

Monitoring Report on Political, Social, Economic Participation of Youth

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Summary

Partners Albania for Change and Development

Partners Albania is part of the regional network “Youth Bank Hub for Western Balkan and Turkey” in partnership with “Ana i Vlade Divac” Foundation in Serbia, Association for Education – MLADIINFO International in Macedonia, “Prima” organization in Montenegro and “Community Volunteers Foundation” in Turkey.

The purpose of the annual monitoring report is to give an overview on the state of affairs regarding political, social and economic participation of youth. The monitoring report is the guide for evidence based policy recommendations and advocacy initiatives of the network regarding youth participation.

The report provides a brief description of the current data on political, social and economic participation of youth based on a set of defined indicators. Considering that this is the second annual report, it provides some significant data comparison over two years of monitoring (2016 and 2017), a set of policy recommendations and potential issues for advocacy initiatives identified through a series of round table consultations with CSO representatives.

Data collection is based on desk research and official requests for information sent to responsible institutions such as: Ministry of Finances and Economy, Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth, General Directorate of Taxation, General Directory of Prisons, Municipalities of Albania.

With regard to social participation of youth, PA conducted an online questionnaire with CSOs working with youth and for youth issues. The aim of the questionnaire was to further analyze the participation of youth in executive positions, managerial roles and in bodies such as: board of directors and general assemblies of CSOs. In total, 53 CSOs responded to the questionnaire. The data of this survey is analyzed and described in the report, accompanied with recommendations related to each area of youth participation.

Note: Young people are individuals aged from 15 to 29, based on EUROSTAT definition.

