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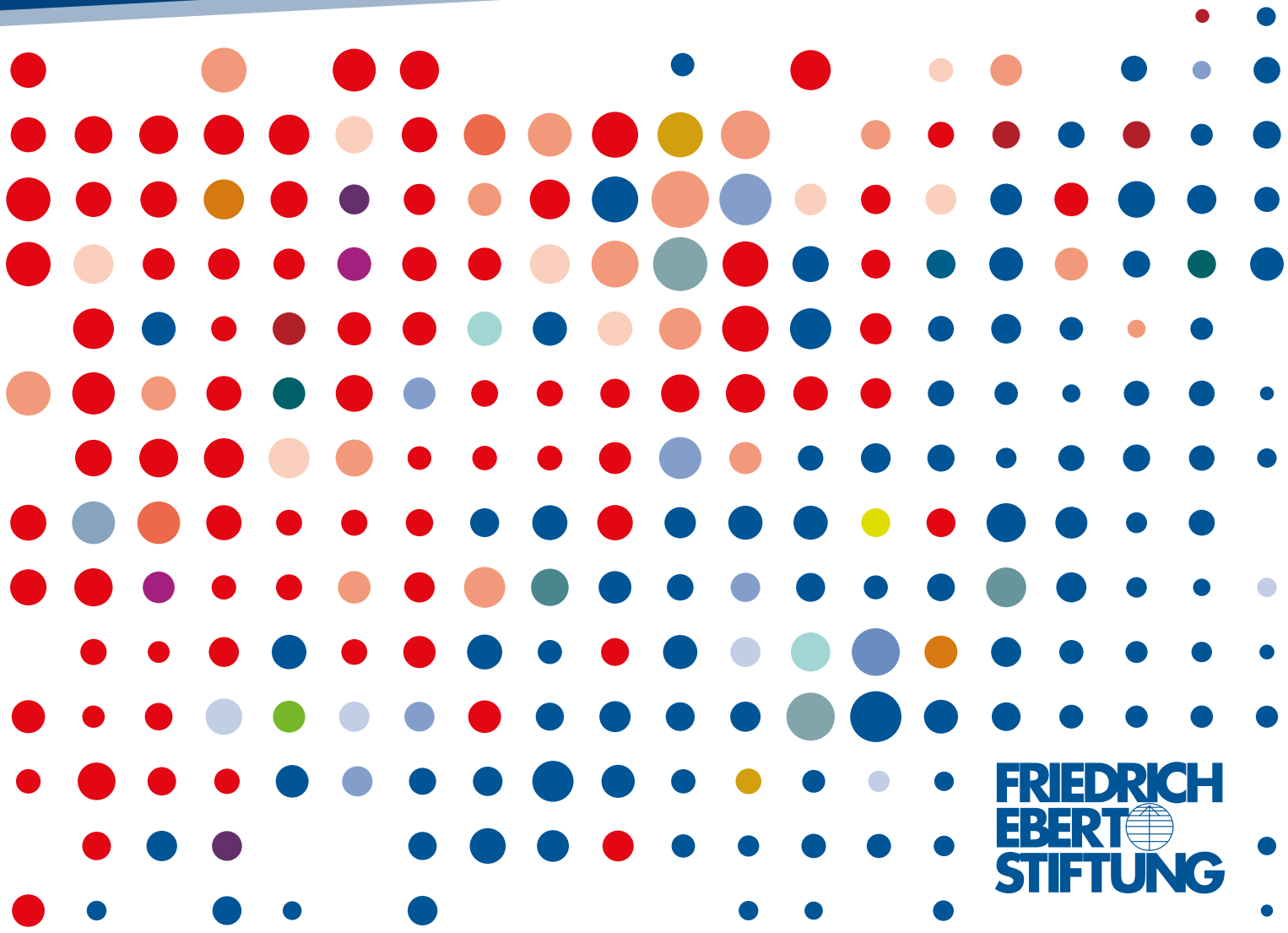

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YOUTH STUDIES SOUTHEAST EUROPE 2018/2019:

"FES Youth Studies Southeast Europe 2018/2019" is an international youth research project carried out simultaneously in ten countries in Southeast Europe: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia. The main objective of the surveys has been to identify, describe and analyse attitudes of young people and patterns of behaviour in contemporary society.

The data was collected in early 2018 from more than 10,000 respondents aged 14–29 in the above-mentioned countries who participated in the survey. A broad range of issues were addressed, including young peoples' experiences and aspirations in different realms of life, such as education, employment, political participation, family relationships, leisure and use of information and communications technology, but also their values, attitudes and beliefs.

Findings are presented in ten national and one regional study and its accompanying policy papers, which have been published in both English and the respective national languages.

YOUTH STUDY SOUTHEAST EUROPE 2018/2019

Miran Lavrič, Smiljka Tomanović and Mirna Jusić

1

PREFACE

The challenges confronting youth in Southeast Europe have been receiving increased international attention in the past few years. The Sofia EU-Western Balkans Summit that took place in May 2018, for instance, adopted a decision to increase youth mobility by doubling Erasmus+ funding alongside efforts to support general socio-economic development in the region. The establishment of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO) in 2016 was a specific measure aiming at increasing youth exchange. A number of conferences, including in the framework of the Berlin process, have raised awareness about difficulties young people are facing in the region, with unemployment and the ensuing brain drain leading the list. At the same time, youth continue to be among those worst affected by precarious working conditions, inadequate state support, normalised corruption, and non-inclusive political and educational systems, which reproduce inequality. All these are of course merely subcomponents of the region's broader crisis of governance.

Addressing the evident lack of channels giving young people a say in policy-making, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) commissioned representative surveys canvassing more than 10,000 respondents aged 14–29 in ten countries of Southeast Europe in early 2018. Modelled after the German Shell Youth Studies[1], the surveys cover a broad range of issues relating to young peoples' experiences and aspirations in different realms of life. Among these are education, employment, political participation, family relationships, leisure, and use of information and communications technology (ICT), but also their values, attitudes, and beliefs. This report is ground-breaking in that it allows for longitudinal juxtaposition, combining comparable data from earlier FES surveys covering Southeast Europe at the national and regional levels (www.fes.de/youth-studies/). Above and beyond interpreting and analysing the data, the authors deduce actionable recommendations with a particular relevance for policy.

The actual findings are cause for both optimism and concern. Youth across the region strongly identify with being European and place relatively great trust in the EU, which is strongly associated with greater economic prosperity. A vast majority are in favour of, in particular, solidarity-based Europeanisation. At the same time, youth describe how they employ informal practices as strategies of surviving in malfunctioning states. Young people's seemingly laissez-faire attitudes towards corruption and informalism point to how poorly the transition to liberal democracy has fared in the past two decades.

Youth are responding to this state of affairs in different ways. While some choose to emigrate, others report low engagement with politics and society and a sense that they are not represented in the political sphere. A third group could be described as those who take political action to contest nationalism, political violence, impunity, and corruption including the 'colourful' Macedonian protests of 2015 and the 'Justice for David' protests in Bosnia and Herzegovina among others.

It has become a truism for everyone engaging with the region that youth are apathetic when it comes to traditional politics. However, a lack of political activity at a political party level might not necessarily mean disengagement. Many young people are involved in their local communities and volunteering. The study shows that young people have a strong ideological and moral stance about what their societies ought to look like. Coupled with frustration over the ongoing stasis in the region, political views express themselves in a variety of diverging ways. Some exhibit a conservative stance and even voice nationalist sentiments. Others appear ready to tap into the global trend of 'millennial socialism', though few persons in the region seem to articulate their views using this language. The values reported by youth, however, demonstrate that many young people have left-leaning views. Rejuvenating a social-democratic option would seem to be a means of bringing these views into the political realm.

To exemplify the wealth of the analysed data, consider the following examples of what may perhaps be counter-intuitive findings:

— While trust in family members is very high, trust in state institutions and political leaders is extremely low. At the same time, support for 'a political leader ruling the country with a strong hand for the public good' has risen sharply since 2008.
— Socio-political values of youth are focused on economic and social security. What pushes youth towards both political extremes on the left-right spectrum is the perceived lack of a welfare state.
— Inequality in access to education faced by young people from underprivileged social backgrounds is most prominent in EU member states Bulgaria, Croatia, and Romania — as is the risk of young people from underprivileged social backgrounds breaking off education before completing a degree (highest risk in Bulgaria, Slovenia, and Romania).
— The intent of youth from Southeast Europe to emigrate remains high but has decreased in recent years, especially in the EU Member States surveyed. Meanwhile, the majority of youth in SEE have not had the experience of educational mobility. This seems to be a missed opportunity both in terms of more realistic attitudes towards emigration and the higher readiness of returning students to engage in politics at home.

Together with my colleagues from our offices in the region and at our headquarters, I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the outstanding scholars we have had the pleasure of cooperating with in preparing this research. I would like to commend the authors Mirna Jusić, Miran Lavrič, and Smiljka Tomanović for this report and also express my gratitude to Marius Harring, Klaus Hurrelmann, Tarik Jusić, and Daniela Lamby for their advice in helping bring this ambitious project to fruition.

I trust that you will find this comparative report, which is, by the way, only one among eleven studies analysing the situation of youth by country (www.fes.de/youth-studies/), as thought-provoking to read as it was to put together as a team.

Felix Henkel
Director
Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
Dialogue Southeast Europe
www.fes-southeasteurope.org

Sarajevo, October 2018

2

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In early 2018, more than 10,000 young people aged 14–29 from ten countries of Southeast Europe (SEE) participated in a survey covering a broad range of issues that concern their experiences and aspirations in different realms of life, such as education, employment, political participation, family relationships, leisure and use of information and communications technology (ICT), but also their values, attitudes and beliefs. This study covers these issues predominantly at the level of the SEE region as a whole, with an emphasis on cross-country comparative analyses. The most important findings are the following[2]:

1. Youth across the region, but especially in the Western Balkans six (WB6) countries, continue to suffer from high unemployment and experience precarious working conditions, while many young people are without a job, and are not undergoing education or training (NEET). A large majority of SEE youth express anxiety about being without a job.
2. In the WB6 countries, young people report a very strong preference for public-sector employment, and political party membership is considered to play a very important role in finding a job in this sector.
3. Young people from underprivileged social backgrounds are considerably less likely to have access to higher levels of education, to participate in political or civic activities, to engage in activities related to self-development, to use ICT for educational and informational purposes, or to find adequate employment.
4. There is a very keen perception of corruption in the educational system in all SEE countries. This has increased in most countries over the past approximately five years.
5. Tolerance towards informal practices, such as using connections, bribery or cheating on taxes, is relatively high among youth across the region and has substantially increased since 2008.
6. Economic factors and negative perceptions of their home country's situation appear to be the strongest drivers of youth emigration. Compared to youth from the WB6 countries, youth from EU member countries are substantially less likely to emigrate, especially when it comes to long-term migration.
7. The idea of a strong welfare state enjoys overwhelming support across the entire region, especially among youth with a lower socioeconomic status.
8. There is considerable support for 'a political leader ruling the country with a strong hand for the public good' as a favourable option for one's country, with the popularity of this notion having risen sharply since 2008 across the entire region.
9. Youth across the region are overwhelmingly pro-European, and advocate a welfare state-based model rather than a neoliberal model of Europeanisation.
10. The vast majority of young people in the region feel poorly represented in national politics and believe that they should have a stronger say. At the same time, other than voting, young people overall have little experience with political and civic participation, and only a small minority holds political offices. The majority of SEE youth state that their political knowledge is poor and that they are disinterested in politics.
11. Staying abroad for the purpose of education or training substantially increases the civic and political engagement of a young person while reducing nationalist tendencies. Nevertheless, the vast majority of SEE youth have not experienced international mobility for educational purposes.

12. Due to high unemployment and inadequate state support, young people from SEE are highly dependent on their parents for financial, housing, education-related and other types of support. Apart from being a burden on parental families, this also means that young people's transitions to adulthood are prolonged.

These and other major findings from the study have a number of important implications for both policy and practice in terms of young people's future and well-being, and especially in terms of their role in society. Based on these findings, the most relevant policy recommendations are:

1. To tackle high unemployment and NEET rates, youth guarantee schemes, comprising both active labour-market policies and opportunities to continue education and training, should be put in place or strengthened. Such guarantee schemes should especially promote work-related learning. Youth mobility schemes that facilitate working or continuing education abroad should be further developed.
2. Policies addressing skills mismatches should be strengthened. They should include fostering better coordination between employers and education institutions, modernisation of curricula in the field of education and developing greater opportunities for internships and apprenticeships in the private sector.
3. Addressing high NEET rates in particular requires measures to be taken in the educational realm, such as measures to prevent leaving school early or to re-engage young people who have left school early in education and training. It should also involve measures offering more general support for youth from underprivileged social backgrounds, such as low income student scholarships, subsidised tuition, or local tutoring programs.
4. An effective fight against corruption and more effective promotion and implementation of the principles of the rule of law are needed to meet the challenges of the 'normalisation of corruption' and increasing political authoritarianism among youth. It is especially important to fight (perceptions of) corrupt practices in education institutions by strengthening rules and control mechanisms, increasing student representation and raising awareness of the problem at the level of international networks of educational institutions.
5. Policy-makers should seek ways to improve political and civic knowledge and engagement among youth. Civic education programmes for greater civic engagement should be fostered in the region, especially through schools and the digital media. More should be done in terms of promoting opportunities for youth to take part in volunteering and other types of civic engagement. Policies should also focus on grassroots youth initiatives and involve different actors, such as governments, institutions in the field of education, NGOs, trade unions and international organisations. International mobility programmes, such as the European Voluntary Service, should be strengthened.
6. Political representation of young people should be bolstered, both through mainstream political party structures and through representative bodies such as youth councils or committees. Policy-makers should also do more in terms of translating youth aspirations for general economic security and European integration into real political action and should directly involve young people to that end.
7. Given the universality of Internet use and young people's ongoing interest in online political engagement, e-participation of youth should be promoted through the development of tailored online platforms.
8. Given the beneficial effects of international educational mobility, countries should encourage participation in existing mobility programmes, such as Erasmus+, and consider establishing new programmes to foster greater educational mobility, including intraregional mobility in SEE.
9. Since educational mobility is related to a greater likelihood of emigration, incentives to encourage return migration should be introduced. For example, incentives for employers in sending countries to hire professionals with experience or education from abroad could stimulate those professionals to return to their home countries. Such policies should be integrated into broader return migration schemes involving cooperation between sending and receiving countries.
10. Policies to deter emigration should be enhanced, especially in SEE countries that have not yet joined the European Union (EU). These policies should target economic insecurity and lack of employment opportunities as the most significant motivational factors underlying migration.
11. Governments should provide a set of related and intersectional policies that could facilitate the transition to adulthood for young people in SEE countries, including but not limited to: educational and employment policies that provide flexible arrangements for young people who want to combine education and work and/or parenthood; policies that provide affordable housing for young people; policies that guarantee stable employment with secured employee rights; and a set of policies related to family planning and work and family balance.
12. As youth from underprivileged social backgrounds face substantially greater challenges in terms of virtually all important aspects covered in this study, a combination of policy measures that provide support to youth from poor households, such as social assistance, scholarships and other types of support for those in education, active labour market policies for job-seekers and "making work pay" schemes for low-wage earners need to be considered and adapted to individual country contexts.

3

INTRODUCTION

A round of representative youth surveys commissioned by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) in the region of Southeast Europe[3] between 2011 and 2015 (hereafter: FES Youth Studies SEE 2011–15) revealed troubling perceptions and experiences among young people.[4] Predominantly espousing conservative values, faced with high levels of joblessness, disillusioned with politics and displaying low levels of both social and institutional trust, surveys underscored young people's exclusion from the social, economic and political milieu.

Following such striking findings and owing to worrisome trends affecting a number of SEE countries, not limited to high youth unemployment and considerable youth emigration, FES commissioned a second round of representative regional youth surveys in 2018 (hereafter: FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19), encompassing young people aged 14–29 in ten countries of SEE: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia.[5] Surveys follow a common questionnaire and focus on important aspects of young people's attitudes and experiences, including leisure time and technology use; education; employment; family life; mobility and migration; young people's basic world views and socio-political attitudes; and their political and civic engagement.

This policy study integrates the findings of the ten national 2018 youth surveys and analyses them from a regional perspective, making comparisons with the first round of surveys. It furthermore discusses implications that findings have for important areas of policy, and as such seeks to inform the policy discourse in countries of the region.

