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Monitoring report of Political, Social, Economic Participation of Youth

Albania 2021



YouthHUB

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Introduction – About the Project and Youth Participation Index.

Partners Albania for Change and Development, in the frame of the project “WB&T for EmploYouth”, implemented in partnership with “Ana i Vlade Divac” Foundation in Serbia, Youth Alliance in North Macedonia, “Prima” association in Montenegro, and “Community Volunteers Foundation” in Turkey, since 2016, develops the “Monitoring Report on Political, Social and Economic Participation of Youth” in Albania, contributing to the development of the regional report providing an overview of situation of youth in the five countries.

The report provides a comprehensive overview of opportunities for youth through the lens of 25 indicators of political, economic, and social participation.

· **Political dimension** refers to the opportunities of young people to get involved in political processes – to be informed on the work of the government, parliament, and municipalities, to participate in youth networks, and to be elected to political positions.

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


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

The Report is a concrete tool that can be used by public authorities and CSOs to **systematically identify and address the most pressing challenges of youth participation**. It contributes to:

- Compare data according to key indicators of youth participation in all three dimensions: political, economic, and social;
- Monitor progress in youth participation through the years in Albania;
- Advocacy actions at the local level for the implementation of policies and programs aimed at the improvement of youth participation.

The Albania Country Report for 2021 provides an analysis of the data collected through desk research and official request for information sent to responsible institutions as: *Ministry of Finance and Economy, Ministry of Education and Sports, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, Minister of State for Youth and Children, Minister of State for Entrepreneurship Protection, Ministry of Tourism and Environment, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, General Directorate of Taxation, General Directorate of Prisons, National Institute of Statistics, and Albanian municipalities.*

The data of this report are also included in the regional annual report “Youth Participation Index”, reflecting, and comparing the data from the five countries (*Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Turkey*), of the Youth Hub Network for WB & Turkey.



“In 2021 we received the highest response from the Albanian institutions regarding data on youth participation.”


Data on Political Participation of Youth

INDICATORS	TOTAL	FEMALE	MALE	YEAR
Young ministers in government	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2021 ¹
Young deputy ministers in government	3.0%	3.0%	0.0%	2021 ¹
Young MPs in the parliament	2.10%	1.4%	0.7%	2021 ¹
Young mayors	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2021 ¹
On-line tools for information and participation in decision making of government and parliament	94.0%			2021 ¹
On-line tools for information and participation in decision making of municipalities	72.1%			2021 ¹
Existence of youth structure (councils/parliaments/unions) on national level	Yes			2021 ²
Existence of youth structure (councils/parliaments/unions) on local level	43.0%			2021 ³

[1] Desk Research

[2] Request for Information to the Ministry of State for Youth and Children

[3] Request for Information to the 61 Municipalities of Albania

A large crowd of people is gathered in a city street, with buildings in the background. The scene is overlaid with a dark blue semi-transparent layer. A white text box with a dark blue border is centered in the lower half of the image. The text inside the box reads: "In 2021, Albania took a step forward on the establishment and improvement of youth structures at local and national level". There are yellow horizontal bars at the top and bottom of the page.

“In 2021, Albania took a step forward on the establishment and improvement of youth structures at local and national level”

Data on Social Participation of Youth

INDICATORS	TOTAL	FEMALE	MALE	YEAR
Young people at risk of poverty	No data	-	-	2021 ⁴
The percentage of young poor people (the young people who lives under the line of poverty) (No of young poor people / no of young people)	No data	-	-	2021
Young people in prisons	36.9%	0.4%	36.5%	2021 ⁵
Young people part of social welfare system (who receive financial support in Social Protection System) divided with the young people who are in the social welfare system	24.3%	-	-	2021 ⁶
Dropout from the secondary education	1.5%	0.9%	2.0%	2020-2021 ⁷
Young people enrolled in tertiary education	21.7%	26.2%	17.2%	2021 ⁸
Young people graduated from tertiary education	26.0%	28.9%	21.6%	2021 ⁸
Participation rate in non-formal education and training (last 4 weeks).	36.3%	52.7%	47.3%	2021 ⁹

[4] Partners Albania sent a request for information to the National Institute of Statistics but they responded that this data is not yet published for 2021

[5] Request for Information to the General Directorate of Prisons

[6] Request for Information to the Ministry of Health and Social Protection

[7] Request for Information to the Ministry of Education and Sports

[8] Request for Information to the Ministry of Education and Sports and National Institute of Statistics (INSTAT)


[9] Request for Information to the National Institute of Statistics (INSTAT)

“On the 6th year of monitoring, data on young people in the Social Welfare System are still only partially measured by the responsible institutions”

Here you can show generic stats and metrics for your email campaign.