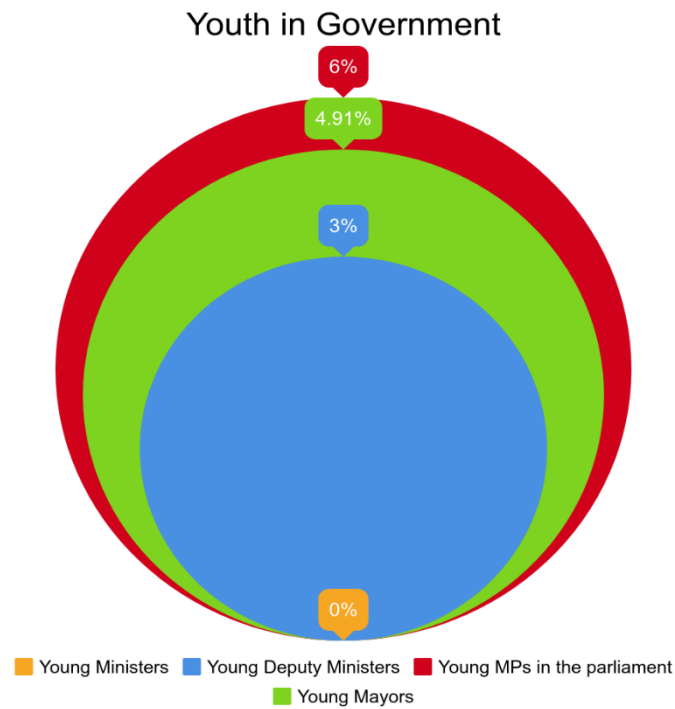
A project funded
by the European Union



Implementing partners



Data on Political Participation of Youth



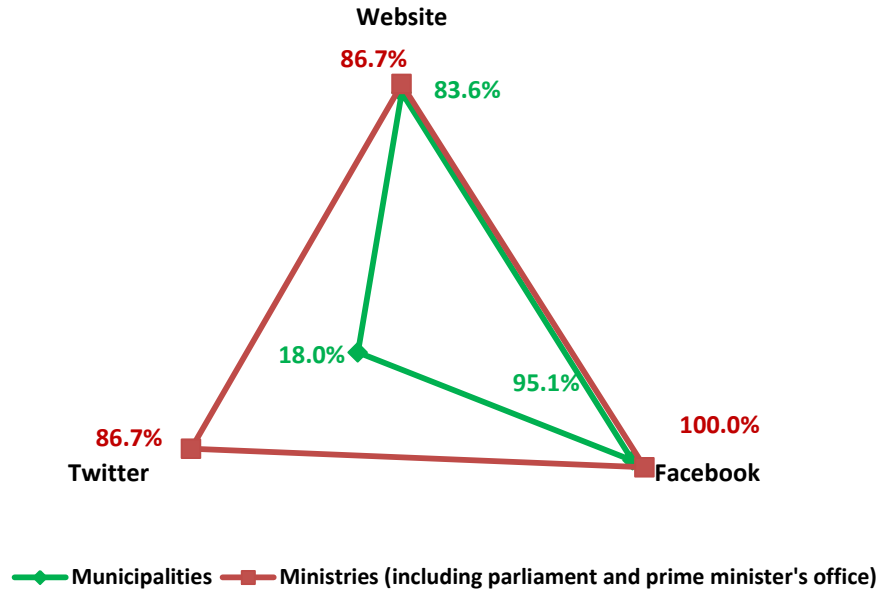
20% youngsters part of the general assembly of Socialist Party of Albania (Socialist Party of Albania, 2017)

0 youth structures at the national level

18 out of **52** responded municipalities have a youth structure (Municipalities, 2017)

¹ It is selected the political party, which has the majority in the parliament, in order to see the participation of youth in decision making bodies of political parties.

“From the monitoring of online tools, it is noticed that ministries have more updated websites and Facebook accounts than municipalities. At local level, there is a lack of information and lack of interactivity between citizens and municipality”

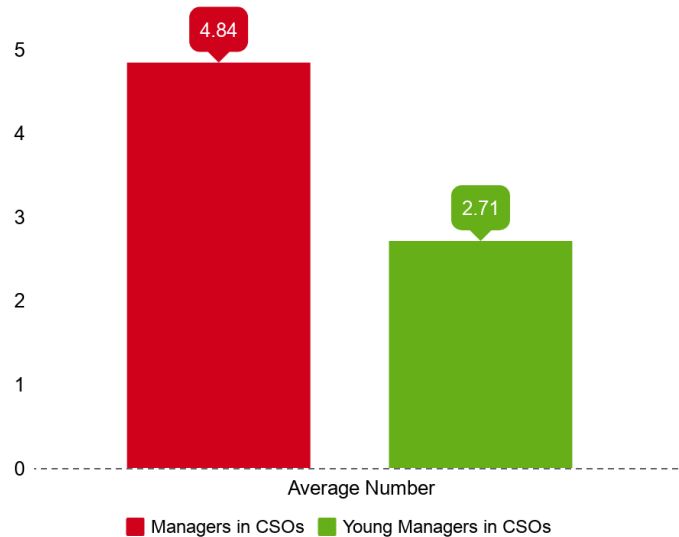


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Data on Social Participation of Youth

From CSOs’ data analyses, the average of young people in managerial positions is *half* of the average total number of managers in CSOs.

Youngsters in CSOs' Managerial Positions



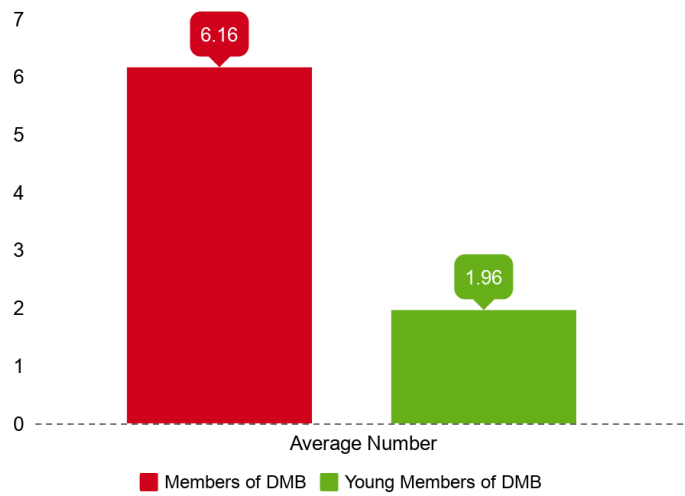
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² On-line tools for information and participation in decision making of government, parliament and municipalities. PA has monitored three online tools: websites, Facebook accounts and twitter.

³ 53 CSOs were part of the sample and responded to a short questionnaire.