Drawing on dominant and contemporary conceptualisation of youth as a group undergoing multifaceted transitions (e.g. Furlong, 2013), it seeks to understand young people's aspirations and pathways in a region that is going through complex transitions itself, which inevitably leaves a strong imprint on young people's abilities to find employment, continue education, live independently, start a family or participate purposefully in social and political life. While fully cognizant and accepting of both sides of the 'agency' and 'structure' dichotomy (e.g. Beck 1992; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; Evans & Heinz, 1994; Heinz, 2009; Furlong, 2013), whereby young people are both seen as actively shaping their own destiny and as constrained by structural factors such as class, ethnicity, physical ability or gender, a particular focus of this study is to understand how structural factors shape young people's values and beliefs, behaviours and experiences, and how potential inequalities may be addressed through policy.

Survey findings suggest that young people in the region continue to face challenging transitions to adulthood. They have a difficult access to the labour market and tend to work in precarious conditions. Informality appears to be a constant in their lives, as a substantial share of youth perceive their educational systems to be corrupt, but also exhibit tolerance towards informal practices. Youth from the WB6 in particular express a great willingness to leave their countries, fuelled by existential reasons and negative perceptions of the situation at home. At the same time, youth across the region overwhelmingly support the EU. While voter turnout is relatively satisfactory, experience of non-conventional forms of political engagement, as well as volunteering, is rather uncommon across the region, with youth reporting low levels of interest and knowledge of politics, while claiming subpar representation in politics. Due to an unfavourable economic situation, many young people are dependent on the support of their parents and have to prolong their transitions to independent living and family formation. Social inequalities permeate all aspects of young people's lives and, *inter alia*, yield differences in the extent to which young people have access to higher levels of education, engage in different self-development activities, partake in politics or volunteering activities or access employment. Such findings paint a picture of socioeconomic and political exclusion that may undermine the fabric of the predominantly weak SEE democracies, as well as the economic potential of countries, as young people, overburdened by existential concerns, seek their luck elsewhere. They also suggest the need for

multi-faceted policy responses to equip SEE youth with the resources needed to continue their pathways to adulthood and participate in society in a meaningful manner.

The study is organised into chapters on education, employment, basic worldviews, socio-political values and attitudes, political and civic participation, mobility and migration, families and transition to adulthood, leisure time and ICT use. The final chapter offers a set of framework recommendations for national and international actors involved in decision-making processes in the region.

4

EDUCATION

By Smiljka Tomanović[6]

EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF YOUTH

The great significance of education for young people has been highlighted in contemporary society globally (Wyn, 2009, p. 103) in general and in the SEE region in particular (Jusić & Numanović, 2017). Although informal education is gaining in value and significance, as it provides specific knowledge and skills needed for employment, formal education is still a form of cultural capital necessary for ensuring stable employment. Therefore, education serves as the main mechanism of social reproduction and mobility, and consequently the main source of new social inequalities and exclusion in contemporary society (Furlong & Cartmel, 2007). Nevertheless, the previous round of surveys (FES Youth Studies SEE 2011 – 15) reveals unequal access to education that could also be attributed to factors such as scarce financial support from the state and lack of possibility to combine work and study (Jusić & Numanović, 2017, p. 32). It has also been evidenced that a lack of good quality education limits a young person's chances to obtain proper and stable employment and *vice versa*. Moreover, education and training systems that equip young people with needed skills and prepare them for the labour market represent one of the conditions for facilitating education to work transitions (Eurofound, 2014a). In this chapter, we have therefore decided to explore topics of accessibility of different types of education, such as its equity and different aspects of its quality as perceived by the young people. These include young people's satisfaction with the quality of education, their perception of the presence of corruption in education, their participation in practical aspects of schooling, and their attitude on adjustment of education to the demands of the labour market.

Significant variations exist within samples among the countries covered by FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 surveys when it comes to activity and educational status of youth (Graph 4.1). In most countries, for instance Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia and Montenegro, the predominant part of the sample consists of young people who are outside of the educational system.

FIGURE 4.1: **Educational status of youth, FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 (in %).** What is your current status in terms of education?

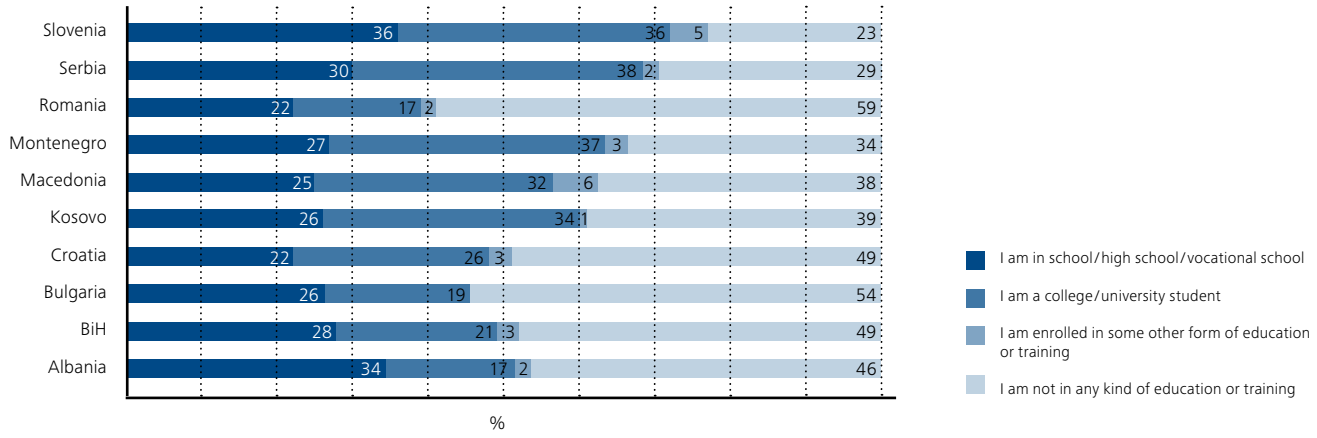
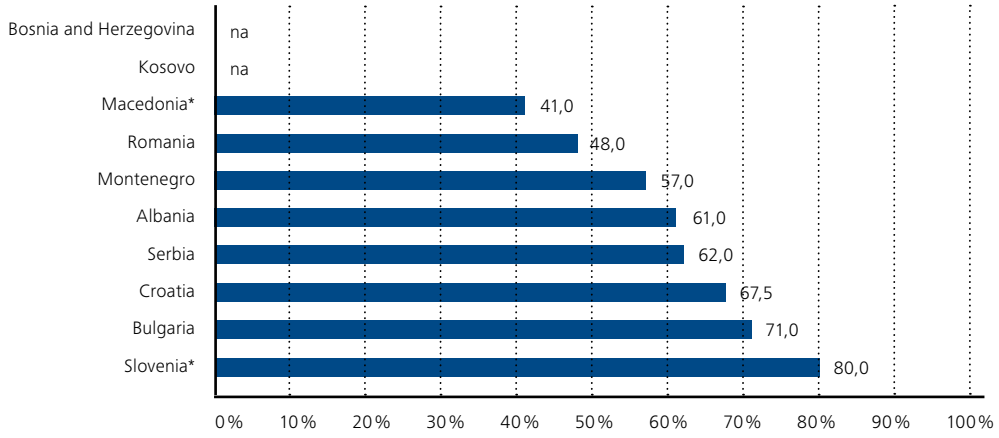


FIGURE 4.2: **Tertiary education enrolment rates, 2016 (in %)**



Note: * Data relates to 2015.
Source: The World Bank: http://databank.worldbank.org

Among SEE countries that are EU member states, Slovenia has already exceeded the Europe 2020 strategy's target of having at least 40 % of 30-34-year-olds with completed tertiary education, while Romania, Croatia and Bulgaria have shares between 28 % and 32 %, respectively (Eurostat, 2016). Official tertiary education enrolment data for the region show a trend towards reaching the EU target of higher education set as a national goal for their country given high enrolment rates in Slovenia, Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania, while non-EU countries such as Serbia, Albania and Montenegro also have high rates (Graph 4.2).

EQUITY IN EDUCATION

A commonly-used measure of educational equity is the odds ratio[7] of educational mobility, which indicates chances to obtain an education higher than the one obtained by respondents' parents. We associate the level of education that a young person has obtained (or, in the case of higher education, is enrolled in) with the level of education of their parents, and compare it with the educational attainment of other young persons and their parents' level of education. The comparative analysis of FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 findings reveals significant educational inequalities. Namely, young people whose parents have secondary education are considerably more likely (from 2 times more likely in Slovenia to 26 times more likely in Bulgaria and 33 times more likely in Croatia) to complete secondary education as compared with peers whose parents have primary education.[8] The likelihood of a young person whose parents have tertiary education to enrol in university studies is much higher as compared with peers whose parents have only primary education: from 26 times higher in Macedonia to over 100 times higher in Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania.[9] In other words, young people coming from families where the parents just have primary school education have much lower chances of obtaining secondary education and particularly of enrolling in university studies. The analysis shows that the chances of enrolment in a university by a young person whose parents have completed tertiary education are higher as compared to those whose parents have finished secondary education: the rate is 2 times higher in Macedonia, 3 times higher in

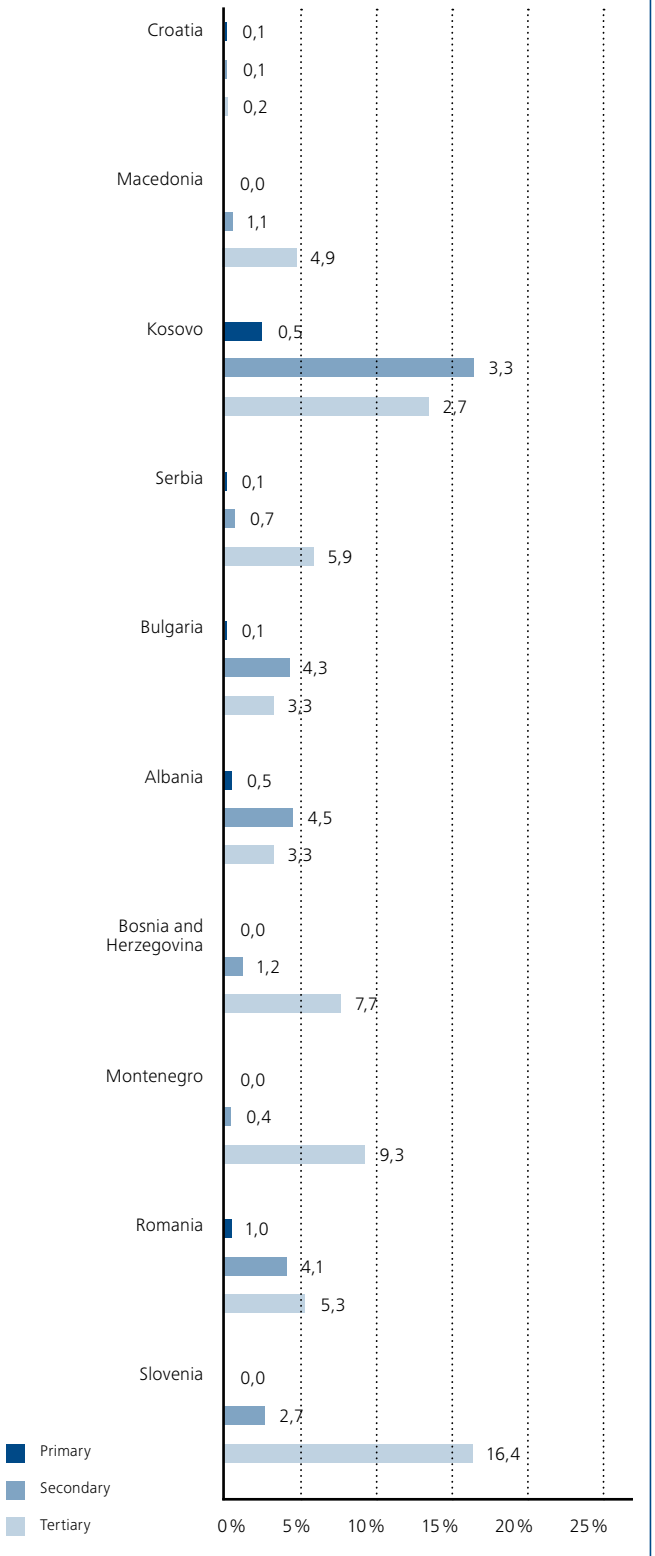
Montenegro, 4 times higher in Slovenia, Croatia or BiH, 5 times higher in Albania, Kosovo or Serbia, 6 times higher in Romania and 10 times higher in Bulgaria.

The differences between countries are not related to their development as indicated by the Human Development Index (HDI), but are presumably induced by different systems of educational policy. One can find a consistency in the openness or closeness of systems in terms of access to different levels of education, since odds ratios for educational mobility to secondary school and to university for both levels of parents' education are significantly correlated.[10] Taking into account the chances for mobility at all levels of education presented above, the risk of exclusion and self-reproduction at the bottom of the social hierarchy ('underclass') is particularly visible in Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania. The potential explanation of differences in educational equity between the SEE countries is a very complex issue, which is related to path-dependent, post-socialist transformations and country-specific educational policies.[11]

Inequality in access to higher levels of education affects young people from lower social strata in all SEE countries. The risk of social exclusion due to a lack of access to education is particularly prominent among the young from families with low educational attainment in Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania.

When analysed in relation to features of socioeconomic status, quitting education early ('dropout rates') is another indicator of educational equity. Among the SEE countries that are members of the EU, the lowest proportions of 'early school leavers' were observed in 2015 in Croatia (2.8 %) and Slovenia (5 %), while Romania (19.1 %) was among the countries with the highest shares. Croatia and Slovenia were among thirteen Member States that have already met their Europe 2020 national target for this indicator (Eurostat, 2016).[12] Country differences with regard to young people quitting education early are evident from the youth survey data, as presented in Graph 1.3.

FIGURE 4.3: **The share of young people who have quit school at different levels of education, FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 (in %)**



The differences are not correlated with countries' development as indicated by HDI, but are presumably consequences of different educational policies. For instance, the dropout rate from university studies is the highest in Slovenia, which could be interpreted as the effect of having the highest enrolment in tertiary education among countries in the region.[13] Dropping out of

education early is correlated with parents' educational status in most SEE countries except for Macedonia and Serbia. It is particularly prominent in Slovenia and Bulgaria, where almost half of young people whose parents have the lowest levels of education have left schooling before completing a degree, and in Montenegro and Romania, where around one-third of the young from families with low levels of education reported the experience.[14] Leaving education before degree completion is significantly correlated with household material status in all countries except Kosovo and Macedonia. Between a quarter of young people who described their household status as the lowest in Albania, BiH, and Serbia, and around one-third in Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia, had dropped out before completing a degree.[15] Young people from rural areas are also more prone to drop out of school earlier.[16]

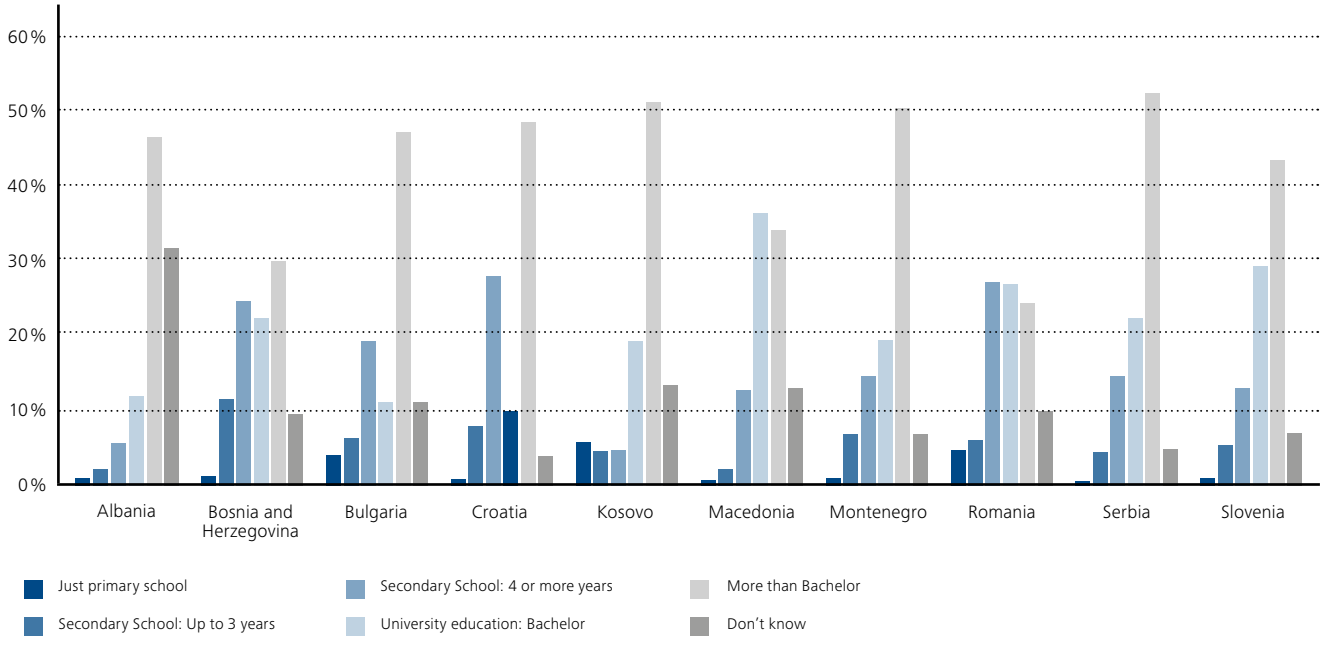
Young people from families with lower levels of educational attainment and from poor, predominantly rural, households are more likely to drop out of school before attaining a degree, especially in Bulgaria, Slovenia and Romania.