Data on Economic Participation of Youth

INDICATORS	TOTAL	FEMALE	MALE	YEAR
NEET rate	26.1%	29.1%	23.2%	2021 ⁹
Youth unemployment rate	20.9%	21.4%	20.5%	2021 ⁹
Long-term youth unemployment rate	11.6%	11.7%	11.6%	2021 ⁹
Youth Labor force participation rate	52.5%	46.3%	58.6%	2021 ⁹
Youth Employment rate	41.5%	36.4%	46.6%	2021 ⁹
Young people that started their own business with the financial support of state	2.6%	2.5%	2.6%	2021 ¹⁰
Self-employed young people	17.9%	13.9%	21.1%	2021 ⁹



“There is a significant gender disbalance regarding the economic participation. Young women continue to have a lower participation rate in all indicators of the economic dimension than young men”.

Comparisons of data during 6 years of monitoring

Overall, several indicators have changed positively and negatively through the years but compared to data reported in the first index, six years ago, there is a noticeable improvement.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION DIMENSION

The data on *youth representation in Parliament and other political positions* are collected through desk research. This process consists of checking the official websites of the Government, Parliament, and municipalities, although in some cases necessary information is not available – either there is no information about the age of persons appointed to political positions, or the websites are not regularly updated.

Regarding the data on the *use of online tools*, the problem is identifying official social network channels used by the Government, Parliament, and municipalities. In some cases, communication with citizens has been carried out via social network channels of mayors instead of municipalities and in many cases the official channels are inactive.

The only indicator in the political participation dimension that has not changed and improved through the years, even in 2021 after the central election, is the *percentage of young ministers in the government*, which continues to remain 0.

However, it is important to emphasize that in the new government of 2021, 80% of the ministers are female and the average age is 44 years old, with the Minister of State for Entrepreneurship and Minister of State for Youth and Children respectively 32 and 31 years old, really close to the youth age range (15-29).

Meanwhile, the *percentage of young deputy ministers is merely 3%*, with an average of 1 young deputy minister through the years. The number of *young female deputy ministers in the government is higher than male representatives*. The number of *young MPs* remains very low, in 2021 the percentage is 2.1%, the same as in 2016.

Also, the *percentage of young mayors has decreased to zero in the last three years 2019-2021*. In 2021 there are just three mayors between 33-35 years old, close to the youth range. The determinant factor in the change of this percentage is the local elections held every 4 years, and the nearest local election is expected to be held in 2023.

94% of the governmental institutions and parliament and 72.1 % of municipalities have developed online tools for information and participation in decision-making. Almost all the institutions have a webpage and a Facebook account, while Twitter is not frequently used in Albania. Through the years it is noticed a positive increase in the presence of online tools.

The approval of law No.75/2019 “For Youth”, has contributed to the creation of *youth structures* at the national level, such as the “National Youth Agency”, “National Youth Council”, and “National Youth Congress”.

The *youth structures at the local level* have reached the highest presence in 2019 at 57.4% but in the two consecutive years, the percentage has been decreasing. However, pursuant to Law No. 75/2019 “For Youth”, all the municipalities have the responsibility to establish official local youth structures in the form of local youth councils. According to the information provided by the municipalities, they are working on the creation of local youth councils and by 2022 most of the municipalities will have youth structures in place.

ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION DIMENSION

In general, regarding the *data on the economic participation* of youth, most of the indicators have slightly changed or remained the same.

The *NEET rate in Albania* has had a decreasing trend in small percentages through the years, reaching the lowest value in 2021 at 26.1%. Over the years the number of NEET women has been higher than the number of NEET men.

Youth unemployment in 2021 is in the same percentage (20.9%) as in 2020. The young women unemployment rate is slightly higher than young men unemployment rate.

Long-term unemployment has a slight increase in 2021 by 0.2%, but the percentage (11.6%) is still lower than the percentage in 2016, 2017, and 2018. For the first time in 2021, the young women long-term unemployment rate is higher than for young men. From 2020 to 2021 the long-term unemployment of women increased by 1.5% and decreased by 1% for men.