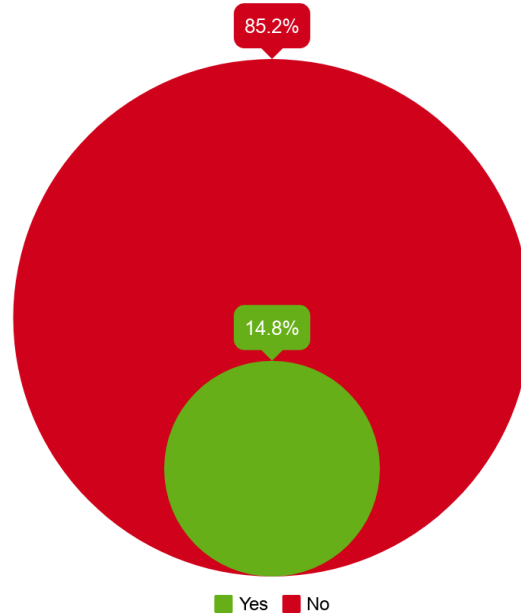
The average of young members in CSOs' Decision Making Bodies (DMB) is *one third* of the average total number of members in these decision making bodies.

Youngsters Members of CSOs' Decision Making Bodies

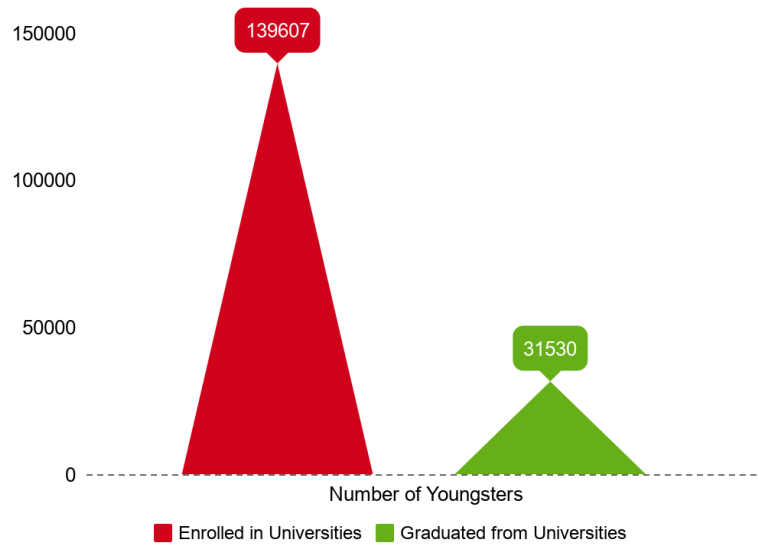


Only *14.8%* of Presidents/Directors of respondent CSOs are youngsters.