Trends in the connection between levels of education and important structural factors that may result in inequalities are evident in the case of SEE youth, since positive correlations between respondents' level of completed education and the material situation of respondents' households, their parents' educational attainment, and living in urban areas were also detected in FES Youth Studies SEE 2011 – 15 analyses (Jusić & Numanović, 2017, p. 32). Parents' education and the material situation of households have proven to be significant stratification factors in the diversification of education achievements and aspirations of young people (Tomanović & Stanojević, 2015).

As is evident from Graph 1.4, most young people in all SEE countries, except in Romania, have high educational aspirations, with most of them aiming beyond a Bachelor's degree. The differences between the countries could be attributed to different distributions of respondents with respect to socioeconomic status (SES). Educational aspirations are lower among young people from underprivileged backgrounds: those coming from households with a low material status,[17] from families with lower educational attainment of parents,[18] and from rural areas.[19] Statistical analyses also revealed that, besides lower aspirations, young people from poor households[20] and families with lower levels of educational attainment[21] more frequently do not have clear plans for a future education (response 'don't know'). Young people are 'sure' or 'very sure' that they will accomplish the level of education they are aspiring towards, as means range from 4.1 in Slovenia to 4.56 in Bulgaria (on a 5-point scale, where 5 means 'very sure').[22] Although most young people are confident that they will achieve their educational aspirations, those from more affluent and better-educated families are more confident.[23]

Youth from underprivileged backgrounds – from poor households, from families with lower levels of educational attainment and residing in rural areas – have lower aspirations and less clear educational plans.

FIGURE 4.4: **Aspired level of education by country (in %)**



QUALITY OF EDUCATION

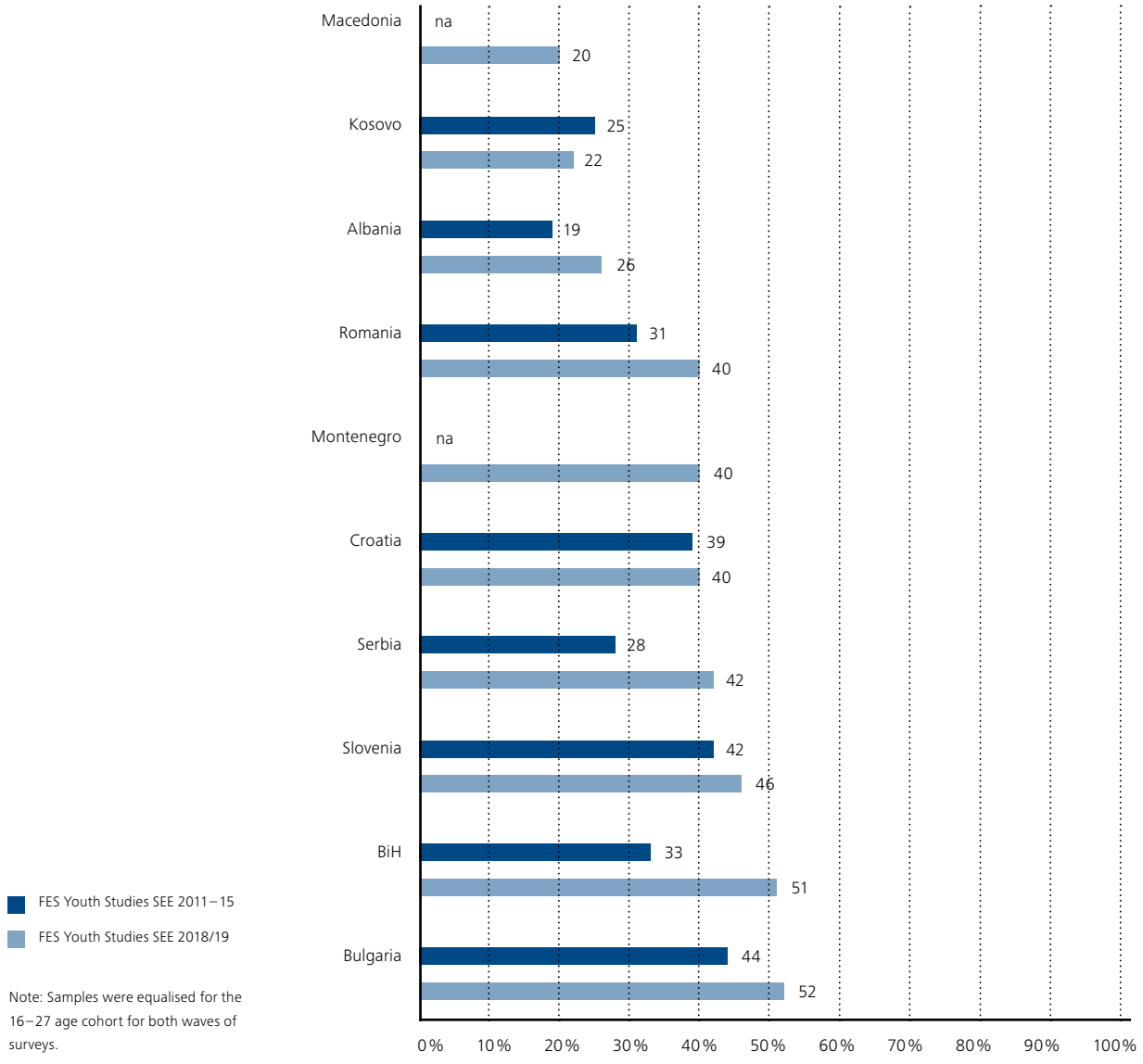
Perceived quality of education

Concerning satisfaction with the quality of education, FES Youth Studies SEE 2011–15 results showed differences between countries: the greatest satisfaction was expressed by young people in Bulgaria, Slovenia and Croatia, the lowest in Romania, Serbia and BiH, while Albania, Kosovo or Macedonia were in the middle (Jusić & Numanović, 2017, p. 33). Since there were no significant differences in satisfaction according to respondents' level of education, one can surmise that it was a systemic issue in each country (Lavrič, 2015), i.e. country-specific and contextualised. In FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19, there is moderate satisfaction with the quality of education: on a scale from 1 – 'not satisfied at all' to 5 – 'completely satisfied', scores are concentrated around 3 ('somewhat satisfied') and range from 2.6 in Macedonia to 3.4 in Bulgaria.

Young people in all SEE countries involved in FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19, except Kosovo, expressed a higher level of satisfaction with education than in the FES Youth Studies SEE 2011–15 surveys (Graph 4.5). As compared with the findings from the previous surveys, the level of satisfaction is considerably higher in BiH, Serbia, Albania and Romania, while young people remain quite satisfied in Bulgaria, Slovenia and Croatia. Among those young people who have completed education, those with higher levels of education are less satisfied with its quality[24] in all the countries except Serbia.

Young people's perception of the quality of education in their country only partly reflects its quality as indicated by the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) results of 15-year-old students' performance. Namely, according to the PISA 2015 study, only students from Slovenia performed above the OECD average in science, reading and mathematics, and somewhat below the average in Croatia (OECD, 2018, p. 5). On the other hand, in

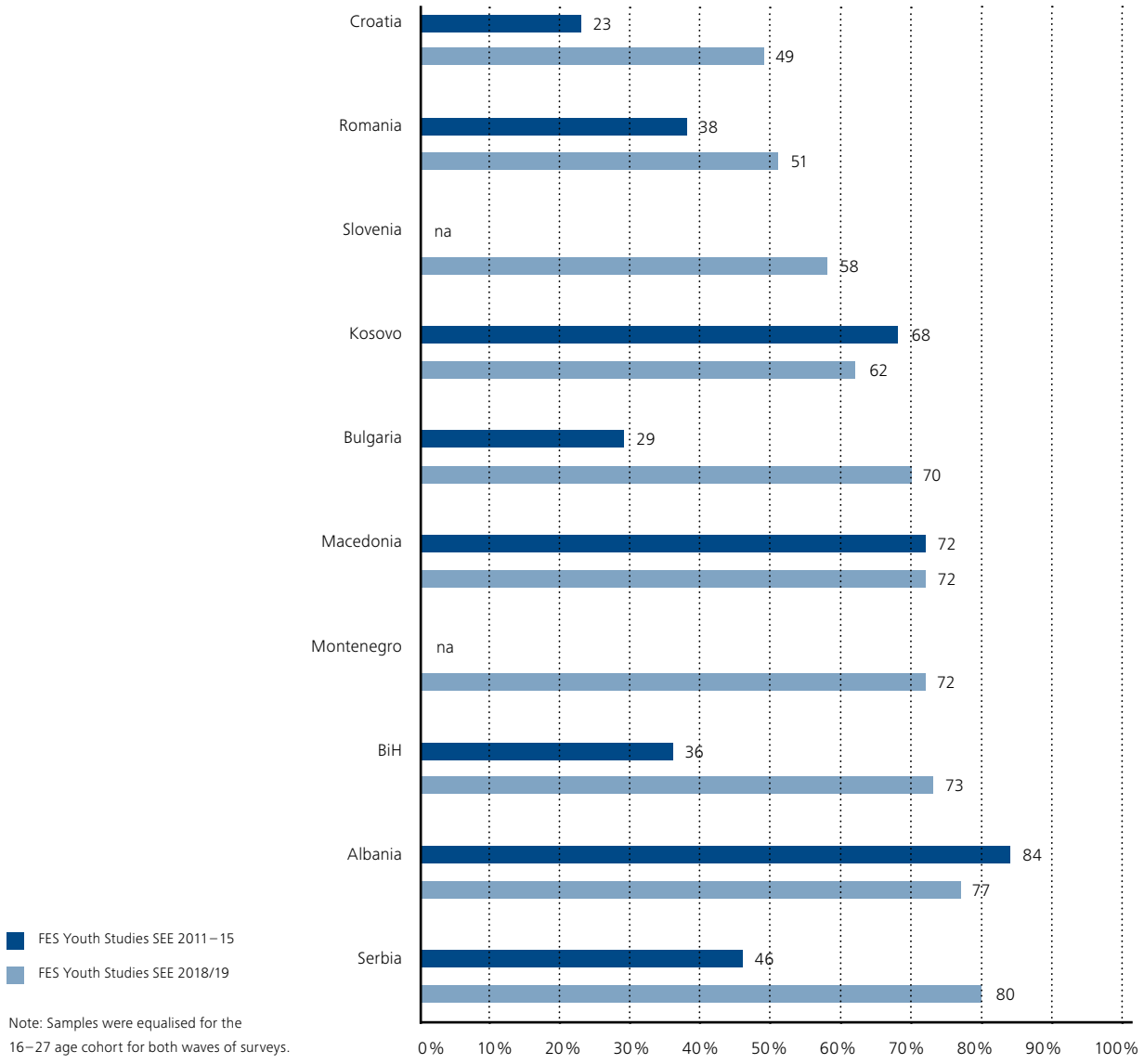
FIGURE 4.5: **The share of youth aged 16–27 who responded that they are 'satisfied' and 'very satisfied' with the quality of education in their country (in %).**
How satisfied are you generally with the quality of education in your country?



Note: Samples were equalised for the 16–27 age cohort for both waves of surveys.

FIGURE 4.6: **Share of youth aged 16–27 who responded with 'I agree' and 'I totally agree' to the statement "There are cases where grades and exams are 'bought'" (in %).**

Do you agree that there are cases where grades and exams are 'bought' in institutes/universities in your country?



Note: Samples were equalised for the 16–27 age cohort for both waves of surveys.

Bulgaria, Romania, Albania, Montenegro and Serbia,[25] and more than one-half of students in Macedonia and Kosovo performed below the baseline level of proficiency (Level 2) in all three subjects studied (Ibid, p. 5). It is worth noting, related with a view to our previous findings on equity in education in SEE countries, that PISA studies have established that high achievement and equity in education are not mutually exclusive, since some countries such as Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Hong Kong (China) and Macao (China) have achieved both high levels of performance and equity in education (Ibid, p. 6).

With the exception of Kosovo, levels of expressed with education in one's country have increased in all countries since the 2011–2015 youth surveys, considerably so in BiH, Serbia, Albania and Romania.

Perception of corruption in education

Corruption is a prominent issue of public debate in SEE countries. The perception of corruption in education was evidenced among young respondents in the previous round of youth surveys (Jusić & Numanović, 2017). The FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 data reveal that there is a very salient perception of corruption in education in all countries, ranging from 3.4 in Romania to 4.3 in Serbia (on a 5-point scale, with 5 constituting the response 'I totally agree' with the statement that grades and exams are 'bought' in the country).

As is evident in Graph 1.6, young people's perception of the presence of corruption in their country's educational systems has increased since the FES Youth Studies SEE 2011–15 surveys in all countries, with the exception of Albania, Kosovo and Macedonia, where it still remains high.[26] These are upsetting findings that seem to contradict the previous finding of an increase in person-

al satisfaction with the quality of education in a country. We can assume that satisfaction with the quality of education is partly based on personal educational experience, while the attitude toward corruption in education is partly a reflection of debates surrounding this issue, which have become a more regular part of public discourse in individual countries.

In FES Youth Studies SEE 2011–15, corruption was more frequently perceived to be present in education in SEE countries where education was assessed as being of a lower quality (Jusić & Numanović, 2017, p. 36). This remains true in FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19, with the exception of Serbia and Romania, where young people expressed moderate satisfaction with the quality of education. A negative correlation between the perception of corruption and satisfaction with the quality of education, detected at the regional level in FES Youth Studies SEE 2011–15 (Lavrič, 2015), is also present in FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19.[27] Young people with higher levels of education are more critical about the educational system in their countries – they are less satisfied and more convinced that there is corruption present. This finding was to be expected, since they have had longer experience with the educational system, are also more informed about such problems from the public discourse, and are more interested in the topic of corruption.

Very salient perception of corruption in education is present in all SEE countries, with the highest level being registered in Serbia and the lowest in Croatia. Perception of corruption has increased in most countries, with the exceptions of Albania, Kosovo and Macedonia, where it still remains very high.

Quality of education in facilitating education-to-work transitions

One of the key elements that facilitate transitions to the labour market are education and training systems that equip young people with needed skills and prepare them to enter the labour market (Eurofound, 2014a). The majority of youth in all countries involved in FES Youth Studies SEE 2011–15 had not performed an internship (Jusić & Numanović, 2017). The FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 data presents a more favourable picture, since in half of the countries (Slovenia, BiH, Serbia, Montenegro and Croatia), more than half of young people reported performing an internship (Graph 4.7).

Except for Macedonia, this aspect of schooling has improved in all countries, considerably so in BiH, Croatia, and Slovenia, and somewhat in Serbia, Kosovo, Albania, and Bulgaria. The least favourable situation is in Romania and in Albania, where only a quarter and a fifth of the young, respectively, have performed a practical in connection with their education (Graph 4.7).

Participation in practical aspects of education has improved in all of the countries except Macedonia, and considerably so in BiH, Croatia, and Slovenia.

