

# Monitoring report of Political, Social, Economic Participation of Youth-Albania

## Summary

*Partners Albania for Change and Development*

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*“Lack of updated official data on youth inclusion remains an issue to be addressed”*

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Partners Albania in the framework of the project “Youth Bank Hub for Western Balkan and Turkey” implemented 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, each year issues a monitoring report aiming to give an overview and analyze the state of affairs regarding youth`s political, social and economic inclusion in Albania.

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 in Albania based on a set of predefined indicators. Considering that this is the third annual report, it provides some significant data comparison over three years of monitoring 2016 - 2018.

The report data are a results of desk researches and official request for information sent to responsible institution such as: Ministry of Finance and Economy, Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, General Directorate of Taxation, General Directorate of Prisons, National Institution of Statistics and Albanian`s Municipalities.

The report elaborates recommendations and advocacy initiatives for future actions in regard to youth state of affairs on political, social and economic participation.

The data on this report are reflected in The Youth Index, elaborated from the 5 country reports of YBH network.

## Data on Political Participation of Youth

Indicators	DATA	YEAR
Young ministers in Government M/F	0.0%	2018
Young deputy ministers in government M/F	3.0%	2018
Young MPs in the parliament M/F	4.9%	2018
Young mayors	6.0%	2015-2018
On-line tools for information and participation in decision making of government and parliament	93.3%	2018
On-line tools for information and participation in decision making of municipalities	67.2%	2018
Existence of youth structure (councils/parliaments/unions) on national level	0.0%	2018
Existence of youth structure (councils/parliaments/unions) on local level	49.0%	2018

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Young MPs in the parliament M/F	4.9%	2018			
Young mayors	6.0%	2015-2018	Young people at risk of poverty	15%	2012 <sup>1</sup>
On-line tools for information and participation in decision making of government and parliament	93.3%	2018	The percentage of poor people (the young people who lives under the line of poverty) (No of young poor people / no of young people)	No data	
On-line tools for information and participation in decision making of municipalities	67.2%	2018	Young people in prisons	47.7%	2018 <sup>2</sup>
Existence of youth structure (councils/parliaments/unions) on national level	0.0%	2018	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	No data <sup>3</sup>	
Existence of youth structure (councils/parliaments/unions) on local level	49.0%	2018			
			Dropout from the secondary education	3.2%	2017-2018 <sup>4</sup>
			Young people enrolled in tertiary education	53,9%	2017-2018 <sup>5</sup>
			Young people graduated from tertiary education	26.0%	2017-2018 <sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The last Instat publication dates on 2012

[http://www.instat.gov.al/media/1312/living\\_standart\\_measurement\\_survey\\_2012\\_revised.pdf](http://www.instat.gov.al/media/1312/living_standart_measurement_survey_2012_revised.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Request for Information General Directorate of Prisons

<sup>3</sup> PA sent a request for information to the Ministry of Health and Social Protection but still has not received any reply.

<sup>4</sup> Request for Information Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth

<sup>5</sup> Request for Information National Institute of Statistics

<sup>6</sup> Request for Information National Institute of Statistics

## Data on Economic Participation of Youth

Indicators	DATA	YEAR
NEET rate	28.6%	2018
Youth unemployment rate	23.1%	2018
Long-term youth unemployment rate	13.1%	2018
Youth Labor force participation rate	50.1%	2018
Youth Employment rate	38.5%	2018
Young people that started their own business with the financial support of state	No data <sup>7</sup>	
Self-employed young people	0.9%	2018

### Comparisons of data during 3 years of monitoring

Based on the three year monitoring of youth state of political, social and economic inclusion, in overall the indicators do not show any significant improvement.

The political participation of youth in the last two years is improved compared to 2016, but following the latest political occurring in 2019, in which the opposition parties resigned their political mandates and decided not to participate in the local elections held in June, the youth political participation for 2019 is not expected to increase. On the contrary, the situation might worsen.

The number of youngsters in prison has increased of 11.2% during this three-year period. The lack of data since 2012 on youth living conditions and partially collected data on youth inclusion in social protection system, show a deterioration of youth's state of social participation.

Regarding the youth economic participation, it is noted a slight improvement during these three years, mentioning here the youth unemployment rate decreased of 5.8% and employment ratio increased of 6.1%. The data on self-employed youngsters has significantly decreased due to a change on methodology. This year the indicator calculates the number of registered self-employed young people compared to the youth population in 2018 from INSTAT, unlike the last two years where it was compared to the number of self-employed people registered in the General Tax Directorate. Furthermore, the lack of data on government's support regarding youngsters' start-up business is another indicator showing low economic youth participation during all the three-year monitoring period.

<sup>7</sup> PA sent an official request for information at the Ministry of Finance and Economy but has not received any reply.

In the third consecutive year of monitoring, lack of statistical data on youth in national and local level remains still an issue. This is mostly encountered in the social participation indicators but also on the economic ones, specifically on government's support on youngsters' business initiatives. Furthermore, two of the Ministries responsible for delivering these schemes did not reply to the official request sent by PA, requesting the above data.

### **Youth political participation**

- Despite the initiative taken by the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth in drafting and approving The Law on Youth by the end of 2018, there is not yet such a law. In addition, it is worth mentioning that in the final youth draft law-proposal, the CSOs recommendations were not reflected. This draft law was contested by the latter specifically about the article 13 on creating a national youth representation structure under the dependency of the ministry.
- Despite strategic commitments stipulated in the National Youth Action Plan 2015-2020, on creating youth representative structures on both level still on national level there is no youth structure and in local level more than half of municipalities does not have such structure either.
- 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 level. Successful models of youth leadership in politics such as young MPs, Young Mayors, and Young Deputy Ministers should be further promoted.

### 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<sup>8</sup>, 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 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.

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<sup>8</sup> Percentage of young people in prisons is calculated as number of young people in prisons divided with total number of people in prisons in Albania.

- During the last years, promotion of vocational education and student orientation toward vocational education has been one of government priority policies. Update of vocational curricula based on labor market needs it is important, in order to ensure employment of graduated youngsters from these institutions.
- 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. Though there is a start-up funds in support of small and medium enterprises from Ministry of Finance and Economy, there is need for more promotion of the availability of this financial scheme and more transparency for the use of funds.