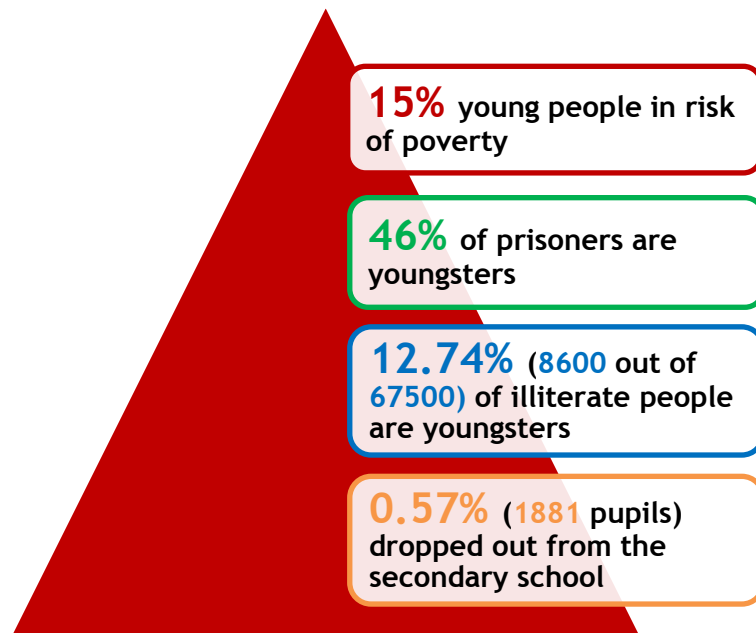
Young Presidents/Directors of CSOs



Young People in Universities



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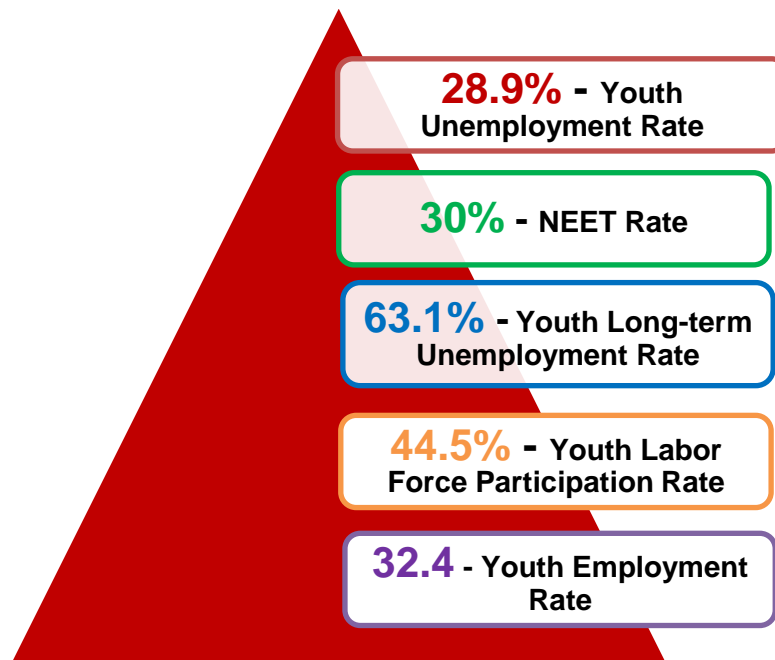


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⁴ The latest updated data for the number of youngsters enrolled in tertiary education is of 2016-2017 academic year: <http://www.instat.gov.al/media/2920/nx%C3%ABn%C3%ABs-dhe-student%C3%AB-t%C3%AB-regjistruar-n%C3%AB-arsim.xlsx>
 The latest updated data for the number of youngsters graduated by tertiary education is of 2015-2016 academic year: <http://www.instat.gov.al/media/2924/t%C3%AB-diplomuar-sipas-niveleve-arsimore.xlsx>

⁵ The source for young people in risk of poverty and illiteracy: Youth in Albania, Challenges in changing times (INSTAT, 2017) http://www.instat.gov.al/media/1583/youth_in_albania_challenges_in_changing_times.pdf
 The source for the % of youngsters in prison is the General Directorate of Prisons, 2017
 The source of information for the Dropout rate from secondary and no. is the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth, 2017

Data on Economic Participation of Youth



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18,3% of self-employed persons are youngsters
(General Directory of Taxes, 2017)

10 youngsters out of **20** have benefited financial support to initiate a start-up by the municipality of Tirana (Municipality of Tirana, 2017)

No one has benefited any financial support to initiate a start-up during 2017 (Ministry of Finances and Economy, 2017)

⁶ Youth Unemployment rate, NEET rate, Youth Labor Participation rate, Youth Employment rate (INSTAT, 2016)
Youth Long-term Unemployment rate (INSTAT, 2015)

Data Comparison over 2 Years of Monitoring

Regarding political participation of youth, the situation is the same in terms of young ministers, even though the government representatives have changed during these two years of monitoring. Still, there are almost no youngsters in ministerial positions. There is a slight increase in the percentage of young MPs in the parliament, from 2 % to 6%.

On the other hand, there is a lack of youth structures attached to ministries and there is no change during these two years of monitoring, which highlights a low participation of youth in central decision making. Even though, the establishment of Youth Consultation Board at the former ministry of Social Welfare and Youth was one of the activities planned for 2015,⁷ to this day such Board is not established. Part of the National Youth Action Plan was the establishment of Youth Consultation Boards at local level. The monitoring shows an increase in the number of youth structures in municipalities. Asked about the Youth Consultation Board as part of their structure, 18 out of 52 municipalities responded that have established these structures. In the meantime, some other municipalities which do not have these structures yet, expressed their willingness to establish Youth Consultation boards with the support of CSOs and donors.