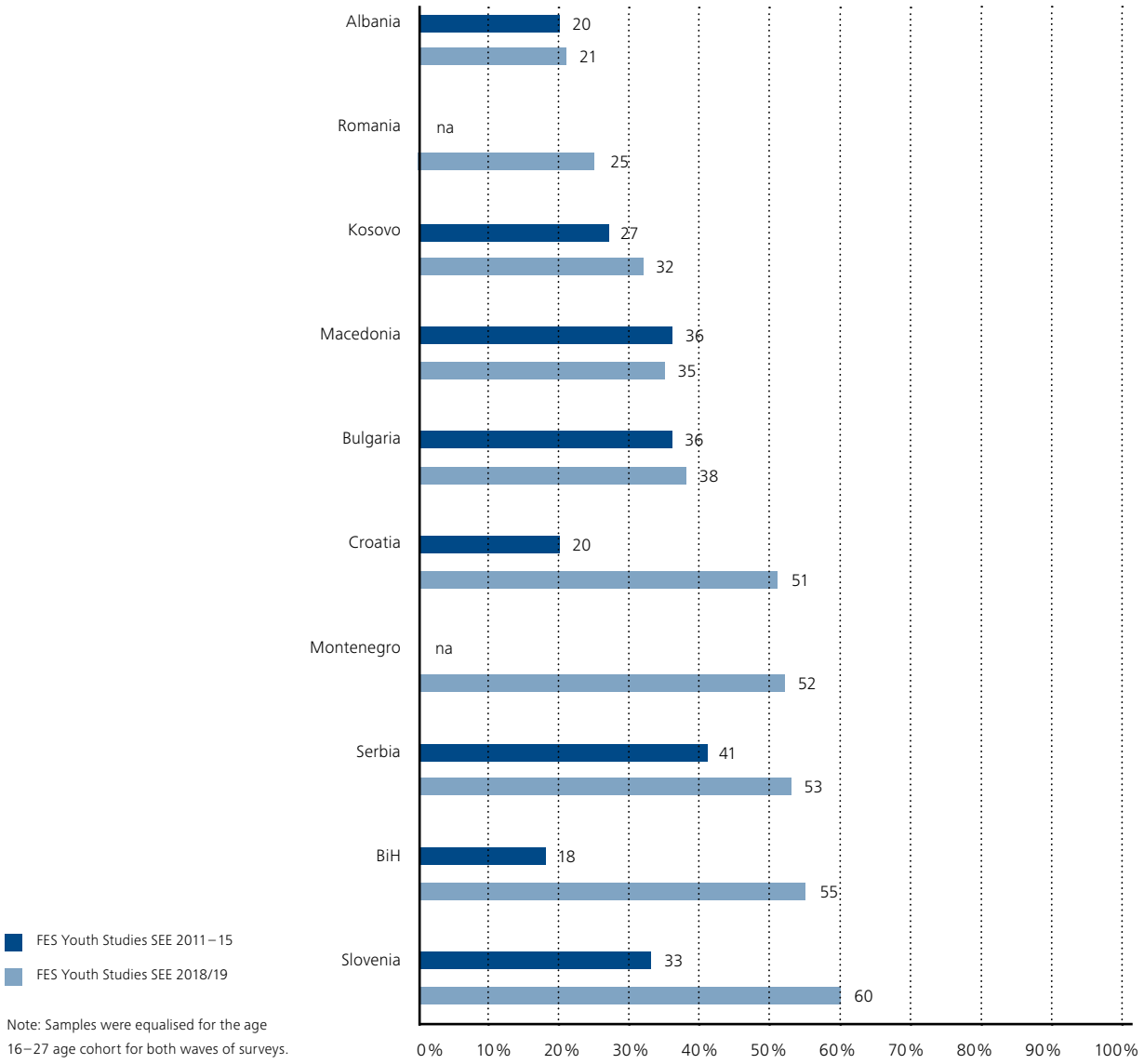
On the other hand, most young people perceived the education systems in their countries not to be well-adapted to the world of work (Graph 4.8), particularly in BiH, in spite of the greatest increase in the performance of practicals, and in Albania, while the young in Croatia expressed a relatively positive view on the issue. These differences could again be attributed to a discrepancy between personal experience and the public debate that is reflected in young people's perceptions.

The finding from FES Youth Studies SEE 2011–15 that there was a positive correlation between young people's belief that they would find a job and the experience of having performed an internship (Jusić & Numanović, 2017, p. 34) is also confirmed in FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 at the regional[28] and at the individual country level. Young people who have performed an internship are also more likely to be in employment, both in the region as a whole (Graph 4.9)[29] and in individual countries, which corroborates the conclusions from FES Youth Studies SEE 2011–15 (Ibid, p. 34).

The comparative data from FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 indicate that young people are in favour of a more practically oriented education, while some have already experienced some of the benefits of such during their employment.

Young people whose education has included a practical are more likely to be employed, both in the SEE region as a whole and in individual countries.

FIGURE 4.7: **Share of youth aged 16–27 who have participated in practical aspects of schooling (practical, internship) (in %).** In your education so far, have you ever performed a practical or internship?



Note: Samples were equalised for the age 16–27 age cohort for both waves of surveys.

FIGURE 4.8: **Perception of adaptation of the education system to work demands, FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 (in %).** Do you think that in your country, training, school and university education are well adapted or not to the current world of work?

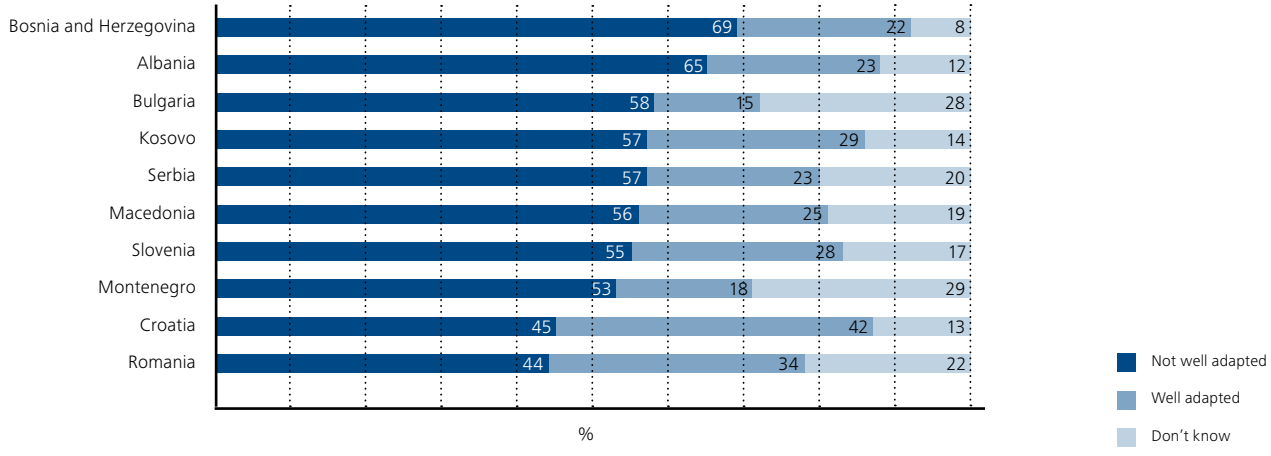
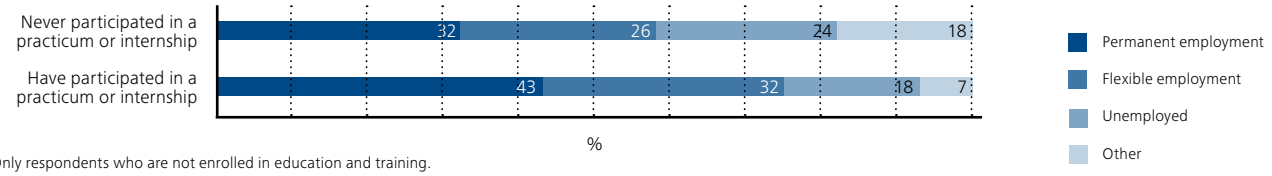


FIGURE 4.9: **Employment status of respondents with and without participation in a practical or internship**



Note: Only respondents who are not enrolled in education and training.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The picture of education in the SEE region is quite unfavourable and somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand, objective data indicate still-existing inequalities in opportunities for attainment of different levels of education for young people from different social backgrounds which are more or less prominent in the different countries. On the other hand, subjective perceptions reveal that most young people are satisfied with the quality of education, although they express a keen perception of corruption in education, which is even greater in comparison to the previous round of youth surveys. Furthermore, although they have experienced increasing involvement in practical aspects of schooling and benefited from this in terms of their employability, young people consider educational systems to be ill-adapted to the demands of the labour market. Since adequate education is every young person's right and one of the main prerequisites for stable employment, governments should seriously consider the issues of equity, corruption and quality of education.

MAIN FINDINGS:

— Young people from underprivileged social backgrounds face significant inequality in access to education, especially at the tertiary level. Such inequality is more prominent in Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania than in other countries.

— There is also a greater risk that young people from underprivileged social backgrounds will break off education before completing a degree. This risk is higher in Bulgaria, Slovenia and Romania than in other countries.

— It is evident that young persons' low socioeconomic status presents an obstacle to achieving their educational potential, as well as to gaining the needed knowledge and skills and having aspirations of higher education. Apart from limiting life opportunities and the quality of life of young people from underprivileged social backgrounds, findings show that educational systems are also reproducing educational inequalities.

— The level of satisfaction with education in one's country has increased in all the countries except Kosovo, and considerably so in BiH, Serbia, Albania and Romania.

— There is a very widespread perception that corruption is rampant in education in all SEE countries, the most extreme case being Serbia and least pronounced case being in Croatia. It has grown in most countries, with the exception of Albania, Kosovo and Macedonia, where it still remains very high.

— Participation in practical applications of education (internships, practicals) has improved in all countries except Macedonia, but considerably so in BiH, Croatia, and Slovenia.

— Young people who have received education that has included a practicale are more likely to be employed, both in the SEE region as a whole as well as in individual countries.

— Although there is evident improvement in practical aspects in the educational system in all countries, young people are not satisfied with its quality in relation to facilitating education-to-work transitions.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Countries should reform their education and social security systems as to ensure greater equity in education. This should include measures such as: early childhood education; grant schemes that are not based solely on achievement, but also take factors of social status into account, as well as other forms of support for the schooling of underprivileged youth; measures for improving performance and preventing dropout by identifying at-risk students early, by monitoring information on attendance, performance and involvement in school activities; reintegration of early school-leavers in education; good vocational education schemes, etc.
2. In order to fight (perceptions of) corrupt practices in educational institutions, governments of countries in the region should, for example, strengthen rules and control mechanisms in the realm of education, increase student representation in education institutions and raise awareness about the problem of corruption at the level of international networks of educational institutions.
3. Educational systems should be reformed to include applied knowledge and skills in curricula at all levels of education. The focus on application of knowledge in education should not include only practical job training, but also different kinds of skills, such as an improvement in digital literacy through ICT use, which could also be tied to enhancing political and civic engagement of young citizens.

5

EMPLOYMENT

By Mirna Jusić[30]

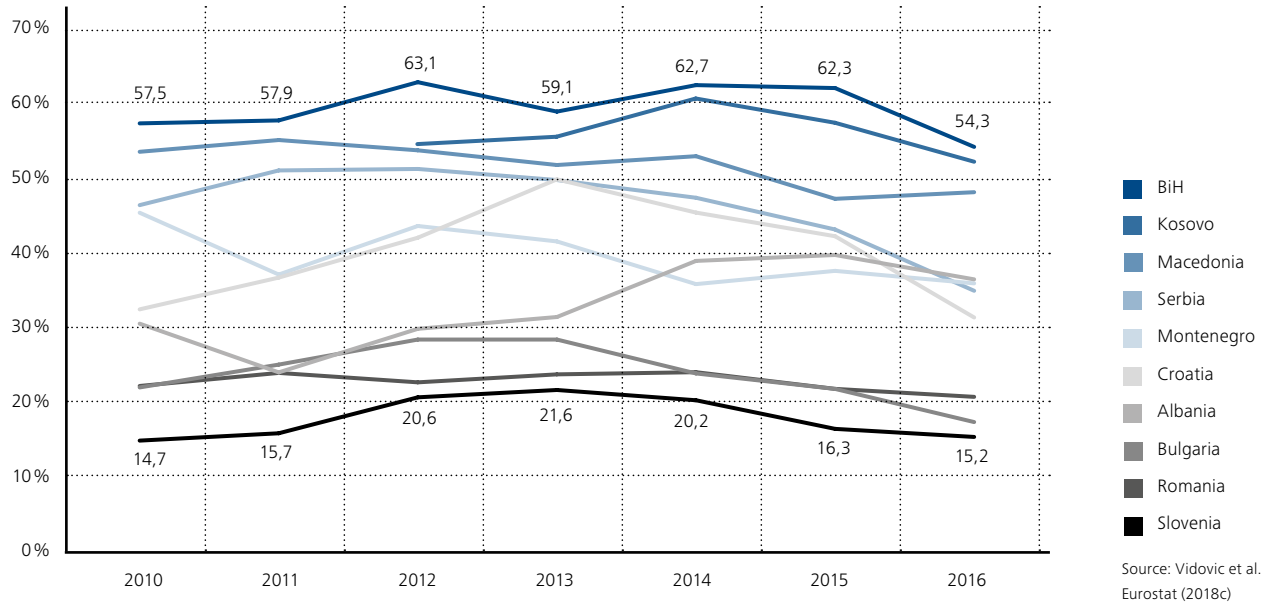
Moving from education to paid employment constitutes an important transition in young people's lives. Young people who are unable to find decent employment are inevitably at a greater risk of (in-work) poverty and social exclusion (Fahmy, 2014; Tomanović & Stanojević, 2015) and may suffer from negative health consequences (O'Higgins & Coppola, 2016). Joblessness and unemployment early on in one's career have been shown to produce 'scarring', long-term effects on employment prospects and earnings (Bell & Blanchflower, 2011). Unemployment is also seen to reduce young people's sense of self-efficacy (Mortimer et al., 2016). As in other parts of Europe and the world, young people's ability to find quality employment in SEE has been complicated by a number of conditions, not limited to a prevalence of skills mismatches between educational systems and the economy (e.g. Arandarenko & Bartlett, 2012), a lack of demand for youth labour or general labour market deregulation tendencies.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND NEET

With the exception of Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria, official labour force survey data on youth unemployment show that unemployment in SEE continues to soar. At 54.3 percent, BiH had the highest youth unemployment rate in Europe in 2016, followed by Kosovo and Macedonia[31] (Graph 5.1).

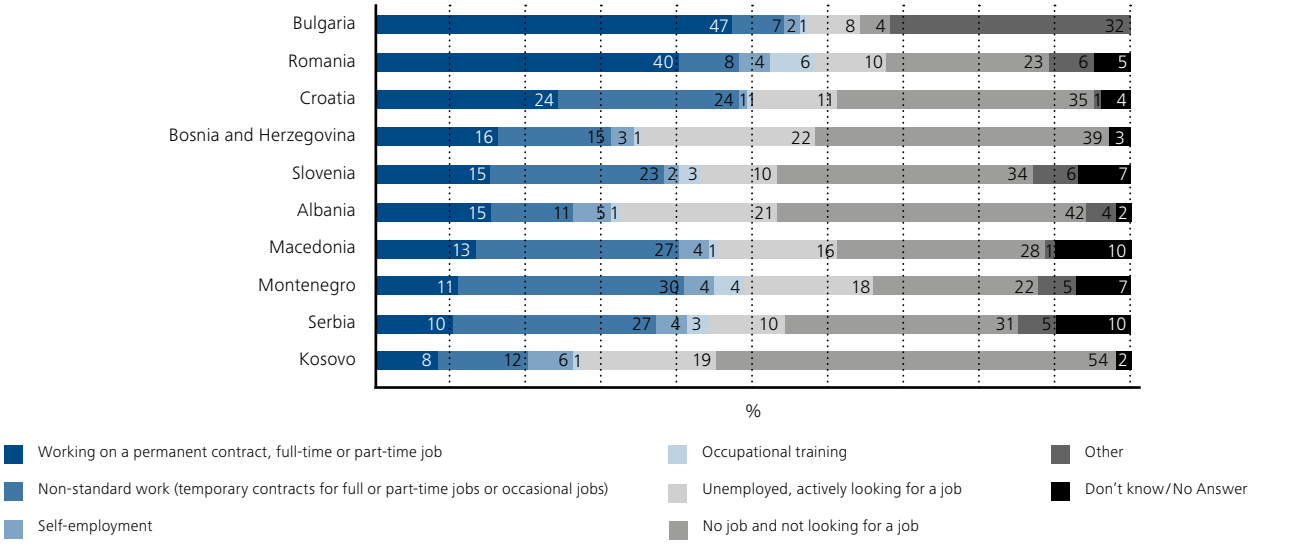
Having increased during and after the economic crisis, youth unemployment rates have fluctuated in recent years across the

FIGURE 5.1: **Youth unemployment rates in SEE over the years (2010–2016), as a percentage of the active population, age 15–24**



Source: Vidovic et al. (2018)/ Eurostat (2018c)

FIGURE 5.2: **Young people's current employment status, age 15–29 (in %)**

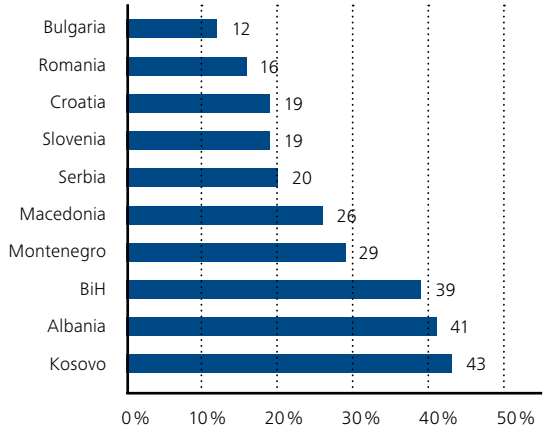


SEE region, but generally appear to be in decline, with this especially being the case in BiH, Croatia and Serbia. A decline in youth unemployment rates in the region is usually attributed to countries' improved economic performance. In addition, according to some sources, emigration from the Western Balkans region might be another important factor that has contributed to a reduction of youth unemployment (Vidovic et al., 2018, p. xii). Yet although joblessness among youth has declined in recent years, unemployment rates remain worryingly high in most parts of the region.

