



**Civic and Political
Participation of
Youth:
Illusion or Reality?**

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YOUTH IN MONTENEGRO

This chapter gives the statistics by age, sex/gender, ethnic structure, education, employment and migration when it comes to young people in Montenegro. According to Article 2 of the Law on Youth¹, young people are persons between the age of 15 and 30.

Statistics related to young people in Montenegro for the period 2011 – 2022

According to the data provided by the Statistical Office of Montenegro (MONSTAT) from the last census held in 2011, out of the total number of population (620.029) young people account for 21.4% or 132.702 citizens belong to the persons between the age of 15 and 29. The share of men in relation to the total number of young people is 51.39% (68.198), while there is 48.61% of women (64.504).

Every year, MONSTAT publishes population estimate. According to it, in 2022, out of the total number of Montenegrin citizens (617.683), there were 116.011 of young people between the age of 15 and 29, more specifically, 60.147 (51.85%) young men and 55.864 (48.15%) young women, which makes 18.78% of the overall population of Montenegro. According to age groups, MONSTAT population estimate for 2022 indicates the following:

Graph 1 – Population estimate on 1st January 2022

	Men	Women	Total
15-19	19.798	18.144	37.942
20-24	19.877	18.598	38.475
25-29	20.472	19.122	39.594
TOTAL	60.147	55.864	116.011

¹ Data on Population estimates, MONSTAT, available at <https://www.monstat.org/eng/page.php?id=48&pageid=48>,

The data show that the number of **young people has been in constant decline** ever since the 2022 census. In fact, in 2022 the number of young people is smaller by 17,691 than in 2011 which is almost **13%** decline in the number of young people. Montenegrin population was experiencing constant growth up until 2019, and then in 2020 commences the declining trend.

Graph 2 – Share of young people in the overall population for the period from 2011 to 2022

	Number of young people	Overall Montenegrin population	Share of young people in the overall population (%)
2011	132.914	619.428	21,46
2012	131.879	620.079	21,27
2013	130.063	620.601	20,96
2014	128.381	621.207	20,67
2015	126.508	621.810	20,35
2016	124.565	622.159	20,02
2017	123.018	622.303	19,77
2018	121.276	622.373	19,49
2019	119.822	622.227	19,26
2020	118.649	622.028	19,07
2021	117.250	620.739	18,89
2022	116.011	617.683	18,78

The share of young people in the overall population in 2011 was 21.46%, whilst in 2022 it is 18.78%, which indicates **a drop of almost 2.7% of young people in the overall population in 11 years**. Also, among Montenegrin youth, the number of young men is somewhat greater than the number of young women.

Ethnic structure

According to the 2011 census data, the age group of the young from 20-29 declared themselves as **Montenegrians (47.3%), then Serbs (25.3%), Bosniaks (9.2%), Albanians (4.7%), Muslims (3.5%), Croats (0.6%) and Roma (1.1%)**. There were 6% of those who would not declare themselves in relation to national background, and others accounted for less than 2%.

Education and employment

According to the MONSTAT Labour Force Survey², in the first quarter of 2022 certain level of education was held by 86.200 persons aged between 15-24, elementary level of education was held by 30.700 persons, 31.800 vocational level education following elementary school, 13.100 held secondary and general level of education, and 6.800 of young people held university degrees.

Early departure from the system of education and training is evident among the population between 18 and 24 years of age with the lowest secondary education, and who are not any more in the process of education and training. In 2021, this rate was **6.7%**, somewhat lower for young men (5.4%) than for young women (8.7%).

When it comes to the share, the data are not optimistic. **The share presenting the percentage of young people who are not employed, and who are not in the system of education or training, so called NEET category** aged between 15 and 29, was 26.5% in 2021, more specifically for young men 28.3%, and for young women 24.6%. At the level of EU-27 in 2021, the share was 15.5% which is almost twice as low in relation to Montenegro.

² Labour Force Survey in Montenegro, MONSTAT, available at: <https://www.monstat.org/cg/page.php?id=22&pageid=22>

Unemployment rate

The activity rate of the young people in 2021 was 44.4% (48.9% for young men and 39.7% for young women) as shown by the MONSTAT Labour Force Survey³. The activity rate of the young in Montenegro was somewhat higher than in EU-27 (37.8%). In 2021, total activity rate of the young was insignificantly higher than in 2011, when it was recorded at 40%.

On the basis of the same official data, **youth unemployment rate for 2021 was 32.5%** (33.2% for young women and 31.5% for young men), **which was by 6.5% higher as compared to the year 2018, and twice as higher in relation to the youth unemployment rate in EU-27.**

Youth migration

Montenegro faces internal and external migration flows. In recent decades, Montenegrin population has been experiencing rapid ageing and increased youth emigration. Emigration is caused by economic uncertainty and instability, coupled with several other causes like social exclusion, poverty, globalization, economic crisis, political instability, corruption, then nepotism and cronyism which has a strong influence on candidates' success when applying for positions in public sector institutions. Besides, policy makers and media should be aware that constant, and especially exaggerated criticism of the situation in Montenegro creates increasingly negative perception among young people, considerably increasing the probability of their emigration, and by that worsen the issue of brain drain.

Based on the World Bank (WB) data from 2018, the estimates tell that **close to 25% of Montenegrins live abroad**⁴. The UN estimate that by 2050 Montenegrin working age population will have shrunk by 150.000⁵. Average number of migrants of working age who leave Montenegro is 3.320 per-

³ Ibid

⁴ <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/787451545030793133/pdf/Montenegro-Growth-and-Jobs.pdf>

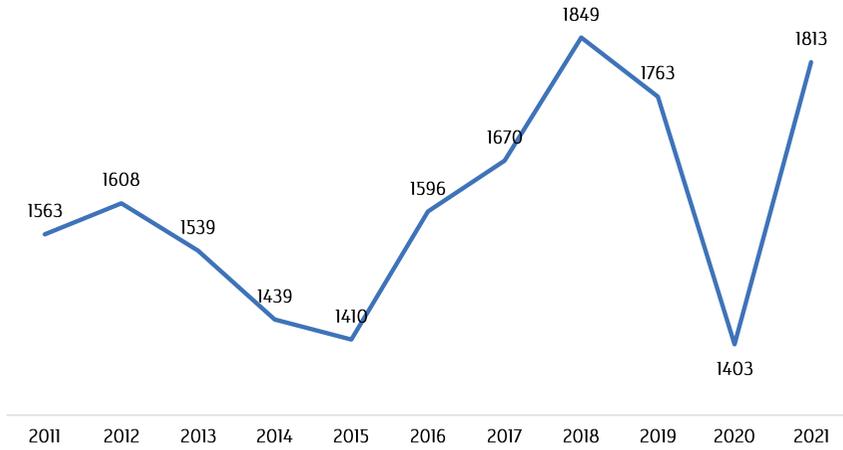
⁵ Ibid

sons a year. Losses which Montenegro faces annually due to emigration amount to € 70 million, which means that every person of working age who leaves Montenegro takes with him/her around € 21.561 of some potential future annual GDP. In the last two decades there is noticeable internal migration towards the capital city and the coastal area.

As regards the data on emigration, there is no accurate statistics in Montenegro which would enable the analysis of its scope, age groups, sex/gender, level of education and other features of migrant population, or which would support the establishment of a database so as to be able to monitor this phenomenon in a systematic way in the future. Rough estimates tell that since 1991 about 173 thousand of Montenegrin youth have left the economy. In this context, according to the data of the Centre for Democracy and Human Rights (CEDEM), just over a third of the young wish to leave Montenegro and to move permanently to another economy, whilst 29.2% might but need not to leave Montenegro, depending on what “the country has to offer”. In addition, on the basis of the data provided by Fridrih-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), more than 70% of Montenegrin youth declared that economic reasons were greater motivation for moving to another country than education (less than 20%) and cultural and other differences, followed by other reasons (less than 10%). Moreover, Balkan barometer created by the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) registers the increase of interest when it comes to emigration from the region. On the other hand, main reasons for internal migration are better conditions for doing business and living.

Internal migration in Montenegro is mostly characterized by the migration flow from rural to urban areas. Young people from rural areas face a series of challenges linked with the lack of opportunities for better quality life. For these reasons, all northern municipalities record negative migration balance. MONSTAT publishes annual data on internal migration. Consequently, the most recent data show that 1.813 out of 6.723 (27%), **more than every fourth young person between the age of 15 and 29 migrated within Montenegro in 2021** (39% of young men and 61% of young women). **Every year since 2011, at least 1.400 young people migrate internally, while comparative data for the period of 10 years show the upward trend, especially as of 2015.**

Graph 3 – Number of young people migrating internally in Montenegro from 2011 to 2021



CIVIC PARTICIPATION OF YOUTH

In this section we analyse current mechanisms of the participation of youth at the central and local level from the point of view of legislation and implementation.

The involvement and participation of young people, especially in decision-making process, is governed by the Law on Youth, but also other laws which regulate, in general sense, participation of citizens in decision-making process and community development, which are thus also applied to young people. Legal provisions that focus on this area are contained in the following pieces of legislation: Law on NGOs, Law on Local Self-Government, General Law on Education and Law on Higher Education.

Despite the existence of various mechanisms, there is a lack of structural dialogue as a consultation process between the young and the decision makers aimed at joint defining and implementation of youth related policies. Sole example of structural dialogue is through the Regional Youth Cooperation Organization (RYCO) where a representative of Montenegrin youth takes part in the Steering Committee.

In addition, differentiation of “subgroups” which belong to young population is not taken sufficiently into account while creating and implementing participation process: for instance, young women, Roma and Egyptian community, young persons with disabilities, who do not have equal opportunities for economic, social and political participation.

Participation of young people at the national and local level is of a limited character. Although certain number of NGOs in Montenegro carries out the activities directed towards increasing the level of participation of young people in decision-making processes, there is a large number of young people who are passive and need to be additionally encouraged to take part in decision-making process. Besides, young people who are considered to be at risk of discrimination (young Roma, young persons with disabilities, young women, young people living in rural areas) still do not participate in the processes of participation and mobility at an equal footing with other groups of young people.

According to the findings of the latest CEDEM Survey, 60% of the young think that young people very often fail to recognize the existence of programmes, thus feeling is created that institutions/organizations are using them just as decor⁶. When working with the young it becomes clear that they have big potential which is to be adequately supported. Frequently, there are difficulties in understanding that the contribution of young people in decision-making is important, as well as in accepting the fact that their participation leads to better results. This is a crucial question, since young people have to have strong voice in decision-making on all relevant social issues (employment, healthcare, education etc.) and this voice should be observed and respected.

On the other hand, that the young are very often unaware of the mechanisms which might enable their participation and consequently unable to participate meaningfully in decision-making processes is corroborated by the data that only 30% of young people have heard of the mechanisms for the participation of young people at the national level. Therefore, despite the fact that there is ever increasing need for innovative approaches to the involvement of young people, public authorities, as well as NGOs should work on stronger promotion of the existing mechanisms.

Regional platforms and networks should have considerably greater influence if their work and activities are communicated better with the target group by applying communication methods adjusted to the young.

On the basis of the still valid Youth Strategy 2017-2021, there are two forms of youth participation: “prescribed” civic participation through mechanisms offered and required by the Government, and “self-initiative” civic participation when initiatives come from citizens, including the young. The data from the latest CEDEM surveys on civic and political participation of young people indicate that the young mostly do not take part in decision-making processes at the national level, but more than 80% consider that young people ought to be involved more and asked to participate in decision-making processes on all levels.

Besides, according to the Decree on the Appointment of NGO Representatives to Working Parties of Public Administration Bodies and

⁶ Bešić, M, Pejović, M. „Civic and Political participation of youth in Montenegro”, CEDEM, 2020 available at <http://www.cedem.me/publikacije/istrazivanja/politicko-javno-mnjenje/send/29-politicko-javno-mnjenje/1962-politicka-i-gradanska-participacija-mladih-u-crnoj-gori>, (Accessed on November 12, 2020) p. 46.

Conducting of Public Consultation during Law Drafting and Strategy Development, NGO representatives may take part in the working parties established with a view to preparing or drafting legislations or programmes in certain areas of intervention. Their participation encompasses joint work of public and civil sector on policy development aimed at exercising common interest. This means that NGOs, including the ones dealing with youth issues, are entitled to participate in the working parties established by state administration bodies. These organizations constitute a form of participation (of youth) in decision-making processes at the national level when they represent the rights and interest of the young. In specific terms, the Youth Law was drafted by a working party which involved three NGO representatives, who were the voice of 29 NGOs which had supported their appointment as the working party members.

The Youth Law envisaged the establishment of the Youth Council with a view to fostering the development of youth policy by the Ministry of Sport and Youth. However, its establishment is still on standby. Although all requirements have been met for its establishment, the influence of political changes and inadequate political will and focus on youth delayed its establishment. Also, there is a hope that youth councils at the national and local level will be working on greater participation of youth and improvement of the position of the young, since in their structure there are mostly representatives of public administration bodies who are not necessarily young people. Finally, only two representatives of the Youth Network of Montenegro could be youth representatives at the national level or at least one member of the youth council can act as a representative of the NGOs that implement youth policy at the local level.

It is regulated that the council as an advisory and professional body has a Chair and eight members, with the Ministry proposing a Chair and three members, while public administration bodies in charge of education propose one member each for the term of office of four years. In addition, one Youth Council member is a representative of legal entities running youth services, and this one is appointed for the period of one year by way of a public call published by the Ministry. It is also regulated that the representative association of NGOs which implement youth policy proposes two members of the Youth Council, at least one of whom comes from among the young, and they are appointed for the

period of one year. In case the Council does not get established, two Youth Council members, at least one of whom comes from among the young, propose NGOs which implement youth policy, for the period of one year. With the adoption of the Regulation on Requirements, Manner and Procedure of Appointment of Youth Council Members, all legislative requirements have been met for the establishment of the Youth Council. Nevertheless, even two years after the adoption of the said Regulation the Council has not been established. Following the establishment, this council will be in charge of: giving proposals for the improvement of the youth policy; giving suggestions in relation to the Strategy development process; delegating its members for the participation in the procedure of drafting legislations from the areas regulating the issues of importance for the young; monitoring the position of the young and proposing measures for its improvement upon the request of the Ministry of Sport and Youth, issuing opinions on other issues of importance for the young. It is worth while emphasizing that current legislative solution fails to recognize the Youth Council which is supposed be free from state officials.