In terms of online tools for information and participation in decision making, there is an increment of municipalities which have created a website, or opened a Facebook account during 2016-2017.

Regarding social participation of youth, there is a decrease of 4.8% of youngsters enrolled⁸ in universities, and a decrease of 6% of youngsters graduated⁹ from universities. Another aggravated data is the number of youth in prisons¹⁰, which is 10% higher than previous year.

With regard to economic participation of youth, the youth unemployment rate has a decrease of 4.3%. On the other hand, during 2017 the percentage of young people out of total number of self-employed people is decreased by 10% in comparison with 2016. There is also a very considerable decrease in the number of people that benefited financial support from the state to start-up a business (from 18¹¹ to 0 youngsters).

⁷ National Youth Action Plan 2015-2020 (Council of Ministers No. 383, 2015)

⁸ The latest updated data for the number of youngsters enrolled in tertiary education is of 2016-2017 academic year:

<http://www.instat.gov.al/media/2920/nx%C3%ABn%C3%ABs-dhe-student%C3%AB-t%C3%AB-regjistruar-n%C3%AB-arsim.xlsx>

⁹ The latest updated data for the number of youngsters graduated by tertiary education is of 2015-2016 academic year:

<http://www.instat.gov.al/media/2924/t%C3%AB-diplomuar-sipas-niveleve-arsimore.xlsx>

¹⁰ It is measured the number of youngsters among the total number of prisoners in Albania

¹¹ According to the Ministry of Finances and Economy (2016), 18 young people out of 33 people benefited financial support to initiate their start-up. Meanwhile, during 2017 **no one** benefited financial support from the state to initiate a start-up.

Policy Areas for Advocacy

Based on consultation with representatives of CSOs, through a series of regional roundtables organized by PA, there are several advocacy issues identified with regard to the political, social and economic participation of youth.

Youth Political Participation

- Political parties should improve their approach to increase youth participation in democracy and decision-making processes;
- There is a need to increase youth participation in executive positions at local and central government;
- Based on the objectives of National Youth Action Plan, it is very important to establish a Youth Consultation Board at central level, as well as to increase the number of Youth Consultation Boards at local level. According to CSOs, the establishment of youth structures at local level should be stipulated in a law and it is important to strengthen these youth structures through financial support provided by donors and state in collaboration with local CSOs.

Youth Social Participation

- Education is a major field of intervention through enhancement of education curricula in primary and secondary schools, including extracurricular activities such as sports clubs, arts, where youngsters can share common interests and hobbies and can be engaged in social life, thus keeping them far from crime and illegal activities. In order to raise the quality of education and simultaneously enhance social skills, social and debate clubs should be established in high schools.
- More focus should be given to career counseling, especially to the establishment of career counseling centers in high schools, provided with qualified and professional education staff for such counseling.
- There is a need for more public space dedicated to cultural and sports activities for youth.
- Reintegration programs should be in place for the youngsters in prisons, tailored to their needs and situation. These programs should contribute to strengthen youth capacities in different life skills and vocational training, preparing them for the life out of prison.
- Assistance schemes should be in place for the returning migrants, such as creating new job opportunities, providing start-ups grants, vocational training, acknowledgement of

training courses obtained abroad etc., provision of psycho-social services for their children who find it difficult to be adapted in the schools etc.

Youth Economic Participation

- One of the advocacy issues is to reduce the high level of unemployment, through strengthening mechanisms for job search and job access, investment in occupational services providing job search-skills building, and more informative online tools.
- There is a need for creation of career counseling centers not only in universities, but also in high schools, as well as research on labor market to inform students about future profession aligning their passion with the market needs.
- It is important to guide youngsters toward vocational education and training and to increase the number of professional schools in Albania. People with low level of education find more difficult to have a job, but so do those with a higher level of education, since there are no job opportunities matching their level of skills and expectations.
- It is important to create an enabling environment for the development of self-employment initiatives, building entrepreneurial skills as well as easing access to credit. Lack of start-up funds provided by state is an issue, which has created limited opportunities for young entrepreneurs. There is not only a need to establish more start-up funds, but also to promote all the financial schemes available for young entrepreneurs in Albania.