Survey data on young people's employment status in SEE show that in most countries, a substantial cohort of youth have no jobs and are not looking for a job, which can by and large be attributed to attending school or university. This is especially the case in Kosovo (56 %), Albania (45 %) and BiH (41 %).[32] The highest incidence of employment may be found in Bulgaria and Romania (Graph 5.2).

Although there are some differences between unemployment rates calculated on the basis of youth survey data and official statistics, youth unemployment rates are comparable to the official statistics, indicating that a substantial portion of young people in many countries of the region are jobless, especially in Kosovo, Albania and BiH (Graph 5.3).[33]

FIGURE 5.3: **Youth unemployment rates (15–29), as a percentage of the labour force**[34]

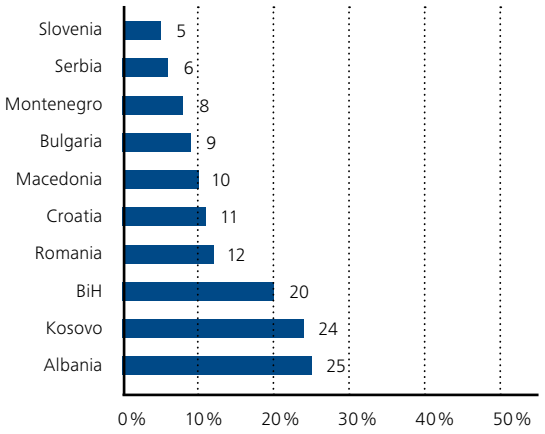


Statistical analysis at the regional level suggests significant relationships between cultural and economic capital and one's employment status. Those respondents whose parents only completed primary school are more likely to be unemployed. Those who are from financially worse-off households are more likely to be unemployed. Gender also appears to matter, as does age: young men are more likely to be in some form of employment, while young women are more likely to be outside of the labour force. Not surprisingly, being employed is more prevalent among older youth. Statistical analysis also indicates a potential regional gap in terms of employment opportunities, as young people from rural areas are slightly more likely to be unemployed. Last but not least, one's level of qualifications defines one's path to employment: while those without primary school are more likely to be outside of the labour force, potentially because they are still in school, those with doctoral degrees are more likely to be employed. [35]

Youth who are not employed, in education or training (NEETs) are, by definition, a very heterogeneous category, "combining groups with very different experiences, characteristics and needs," such as young people who are unemployed for longer or shorter periods of time, caring for children or relatives, who are ill or disabled, taking a break from the labour market or school, or travelling, *inter alia* (Furlong, 2006, pp. 554–555). In other words, not all NEETs are necessarily disadvantaged or socially excluded. Nevertheless, this category is considered useful, as it has been shown to be a potent predictor of unemployment later on (ibid, p. 565).

Being outside of education, training and employment is recognised as a serious problem especially in the WB6 region, as almost one-quarter of young people in the region had NEET status in 2016 (Vidovic et al., 2018, p. 21). Survey data supports such findings in the case of Albania, BiH and Kosovo, where a high share of youth was outside of schooling, training or employment (Graph 5.4). Nevertheless, NEET rates appear to be much lower in some countries, such as Bulgaria, Serbia, Macedonia and Montenegro, in comparison to official statistics and the last round of youth surveys.[36]

FIGURE 5.4: **Percentage of young people who are not employed, undergoing education or training (15–29)**



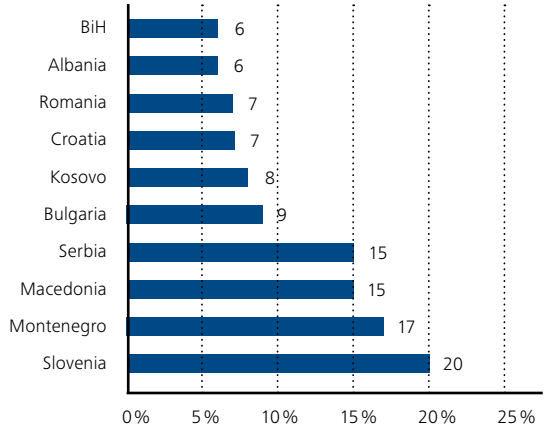
Statistical analysis of youth survey data at the regional level shows that young people who are NEETs are more likely to come from households with fewer material possessions and from those in a worse financial position. Besides economic capital, cultural capital also matters, as youth who are NEETs are also more likely to have parents with lower levels of educational attainment. While the correlation between NEET and respondents' own educational attainment is weakly positive at the regional level, this may be explained by the fact that NEET status is the most prevalent among those who have completed secondary general or vocational/technical education. Importantly, with respect to education, those young people who left formal education before completing a degree at an earlier age are more likely to be NEETs, as opposed to those who left at a later age. Youth who are NEETs are also more likely to come from rural areas, and are older: in fact, the greatest number of NEET youth are in the 25–29 age group.[37] While differences are not very pronounced, young women more often tend to be NEETs than men. Not surprisingly, NEET status is also strongly negatively correlated with countries' level of socioeconomic development, as expressed through HDI.[38]

The implications of having a large cohort of youth outside of education and employment are grave. Besides the immense economic cost that countries incur for not integrating young people in labour markets, NEETs have also been found to be more socially disengaged, less likely than non-NEETs to take an interest in politics, to vote, to trust in institutions or to engage in civic participation (Salvatore et al., 2012, p. 2). Such correlations are also confirmed by SEE youth data (see chapter on political and civic participation by Jusić & Lavrič).

While NEET status is prevalent in many countries, a relatively small share of young people combines education and training with employment (Graph 5.5). Thus, it appears that current education and training systems in most SEE countries are not tightly linked with the labour market, unlike in many northern European countries (Cavalca, 2016, p. 279). Slovenia is an exception, however, as

young people appear to commonly engage in part-time work during study.

FIGURE 5.5: **Percentage of young people who work and are undergoing education or training (15–29)**



Youth in employment, education or training (EET)

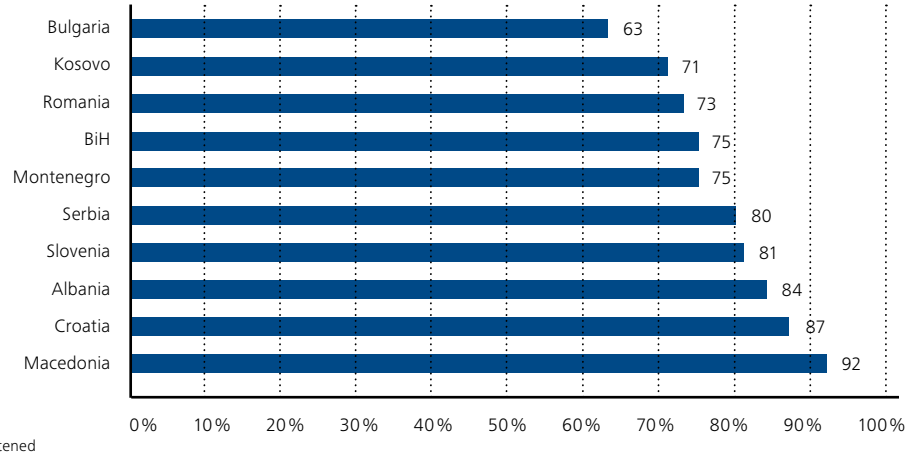
Considering the prevalence of joblessness in the region, a substantial share of youth anxious about the prospect of not having a job is not surprising: the vast majority of young people in SEE are somewhat or very frightened of not having a job, especially so in Macedonia (Graph 5.6).

A substantial cohort of young people in the SEE region are unemployed, especially in Albania, BiH, Kosovo, Montenegro and Macedonia. Besides not having a job, in Kosovo, Albania and BiH a significant portion of youth are also outside of schooling, indicating their potential exclusion from society. Moreover, a large majority of young people in SEE exhibit anxiety over being left jobless. Having parents with lower cultural capital and coming from poorer households are factors common to both a NEET and an unemployment status, suggesting inequalities of opportunity in accessing labour markets.

PRECARIOUS FORMS OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS MISMATCHES

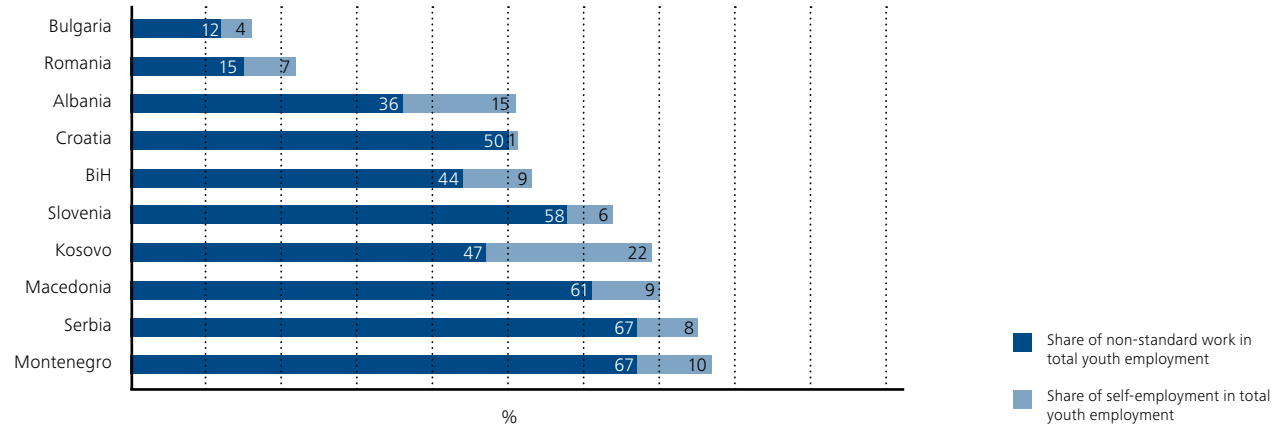
A common critique of the emphasis on the employment-unemployment dichotomy is that it overlooks an important share of vulnerable youth: those trapped in precarious work (Furlong 2006, 565). Precarious work is "usually defined by uncertainty as to the duration of employment, multiple possible employers or a disguised or ambiguous employment relationship, a lack of access to social protection and benefits usually associated with employment, low pay, and substantial legal and practical obstacles to joining a trade union and bargaining collectively" (International Labor Organization 2011, p. 5). It is the result of "drastic deregulation" of employment contracts over the past decades (Maestripieri & Sabatinelli, 2014, p. 154), but also a fall in aggregate demand for youth labour (Cavalca, 2016). Non-standard work, such as temporary employment and some forms of self-employment,[39] is usually (albeit not always) considered to be precarious work, as it is marked by low job security and poor or inadequate working conditions (for more, see Mortimer et al., 2016; Macdonald, 2009). Although it represents "a fundamental factor of

FIGURE 5.6: **Anxiety over not having a job (combination of responses 'somewhat' and 'very' frightened)**



Somewhat or very frightened of having no job

FIGURE 5.7: **Share of non-standard work and self-employment in total youth employment (in %)**[40]



social risk" (Calvaca, 2016, p. 274), as youth in precarious positions are at a danger of in-work poverty, limited and fragmented career prospects and non-linear youth transitions, precarious work among youth is usually overlooked by policy-makers and employment services, who are mainly concerned with the placement of young people in jobs (Furlong, 2006, p. 566).

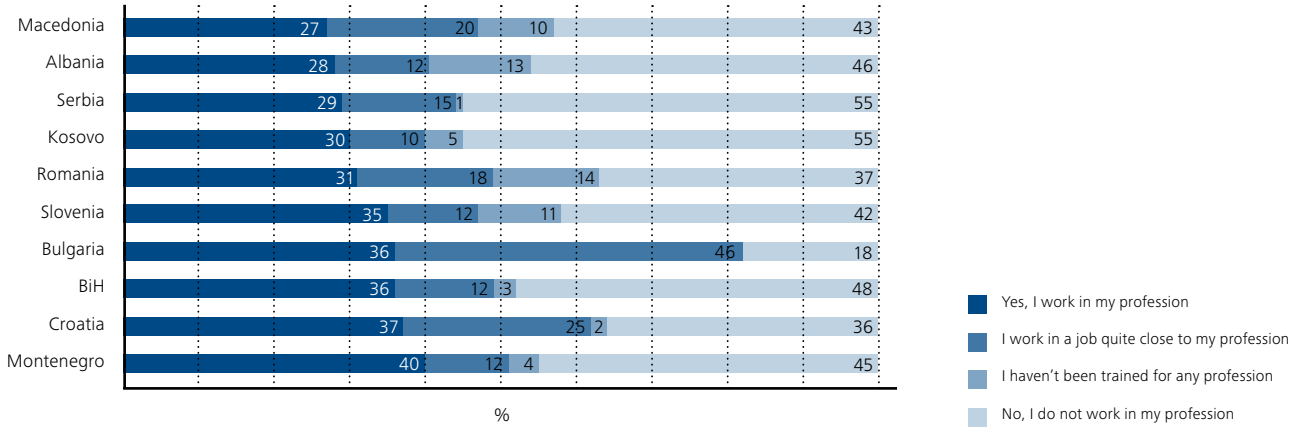
Survey data on young people's employment status show that "the context of a political economy of insecurity" (ibid, p. 567) is very much present in SEE labour markets. In most countries of the SEE region, working on part-time contracts, in occasional jobs or being self-employed is much more common than permanent work among young people who have a job. This is especially the case in the WB6 countries, but also Slovenia. On the other hand, non-standard work or self-employment appears to be an uncommon occurrence among Bulgarian or Romanian youth (see Graph 2.7).

Statistical analysis at the regional level points to potential risk factors for precarious work. Standard employment is more prevalent among those with graduate degrees (MA, PhD) than respondents with lower levels of educational attainment. Similarly, those whose parents have lower educational attainment are much less likely to be in standard employment, and are more likely to be outside of employment, either non-standard or standard. Moreover, young people coming from the poorest households are less likely to be in standard employment, and more likely to be outside of employment, than those who are from financially better-off households. Gender also matters: men are more likely to be in non-standard or self-employment than women. Analysis also points to the importance of practical education in finding permanent work, as those who have had practicals or internships are more likely to be in 'regular' jobs.[41]

Due to skills mismatches, young people in SEE are frequently in a position of working in jobs that are not within their profession. Survey data suggest that a substantial share of young people from SEE – 42 % on average – find themselves in jobs they have not been trained for, which corresponds closely to findings of the last round of youth surveys. Nevertheless, there is variation across countries: youth from Bulgaria, for instance, less frequently work in professions they were not trained for.