The Youth Law from 2019 defines the establishment of the umbrella youth organization or association of NGOs and/or associations involved in the implementation of the youth policy in its Article 20 paragraph 1 reading as follows: “NGOs involved in the implementation of the youth policy may establish an association in line with the law governing the establishment of NGOs”. Moreover, a representative association, within the meaning of the law, is an association consisting of several entities. At least 30 NGOs involved in the implementation of the youth policy from at least six municipalities, two from each region, coastal, central and northern, as stipulated in the law governing regional development. Also, representative nature of the association of NGOs is determined by the line ministry for the period of one year by issuing certificate of representativeness. Consequently, the Youth Network of Montenegro was established in 2020 by 35 youth organizations, organizations working with and for the young, as well as youth associations and unions.

Student parliaments of various higher education institutions are students’ representative bodies established with a view to protecting students’ rights and interests. However, due to the lack of intensive and constructive communication with various partners, but also among very students, the possibility for student parliaments to take an active part

and work on fostering and improving student activism remain limited. The representatives of student parliaments are often termed politically suitable representatives, especially when it comes to the State University, and it is considered that their decisions often do not reflect the views of those who elected them. Student parliaments should dedicate considerable attention to the improvement of the manners and conditions of teaching and practical training in various university units, as this would contribute significantly to their more significant participation in decision-making process and improvement of the position of the young.

On the other hand, student organizations like the Montenegrin Association of Students of Political Sciences (MAPPS), AISEC and ELSA contribute to meeting social, cultural and academic needs and the needs for physical recreation of students, as envisaged by the Law on Higher Education. Their activities foster participation and networking, which results in very constructive participation of their members in various participation mechanisms.

Through membership, establishment and running an NGO implementing youth policy, as one of traditional forms of participation, young people have an opportunity for direct participation in decision-making process. NGOs implementing youth policy are the ones which specified in their statutory documents their involvement in the implementation of youth policy.

High School Students Union of Montenegro is an umbrella organization of student parliaments of all secondary school in Montenegro and an excellent example of youth participation at the national and local level. The Union is a very good example of participation of young people in decision-making process, since its representatives are democratically elected by 83 delegates of the National Conference. Also, they have excellent cooperation with various donors. The Union organizes the Action Day through established cooperation with different stakeholders in Montenegro and by collecting funds for supporting projects developed by student parliaments in Montenegro. Also, as a member of the Western Balkan Youth Cooperation Platform, they organize activities which involve young people in various areas on intervention. Through different number of minor projects every year, the Union strives to improve the quality of life of secondary school students, be it through various activities or interactive events. The Union is also coordinating the Youth Centre in Podgorica ever since it was established.

Political parties' youth branches are rarely independent organizations. Their main target group are young people whose main objective is youth political activism. Membership in this kind of political parties is limited to 30 years of age. However, the representatives of the political parties' youth branches have no real political power and participation in decision-making processes, instead, it is considered that their predominant function is to serve political marketing goals. All political parties in Montenegro have their youth branches.

When it comes to local level, local youth councils were established in four municipalities, only they have not yet been established as common practice. In line with the existing Youth Law, Local Youth Council was established in Podgorica, while local youth councils in Kotor, Cetinje and Pljevlja were established in line with the former Youth Law. Consequently, it is very important to emphasize that the structures of the local youth councils and the Youth Council are completely different. The Youth Council, as a body include only young people, while local youth councils consist of the representatives of municipal bodies in charge of youth policy and NGOs active in the field of the implementation of youth policy and at least one member is a representative of NGOs which implement youth policy.

On the other hand, the young and citizens in general, are not familiar with the mechanisms like Initiative, Citizens' Assembly, Local and Municipal Referendum. No municipality keeps records of these mechanisms having been used thus far for the improvement of the issues of youth policy. When it comes to informal youth groups, Civic Initiative is a good example whose activity has fulfilled its mission. Young people have become very active when it comes to environmental issues. In that context, a positive example worth mentioning here is the civic initiative called "Čempresari" (Cypress tree activists) whose objective was to protect an area belonging to "Niko Rolović" Gymnasium and to stop polluting the area in front of the school.

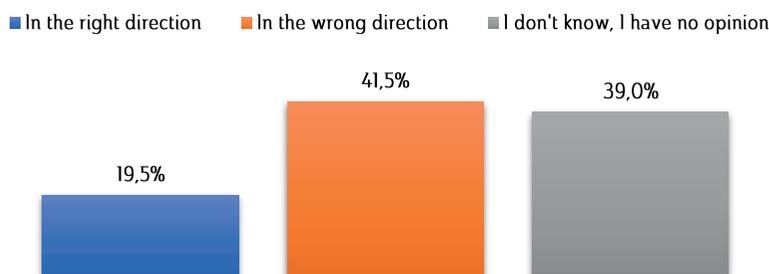
PERCEPTION AND VIEWS OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN RELATION TO SOCIO-POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

With a view to assessing the perception and views of young people in relation to socio-political developments, but also comparing certain data with the data concerning adults, in June 2022 CEDEM conducted a survey on a representative sample for Montenegrin population of 1021 interviewees.

Only every fifth young person considers that Montenegro is moving in the right direction, whilst contrary to them, **41.5% say that Montenegro is moving in the wrong direction. Almost 40% of young people does not know or has no opinion of the direction Montenegro is moving in.**

By comparing the 2019 data we could see that **the number of young people who think that Montenegro is moving in the right direction is by 15% smaller.**

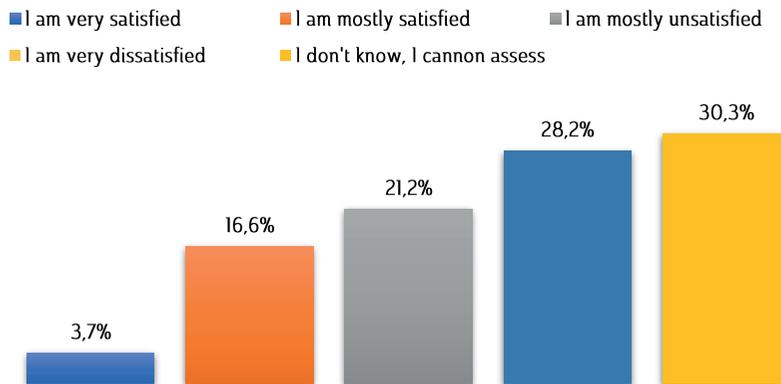
Graph 4 – Which direction Montenegro is moving in? (%)



Observed in a cumulative manner, **almost half of the young are dissatisfied with the performance of this Government, while just over 20% of the young are satisfied with the results achieved thus far.** Almost every third

young person either does not know or is unable to assess Government's performance.

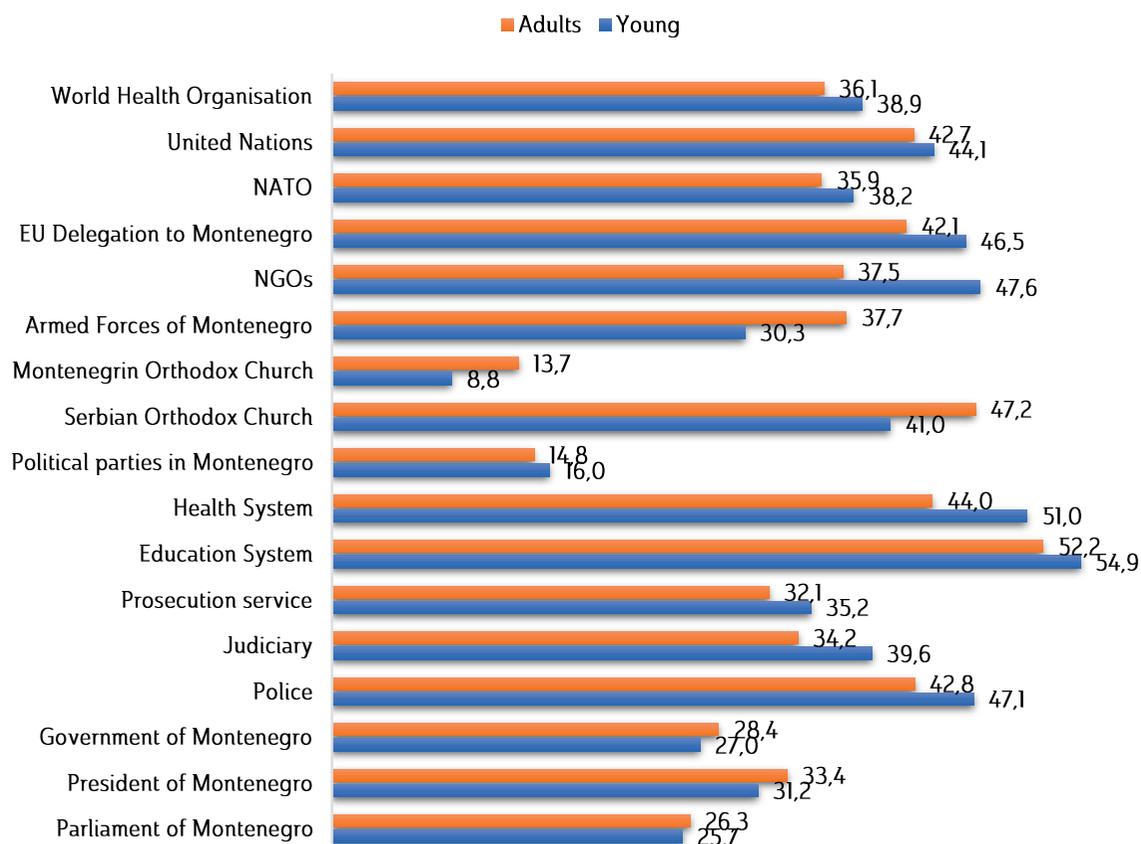
Graph 5 – Are you satisfied with Government's performance? (%)



On the basis of the data obtained during the Survey, the analysis of the trust in institutions indicates that citizens (young and the others) trust the system of education most, followed by health system and Serbian Orthodox Church (for both groups of interviewees), with least trust being placed in Montenegrin Orthodox Church (for both groups of interviewees).

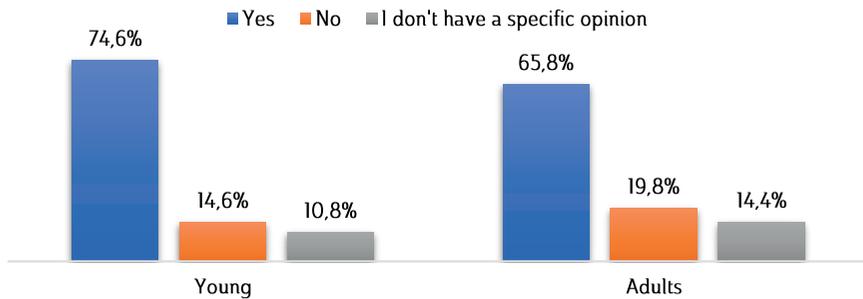
The opinion, i.e. views of the young and other interviewees, for certain institutions differ considerably. Greater degree of trust of the young, as compared to adults, is placed in NATO, EU Delegation to MNE, NGOs, Police, judiciary, prosecution service, education system, healthcare system, political parties, UN and WHO. In case of SOC, Government, President and parliament of Montenegro, the young, as compared to the others, have smaller degree of trust.

Graph 6 – Trust in institution (%)



When it comes to Montenegrin EU membership, **the young support Montenegrin EU membership considerably more than adults, by almost 10%**. When compared to adult interviewees (19.8%), smaller number of young people are contrary to the membership (14.6%).

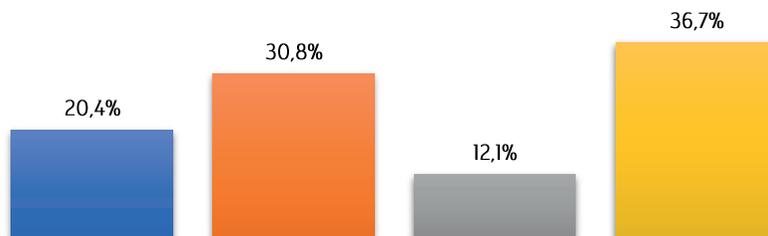
Graph 7 – Support to Montenegrin EU membership (%)



Only every fifth young interviewees believes that the 43rd Government of Montenegro will accelerate its path towards EU, and almost every third that it will be moving equally fast as before. Just over 12% consider that this government will slow down the process of European integration. Majority of young interviewees do not know or have no view on this issue (36.8%).