The *youth employment rate* and *youth labor force participation rate* have increased respectively by 9.1% and 6.8% in comparison to 6 years ago.

The indicator which has marked the lowest value in years (2.6%), is *young people that started their own businesses with the financial support of the state*, based on data received by government institutions. Although, this data does not reflect the entire governmental support since not all institutions measure and/or provide this information.

The number of *self-employed youngsters* has changed drastically through the years, marking the highest rate in 2016 (29%), the lowest rate in 2018 (0.9%), and in 2021 Albania stands at 17.9%.

Young men continue to have a better representation than *young women* in the *youth employment rate*, *youth labor force participation* and *self-employment rate*, and a lower percentage in *NEET* and *youth unemployment rate*.

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION DIMENSION

There has been no data through the years for most of the indicators in the Social Participation Dimension, especially for the percentage of *young poor people* and *young people part of the social welfare system*.

Since 2017, the National Institute of Statistics in Albania (INSTAT) measures the indicator “*people at risk of poverty*” according to age groups and gender. The rate of *young people at risk of poverty* ranges between 24% - 28% through the years, with the lowest value in 2020 at 24.4% and the highest value for *young females at risk of poverty* at 28.1% in 2019.

The data on the *percentage of poor people* is neither measured nor provided by INSTAT, and by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection during 2017-2021. The calculation of this indicator is difficult, as Albania does not have a “minimum living” regulated by law, making the measurement and collection of data very subjective.

In 2021 for the first time in the six years of the monitoring report, Albania has some data on the *young people in the social welfare system*. Young people comprise 24.3% of the beneficiaries of the social protection system. In Albania, there are three programs of social assistance: *the economic assistance scheme*, *the disability allowance scheme*, and *the social services care scheme*. 24.3% are young beneficiaries only in the economic assistance scheme, the data for the other two schemes continue to be partially provided, and only for different age groups other than 15-29.

The percentage of *young people in prisons* has increased by 6.9% compared to last year and most of the prisoners (36.5%) are young men.

Education indicators show significant improvement compared to the first year of monitoring. *Dropout from secondary education* indicator has decreased through all the years, with the lowest value (1.5%), in 2021. It should be noted that for Albania this indicator would be better called “leaving secondary education” as secondary education in Albania is not mandatory and it cannot be called dropout. The rate of leaving secondary education is higher in the rural areas (3.3%) and most of the leaving students are young men 2%.

The percentage of *young people (18-29) enrolled in tertiary education* is 21.7%. Meanwhile, the percentage of young people who graduated from tertiary education, after a small decrease in 2020, is back to its average level through the years, at 26% in 2021.

The percentage of young women (28.9%) that successfully complete their academic level is higher than young men (21.6%). In comparison to young men, young women are more devoted to education and have a lower dropouts ratio from secondary education, a higher willingness to enroll in tertiary education, and a higher graduation ratio from tertiary education.

Meanwhile, the *participation rate in non-formal education and training* (last 4 weeks of 2021) is 36.3%.

Policy issues and recommendations for advocacy

This session provides policy recommendations for each dimension, which should be addressed by institutions and actors working in the respective fields. In the sixth consecutive year of monitoring, the lack of statistical data on youth social participation remains still an issue.

RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING YOUTH POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Young people continue to be underrepresented in political positions, such as mayor, deputy minister or minister in Albania. The situation regarding their representation in political life has not improved over the years. Even though the central elections of 2021 in Albania were a momentum to be used by political parties to increase youth participation by promoting young MPs, young ministers, and young deputy ministers, not many changes were presented.

Some recommendations to be taken into consideration in this context until the next central elections are as below:

- **Governments, parliaments, political parties, and youth organizations should develop strategies/programs to increase the number of young people in political positions.**

It is necessary to pay a special attention to the awareness, information, and encouragement of young people toward participation in political positions. Youth participation can also be improved through education and capacity-building programs, enhancing the youngsters; skills to engage in politics.

The percentage of young mayors has been extremely low over the years and 0% in the last three years. The upcoming local elections in 2023, are a good opportunity to promote and elect more female and young mayors.

- **Youth structures (councils/parliaments/unions) that ensure the participation of young people in the decision-making process must be established or/and enhanced.**

The process of creating youth structures at the local level is on a good path, as some of the municipalities have established their Local Youth Councils (LYC) and some others are in the process of creating new ones. However, it is necessary to unify the LYC structure and functioning. For this purpose, the development of a practical guide would contribute to set-up proper structures at the local level.