Statistical analysis at the regional level suggests that respondents whose parents have completed tertiary education are much less likely to be working at jobs not within their profession. Furthermore, one's level of education also matters: for instance, only 16 % of MA graduates work outside of their profession, as opposed

FIGURE 5.8: **Working in a profession trained or educated for (in %)**[42]



to close to 50 % of youth with secondary general, vocational training, or elementary school. Not surprisingly, older youth are more likely to work in their profession, while the greatest incidence of out-of-profession work is between the ages of 18 to 22, when young people tend to take on their first jobs.[43]

Over- and under-education, or having a higher or lower level of education/qualifications than required by one's job, represents another dimension of the skills mismatch between education systems and labour markets. Over-education hampers one's earning and employment opportunities and represents waste in terms of public investment in education (Floro & Pastore, 2016), while under-education means that workers are not able to reach their "productive frontiers" (ILO, 2014, p. 5).

Youth surveys included respondents' self-assessments of vertical (mis)matches.[44] The majority of youth that work in SEE have taken on a profession that is in line with their achieved level of education. Nevertheless, the share of youth who are over-educated for the positions they are working in is still substantial, especially so in Kosovo, Serbia, Albania and BiH, where labour-market performance tends to be very weak, but also in Slovenia, where the incidence of non-standard employment is considerable. Conversely, over-education appears to be a less common problem in Croatia, Bulgaria and Romania (Graph 5.9). On the other hand, under-education is less common in the region, and may be attributed to the fact that a high share of youth in the region work in non-standard employment, which may not yield as many occupational choices as standard, permanent work (ILO, 2014, p. 15).

Statistical analysis at the regional level points to the premium afforded to MA diplomas, as only 19 % of those with MA degrees work in positions that require a lower level of education than one's own, as opposed to 36 % of those with BA degrees. Economic capital also seems to matter: 40 % of those who belong to the poorest households work in jobs that require lower levels of formal education, as opposed to 21 % of working youth from the richest households.[46]

Personal traits or access to cultural and economic capital within the household are, however, only one part of the explanation for skills mismatches: others usually include supply- and demand-side factors, not limited to the system of education and training and the type and state of the economy, such as its production structure (Caroleo & Pastore, 2016, p. 37). While youth unemployment is, *inter alia, the result of insufficient experience, it is also the outcome of "the way different welfare system and school-to-work transition mixes seek to address the youth experience gap" (Pastore, 2015, p. 3). Over-education, for instance, is expected to be more common "where the education system is of a sequential type, namely where the mission of the education system is to generate general education rather than all-around human capital," as opposed to the dual education type (Caroleo & Pastore, 2016, p. 39). Sequential education systems are indeed more common than dual education systems in SEE. In other words, the nature of the "education-to-work regime" or "transition system" – not only limited to the education system, but also to its links to the labour market, effective placement services, income support, and active labour market policies – conditions the ability of young people to find a suitable job (Pastore, 2015, pp. 3–4).*

With the exception of two countries, the majority of youth who are employed in the SEE region work in non-standard contracts. Skills mismatches are relatively prevalent in the region with respect to working in positions not trained or educated for (42 % on average for the region) or in terms of over-education (30 %).

FIGURE 5.9: **Formal education requirements of young people's jobs**[45]

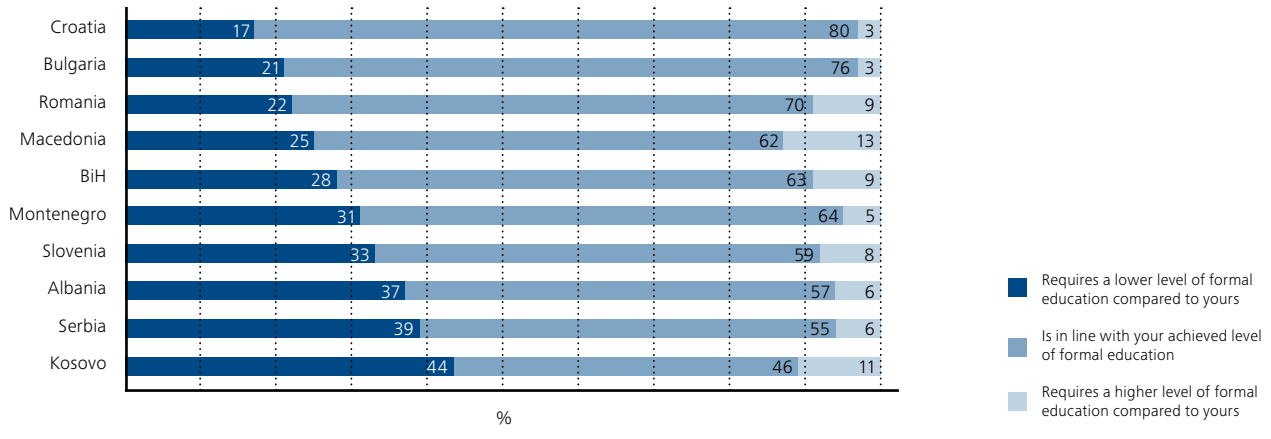
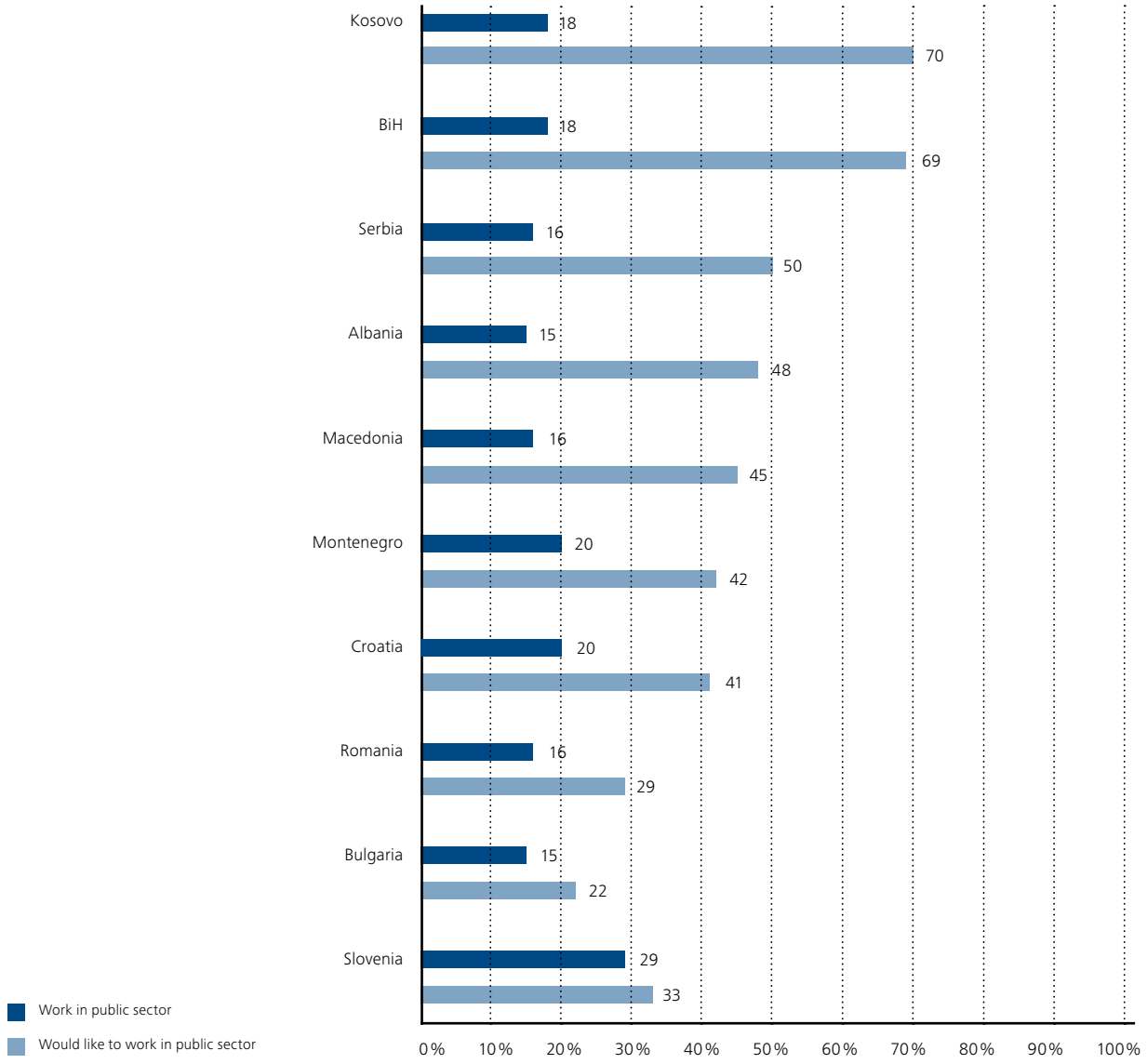


FIGURE 5.10: **Working in the public sector: reality and preference**



JOB SATISFACTION AND SECTORAL PREFERENCES

Although a substantial cohort of SEE working youth deals with precarious employment conditions or works outside of the profession that they were educated for, the majority are satisfied with their jobs, especially so in Bulgaria, Romania and Montenegro. Nevertheless, the finding that 37 % of SEE youth, on average, are either dissatisfied or impartial towards their jobs should not be undervalued.

In terms of the factors that young people from SEE personally consider important when choosing a job, the greatest premium is placed on practical aspects of the job, such as the salary earned (93 %) and job security (92 %), but work also has to be meaningful, with most young people wanting to feel that they have achieved something (88 %). Lower – but still great – importance is afforded to other aspirations, such as working with people (77 %), or the possibility of doing something valuable for society (77 %).

Of those who work, the vast majority of young people in SEE – some 74 % on average – are employed in the private sector. Nevertheless, the public sector represents the workplace for a significant portion of young people in Slovenia and Croatia. Except for Macedonia, very few young people work for non-governmental or international organisations.

While the private sector may be the work destination for the vast majority of SEE youth, it is not the sector of choice for young people in most countries. With the exception of Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Slovenia, young people in other countries would predominantly like to work in the public sector (Graph 5.10). This is in line with the findings from the last round of youth surveys, which showed that youth in all countries except Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia preferred public sector jobs; Croatian youth appear to have shifted their preference towards private sector jobs. That public employment is important to residents of the Western Balkans is nothing new: a recent Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) survey of the general population in WB6 and Croatia showed that

as many as 76% of respondents would prefer public-sector employment (RCC, 2017, p. 73).

Given the clear division between economically more and less developed countries when it comes to private vs. public sector preference, respectively, it does not come as a surprise that youth from countries with a lower HDI prefer employment in the public sector.[47]

Job security is a major appeal of the public sector for SEE youth: indeed, the importance of job security in choosing work is significantly positively correlated with preference for public sector employment,[48] corroborating the finding of the earlier youth study (Jusić & Numanović, 2017, p. 41). Not surprisingly, there is also a significant relationship between employment status and the personal importance attached to secure employment,[49] as those expressing such a preference are more likely to be in stable employment.

Despite the prevalence of non-standard work, the majority of youth in SEE are satisfied with their job. Some three-quarters, on average, work in the private sector. However, in all countries that have not joined the EU, young people exhibit a stronger preference towards public sector employment, while in EU Member States, they prefer private sector employment. The importance that SEE youth attach to job security is positively correlated with the preference for public sector employment.

PERCEIVED FACTORS IN FINDING A JOB

Finding employment on the basis of merit is not the sole expectation among SEE youth. Asked to rank factors that influence finding a job for a young person in their country according to their importance, young people ranked both merit-based factors such as education and expertise, and non-merit-based factors, such as acquaintances and connections with people in power, highly. Such findings are largely congruent with the last round of youth surveys. But while young people in most countries perceive connections with people of power to be important, what appears striking is the difference between youth residing in EU and non-EU members when it comes to the perception of the importance of party membership in finding a job as a young person (Graph 5.11). Party-affiliated employment thus appears to be the perceived norm among young people from the WB6 countries.

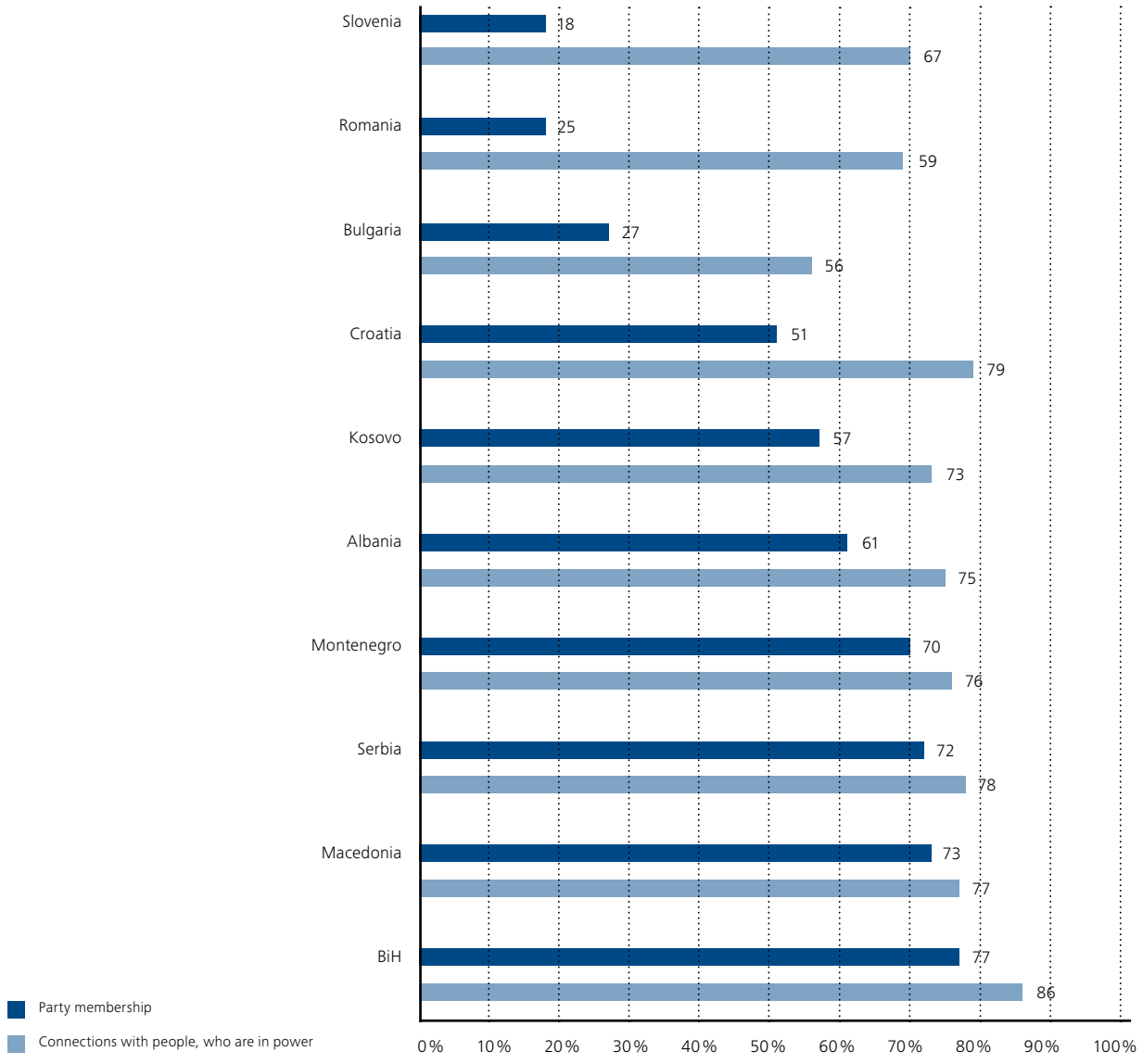
Statistical analysis shows that youth from socioeconomically less developed countries are more prone to believing that connections with people who are in power and having acquaintances are important factors when finding a job as a young person.[50] On the other hand, the preference for working in the public sector is positively correlated with the perception that connections with people in power are an important factor in finding a job,[51] as well as the perception that party membership is important for obtaining employment as a young person,[52] suggesting that young people do not perceive public sector employment as reliant on merit-based criteria, corroborating similar findings from the earlier round of youth surveys (Jusić & Numanović, 2017, p. 41).