Graph 8 – View on Government of Montenegro negotiation speed (%)

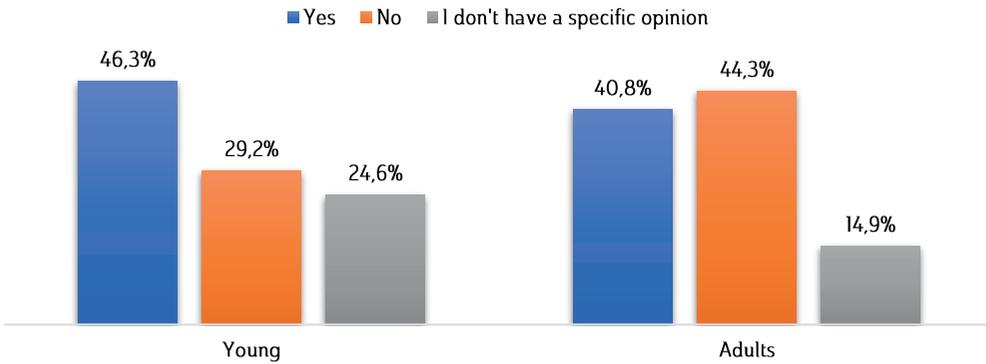
- I think the new minority Government will accelerate Montenegrin path towards EU
- I think that after the establishment of the new Government Montenegro will proceed equally fast towards EU
- I think that the new Government will slow down Montenegrin path towards EU
- I don't know, I don't have an opinion



When it comes to Montenegrin NATO membership, comparative data for adults and **the young are very interesting. In fact, the young support Montenegrin NATO membership by 5.5% more in relation to adults.** On the other hand, **there is considerably smaller number of the young who do not support Montenegrin NATO membership.** More specifically, 44.3% of adults do not

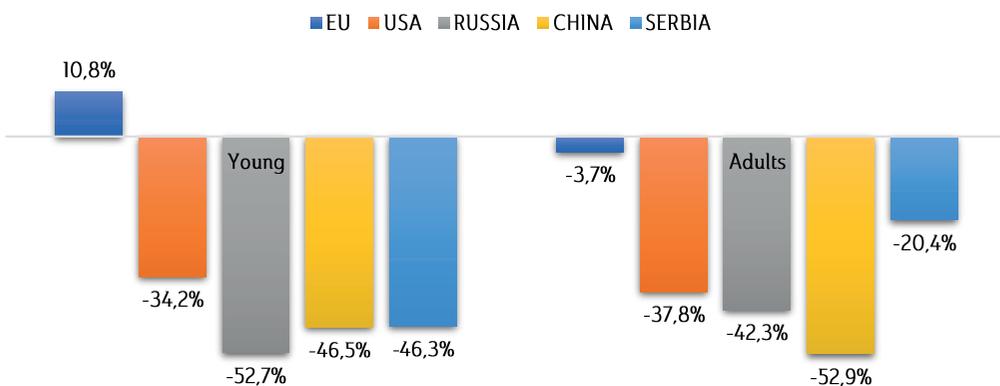
support this membership, while the number of young having the same view as adults (29.2%) is smaller by 15.1%.

Graph 9 – Support to Montenegrin NATO membership (%)



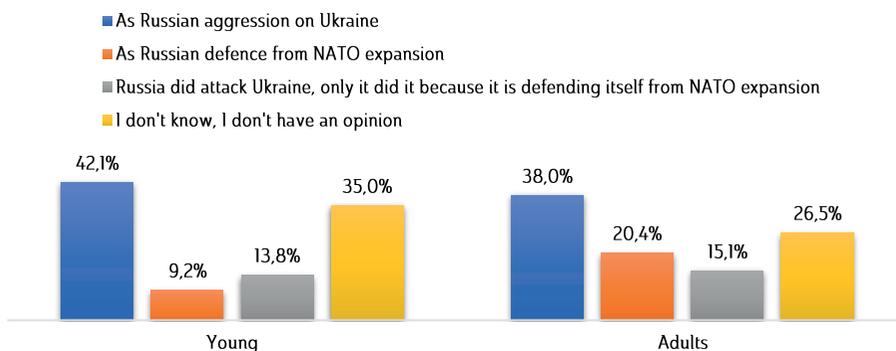
The following graph shows the index of foreign-policy orientation, and/or the difference between the sum that it relies “fully or to a great extent” and the sum that it relies “little or not at all” on the stated countries. The data indicate that **there is a greater number of the young in relation to adults who consider that the EU should be fully or to a great extent relied on.** The young and adults have almost identical view when it comes to the reliance on the USA, whilst the data are significantly different when it comes to China, Russia and Serbia as Montenegrin foreign policy reliance. **Significantly greater number of the young** as compared to adults who consider that Montenegro should rely little or not at all on Russia and China, especially when it comes to Serbia.

Graph 10 – Foreign policy orientation index (%)



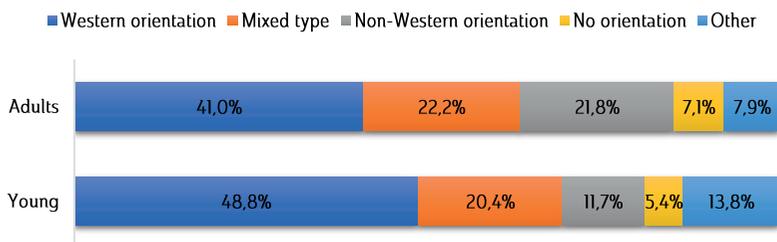
The largest majority of the young and adults alike consider that the war in Ukraine is Russian aggression. Nevertheless, comparative data indicate **that the young, in relation to adults, consider to a significantly smaller degree, i.e. by 10%, that the war is in fact defence from NATO spreading.** Almost the same percentage of the young and adults, about 15%, consider that Russia attacked Ukraine due to defence from NATO expansion.

Graph 11 – View on war in Ukraine (%)



Generally speaking, **Montenegrin citizens are mostly pro-Western oriented although the young prevail in that.** On the other hand, there is significantly smaller number of the young who are non-Western oriented (11.7%), contrary to adults (21.8%). Just about a fifth of the young and adults belong to mixed-type category, when it comes to foreign-policy orientation. No orientation returned 5.4% of the young and 7.1% of adults.

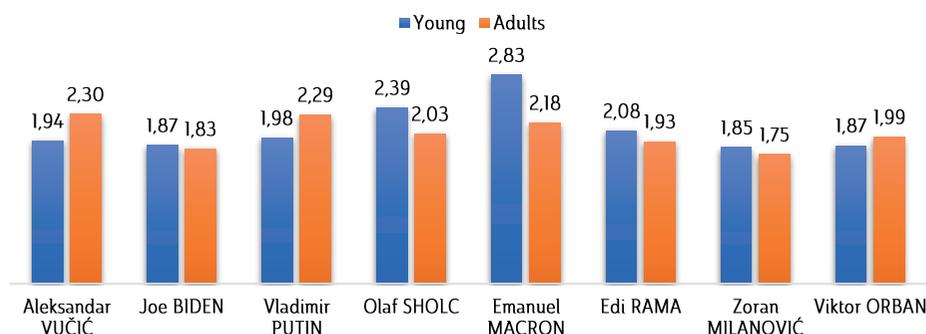
Graph 12 – Foreign-policy orientation (%)



Even when it comes to average score for foreign politicians, the opinions of the young and adults differ with majority of politicians. **The highest average score among the proposed politicians young people awarded to Emmanuel Macron**

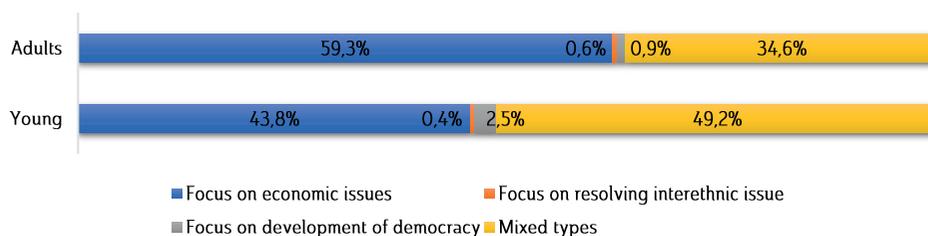
and Olaf Scholz, while adults awarded highest score to Vučić and Putin.

Graph 13 – Average scores for foreign politicians



Contrary to adults, who think that the country should focus on resolving economic issues, **the young mostly belong to mixed-type category when speaking about internal political orientation.** Negligible percentage of the young and adults alike consider that attention is to be directed towards the development of democracy and resolving of interethnic issues.

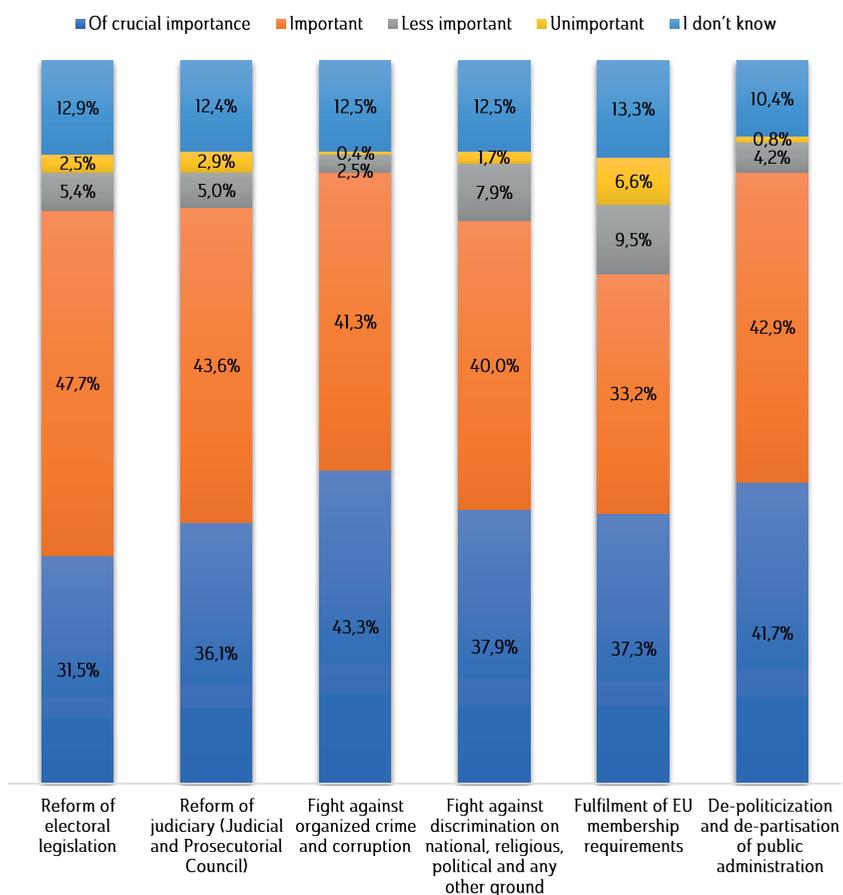
Graph 14 – Internal political orientation (%)



When it comes to the question “Regardless of who is currently in power, to what extent are certain areas and priorities important in terms of betterment in the future and improvement of Montenegro?”, **the same percentage of the young (84.6%) consider depoliticization and departsation of public administration as a key and important priority, i.e. for recruitment to be done on merit and not on the ground of party affiliation, as well as the fight against organized crime and corruption. Almost equally important**

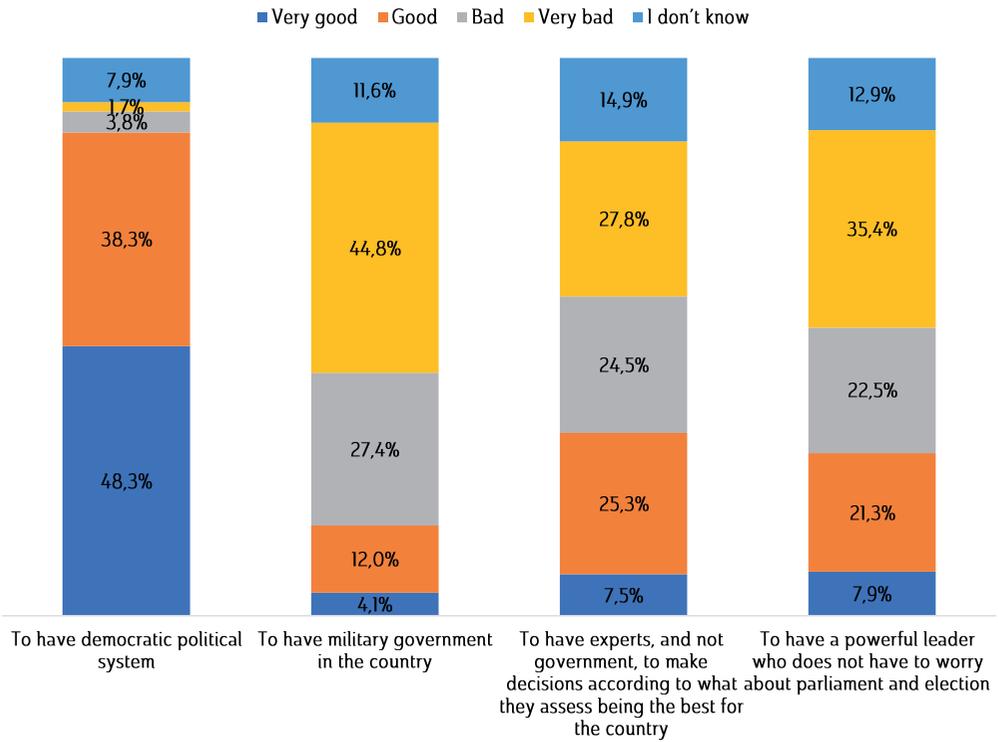
and crucial for the betterment of Montenegro is considered the reform of judiciary (79.7%), then reform of electoral legislation (79.2%), fight against discrimination (77.9%) and finally fulfilment of EU membership requirements (70.5%).

Graph 15 – Priorities for progress of Montenegro (%)



Finally, when it comes to a very important issue of participation in decision-making processes the data show assessments of different government systems. Unequivocally, **most young people think that democratic political system is very good**. Conversely, more than half the young think of other political systems as being bad and very bad.