- **Public institutions must enhance the use of online tools to improve communication with young people.**

There is an increase in terms of *online tools* used for information and participation in decision-making at local and central level. However, some of the web pages of public institutions cannot be reached, and some others lack the necessary information they should provide, or the information is outdated. *The update of online tools and the provision of information to the public remains a necessity.* In this context ministries and municipalities should update their websites and social media, share more information with their citizens and ensure the possibility of citizens engagement in participatory processes.

RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING YOUTH ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

Young people are key agents for the economic growth of the country, but the situation concerning indicators of young people's position in the labor market has not significantly changed.

The NEET rate in Albania continues to be over 25%. To reduce this high level of NEET rate, responsible institutions should play an important role in identifying the NEET youth, and developing concrete mechanisms of youth engagement in education, training, and employment.

To match demand and supply in the labor market and align students' interests with market needs, it is necessary the establishment of career guidance counselling, a missing service at the national level, which would contribute to youth orientation and employment.

Data on youth entrepreneurship show that a small number of young people choose self-employment as an option and those who choose it may lack adequate support.

Entrepreneurship of young people, especially young women, should be stimulated and promoted, by providing adequate information, assistance, and financial support.

During 2021, only 2.6% of young people in Albania, started their own businesses with state financial support. The government is working on the creation of the first "Techno Park in Albania", which will allow all small-medium businesses to work in a mutual area. Youngsters interested in the development of start-ups and entrepreneurship models still need the support of professional incubators and accelerators, which might offer access in funds, training & mentoring programs, networking opportunities, exposure to international markets, etc.

RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING YOUTH SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

Participation of young people in non-formal education and training should be encouraged.

Young people need to acquire knowledge and skills, which later can be used in the labour market. Responsible institutions at the local and central level should develop specific programs for the integration of youngsters from marginalized groups into the education system. Also, the development of the Career Guidance Service at the local level, which is in the early stages in Albania, will enable young people to adapt their decisions and actions on career paths. In addition to the institutions, family and peers are important for informal learning. At this point, youngsters can increase their social competencies, thus their social inclusion will be improved.

A lower social participation rate decreases opportunities for informal learning. In the situation of long-lasting poverty, social deprivation occurs as well. Especially young people with lower socio-economic status have a lower participation rate. Poverty can lead to fewer social participation opportunities and informal learning. It is essential that responsible institutions identify young people at risk of poverty and young poor people and assist them to improve their situation to prevent their emigration.

Determination of a "living minimum" in Albania and legal initiatives for its approval, including the process of public consultation in this regard, is an important step that will also facilitate the process of data collection on poor people. As seen from the report, the data for the welfare system are partial, so accurate data collection is needed, including, and specifying data for the 15-29 age range, part of the welfare system.

Annex 1:

Methodological notes

Since 2016, a set of indicators were chosen based on an analytical process comprising extensive desk research and expert consultations. In the following Table are listed all the indicators, calculation methods, and data sources.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION DIMENSION	DATA CALCULATION METHOD			SOURCE OF DATA
	Data	Female	Male	
Young ministers in Government M/F	The number of young ministers (15-29) / Total number of ministers	The number of female young ministers (15-29) / Total number of ministers	The number of male young ministers (15-29) / Total number of ministers	Desk research
Young deputy ministers in government M/F	The number of young deputy ministers (15-29) / Total number of deputy ministers	The number of female young deputy ministers/Total number of deputy ministers	The number of male young deputy ministers (15-29) / The total number of deputy ministers	Desk research
Young MPs in the parliament M/F	The number of young MPs (15-29)/ Total number of MPs	The number of female young MPs (15-29) / Total number of MPS	The number of male young MPs (15-29) / Total number of MPs	Desk research
Young mayors	The number of young mayors (15-29)/ Total number of mayors	The number of female young mayors (15-29) / Total number of mayors	The number of male young mayors (15-29) / Total number of mayors	Desk research
Online tools for information and participation in the decision-making of government and parliament	Average of (Number of public institutions at central level that have Twitter / Total number of public institutions at central level + (Number of public institutions at central level that have Facebook/Total number public institutions at central level) + (Number of public institutions at central level that has a Webpage / Total number of public institutions at central level)	N/A	N/A	Desk research

