comparability, continuity of research and time series data. MICS involves the collection of data on children's health, development, education, protection and general well-being, as well as data on women's reproductive health.

Inactive population consists of all persons aged 15 and over who are not categorized as employed or unemployed population. Inactive population includes students, pensioners, persons doing housework, as well as other persons who, in the observed week, did not perform any work for remuneration, undertook no active steps to find a job or were not able to start working within two-week time after the observed week.

Unemployed persons are the persons who, in the observed week, did not perform any work for remuneration, who undertook active steps to find a job during the four weeks preceding the observed week and can start working within two-week time after the observed week (definition from the Labour Force Survey).

Unemployed person is a person from 15 years of age until fulfilling the conditions for retirement, i.e. not older than 65 years of age, capable and immediately ready to work, who has not established employment or otherwise exercised the right to work, and who is registered as unemployed and is actively seeking employment (Law on Employment and Unemployment Insurance, Article 2, Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, no. 36/09 and 88/10).

Primary school net attendance rate: Percentage of primary-school-age children currently attending primary school.

Primary school net intake rate: Percentage of primary-school-age children who enrolled in the first grade of primary school.

Informal employment means work in unregistered companies, work in registered companies but without a formal employment contract, as well as work of unpaid family workers.

Informal education: informal education / informal training means institutionalized learning taking place within structured programs, but not in the formal education system. These are organized learning processes that are intended for training for work and other activities, as

well as for personal development. Informal education is organized in the form of: courses, workshops and seminars, on-the-job instructions/training and private tutoring.

Adult education includes all lifelong learning activities (after completion of initial education) to improve the knowledge, skills and competencies from a personal and social aspect, as well as from an employment point of view.

Crude birth rate is the number of live births per 1,000 people in the observed year.

Open Method of Coordination (OMC) was established by the European Union in 2000 and represents a mechanism for establishing cooperation between the Member States in areas where such a need exists, and which are within the competence of Member States (so-called “soft legislation”). This mechanism represents a voluntary process of political cooperation and implies a mutual process of planning, monitoring, comparing and adjusting national policies in line with the common goals of the Member States of the European Union.

At-risk-of-poverty threshold (relative poverty line) is set at 60% of the median national equivalent income and is expressed in dinars.

Average age of the population means the average age of its members (arithmetic mean).

Estimated population in 2019 was calculated based on the results of the 2011 Census, natural population growth and internal migrations.

NEET rate represents the share of persons aged 15-24, who are not employed and who don't attend education or training in the total population of that age.

Activity rate (of the workforce) represents the share of the active population in the total population aged 15 and over.

Long-term unemployment rate represents the share of persons unemployed for more than one year in the workforce (employed and unemployed) aged 15 and over.

Primary school completion rate: Number of children attending the final grade of primary school (excluding repeaters) divided by the number of children of primary school completion age (the age appropriate to the final grade of primary school).

Inactivity rate represents the share of the inactive population in the total population aged 15 and over.

Unemployment rate represents the share of the unemployed people in the workforce (employed and unemployed) aged 15 and over.

Informal employment rate represents the share of informally employed people in total employment.

Transition to secondary school rate: The number of children attending the final grade of primary school during the previous school year who are in the first grade of secondary school during the current school year divided by the number of children attending the final grade of primary school during the previous school year.

Rate of natural population growth represents the difference between the birth rate and the mortality rate in the observed year.

Risk of poverty or social exclusion rate indicates the percentage of people who are at risk of poverty, or are severely materially deprived, or live in households with very low labour intensity.

At-risk-of-poverty rate: share of persons with income by consumption unit below 60% of the median of the equivalent income in the total population.

Youth policy actors are: the Republic of Serbia, the autonomous province and the local self-government unit as implementers of youth policy, institutions, associations organizing youth activities and other entities participating in the implementation of youth policy.

Formal education is a structured and institutionalized system prescribed by the state (in our country by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development). Formal education includes: the determined objective and level of education, curriculum and syllabus, rules for access to the higher level of education, organized in educational institutions that are in the system of formal education. Certificates of completion and diplomas recognized by the competent ministry are obtained upon the completion of formal education.