While young people in the region perceive both merit-based factors, such as education and expertise, and non-merit-based ones, such as acquaintances and connections with people in power, to be important for a young person to secure a job, in the WB6 countries, party membership is considered to be of greater significance in finding employment than in other countries of the region.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In terms of their labour market status, young people face bleak prospects of obtaining a job in most countries of the region, especially in countries that have not joined the EU. High NEET rates also plague most SEE countries. Lower levels of economic and cultural capital are a common trait of NEET and unemployed youth, suggesting inequalities in access to the labour market. With some exceptions, the majority of youth employed in SEE countries tend to work in non-standard jobs. They also face significant skills mismatches in the labour market, allowing one to surmise that young people's school-to-work transitions are poorly facilitated by educational and labour market institutions. In all countries that are not EU members, young people exhibit a stronger preference towards public sector employment. Merit and non-merit-based means of obtaining a job as a young person are given almost equal weight by youth in the region, but political party membership as a condition for employment ranks high among youth in non-EU countries. In order for the SEE region to avoid the prospect of having "a lost generation of young people who become permanently excluded from productive employment" (O'Higgins & Coppola, 2016, p. 3), the multi-dimensional and complex problem of youth unemployment needs to be addressed both on the demand side, by creating more and better-quality jobs for young people, and on the supply side, by overhauling the school-to-work regimes and improving young people's employability.

FIGURE 5.11: **Share of youth who perceive party membership or connections with people in power as important in finding a job (in %)**



MAIN FINDINGS:

1. Youth surveys confirm that the region continues to suffer from high unemployment rates, especially so in countries that have not joined the EU. Moreover, the share of youth who are not employed, undergoing education or training is substantial in some countries, especially in Kosovo, Albania and BiH. As the threat of joblessness looms large, it does not come as a surprise that a large majority of SEE youth exhibit anxiety over not having a job.
2. Factors common to being unemployed or being a NEET include having parents with lower levels of cultural capital or coming from less well-off households, pointing to the existence of inequality of opportunity when it comes to one's ability to access the labour market.
3. With some exceptions, the majority of youth employed in SEE countries tend to work in non-standard jobs. Survey results confirm the problem of skills mismatches between education and employment systems in most countries, as demonstrated by the substantial shares of young people working in professions they have not been trained for or in positions they are overeducated for.
4. While young people predominantly tend to work in the private sector, in all countries that are not EU Member States, young people exhibit a stronger preference towards public sector employment. Not surprisingly, job security is perceived to be one of the most looked-for traits in employment and correlates positively with a preference for public sector employment.
5. In all WB6 countries, a convincing majority of young people believe that political party membership plays an important role in finding a job.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To tackle unemployment and high NEET rates, youth guarantee schemes – comprising both active labour market policies and opportunities to continue education and training – may be a policy to explore. Such guarantee schemes should especially promote work-related learning.
2. Youth mobility schemes, whereby young people would have the opportunity to continue education or work abroad for defined periods of time, may be another policy avenue to explore.
3. Addressing high NEET rates in particular requires measures to be taken in the educational realm, not limited to the prevention of early school-leaving and the re-engagement of youth who have left school early in education and training[53]; as well as apprenticeships and internships as a means to acquire skills and experience and thus ease school-to-work transitions. It should also involve measures of more general support for youth from underprivileged social backgrounds, such as low income student scholarships, subsidised tuition, or local tutoring programmes.
4. Governments need to tackle the problem of skills mismatches between educational systems and labour markets by fostering better coordination and information
5. Exchanges between the private sector and education and training institutions, stronger social dialogue, modernisation of educational curricula and greater opportunities for internships and apprenticeships in the private sector may be some avenues through which such mismatches can be reduced.
6. With respect to reducing precariousness in employment, employment protection needs to be increased in order to prevent the vicious cycle of temporary and occasional jobs for youth. Moreover, encouraging increased youth representation through labour unions is a way to achieve better employment security and quality jobs.
7. To secure better-quality jobs for youth, strengthening online job-search tools and platforms, investing in effective job-placement services, and developing better training opportunities is needed to increase young people's chances of finding employment.

6

BASIC WORLD-VIEWS OF YOUNG PEOPLE

By Miran Lavrič

Contemporary literature suggests that world views of young people are an important factor in determining the future of societies in at least two ways. First, young people can directly become agents of social change through political and wider social action. The second, more indirect mechanism of young people's influence on the future of a society is illustrated in Mannheim's conceptualisation of generations. Mannheim (1952) conceived of a generation as an age group formed by specific historic circumstances and developing its own unique worldview, a set of values and patterns of behaviour. Inglehart and his collaborators have empirically demonstrated that values indeed tend to be relatively stable over a lifecycle by showing that differences between birth cohorts tend to be stable over time (Inglehart & Norris, 2003; Inglehart & Welzel, 2005). Thus, extrapolating from the contemporary sociology of generations (Woodman, 2017), we have good reason to expect that the world views of today's young people will have an important impact on societies when they reach adulthood and assume important social positions.[54]

LIFE SATISFACTION AND OPTIMISM

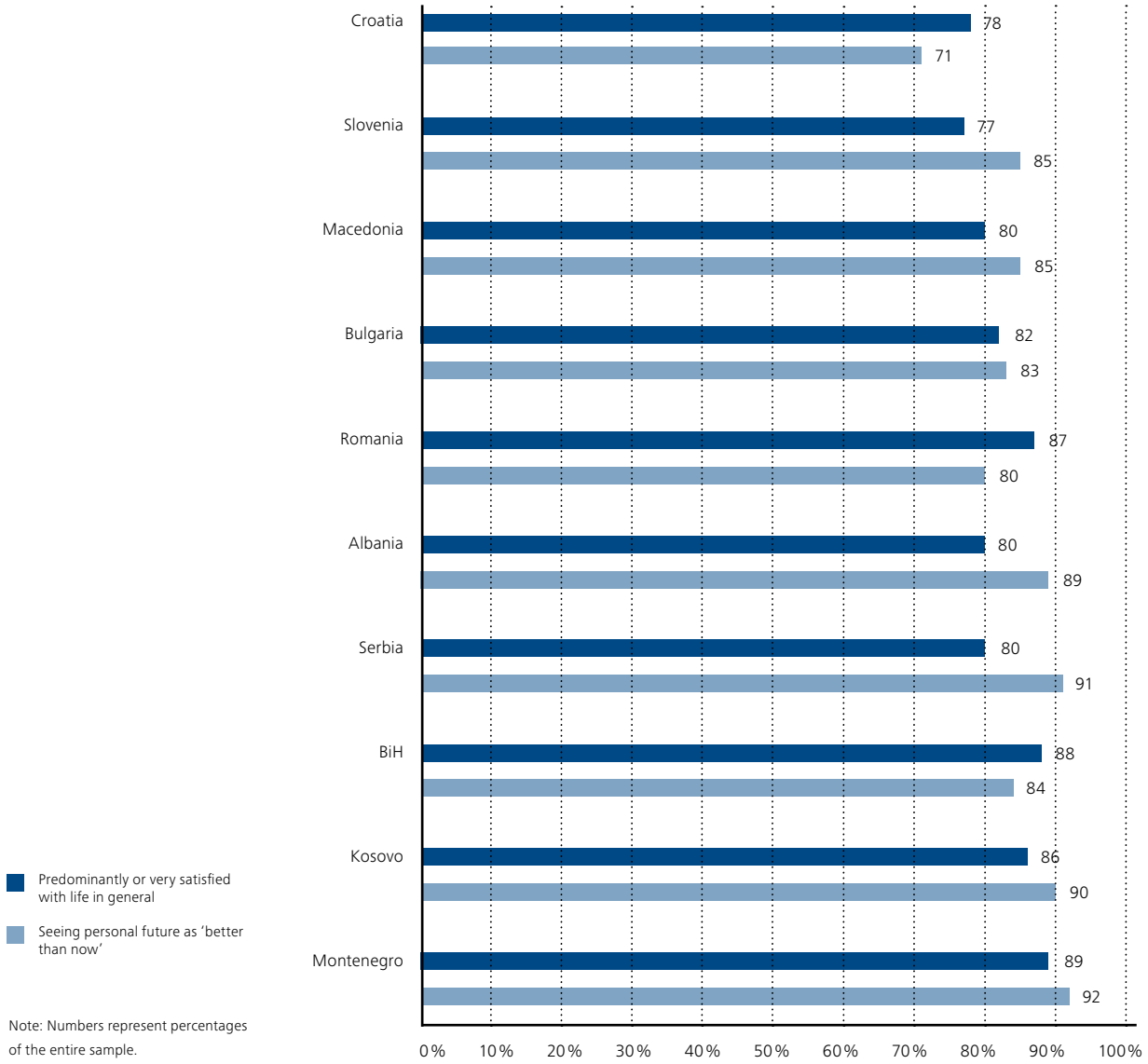
Recent research confirms the notion that general life satisfaction of youth has important implications for their psychological, social, and educational functioning (see Proctor, Lindley, & Maltby, 2009). According to our findings, average scores of life satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 5 varied between 4.0 in Slovenia and 4.4 in Montenegro, which points to a very high level of life satisfaction of youth in the region.

The analysis of cross-country differences might be interesting, especially due to the fact that the lowest life satisfaction was found among youth from the two most socioeconomically developed countries, Slovenia (M = 4.0) and Croatia (M = 4.1). Furthermore, youth from least developed countries like Kosovo (M=4.4), BiH (M = 4.2) or Albania (M = 4.3) are among the most satisfied and optimistic, which is in contrast with the results of some recent surveys.[55] Since the differences between countries are rather small, it makes sense to focus on a more important general conclusion concerning the generally high levels of both measures of psychological well-being.

Youth across the region express very high levels of life satisfaction and optimism about their personal future.

Among the different potential factors, the financial situation of the household proved to be the strongest predictor of life satisfaction,[56] followed by religiosity.[57] The most interesting predictors, on the other hand, were the extent to which one identifies with being European[58] and the extent to which one positively evaluates the socioeconomic situation in the EU.[59] Similar correlations were found in the case of optimism about one's personal future.

FIGURE 6.1: **Young people's life satisfaction and perceptions of their personal future, by country**



Note: Numbers represent percentages of the entire sample.

Life satisfaction and optimism of youth are closely correlated with their European identity and a positive perception of the EU.

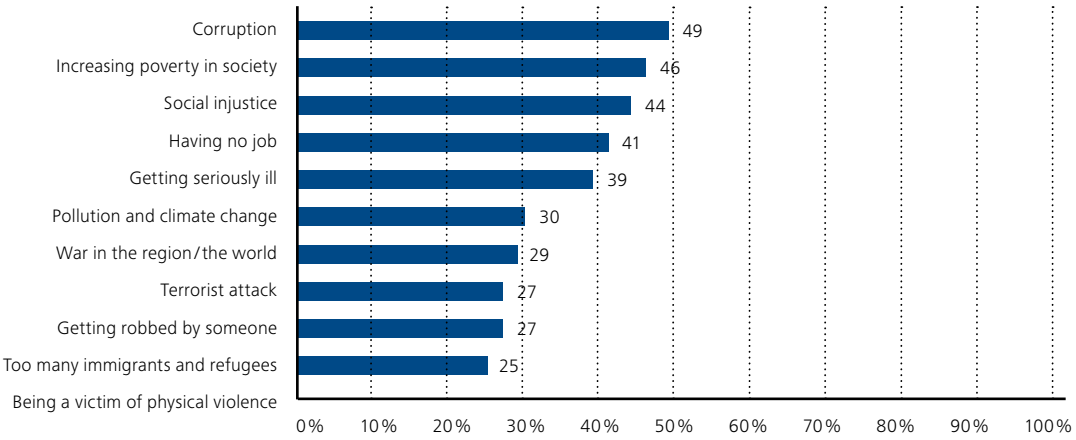
In other words, the EU seems to be an important pillar of optimism and hope for youth in the SEE region.

MAIN ANXIETIES AND CONCERNS

Within the last wave of FES youth studies (FES Youth Studies SEE 2011 – 15), SEE youth perceived unemployment, poverty and job insecurity to be the most alarming problems in their countries (Jusić & Numanović, 2017). The authors of the regional report interpreted this finding largely as a reflection of the prevalent socioeconomic state of individual societies and their public discourse, both infused by the effects of the economic crisis that was still very much felt at the time (p. 51).

As can be discerned from Graph 3.2, things have changed significantly in recent years. The problem of unemployment slipped from first to fourth, most probably due to the dwindling effect of the 2008 economic crisis. What has not changed, however, is that material/existential problems are still seen as more alarming in comparison to more global threats such as climate change, terrorist attacks or the influx of immigrants and refugees.

FIGURE 6.2: **Main anxieties of youth, entire FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 sample.** Do you feel frightened by:



Note: Percentage of persons who answered 'A lot'

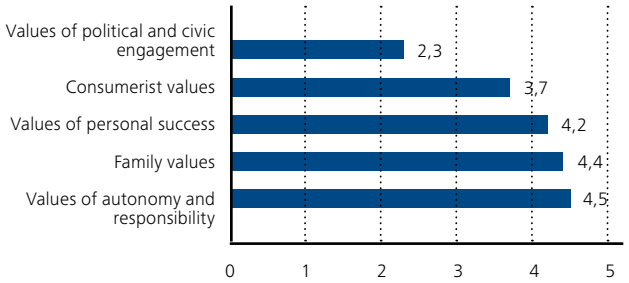
Corruption, poverty and social injustice are the top concerns of youth in SEE.

All these concerns are rather broad public issues and as such directly responsive to political decisions. In this sense, one could interpret the increased prevalence of such topics as an indication of an increase of (perhaps rather implicit) political potential of youth.

BASIC VALUE ORIENTATIONS

Respondents to FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 surveys rated twenty items measuring basic social values in terms of importance in their personal lives. Out of these items, factor analysis yielded five basic value orientations.[60] Since the differences between countries were in most cases relatively small, only the data for the entire FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 sample are presented.

FIGURE 6.3: **Importance of five basic value orientations, entire FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 sample**



Note: Values range from 1 (not at all important) to 5 (very important).

In all the countries observed, values of autonomy and responsibility, family values, and values of personal success (health, education, career) were reported as the most important, reaching extremely high scores on a 1 to 5 scale. Such social values are fully compatible with the general logic of capitalist societies, leading to a loyal and prudent workforce reproducing itself mainly through the family domain. The logic of capitalism is also evident in a relatively high presence of consumerist values, such as being rich or wearing branded clothes. Conversely, a relatively low emphasis on civic and political engagement is quite obviously not a good basis for a truly democratic political system. In analysing results of FES Youth Studies SEE 2011–15 surveys, Jusić and Numanović (2017, pp. 14–15) came to very similar results and conclusions.

Youth across the SEE region puts the highest emphasis on individualistic, family and consumerist values, while political or civic engagement are for the most part not seen to be important.

Consistent with the literature on post-materialism (Inglehart, 1977), consumerist values tend to be more pronounced in less developed countries.[61] Similar is true in the case of family values.[62] Both of these findings are compatible with the individualisation theory (see for example: Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002). More importantly, values of civic and political engagement are positively correlated with respondents' educational level,[63] the highest level of education of respondents' parents,[64] and the level of European identity of respondents.[65]

Education and European identity appear to be factors that tend to increase values of political and civic engagement.

RELIGION

Applied measures of religiosity included frequency of attendance of religious services and self-stated importance of God in one's life. Since both of these items were also used in the World Values Survey (Inglehart et al., 2014), it was possible to compare religiosity of youth in 2018 with the situation in approximately 2008.[66]

The first finding emanating from graph 3.4 is that differences between countries in terms of religiosity are relatively large and in line with results from previous cross-national studies, both at the level of youth and at the level of entire populations (e.g. Lavrič, 2013; Jusić & Numanović, 2017).