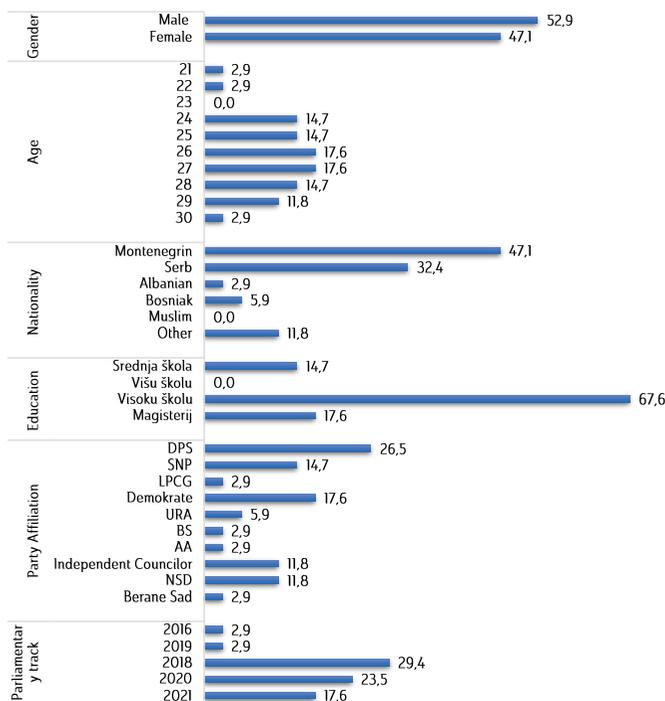
Graph 16 – Assessment of various government systems (%)



PERCEPTION AND VIEWS OF YOUNG COUNCILLORS IN LOCAL PARLIAMENTS ON POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

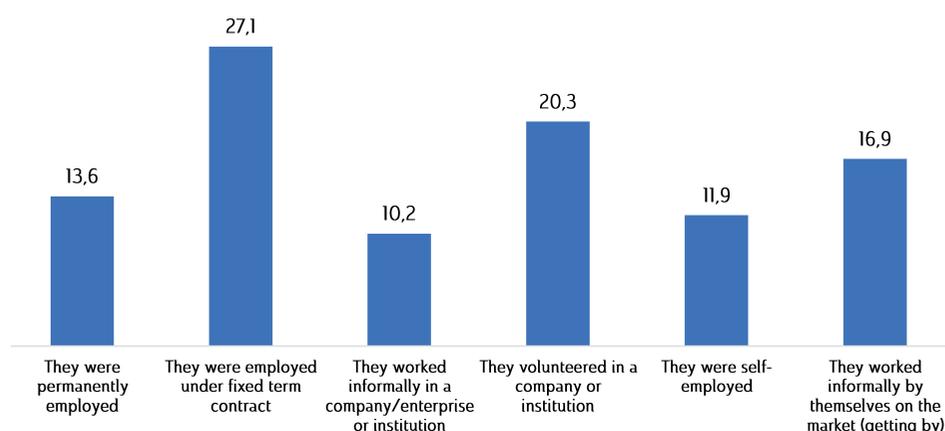
Integral part of civic political participation in the survey which was presented in the first part was to explore the views and political activism of councillors in local parliaments. In doing that, only young councillors were included in the survey, those up to the age of 30. The aim of this part of the survey was to determine to what extent do young councillors participate in political life, and also to determine their perception and views when it comes to youth policy. Criterion for selecting interviewees was simple; in fact, we forwarded e-mail questionnaire to all local councillors up to the age of 30. In the outcome, the Questionnaire was filled in by 75 interviewees, which is more than satisfactory having in mind total number of local councillors who meet the given age criterion. First of all, we present key features of the interviewees themselves.

Graph 17 – Main features of the interviewees (%)



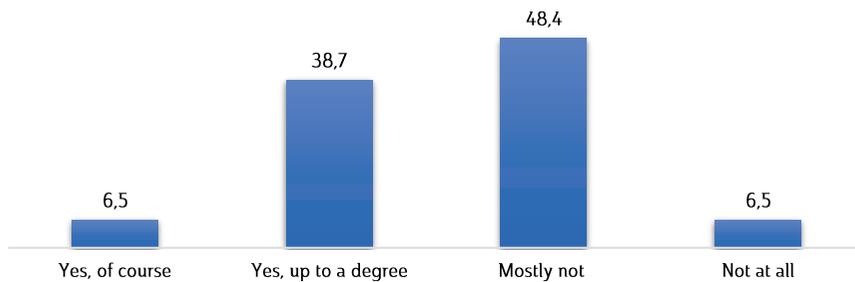
Prior to their terms of office in local parliaments, **most of young councillors had had fixed term employment contracts**, and just over one fifth of them volunteered in a company or institution. Over 13% had had permanent employment contracts, whilst around 11% of them worked informally in a company or were even self-employed. Finally, 16.9% worked informally in the market for their own account.

Graph 18 – Employment status of local councillors prior to the beginning of their terms of office in local parliaments



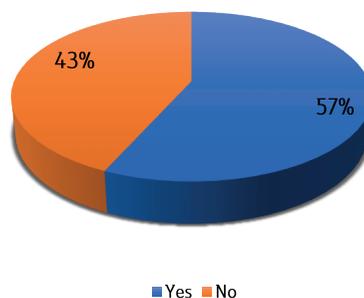
In this part of the survey, we were exploring certain views of young councillors and sought their opinion on current policies focusing of the young and their assessment of the effectiveness of youth organizations or bodies in charge of the young. To the question of general assessment of the interviewees on whether Montenegro as the country takes special care of the young, **almost every other young councillor mostly negatively assesses country's care of the young**, whilst 6.5% assess it completely negatively. Just over a third consider that some care is taken, and only 6.5% consider full care is taken. When compared to 2019 data, **considerably smaller number assess that the country takes care of the young, and/or there are more who think that the country does not pay sufficient care of the young**.

Graph 19 – Generally speaking, does Montenegro take special care of the young (%)



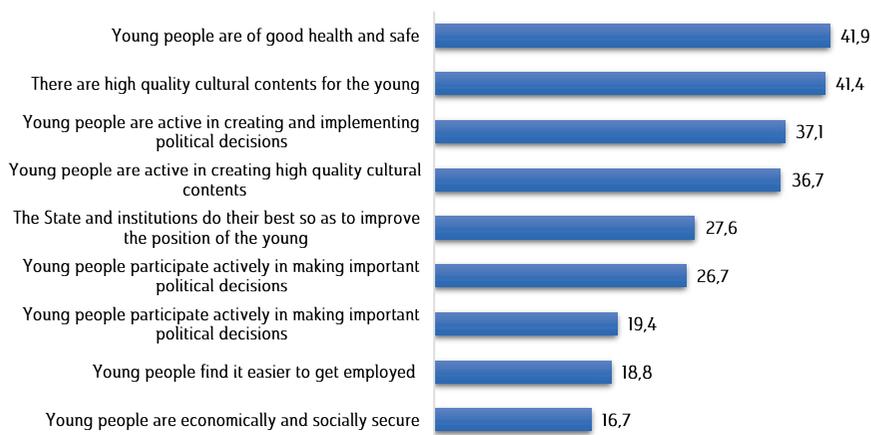
When it comes to organizations dealing with the young, **majority of young councillors (57%) know of at least one youth organization**. Of those who responded positively, when asked open question most often they stated NGOs (none of them with particular frequency) - EYCA, NGOs, youth clubs, Berane Youth, Unicef, Active Zone, Juventas, URA, Youth Network, Alfa Centar, Niksic Youth, RYCO, Ombudsman.

Graph 20 – Cognizant of some organizations dealing with youth issues (%)



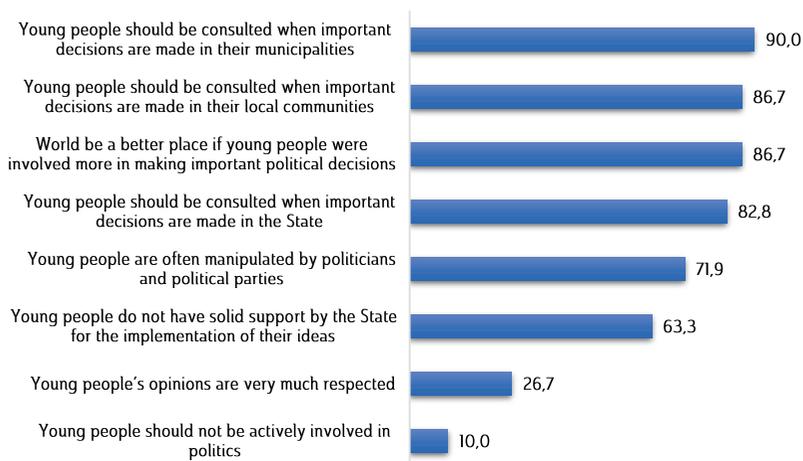
When it comes to greatest achievements in the area of the young, the data indicate that young councillors consider that in no area (graph 21) greatest achievement has been made. Just as in the findings of the 2019 survey, the worst assessed aspect is economic and social security of the young, youth employment and active participation of the young in the implementation of important political decisions. Just over a third consider that achievements have been made in the area of creation of cultural contents for the young. Near half of local councillors consider that the young are of good health and safe.

Graph 21 – Greatest achievements when it comes to the position of the young - % SUM fully achieved and to a great extent



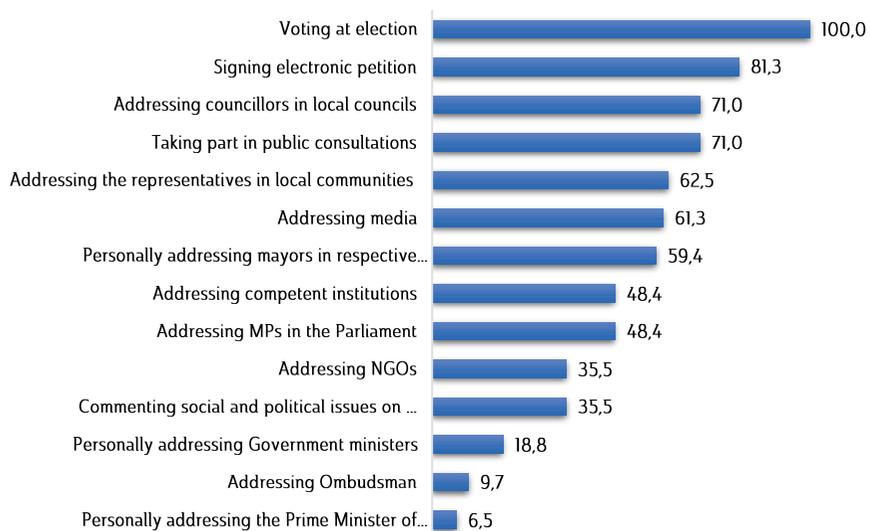
Using traditional four-point Likert scale of ordinal type, young councillors' views of the young were being explored. The outcomes show full agreement and agreement up to a certain level with the stated views. **The outcomes indicate that the views of young councillors are very affirmative when it comes to political participation at all levels, especially in their respective municipalities.** Among the views they agree the least is the view that the young should not be practicing politics, **and only every fourth young councillor considers that the opinions of the young in Montenegro are very much observed.**

Graph 22 – Views on the young – (%) SUM fully in agreement and agreement up to a degree



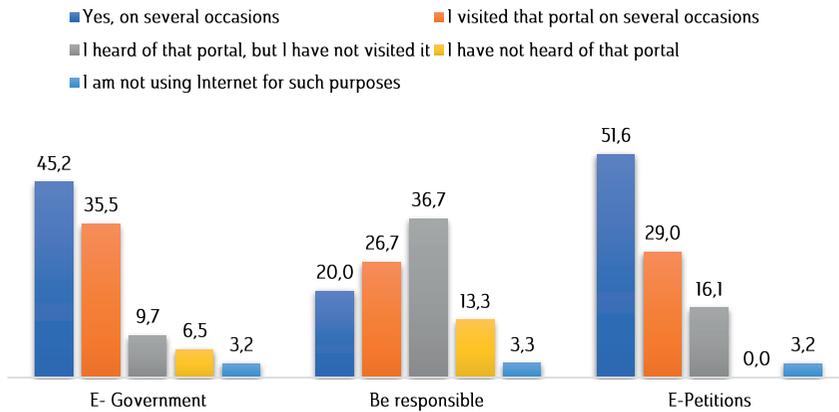
In this part of the survey, questions were asked bearing on the frequency of **certain specific forms of political participation of the very young councillors**. First of all, Graph 23 shows the frequency of these forms of political participation. Voting is the most frequent form of participation, but also every form of “address” is very often present in political participation of young councillors. Rarer forms of behaviour are those directed towards addressing NGOs, commenting on social and political issues on the Internet and social networks, and the rarest forms – personal address to the Prime Minister, Ombudsman and Government ministers.

Graph 23 – Frequency of forms of political participation - SUM regularly and frequently %



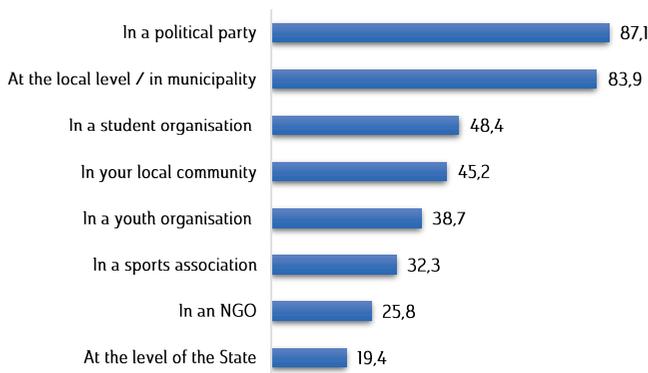
When it comes to using the available portals like “e-Government”, “e-Petitions” and the applications like “Be Responsible”, **the outcomes indicate that over half of the young councillors used e-Government portal, whilst most of them did not visit or heard of e-Petitions and the application “Be responsible”**.