ANNEX 2 EUROSTAT TABLE DATA FOR SELECTED COUNTRIES

Table 1 Demography

Demography / young people aged 15-29 (number and percentage) 2019						
no.	European Union and selected countries	young people		average age of leaving the family %	men %	women %
		number	%			
	EU-27	74,172,086	16.6	26.2	27.1	25.2
1	Austria	1,573,475	17.2	25.4	26.2	24.6
2	Hungary	1,678,211	17.2	27.2	28.5	25.8
3	Germany	13,804,084	16.6	23.7	24.4	22.9
4	France	11,662,704	17.4	23.6	24.5	22.9
5	Switzerland	1,478,445	17.3	/	/	/
6	Albania	681,552	23.8	/	/	/
7	Bulgaria	1,042,915	14.9	30.0	32.1	27.6
8	Greece	1,667,431	15.5	28.9	30.1	27.7
9	Romania	3,179,678	16.4	28.1	30.3	25.7
10	N. Macedonia	411,979	19.8	31.8	35.6	28.0
11	Slovenia	309,475	14.9	27.7	28.6	26.6
12	Serbia	1,156,611	16.6	31.1	33.7	28.4
13	Turkey	19,247,865	23.5	27.5	29.7	25.4
14	Croatia	684,437	16.8	31.8	33.6	29.9
15	Montenegro	119,822	19.3	33.1	35.4	31.0

Source:

The table is made based on the Eurostat data available at the link:

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>

Chapter: Population and Social conditions/ Youth population

Table 2 Education

Education / young people aged 18-24 and 20-24 and people aged 30-34, 2019 (%)										
no.	European Union and selected countries	young people 18-24 school leaving			people aged 30-34 with tertiary education			young people 20-24 with at least secondary school completed		
		total	men	women	total	men	women	total	men	women
	EU-27	10.2	11.9	8.4	40.3	35.1	45.6	83.5	81.0	86.2
1	Austria	7.8	9.5	6.1	42.4	39.3	45.6	87.3	84.4	90.3
2	Hungary	11.8	12.7	10.9	33.4	27.2	39.8	86.6	85.7	87.5
3	Germany	10.3	11.8	8.8	35.5	35.1	35.9	77.5	75.0	80.2
4	France	8.2	9.6	6.9	47.5	42.4	52.3	88.5	86.4	90.7
5	Switzerland	4.4	5.1	3.8	56.1	55.1	57.1	89.3	87.1	91.4
6	Bulgaria	13.9	14.5	13.3	32.5	26.4	39.0	84.4	83.6	85.4
7	Greece	4.1	4.9	3.0	43.1	36.7	49.3	94.5	93.4	95.7
8	Romania	15.3	14.9	15.8	25.8	22.2	29.8	83.4	83.8	83.0
9	S. Macedonia	7.1	5.9	8.4	35.7	32.1	39.4	91.9	93.6	90.1
10	Slovenia	4.6	5.2	3.8	44.9	34.5	57.1	92.4	91.5	93.5
11	Serbia	6.6	6.5	6.7	33.5	26.9	40.4	92.5	92.7	92.4
12	Turkey	28.7	24.5	28.6	31.4	32.7	30.0	62.0	60.5	63.4
13	Croatia	3.0	3.1	3.0	33.1	24.7	41.8	97.3	97.5	97.1
14	Montenegro	5.0	5.2	4.9	36.8	35.4	38.1	95.2	95.1	95.3

Source:

The table is made based on the Eurostat data available at the link:

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>

Chapter: Population and Social conditions/Youth employment

Table 3 Labour market

Labour market / young people aged 15-29 (in thousands and percentages) 2019													
no.	European Union and selected countries	employed		unemployed				unemployed for more than 12 m. %			only employed number	part-time employees %	temporary employment %
		number	%	number	% total	% men	% women	total	men	women			
	EU-27	34,928.0	48.2	4,711.3	11.9	12.0	11.8	3.4	3.6	3.2	2,019.6	22.4	35.5
1	Austria	955.4	63.4	69.5	6.8	7.1	6.4	1.1	1.2	1.0	28.7	23.0	23.1
2	Hungary	764.7	47.1	60.3	7.3	7.6	6.9	1.9	2.2	1.5	34.6	4.8	9.4
3	Germany	8,067.0	60.4	419.1	4.9	5.6	4.1	1.1	1.4	0.8	197.6	23.0	35.8
4	France	5,072.5	44.6	914.3	15.3	16.2	14.2	4.2	4.9	3.5	245.5	17.8	38.7
5	Switzerland	1,029.5	71.2	72.6	6.6	6.8	6.4	1.2	1.2	1.1	29.9	28.5	35.3
6	Bulgaria	432.5	42.1	31.9	6.9	7.5	6.0	3.6	3.9	3.1	20.3	3.7	7.1
7	Greece	502.7	31.3	204.8	28.9	26.3	32.1	17.1	15.2	19.4	63.0	18.7	23.3
8	Romania	1,344.8	42.4	152.7	10.2	10.8	9.4	3.9	4.2	3.4	142.0	7.8	3.7
9	S. Macedonia	139.7	34.4	61.2	30.5	28.7	33.0	21.1	21.0	21.3	9.0	5.6	29.6
10	Slovenia	158.2	51.1	12.8	7.5	6.3	9.0	2.0	1.7	2.4	10.0	17.9	40.5
11	Serbia	417.2	36.9	114.2	21.5	20.8	22.5	8.7	8.3	9.3	39.8	9.4	44.6
12	Turkey	7,351.8	41.5	2,069.7	22.0	19.4	26.5	4.5	2.9	2.9	494.1	11.6	16.6
13	Croatia	297.7	43.5	45.4	13.2	10.4	16.7	3.6	2.4	5.1	10.3	5.5	42.0
14	Montenegro	52.5	39.7	15.0	22.3	22.5	21.9	13.8	13.7	14.1	4.0	4.3	66.2

Source:

The table is made based on the Eurostat data available at the link:

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>

Chapter: Population and Social conditions/ Youth population

Table 4.1 Participation and volunteering activities (%)

Participation and volunteering activities, young people 16-29, 2019, percentage																		
no.	European Union and selected countries	getting together with family and relatives				getting together with friends				contacts with family and relatives				contacts with friends				volunteering activities
		once			never	once			never	once			never	once			never	
		daily	weekly	yearly		daily	weekly	yearly		daily	weekly	yearly		daily	weekly	yearly		
	EU-27	17.6	35.1	12.9	1.8	41.7	39.8	2.0	1.0	22.6	39.3	6.4	4.3	49.2	34.0	1.4	2.1	31.7
1	Austria	10.0	37.2	15.9	2.7	26.8	56.2	1.5	0.5	17.2	40.1	8.9	3.8	39.2	47.1	1.5	0.7	29.3
2	Hungary	21.2	36.9	8.7	0.7	41.2	34.4	2.6	0.4	27.2	37.8	5.7	1.4	43.6	34.8	1.7	0.6	8.6
3	Germany	20.3	28.0	15.9	2.1	45.0	36.7	1.8	1.0	23.2	37.4	7.8	2.5	56.7	29.9	1.4	1.1	31.9
4	France	12.9	38.5	11.4	1.5	29.4	44.6	2.6	0.8	16.4	47.8	4.3	4.4	34.6	43.2	1.2	1.8	14.2
5	Bulgaria	25.5	22.4	7.4	5.3	60.1	26.3	1.0	2.6	15.6	24.5	2.9	22.6	42.6	26.7	0.7	18.5	2.3
6	Greece	35.9	28.1	0.9	0.9	69.0	24.4	0.6	0.1	42.8	29.4	4.8	1.0	76.7	17.8	0.3	0.4	15.7

Source:

The table is made based on the Eurostat data available at the link:

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>

Chapter: Population and Social conditions/Youth participation, Youth volunteering