<p>Online tools for information and participation in the decision-making of municipalities</p>	<p>Average of (Number of municipalities that have Twitter / Total number of municipalities) + (Number of municipalities that have Facebook / Total number of municipalities) + (Number of municipalities that have a Webpage / Total number of municipalities)</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Desk research</p>
<p>Existence of youth structures (councils/parliaments/ on the national level</p>	<p>Number of youth structures on the national level</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Information provided by the Ministry of Youth and Children and Desk Research</p>
<p>Existence of youth structures (councils/parliaments/ on the local level</p>	<p>The number of municipalities that have youth structure (councils, parliaments, unions) / Total number of municipalities</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Information provided by the Municipalities and Ministry of Youth and Children</p>

ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION DIMENSION	DATA CALCULATION METHOD			SOURCE OF DATA
	Data	Female	Male	
NEET rate	Data calculated and provided by INSTAT	Data calculated and provided by INSTAT	Data calculated and provided by INSTAT	Information provided by the National Institute of Statistics in Albania (INSTAT)
Youth unemployment rate	Data calculated and provided by INSTAT	Data calculated and provided by INSTAT	Data calculated and provided by INSTAT	Information provided by the National Institute of Statistics in Albania (INSTAT)
Long-term youth unemployment rate	Data calculated and provided by INSTAT	Data calculated and provided by INSTAT	Data calculated and provided by INSTAT	Information provided by the National Institute of Statistics in Albania (INSTAT)
Youth Employment rate	Data calculated and provided by INSTAT	Data calculated and provided by INSTAT	Data calculated and provided by INSTAT	Information provided by the National Institute of Statistics in Albania (INSTAT)
Young people that started their own businesses with the financial support of the state	The number of young people (15-29) who received financial support from the government (Ministries) / Total number of people who received financial support from the government (Ministries)	The number of young females (15-29) who received financial support from the government (Ministries) / Total number of females who received financial support from the government (Ministries)	The number of young males (15-29) who received financial support from the government (Ministries) / Total number of males who received financial support from the government (Ministries)	Information provided by the Minister of State for Entrepreneurship Protection, Ministry of Finances, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, and Ministry of Tourism and Environment
Self-employed young people	Data calculated and provided by INSTAT	Data calculated and provided by INSTAT	Data calculated and provided by INSTAT	Information provided by the National Institute of Statistics in Albania (INSTAT)

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION DIMENSION	DATA CALCULATION METHOD			SOURCE OF DATA
	Data	Female	Male	
Young people at risk of poverty	Data calculated and provided by INSTAT	Data calculated and provided by INSTAT	Data calculated and provided by INSTAT	Information provided by the National Institute of Statistics in Albania (INSTAT)
The percentage of poor people (the young people who live under the line of poverty) (No. of young poor people / no. of young people)	No data	No data	No data	N/A
Young people in prisons	The number of young people (15-29) in prison / Total number of people in prison	Number of young females (15-29) in prison / Total number of people in prison	Number of young males (15-29) in prison / Total number of people in prison	Information provided by the General Directorate of Prisons
Young people part of social welfare system (who receive financial support in Social Protection System) divided with the young people who are in the social welfare system	Young people (15-29) beneficiaries of the economic assistance scheme / Total People beneficiaries of the economic assistance scheme	No data	No data	Information provided by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection
Dropout from secondary education	Data calculated and provided by the Ministry of Education and Sports	Data calculated and provided by the Ministry of Education and Sports	Data calculated and provided by the Ministry of Education and Sports	Information provided by the Ministry of Education and Sports
Young people enrolled in tertiary education	Young people (18-29) enrolled in Tertiary Education / Total young people (18-29)	Young females 18-29 Enrolled in Tertiary Education / Total young female (18-29)	Young males 18-29 Enrolled in Tertiary Education / Total young males (18-29)	Information provided by the Ministry of Education and Sports and the National Institute of Statistics in Albania (INSTAT)
Young people graduated from tertiary education	Young people (18-29) graduated in 2021 / Young people (18-29) enrolled in 2021	Young female people (18-29) graduated in 2021 / Young females (18-29) enrolled in 2021	Young Male people (18-29) graduated in 2021 / Total young males (18-29) enrolled in 2021	
Participation Rate in Non-Formal Education and Training (last 4 weeks)	Data calculated and provided by INSTAT	Data calculated and provided by INSTAT	Data calculated and provided by INSTAT	Information provided by the National Institute of Statistics in Albania (INSTAT)

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