Graph 24 – Frequency of using Internet portals



How often are young councillors involved in decision-making process can be seen in the results shown in the Graph 25. The data indicate **that almost every young councillor participates in decision-making processes in some political party or at the local level in respective municipalities. They participated least at the state level – only one fifth of young councillors.**

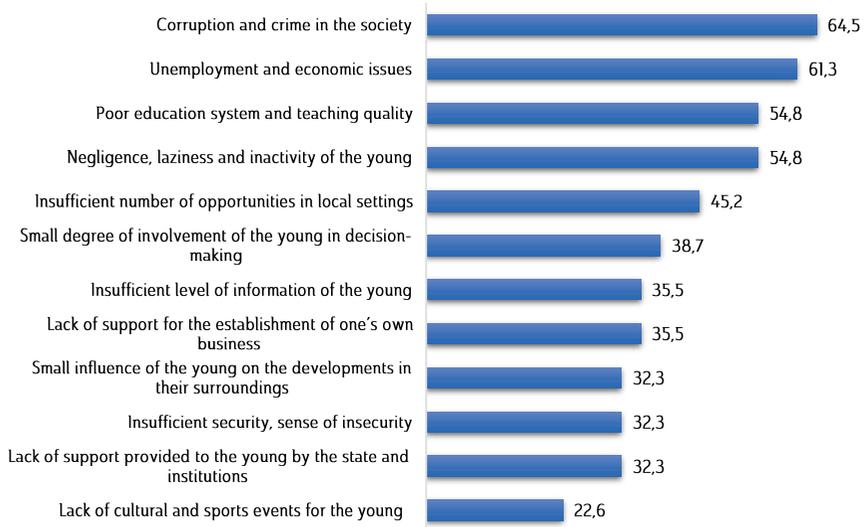
Graph 25 – Participated in decision-making on several occasions (%)



In the last segment of the Questionnaire, we asked from the interviewees to assess what the key issues young people face were, more precisely, for each one of potential issues the interviewees were assessing the extent to which particular issue was prominent. Graph 26 gives percentage-wise distribution of only those interviewees who stated that the specified **issues were**

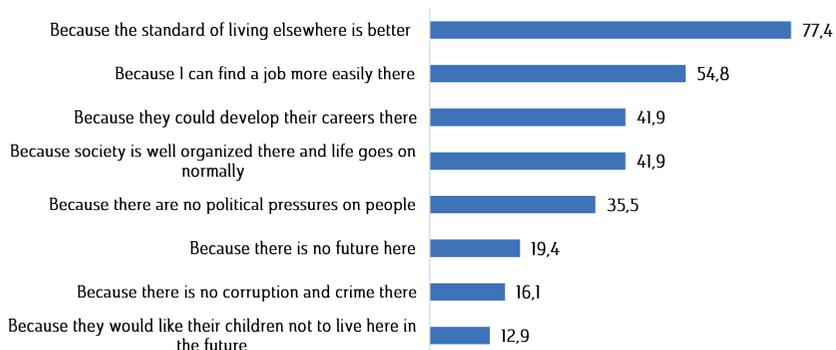
among the key ones. The results indicate that corruption and crime in the society, then unemployment and economic issues are the most prominent ones, whilst the least pronounced issue is the one of lack of cultural and sports contents for the young.

Graph 26 – Key issues young people face – (%) one of the key issues



Graph 27 presents the responses of young councillors when asked about key factors which potentially generate emigration of the young. The interviewees consider that the key reasons are of economic nature, therefore the assessment that the standard of living elsewhere is better, as well as the assessment that it is easier to get the employment abroad.

Graph 27 – Key reasons for youth emigration (%)



ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT STATE OF PLAY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF ACTIONS OF YOUNG COUNCILLORS IN LOCAL PARLIAMENTS

Having in mind that Local Council is citizens' representative body, its role and importance, this part of the Survey is dedicated to the representation and engagement of young people and/or councillors up to the age of 30 (hereinafter referred to as: younger councillors) in Montenegrin Local Councils. In direct election, citizens vote for certain list of candidates and the representatives of the lists are the councillors elected on the basis of free, general, equal and direct suffrage, pursuant to the law governing the election of councillors and MPs.

The Law on the Election of Councillors and Members of Parliament is a crucial law governing the manner and procedure for electing councillors in the municipalities, Capital City and Old Royal Capital, as well as MPs. Besides, this law defines the organization, composition and competence of bodies in charge of conducting elections, determining voting results and distribution of seats, but also protection of suffrage and other issues of importance for the organization and implementation of election process.

Citizens holding Montenegrin citizenship who are registered in the voters' list according to the law governing voters' list elect and can be elected Councillors and MPs based on the general and equal suffrage during free and direct election and secret ballot.

In the Local Councils of the Capital City and of the Old Royal Capital, 30 councillors are elected plus one councillor per every 5000 voters. The number of councillors is determined by the special decision of the local councils no later than by the day of the calling of the election. A councillor and an MP is elected in an electoral unit on the basis of a political party list (political party election list), coalition of political parties (coalition election list), and/or group of voters (election list of a group of voters). Terms of office of councillors and MPs are distributed proportionately to the number of obtained votes, lasting for four years.

Suffrage, pursuant to Article 10 of the Law on Election of Councillors and MPs, covers the following voters' rights: elect and be elected; to nominate

and be nominated; to decide on the nominated candidates and election lists; to interview candidates publicly; to be timely, truly, thoroughly and objectively informed about programmes and activities of the submitters of election lists and on the candidates on the respective lists, as well as hold other rights envisaged by this law.

A person who has turned 18, who is fit for work, whose domicile has been in Montenegro for at least two years and whose place of residence has been in a municipality, as a constituency, for at least six months prior to election day, is entitled to vote and be elected a councillor.

Every local council has its Rules of Procedure, but the provision is the same when it comes to amendments. Contrary to the Parliament, where motions are lodged for amending bills, at the level of local councils, motions are lodged to the Speaker for amending draft decisions in the form of written amendments with reasoning. An amendment may be lodged by the authorized proposers, as well as the competent body of the Local Council. The proposer of an amendment is obliged to state in the reasoning if additional funds are needed for the implementation of the proposed amendment. Amendment is to be lodged no later than three days prior to the beginning of the session where draft decision is to be considered. The proposer of the decision, Mayor if he/she is not a proposer and a competent body may lodge the amendment in writing and with a reasoning prior to the conclusion of the debate on the draft decision. Amendment to the draft decision is sent to councillors, proposer, Mayor, if he/she is not a proposer, and to competent body if this one is not the submitter of the amendment. The proposer of the decision and the Mayor, if he/she is not the proposer of the decision, submit to the Council written opinion on every amendments being lodged. Competent body is obliged to consider the amendments to the draft decision and to propose to the Council the ones to be accepted and the ones to be rejected. The Council decides on the amendments in the order of the articles of draft decision they were lodged to. In case several amendments have been lodged to one article of the draft decision, the amendment suggesting the deletion of the article is considered first, followed by the amendments that suggest modifications. In case an amendment is lodged to an amendment, this one is to be voted first. The amendment lodged by the proposer of the decision and the amendment granted by the proposer of the decision becomes an integral part of the draft decision and the Council does not deliberate about the same.

A councillor, and/or MP makes a decision and votes according to his/her own conviction.

Pursuant to Article 43 of the Law on Local Self-Government, for the purpose of efficient and rational performance of the tasks from the area of competence of the Council, committees and councils are established as permanent working parties, with the possibility of establishing temporary boards. Councillors get appointed committee members by Local Councils. Conversely, beside councillors, local councils may also appoint other persons as members of councils and boards, but these are not in the focus of this survey.

Although local elections were supposed to be held in Pljevlja, Rožaje, Plav, Tivau Budva, Plužine, Žabljak, Bijelo Polje, Šavnik, Bar, Danilovgrad, Kolašin, Capital City of Podgorica and in Golubovci – a municipality within the Capital City, with the amendments of the Law on Local Self-Government these were postponed for 23rd October 2022. Following the initiative for assessing the constitutionality of this amendment, the Constitutional Court assessed as unconstitutional the amendments to the Law on postponing the election in Podgorica and thirteen municipalities, after which decision the President of Montenegro called the election for the same date in accordance with the decision of this court.

Due to the need for comprehensive approach, the issue of civic activism of the young, together with previous two parts of the Survey, we got down to analysing current state of play and effectiveness of the activities of the young in the structures at the local level, from the aspect of the number of the young in the bodies at the local level, their actual activities and advocating the interests of the young through measuring the number of amendments, participation in discussions, length of discussions etc. The aim of this part of the Survey is the overview of the actual participation and action of the young at the local level. The analysis was performed at the level of all Montenegrin cities/towns.

Consequently, the questionnaire was sent to all the secretaries of the Local Councils, so as to receive the answers to the following questions:

1. How many amendments were lodged by all councillors, and how many by those below the age of 30?
2. How many times did the councillors participate in discussions (take the floor) during the sessions of the Local Council, and how many times did the councillors below the age of 30 take the floor?

3. How many councillors below the age of 30 are there in the committees of the local councils?
4. How many councillors below the age of 30 chair the committees of the local councils?

The collected data were presented for all cities/towns (in alphabetical order).

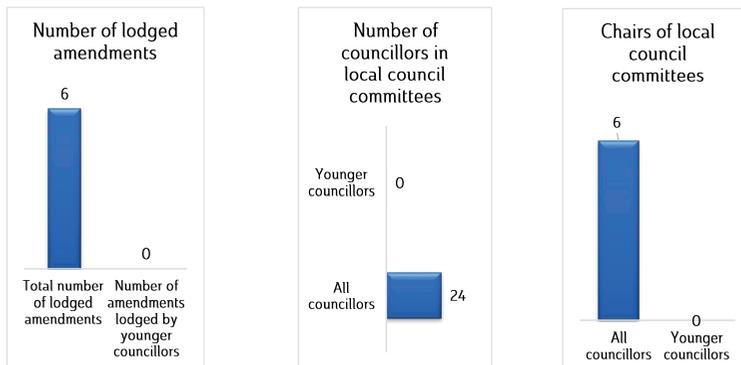
Andrijevica

Andrijevica Local Council was established on 29th September 2020 for the term of office of 2020-2024; it is composed of 31 councillors one of whom is below the age of 30. i.e. 3.22%.

The total of 6 amendments were lodged by all councillors during the current term of office, none by the young councillor.

The young councillor took part in no discussions.

Andrijevica Local Council has six committees in which there no councillors below the age of 30, nor do they chair any of the committee.



Compared to the previous local council, the actual one has half the number of councillors below the age of 30, and there are no young councillors in the working parties of the Local Council.

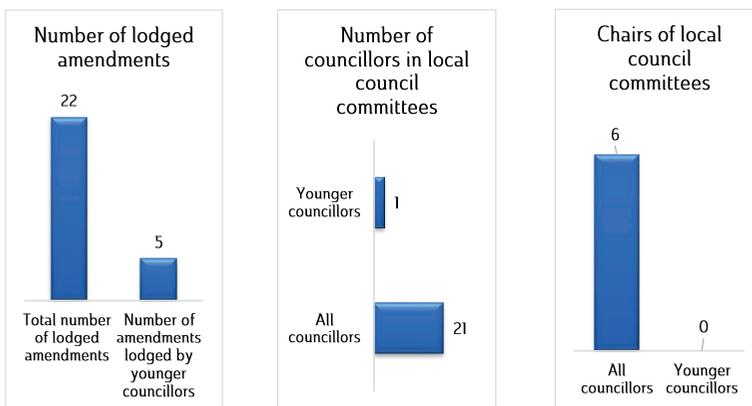
Bar

Bar Local Council was established on 26th June 2018 for the term of office of 2018-2022. It is composed of 37 councillors, with two of them being below the age of 30, i.e. 5,4%.

As of its establishment, the total of 22 amendments were lodged in the Local Council, 5 of which were lodged by the young councillors.

One councillor below the age of 30 took part in 30 discussions.

Out of the total of 6 committees, composed of 21 members, one young councillor sits in two and no young councillors chair any of the committees.

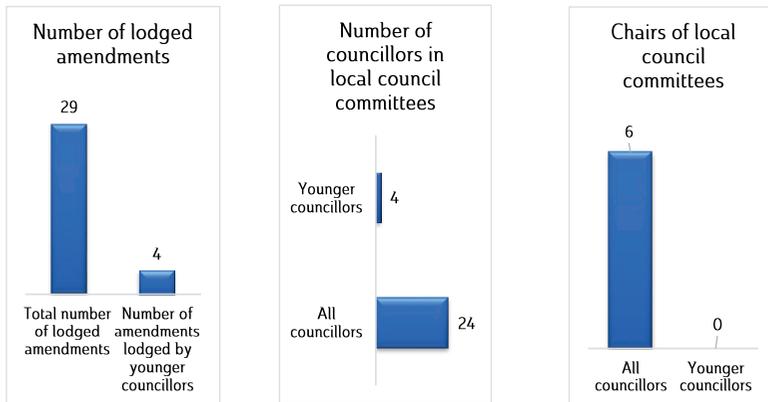


Bijelo Polje

Bijelo Polje Local Council, was established on 28th June 2018 for the term of office of 2018-2022. It is composed of 38 councillors, five of whom being below the age of 30, i.e. 13.16%.

As of its establishment, 29 amendments were lodged, 4 of which were lodged by young councillors. The councillors took part in 1391 discussions, with young councillors taking part in 51 of these.