Table 4.2 Culture and creativity

Culture and creativity, young people 16-29, 2015, percentage																	
no.	European Union and selected countries	participation in cultural or sports activities in the last 12 months	types of activities					participation in artistic activities in the last 12 months						participation in sports activities in the last 12 months			
			cultural activities 1, 2 or 3	1 cinema	2 live performances	3 cultural sites	sports events	daily	once a week	once a month	several times a month	once a year	not in the last year	no participation	at least once	1 to 3 times	at least 4 times
	EU-27	85.2	82.5	75.1	52.1	47.2	45.1	7.2	15.8	5.2	8.8	4.7	58.3	54.9	45.1	24.2	20.9
1	Austria	90.1	88.4	82.3	51.6	40.9	48.1	10.0	21.2	10.8	9.3	6.1	42.5	51.9	48.1	24.8	23.3
2	Hungary	78.8	75.2	68.4	41.8	47.7	45.4	/	/	/	/	/	/	54.6	45.4	26.5	18.9
3	Germany	91.3	88.1	78.9	54.4	49.4	51.6	11.9	25.8	10.8	15.1	9.1	27.3	48.4	51.6	24.1	27.4
4	France	93.5	91.8	82.7	63.1	55.0	40.1	3.2	8.0	1.1	4.4	2.6	80.7	59.9	40.1	22.8	17.3
5	Switzerland	95.4	94.1	85.8	67.5	64.2	61.9	6.9	21.7	7.5	9.0	2.9	52.0	38.1	61.9	23.3	38.7
6	Bulgaria	56.2	52.1	48.2	30.6	22.8	35.4	8.1	7.7	3.1	4.3	1.2	75.6	64.6	35.4	20.3	15.1
7	Greece	77.9	74.3	67.0	52.7	19.3	44.0	11.3	20.6	6.2	29.3	28.2	4.5	56.0	44.0	35.4	8.7
8	Romania	50.7	48.5	39.9	38.9	30.5	28.3	0.8	3.0	5.4	5.2	9.3	76.3	71.7	28.3	18.7	9.7
9	S. Macedonia	56.0	43.9	28.4	39.0	23.7	37.6	8.3	3.7	5.4	4.3	6.3	72.0	62.4	37.6	26.3	11.2
10	Slovenia	89.4	86.1	71.1	64.2	47.0	44.6	5.1	14.9	3.1	7.9	0.8	68.3	55.4	44.6	21.1	23.5
11	Serbia	69.3	56.8	47.5	38.4	22.5	43.3	7.2	7.2	3.7	5.7	1.8	74.4	56.7	43.3	18.1	25.2
12	Croatia	77.1	70.5	60.2	51.1	34.5	50.9	5.3	10.2	2.6	7.9	2.9	71.2	49.1	50.9	27.2	23.1

Source:

The table is made based on the Eurostat data available at the link:

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>

Chapter: Population and Social conditions/ Youth-culture and creativity

Table 4.3 Youth in the digital world

Youth in the digital world, 16-29, 2019 (%)													
no.	European Union and selected countries	use the internet every day	interacting with public authorities	how the internet is used, young people 16-29, 2019, 2017									
				writing e-mails	participating in social media	uploading content on websites	internet banking	travel and accommodation 2017	selling goods and services	job search or sending an application	voting, public debates, consultations	posting opinions on civic or political issues via social media	online courses
	EU-27	94	57	88	84	49	59	44	21	29	12	15	13
1	Austria	98	83	96	91	40	78	46	14	28	14	6	14
2	Hungary	95	54	87	91	45	47	27	19	27	7	13	8
3	Germany	98	61	95	80	56	64	57	30	31	19	17	11
4	France	92	75	88	72	40	69	45	27	32	11	9	16
5	Switzerland	/	81	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
6	Bulgaria	87	33	61	80	38	9	15	10	20	5	17	6
7	Greece	92	78	86	88	74	33	42	3	29	5	14	10
8	Romania	86	11	66	83	28	9	15	4	10	5	11	5
9	S. Macedonia	96	37	71	92	95	20	13	7	22	5	12	12
10	Slovenia	95	61	90	85	55	48	51	24	24	8	4	5
11	Serbia	96	33	57	88	70	18	40	13	22	4	10	11
12	Turkey	85	69	51	80	49	43	12	23	16	10	23	5
13	Croatia	98	48	86	95	62	63	29	31	29	19	19	8
14	Montenegro	/	29	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/