Four young councillors are members local council committees, but no committee is chaired by young councillors

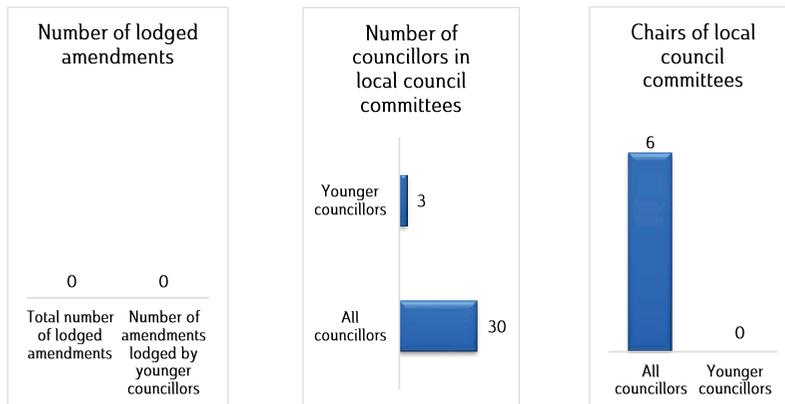


Berane

Berane Local Council was established on 7th June 2022 for the term of office of 2022-2026. It is composed of the total of 35 councillors, 4 of whom are below the age of 30, i.e. 11.43%.

No session was held as of its establishment; thus, the councillors had no activities in terms of discussions, lodging of amendments or raising councillor questions.

In the working parties of Berane Local Council, in three out of the total of 6 committees there are councillors below the age of 30, three of them to be precise, but none of the committees is chaired by the young councillors.



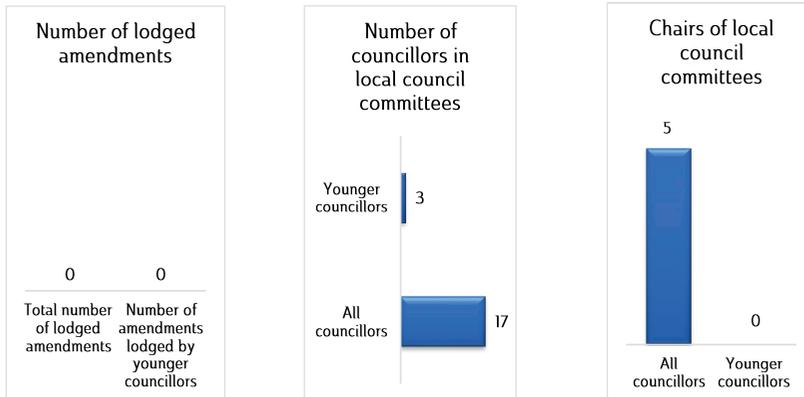
Budva

Budva Local Council was established on 17th September 2020 for the term of office of 2020-2024. It is composed of 32 councillors, five of whom are below the age of 30, i.e. 15.62% out of the total number of councillors.

Budva Local Council Administrative Service does not hold precise data related to amendments being lodged, either because of the failure to adopt the same or due to their withdrawal. During the sessions of the Local Council, councillors participated in discussions on 90 occasions, of which younger councillors took the floor on 7 occasions.

There are five committees in this local council, and in three of them there are three young councillors. No committee is chaired by young councillors.

Budva Local Council was dissolved by the decision of the Government of Montenegro of 31st March 2022, after which Board of Trustees was appointed to perform the role of the Council until its reestablishment.



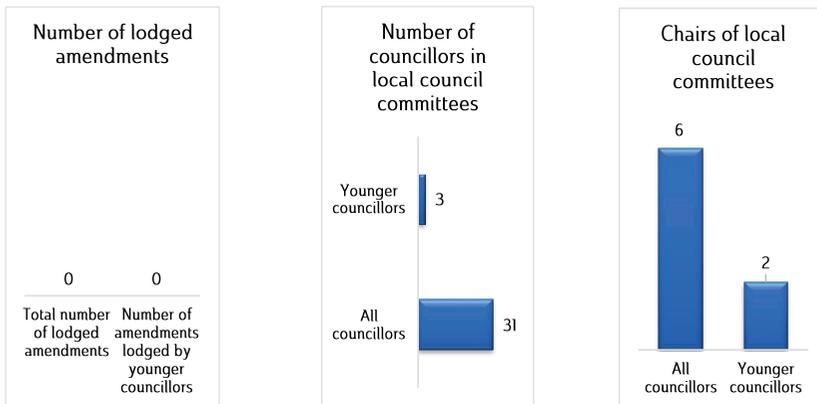
In relation to previous composition, the number of younger councillors was increased by more than 10%, only in this composition there no younger councillors chair Local Council committees.

Cetinje

Cetinje Old Royal Capital Local Council was established on 4th January 2022 for the term of office of 2021-2025 and it is composed of 33 councillors. Out of the overall number, there are 6 councillors below the age of 30, which is 18.18% of the total number of councillors.

No amendments were lodged during the term of office of this Local Council. During the Council sessions, councillors took part in discussions on 176 times in total, of which younger councillors took part in discussions on 18 occasions.

Three younger councillors take part in the work of the Local Council committees, and two younger councillors chair the working parties of the Local Councils.



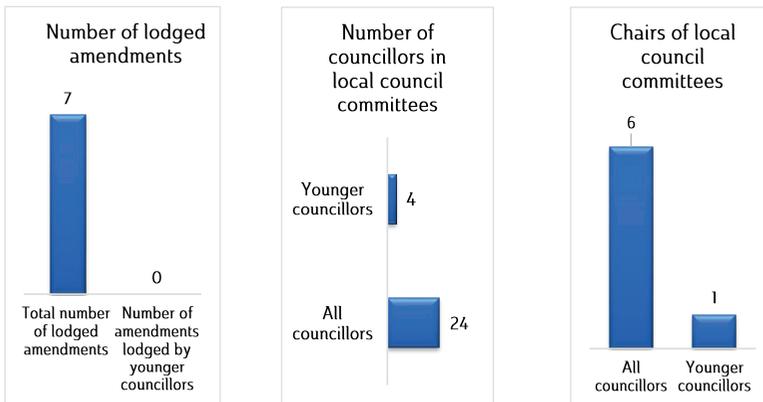
Despite the increase in the number of councillors below the age of 30, just as in the previous composition of the Council, only two younger councillors took part in the work of the committees, but still no committee is chaired by a younger councillor. Participation of younger councillors in discussions has been increased by about 6% as compared to the previous composition of the Local Council.

Danilovgrad

Danilovgrad Local Council was established on 4th July 2010 for the term of office of 2018-2022 and it is composed of the total of 33 councillors, four of whom are below the age of 30, which constitutes the share of 12.12%.

When it comes to the Amendments being lodge for the observed period, the total of 7 were lodged, but no amendment was lodged by younger councillors. As for discussions during the Council sessions, all councillors took part in the same with the total of 423 times, of which the councillors below the age of 30 took part on only 18 occasions.

Four younger councillors are members of the Local Council committees, with one committee being chaired by a young female councillor.

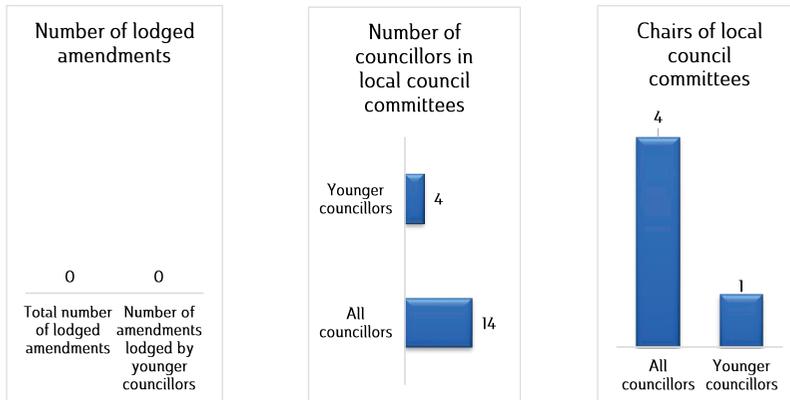


Gusinje

Gusinje Local Council was established on 3rd October 2020 for the term of office of 2020-2024 and it is composed of 30 councillors, 8 of whom are below the age of 30. i.e. 26.67%.

No amendment was being lodged within this composition of the Council, while councillors took the floor on 210 occasions, with younger councillors taking the floor on 44 occasions.

In the Local Council committees, there are four councillors below the age of 30. One councillor below the age of 30 chairs a Local Council committee.

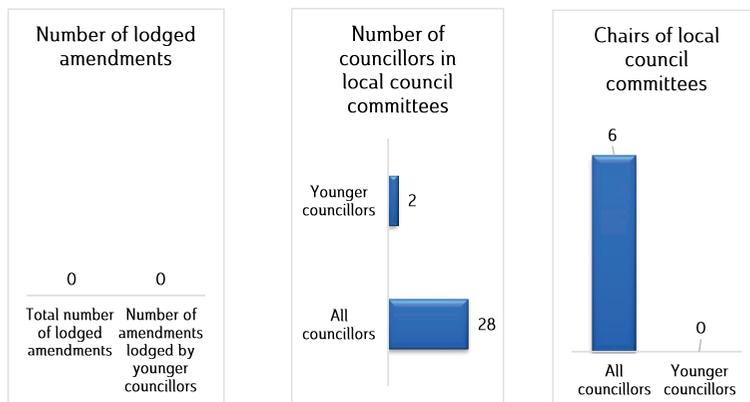


Herceg Novi

Herceg Novi Local Council was established on 7th June 2021 for the term of office of 2021-2025 and it is composed of the total of 35 councillors, two of whom are below the age of 30, i.e. 5.71%.

As of the establishment of the Local Council, no amendments have been lodged and the councillors took no part in discussions.

Two younger councillors are members of the Local Council committees, but none of them is chaired by a younger councillor.

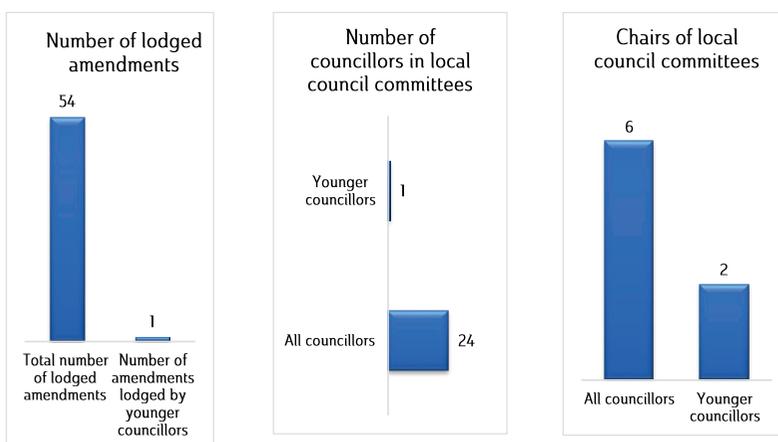


Kolašin

Kolašin Local Council was established on 9th July 2018 for the term of office of 2018 – 2022 and it is composed of the total of 31 councillors, 5 of whom are below the age of 30, i.e. 16.12%.

Out of the total of 54 amendments, one was lodged by younger councillors. Since the constitutive session of the Local Council, councillors took part in 1583 discussions, with younger councillors taking part in 126 of these.

Within the working parties of the Local Council there are 6 committees, two of them chaired by younger councillors, whilst one younger councillor participates in the work of the committees as a member.

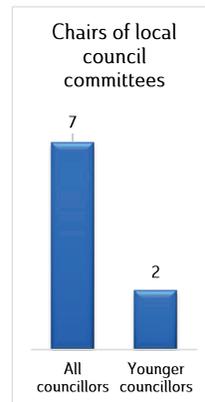
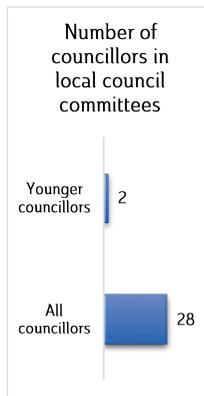
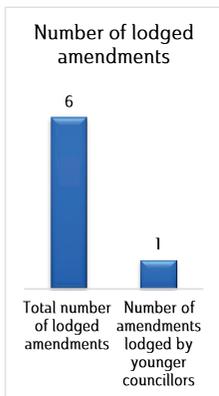


Kotor

Kotor Local Council was established on 30th October 2020 for the term of office of 2020-2024 and it is composed of the total of 33 councillors, 3 of which below the age of 30, i.e. 9.09%.

As of the constitutive session of the Local Council, councillors have taken part in discussions on 120 occasions, with no younger councillor taking the floor. During this term of office, 6 amendments were lodged, one of which came from a younger councillor.

Within permanent working parties in this Local Council, there are seven committees, with two younger councillors participating as members, whilst one councillor below the age of 30 chairs one of the committees.

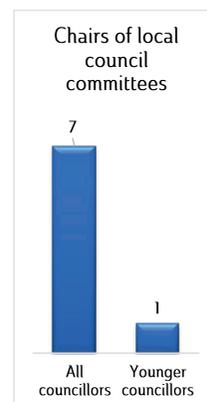
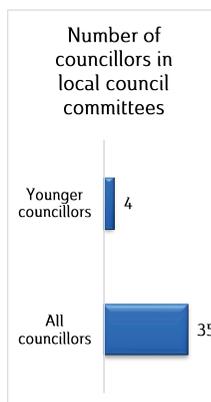
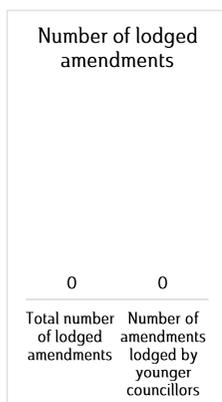


Mojkovac

Mojkovac Local Council was established on 5th January 2022 for the term of office of 2021-2025 and it is composed of the total of 31 councillors, four of whom below the age of 30, i.e. 12.9%.

As of the constitutive session of the Local Council, the councillors have taken part in discussions on 34 occasions, seven of which younger councillor took the floor. No amendments have been lodged thus far.

All younger councillors take part in the work of the Local Council committees, and one of them is chaired by a younger councillor.