Source:

The table is made based on the Eurostat data available at the link:

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>

Population and Social conditions/ Youth in digital world

Table 5 Health

Health, young people (18-29, 15-29 and 16-29) 2008, 2014 or 2018 (%)								
no.	European Union and selected countries	overweight according to the BMI (18-29)	daily smokers (15-29)	long-standing illness (16-29)	no limitations due to illness (16-29)	some limitations due to illness (16-29)	severe limitations due to illness (16-29)	psychological distress (15-29)
		2014	2014	2018	2018	2018	2018	2008
	EU-27 (2020)	6.6	19.3	17	91.8	6.4	1.8	
1	Austria	7.8	29.9	19.5	84	13.1	2.9	82
2	Hungary	4.6	30.2	10	93.4	5.1	1.5	75
3	Germany	8	15	21.8	92.9	6.5	2	/
4	France	7.8	25.4	16.6	91.4	6.3	2.4	/
5	Switzerland	/	/	19.8	84.1	14.7	1.2	/
6	Bulgaria	5.2	27	3.8	96.3	2.9	0.8	83.9
7	Greece	5.6	23.5	3.6	96.7	1.4	1.9	81.2
8	Romania	2.3	17.4	2.1	94.2	4.8	1.1	75.4
9	S. Macedonia	/	/	1.6	98.9	0.5	0.7	/
10	Slovenia	6.4	19.5	18.1	82.6	15	2.4	80.7
11	Serbia	/	/	3.6	97.6	1.8	0.6	/
12	Turkey	5.8	23.6	11.7	92.1	5.5	2.4	62.4
13	Croatia	4.6	22.8	7.6	93.9	4.4	1.8	/
14	Montenegro (2017)	/	/	2.6	96.1	2.5	1.7	/

Source:

The table is made based on the Eurostat data available at the link:

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>

Chapter: Population and Social conditions /Youth health

Table 6 Social inclusion (%)

Social inclusion / risk of poverty and risk of poverty or social exclusion, young people aged 16-29, 2018, percentage								
no.	European Union and selected countries	risk of poverty			risk of poverty or social exclusion	living with parents and at risk of poverty or social exclusion	living with parents and at risk of poverty	in-work and at risk of poverty
		total	men	women				
	EU-27	20.5	19.4	21.6	26.2	24.1	17.8	10.4
1	Austria	16.6	14.6	18.7	20.3	13.5	9.9	9.9
2	Hungary	14.3	12.0	16.7	22.2	19.5	12.1	4.4
3	Germany	20.1	18.0	22.2	24.2	15.3	11.7	13.5
4	France	16.9	17.9	15.8	21.8	21.2	15.6	6.8
5	Switzerland	12.2	12.4	12.0	16.4	13.7	8.8	10.0
6	Bulgaria	23.1	24.2	21.8	32.7	30.0	20.4	12.2
7	Greece	24.8	24.0	25.5	40.2	38.8	23.9	9.3
8	Romania	26.1	24.7	27.7	35.3	33.1	23.6	16.2
9	S. Macedonia	25.2	25.5	24.8	44.4	44.5	25.4	7.3
10	Slovenia	11.6	10.6	12.5	14.7	11.5	8.4	5.6
11	Serbia	26.0	26.7	25.2	35.7	35.6	25.7	7.1
12	Turkey	26.1	19.5	23.9	40.9	(2017) 45.3	(2017) 22.8	11.0
13	Croatia	15.0	14.7	15.4	20.6	20.3	14.8	3.3

Source:

The table is made based on the Eurostat data available at the link:

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>

Chapter: Population and Social conditions/ Youth social inclusion