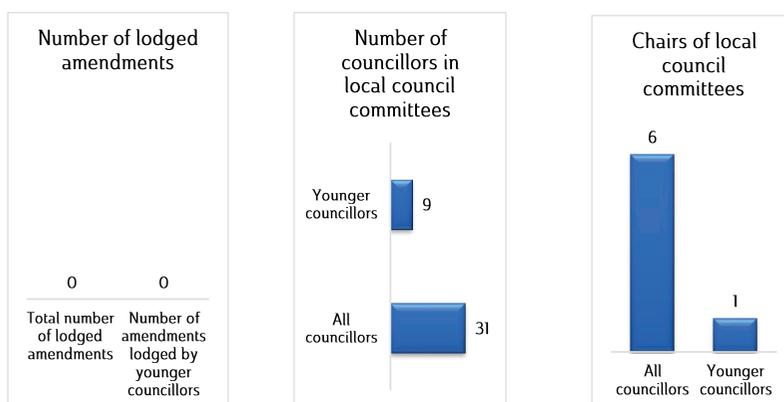
Nikšić

Nikšić Local Council was established on 7th May 2021 for the term of office of 2021-2025 and it is composed of the total of 41 councillors, 10 of whom are below the age of 30, i.e. 24.39%.

No amendments have been lodged during the term of office of this Local Council. As of the constitutive session, the councillors took part in discussions on 106 occasions, with younger councillors taking the floor on 23 occasions.

Nine younger councillors are involved in the work of five committees, while one committee is chaired by a younger councillor.

This Local Council stands out from the others in that its Speaker is below the age of 30.



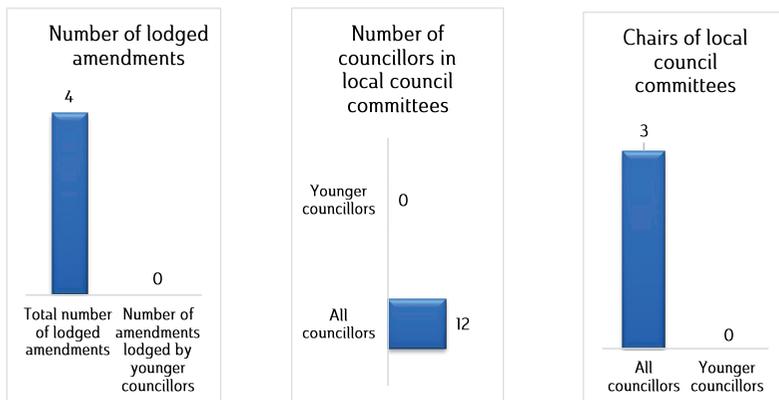
Plav

Plav Local Council was established on 5th July 2018 for the term of office of 2018-2022 and it is composed of the total of 31 councillors, one of whom is below the age of 30, i.e. 3.22%.

Four amendments have been lodged during the term of office of this Local Council, but only by the councillors over the age of 30. The share of young councillors is small. Older councillors prevail during the Council sessions

as they have more experience. No specific data were provided by the Local Council Administrative Service.

Within the framework of permanent working parties in this Local Council, there are three committees, but no younger councillor is involved in the work of these.

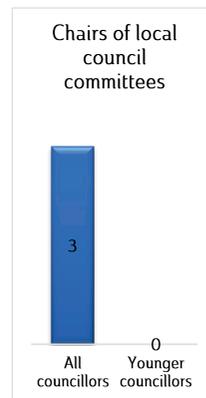
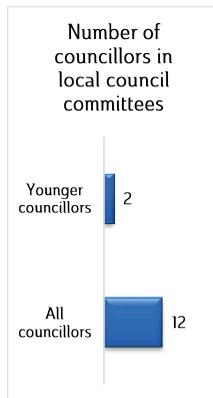
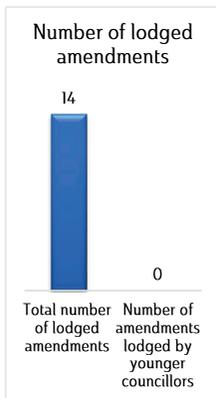


Plužine

Plužine Local Council was established on 25th June 2018 for the term of office of 2018-2022 and it is composed of the total of 30 councillors, 3 of whom are below the age of 30, i.e. 10%.

During this term of office, 14 amendments have been lodged, none by the councillors below the age of 30. Younger councillors rarely take the floor, but no specific data were provided by the Administrative Service of this Local Council.

Within the framework of permanent working parties of this Local Council, there are four committees, in which two younger councillors take part as members, whilst no committee is chaired by a younger councillor.

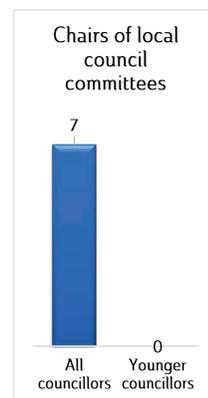
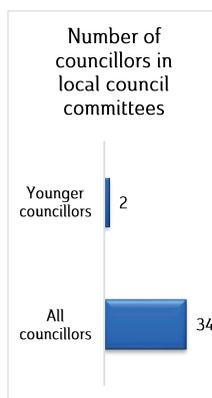
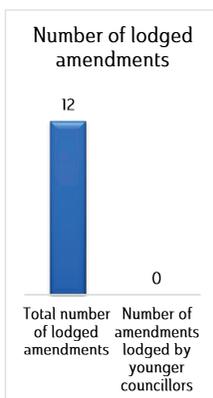


Pljevlja

Pljevlja Local Council was established on 6th July 2018 for the term of office of 2018 – 2022 and it is composed of the total of 35 councillors, three of whom below the age of 30, i.e. 8.57%.

During the term of office of this Local Council, 12 amendments were lodged, but none by younger councillors. Councillors took the floor on 477 occasions, with younger councillors taking the floor on 30 occasions.

Within the framework of permanent working parties of this Local Council, there are seven committees, in which two young councillors take part as the members, whilst no young councillor chairs any of the committees.

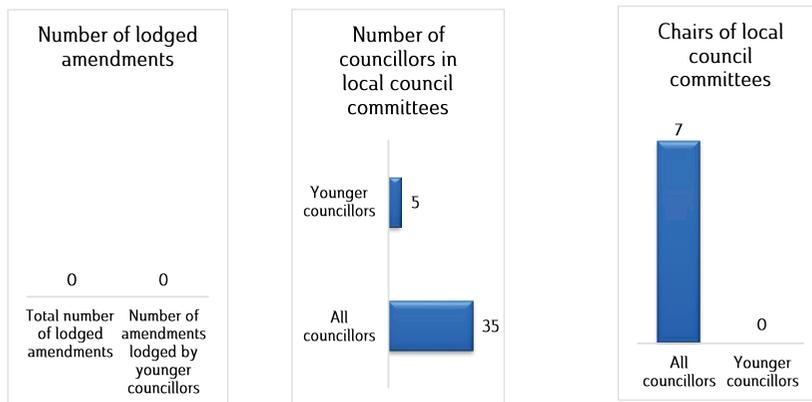


Podgorica

Capital City Podgorica Local Council was established at the constitutive session held on 6th July 2018 for the term of office of 2018-2022. It is composed of 61 councillors, 11 of whom are below the age of 30, i.e. 18%.

During this term of office, the councillors lodged no amendments to the draft decisions that were on the agenda of the Council. The councillors below the age of 30 took the floor in discussion on 127 occasions.

Within the framework of the permanent working parties of this Local Council, there are 5 committees which have the total of 35 members, 5 of whom are the councillors below the age of 30. No younger councillor chairs a committee.

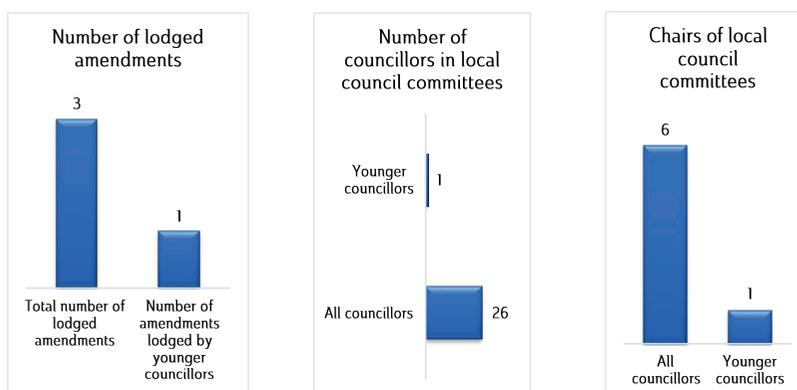


Rožaje

Rožaje Local Council was established on 2nd July 2018 for the term of office of 2018-2022 and it consists of the total of 34 councillors, one of whom is below the age of 30, i.e. 2.94%.

During this term of office, three amendments were lodged, one of which by a councillor below the age of 30. During the sessions of the Council, the councillors participated in discussions taking the floor on 832 occasions, out of which younger councillors took the floor on only four occasions.

In the Local Council committees (six in total) there is only one councillor below the age of 30, while of committee is chaired by a councillor below the age of 30.

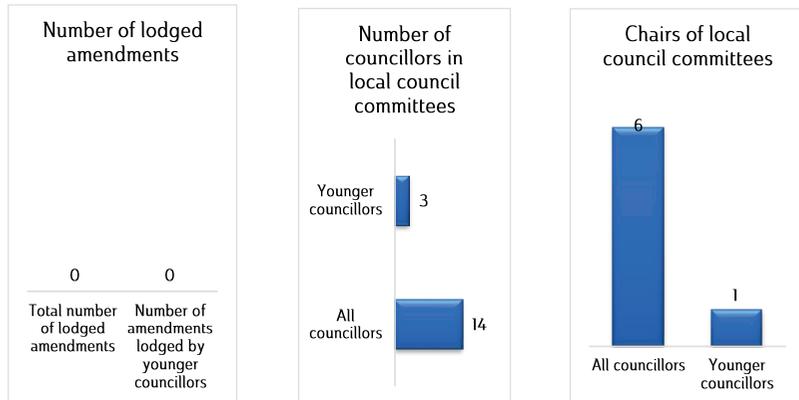


Šavnik

Šavnik Local Council was established on 15th June 2018 for the term of office of 2018 – 2022 and it is composed of the total of 30 councillors, three of whom are below the age of 30, i.e. 10%.

During the term of office of this Local Council, no amendments were lodged by the councillors. During the Council sessions, councillors took part in discussions by taking the floor on 132 occasions in total, of which younger councillors took the floor on 40 occasions.

In the Local Council committees (six in total), there are three councillors below the age of 30 acting as committee members, while one committee is chaired by a younger councillor.



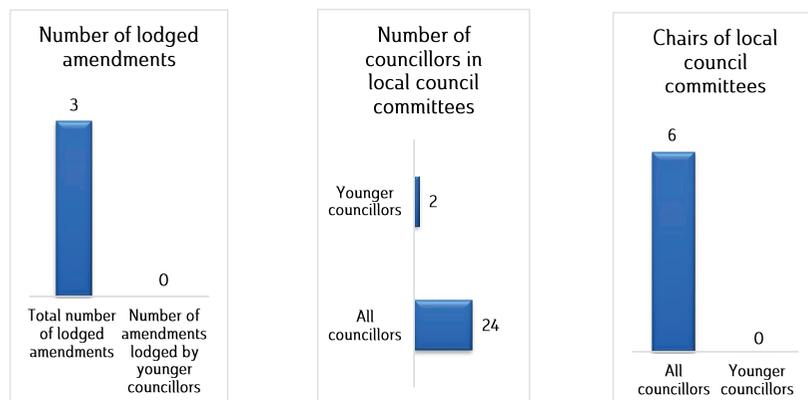
Tivat

Tivat Local Council was established on 28th September 2020 for the term of office of 2020-2024 and it is composed on the total of 32 councillors, three of whom are below the age of 30, i.e. 9.38%.

Since the beginning of the term of office, three amendments have been lodged, none by the councillors below the age of 30. No discussion data were provided by the Local Council Administrative Service.

In the Local Council committees there are two councillors below the age of 30, but no committee is chaired by a younger councillor.

By means of the Decision of the Government of Montenegro of 10th March 2022, this Local Council was dissolved and the Board of Trustees was appointed to perform the role of the Council until its reestablishment.

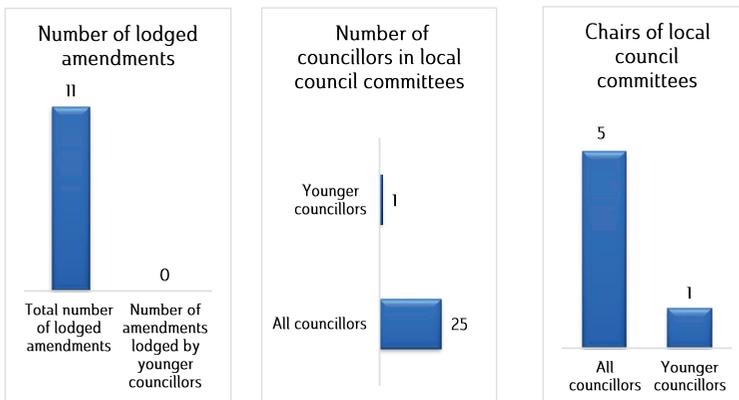


Tuzi

Tuzi Local Council was established at the constitutive session held on 21st March 2019 for the term of office of 2019-2023 and it is composed of the total of 32 councillors, three of whom below the age of 30, i.e. 9.38%.

During this term of office, 11 amendments have been lodged by the councillors over the age of 30. The councillors below the age of 30 participated in discussions on 31 occasions in total.

Out of five Local Council committees, one younger councillor chairs a committee and another one is a member of a committee.

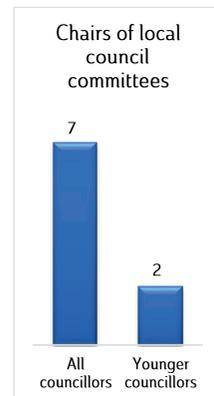
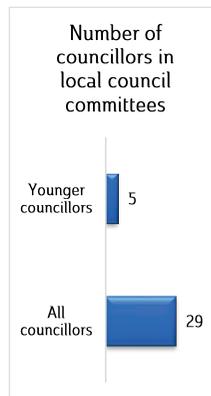
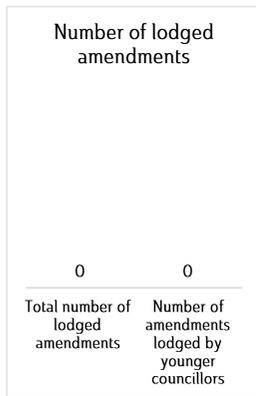


Ulcinj

Ulcinj Local Council was established on 25th May 2022 for the term of office of 2022 – 2026 and it is composed of 33 councillors six of whom is below the age of 30, i.e. 18.18%.

As of the establishment, no amendments have been lodged, and only one unfinished session has been held thus far, during which no councillors took part in the discussions.

Two younger councillors chair the respective committees and five younger councillors are involved in the committees as members.

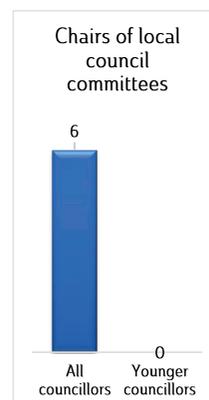
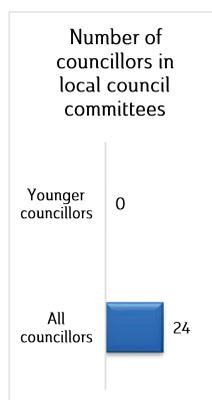
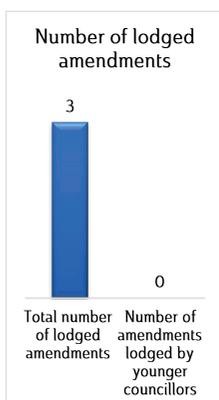


Žabljak

Žabljak Local Council was established at the session held on 25th June 2018 for the term of office of 2018-2022 and it is composed of 31 councillors, 3 of whom are below the age of 30, i.e. 9.68%.

The councillors took part in the discussions on 408 occasions in total, of which younger councillors took the floor on 31 occasions. So far, three amendments have been lodged by the councillors over the age of 30.

Žabljak Local Council has 6 committees, but there are no younger councillor either as chairs or members.

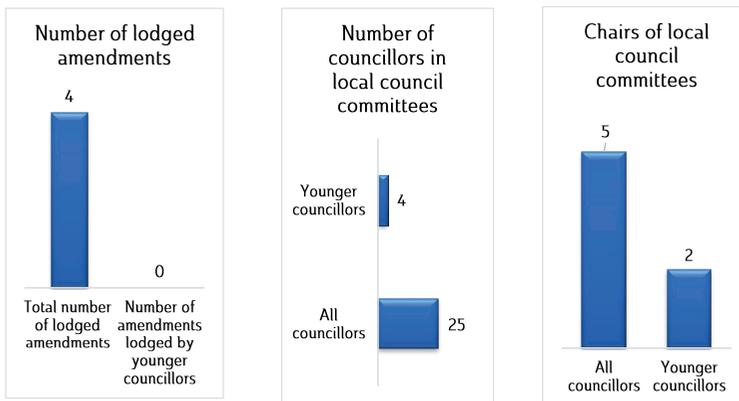


Petnjica

Petnjica Local Council was established on 24th January 2022 for the term of office of 2022-2026 and it is composed of 31 councillors, 6 of whom below the age of 30, i.e. 19.35%.

Four amendments have been lodged during this term of office by the councillors over the age of 30. The Local Council Administrative Service has provided no data on the participation in discussions.

Four councillors below the age of 30 hold the position of the members of the Local Council committees, while two younger councillors chair the respective committees.



The following table presents the data for all municipalities.

56 Civic and Political Participation of Youth: Illusion or Reality?

Municipalities	Population	Young	Share of the young in overall population	Number of the young in local councils	Total number of councillors	Share of young councillors in local councils	Total number of lodged amendments	Number of amendments lodged by young councillors	Share of amendments lodged by young councillors	Total number of councillors in LC committees	Young councillors in LC committees	Share of young councillors in LC committees
Andrijevica	5071	998	19,68%	1	31	3%	6	0	0%	24	0	0%
Bar	42048	8872	21,10%	2	37	5%	22	5	23%	21	1	5%
Berane	28739	7362	21,67%	4	35	11%	0	0	0%	30	3	10%
Bijelo Polje	46051	10162	22,07%	5	38	13%	29	4	14%	24	4	17%
Budva	19218	4060	21,13%	5	32	16%	0	0	0%	17	3	18%
Cetinje	16657	3689	22,15%	6	33	18%	0	0	0%	31	3	10%
Danilovgrad	18472	4180	22,63%	4	33	12%	7	0	0%	24	4	17%
Herceg Novi	30864	5703	18,48%	2	35	6%	0	0	0%	28	2	7%
Kolašin	8380	1746	20,84%	5	31	16%	54	1	2%	24	1	4%
Kotor	22601	4432	19,61%	3	33	9%	6	1	17%	28	2	7%
Mojkovac	8622	1796	20,83%	4	31	13%	0	0	0%	35	4	11%
Nikšić	72443	15249	21,05%	10	41	24%	0	0	0%	31	9	29%
Plav	11245	2748	24,43%	1	31	3%	4	0	0%	12	0	0%
Pljevlja	30786	5547	18,02%	3	35	9%	12	0	0%	34	2	6%
Plužine	3246	589	18,15%	3	30	10%	14	0	0%	12	2	17%
Podgorica	173841	40712	23,41%	11	61	18%	0	0	0%	35	5	14%
Rožaje	22964	5521	24,04%	1	34	3%	3	1	33%	26	1	4%
Šavnik	2070	417	20,14%	3	30	10%	0	0	0%	14	3	21%
Tivat	14031	1771	12,62%	3	32	9%	3	0	0%	24	2	8%
Ulcinj	19921	4255	21,36%	6	33	18%	0	0	0%	29	5	17%
Žabljak	3569	705	19,75%	3	31	10%	3	0	0%	24	0	0%
Tuzi	12096	880	7,27%	3	32	9%	11	0	0%	25	1	4%
Petnjica	6686	1294	19,35%	6	31	19%	4	0	0%	25	4	16%
Gusinje	1863	192	10,30%	8	30	27%	0	0	0%	14	4	29%

By participating in decision-making, the young can change personal culture and the society. In this way, their experience grows, which will in turn enable them to exercise their political rights, to further democratization and active participation in the areas of importance for the empowering of the young.

When speaking about civic and political participation, voting at election most often comes to one's mind. Although the exercise of passive suffrage is a very important indicator of a democratic society, there are many other ways and it is considered to be just the starting point for participation. More than one third out of 169 goals set within UN SDGs programme¹ (United Nation Sustainable Development Goals) are related to the young and underline the importance of their empowerment, participation and wellbeing. Participation of the young is very important, since social inclusion policy cannot be considered successful unless the participation of the young who have difficult access to participation due to poverty, lack of education, religious issues, language and race in their social life is ensured.

Prior to starting analysing current state of play in the area of political participation of the young at the local level, it is worthwhile refer to relevant universal surveys. These show that the young have been very much neglected in the political life and that although they make more than half of global population, only 2.6% of the members of parliament are below the age of 30. If one is to look at the trend concerning this matter, progress has been made but very gradually. In 2014, the percentage of young councillors was 1.6%, then 1.9% in 2016, 2.2% in 2018, and 2.6% in 2021.²

In Montenegro, every fifth citizen is a person below the age of 30. If it is taken into account that the young make 21.4% of the overall population of Montenegro and that in the highest legislative body only four seats belong to the MPS below the age of 30, it can be concluded that there are 4.94% of youth representatives, i.e. 16.46% less in relation to the share of the young in Montenegrin population. In the previous composition of the Parliament of Montenegro the number of the young in this institution was higher by 2.46%.

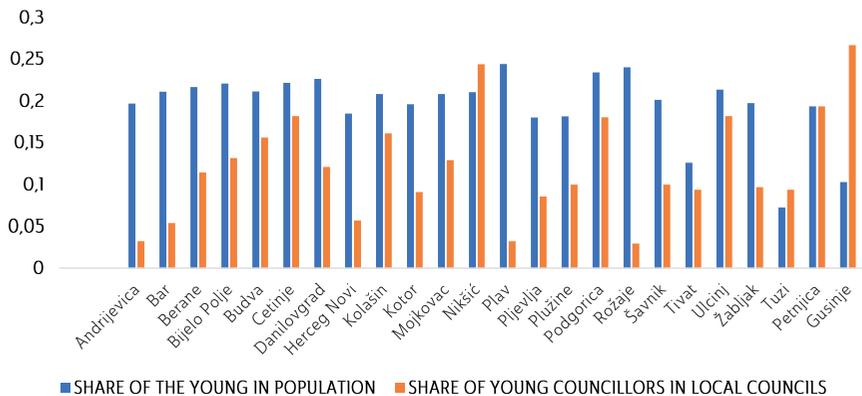
When speaking about local self-governments, only three, i.e. Gusinje,

¹ <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/envision2030.html>

² <https://www.ipu.org/youth2021>

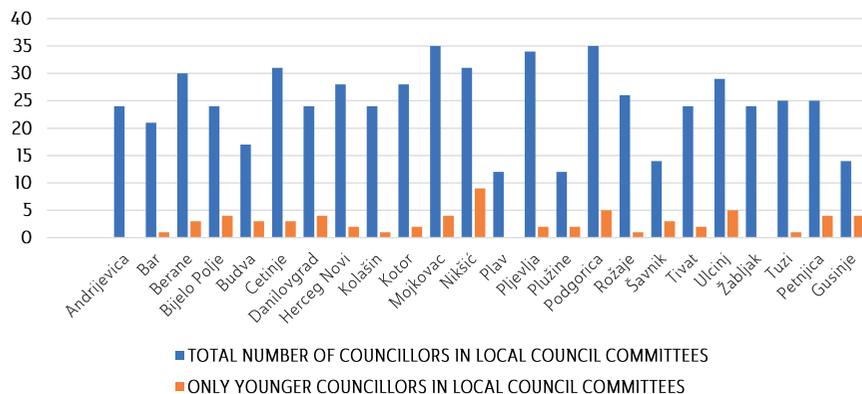
Nikšić and Tuzi have got the same or higher percentage of the councillors below the age of 30 in relation to the number of the young in the overall population of given local self-governments.

Graph 28: Relation between the share of the young in the overall population and the share of young councillors in Local Councils



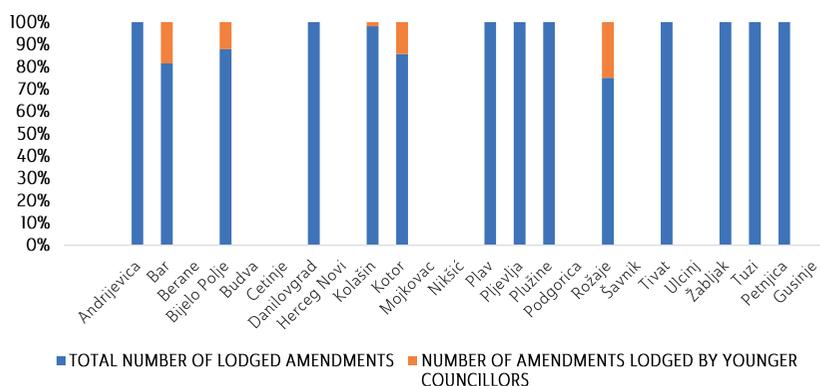
When it comes to the relation between the lodged amendments to the draft decisions between the young councillors and the older ones, only five local councils, i.e. Bar, Bijelo Polje, Kolašin, Kotor and Rožaje provided the data that the young councillors actually lodged the amendments. In fact, only 12 amendments, out of the total of 178 lodged ones, i.e. 7 % are the ones being lodged by the councillors below the age of 30.

Graph 29: Share of the number of amendments lodged by the young councillors in the total number of the lodged amendments



When it comes to the relation between young councillors and the overall number of councillors in local council committees, the situation is not significantly better. In three local councils, the young are not represented at all in the respective working parties, whilst the average for all local councils is 11%.

Graph 30: Overview of the number of councillors in local council committees



The stated statistics indicates that the young have not been sufficiently represented in decision-making process in the representative homes at the level of municipalities and that, having in mind the number of participations in discussions and representation in local council committees, one can most often speak about the cosmetic participation of the young in decision-making processes at the local level. On the other hand, enhanced representation of the young can strengthen the legitimacy of local councils, achieve greater level of fairness and better decisions, but also create important symbolic effects for the young and the political process.

The issue of fairness is important since the young make significant share of population and it is very important for them to participate in the places where decisions are made, not by mere holding of the positions of councillors, but by their constructive actions and contributions to better solutions, by taking part in discussions and by lodging amendments. In this way, the representatives of “minor power” will have the opportunity to express their opinion on important issues, but also strengthen the le-

gitimacy of local council acts and decisions. On the other hand, the enacted laws and decisions, can be harmful to the interests of the young, both in actual moment and in the future, because of which permanent work has to be done on strengthening the participation of the young in policy development.

With actual participation of the young, the politics of deliberation would be strengthened with the contribution of new ideas and political solutions for resolving problems, but also with freshness in political debates. One should also not neglect the fact that younger councillors could be an example for other young people for raising interest in the participation in political spheres.

On Montenegrin political stage, generation changes are negligible; the same political actors that have been here for a couple of decades are still actively participating, either in power or in opposition. In this regard, political stage is in need of rejuvenating and adjusting Montenegrin local councils to the time we live in and the changes of the manners in which decisions are made and in which politics is implemented.