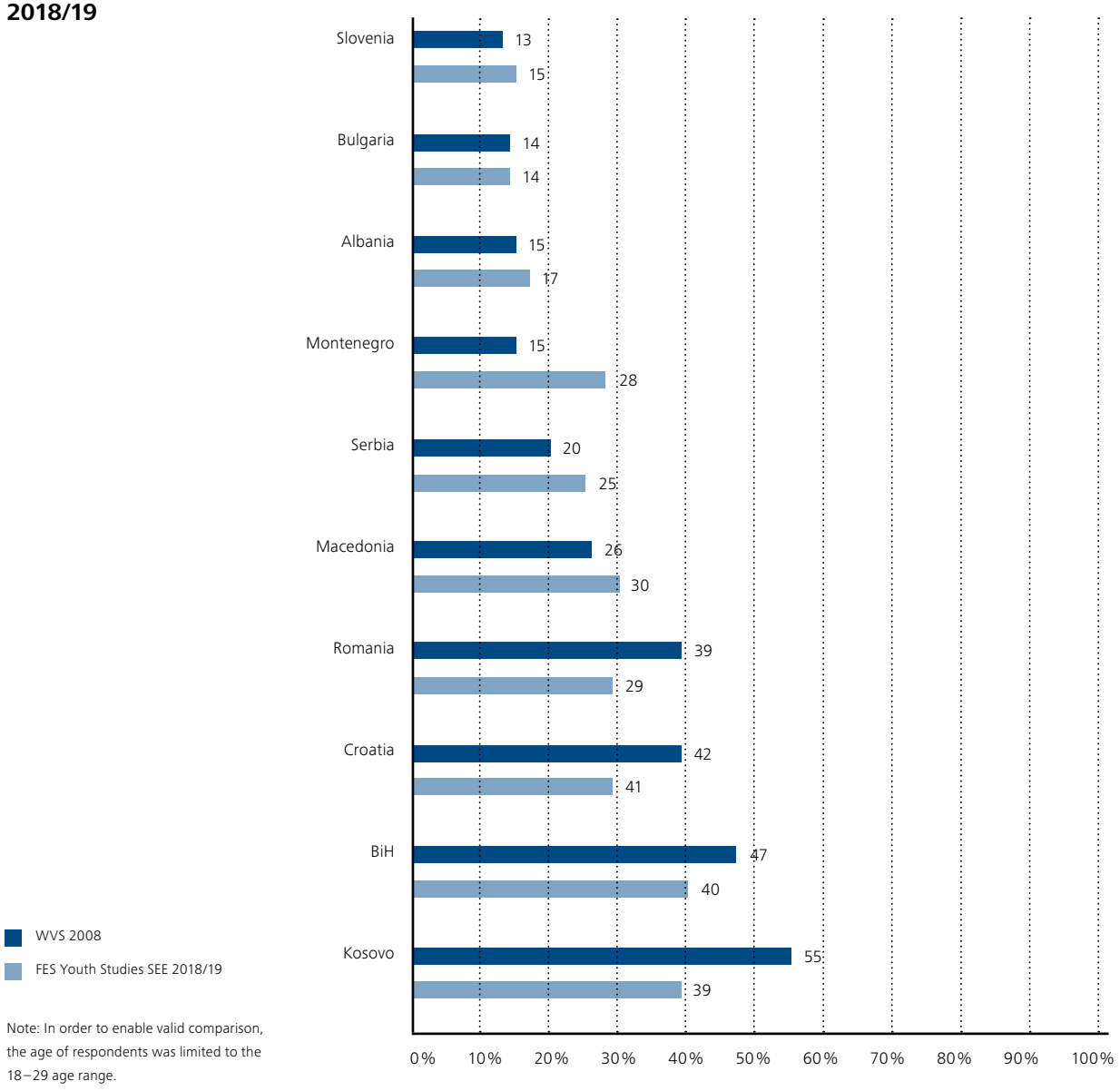
Secondly, we can note that the differences in monthly attendance of collective religious rituals between the countries observed are relatively stable over time. More importantly, we can detect interesting differences in terms of religious dynamics. Religious attendance has decreased substantially in Kosovo, BiH and in Romania, but has substantially increased in Macedonia, Serbia and (especially) Montenegro.

While religious attendance is a good indicator of so-called 'institutionalised religiosity,' it tends to miss 'individualised religiosity' (Pollack & Müller, 2006; Lavrič, 2013), which can be measured, for instance, as the importance of God in one's everyday life.

Considering the existing literature on religious change,[67] it is not surprising that individualised religiosity has increased in eight out of ten observed countries. This confirms the general trend toward privatisation of religiosity in the region, which had already been established in most of the countries observed for the period between 1995 and 2008 (Lavrič, 2013).

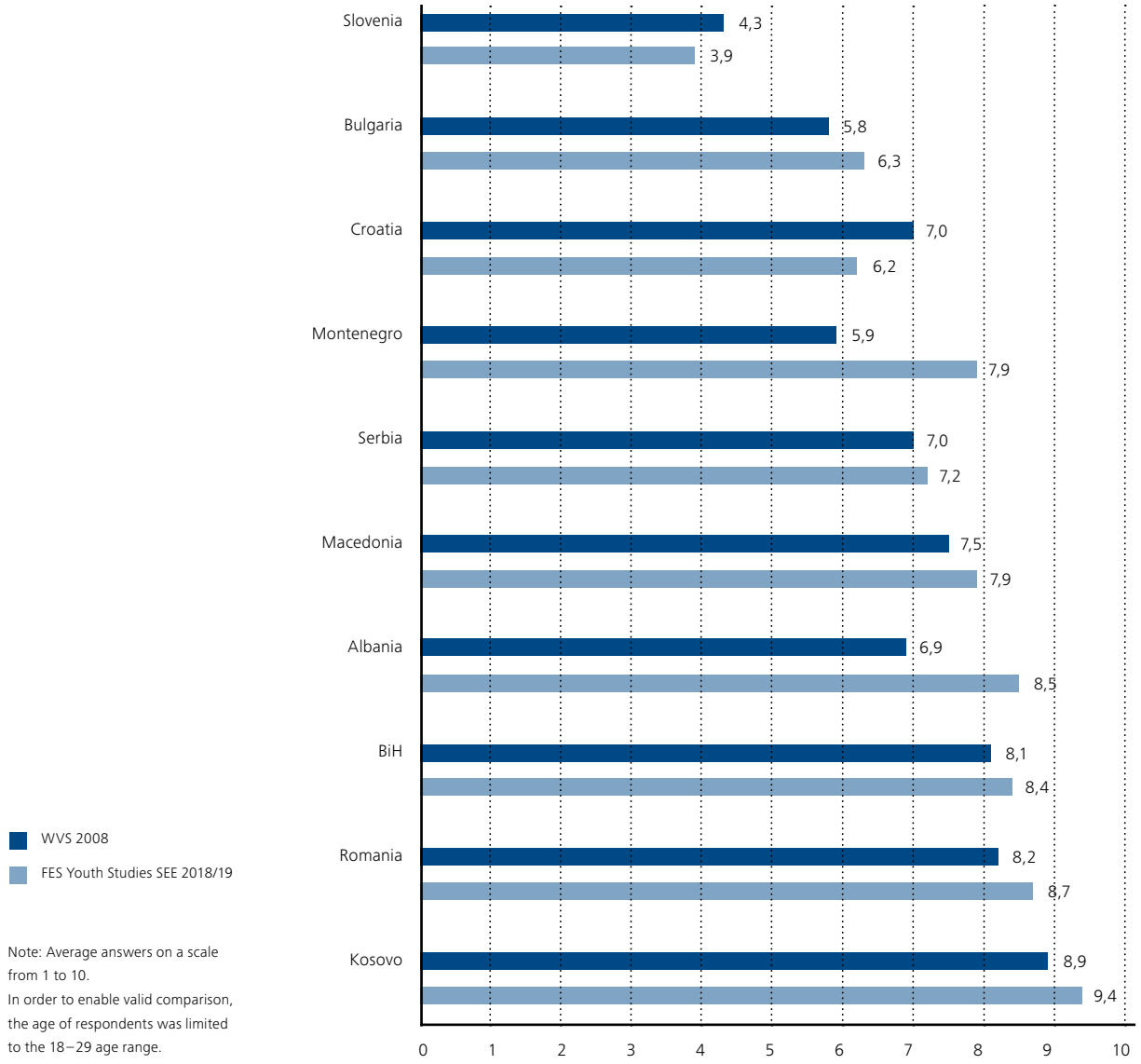
However, this general trend is not present in all countries and our results suggest that, considering both indicators, three kinds of religious change has taken place, including an increase in religiosity, its privatisation and its general decline (secularisation).

FIGURE 6.4: **Attendance of religious services at least once a month, WVS 2008 and FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19**



Note: In order to enable valid comparison, the age of respondents was limited to the 18–29 age range.

FIGURE 6.5: **Average importance of God in respondents' lives, WVS 2008 and FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19**



Note: Average answers on a scale from 1 to 10.
In order to enable valid comparison, the age of respondents was limited to the 18–29 age range.

During the last decade, religiosity has substantially increased among youth in Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, while it has become substantially more privatised in BiH, Kosovo and Romania. Croatia and in part Slovenia are the only countries with more general secularisation tendencies.

Croatia is the only country where religiosity among youth has decreased both in terms of attendance of religious services and the self-stated importance of God in one's life,[68] suggesting tendencies toward secularisation. Something similar could also be said for Slovenia, where, despite the fact that the self-declared importance of God in individuals' lives has slightly increased, some other indicators[69] suggest that secularisation has been taking place there too.

Available data and theory also enable us to make some tentative predictions about future developments. The first relevant finding in this regard is that levels of religiosity strongly correlate with HDI of the country one lives in. This is very much in line with the probably most influential version of secularisation theory at present, according to which higher levels of HDI indicate higher levels of existential security, which is the most important factor eroding religiosity along the lines of modernisation (Norris & Inglehart, 2004).

The second relevant variable in terms of predictions of future trends is age. Since the theory of generations (Mannheim, 1952) and the concept of the 'cohort effect' (Abramson & Inglehart, 1995) assume that values and worldviews are mainly defined during the pre-adult period, the so-called 'formative years,' values of younger generations can be taken as a good predictor of trends in the future. In this sense, a negative correlation between age and religiosity means that we can expect a gradual increase in religiosity as the older (and less religious) generation grows out of

the category of youth. Such a situation can be found in Croatia[70] and Slovenia.[71] The opposite is the case in Bulgaria,[72] which suggests a potential future decrease in religiosity among youth in this country.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Youth across the region are very satisfied with their lives and optimistic about their future, partially due to their hopes in relation to EU accession. Their values are focused around family, personal success and consumption, while they are rather detached from civic and political engagement. On the other hand, the main concerns of youth pertain precisely to issues revolving around the public sphere, such as corruption, social injustice and poverty. Thus, young people are the most concerned about public issues, but largely don't see civic or political engagement as viable means to address such issues.

MAIN FINDINGS:

1. Life satisfaction and personal optimism of youth across the region are very high and even slightly higher among youth from less socioeconomically developed countries. European identity and positive perceptions of the EU are important pillars of this optimism and satisfaction.
2. Rather than personal issues, public challenges such as corruption, poverty, and social injustice are leading the list of concerns of youth in SEE.
3. Youth across the SEE region place the highest emphasis on individualistic, family and consumerist values, while political or civic engagement are predominantly seen as not important.
4. Values of political and civic engagement correlate with higher levels of education and European identity.
5. With considerable variation between countries, religion continues to be an important social factor among youth in the region.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

In order to maintain and develop democracy in the region, values of civic and political engagement should be promoted among youth across the region. Based on our findings and some general observations, policy-makers could:

1. Emphasise the link between a European identity and values of civic and political engagement through different forms of communication with the young.
2. Foster public debates on ways and means for youth to make a political impact in their societies.
3. Increase the overall level of education of youth and the general population.

7

SOCIO-POLITICAL VALUES AND ATTITUDES

By Miran Lavrič

Exactly fifty years ago, in 1968, young people across Europe and the US demanded social change and went on the streets to get it. More recently, youth was critically involved in movements and events, such as the Arab Spring or Occupy Wall Street, and made an important contribution to the creation of influential radical left political parties like Syriza (Greece) or Podemos (Spain). Extreme right-wing ideas have also become increasingly attractive to youth across Europe, which is probably most visible in the Identitarian movement.

Based on some studies, one could conclude that youth in the SEE region tend to lack such political vigour. Taleski, Reimbold and Hurrelmann (2015), for instance, used the FES Youth Studies SEE 2011–15 data in order to assess the democratic potential of youth in the region. Based on the political disinterest and passivity of young people there, they concluded that "…youth in SEE constitute an unlikely agent for supporting democratisation and EU integration" (p. 52).

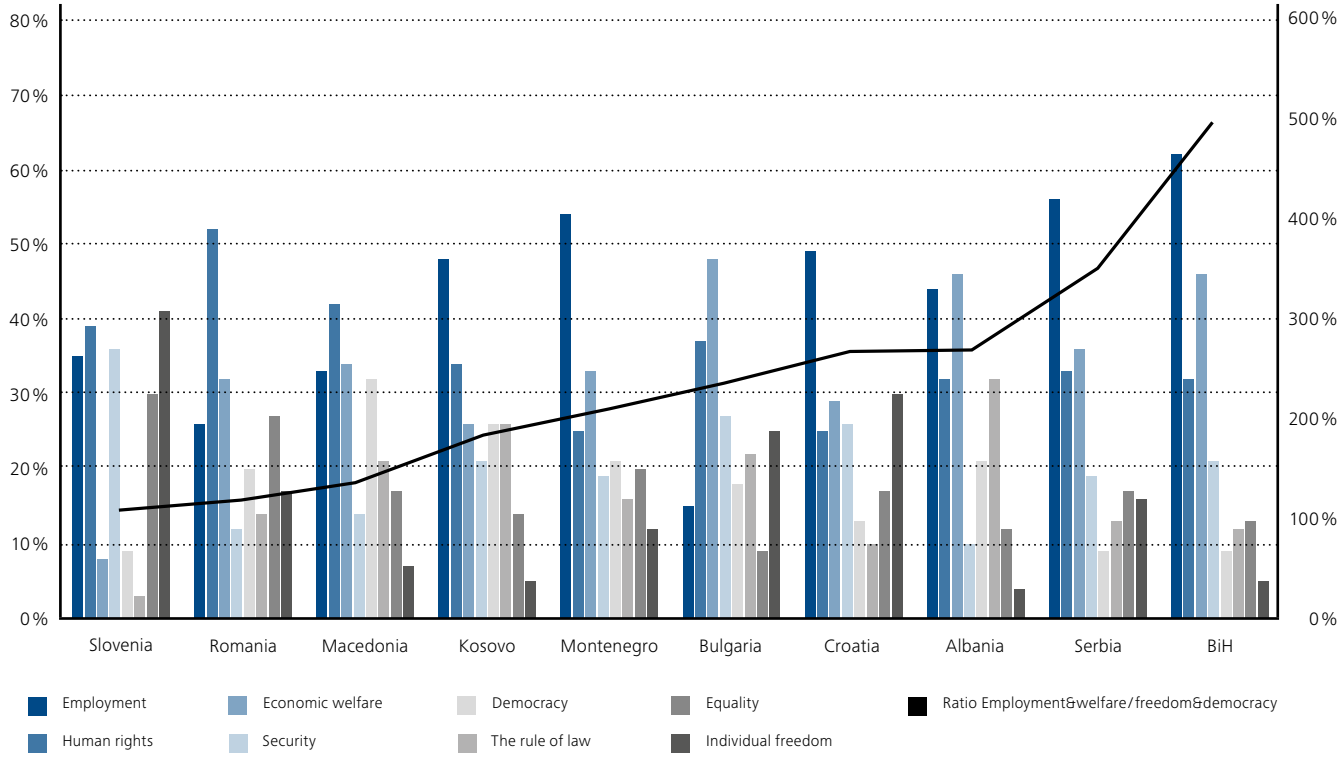
In recent years, however, there have been signs of awakening as regards the democratic/political potential of youth in some countries at least. In Serbia, for instance, youth played a central role in demonstrations behind the slogan 'Against the Dictatorship,' which mobilised in the wake of parliamentary elections in 2017 (McLaughlin, 2017). Slovenian youth played an important role in the 2012–13 Slovenian protests and in The United Left political party entering national parliament in 2014. In Macedonia, students proved to be one of the crucial forces behind protests in the context of Macedonia's wiretapping scandal, which (in)directly led to the collapse of the Gruevski government in 2017 (Kosturanova, 2017). In BiH, youth was largely involved in the emergence of grassroots popular assemblies, locally known as plenumi (Radović, 2017). Youth movements have also proved to be an important political force in Kosovo, especially by supporting the Vetevendosje (self-determination) movement[73] (Marku, 2017). While all these movements are predominantly leftist and visibly pro-democratic in nature, one should also bear in mind that, as Trošt and Mandić (2018, p. 1) show, youth in SEE are often also seen, at least in media reports and political speeches, as highly susceptible to nationalist ideas.

BASIC SOCIO-POLITICAL ORIENTATIONS

Economic security over individual freedom and democracy

We begin our analysis of major socio-political values by examining the relative importance of eight concepts that usually characterise, at least in the European context, the level of social, economic and democratic development of a given society.

FIGURE 7.1: **The relative importance of eight major socio-political values, by country**



Note: Respondents were asked to rate their three most important socio-political values. The scores on the graph were computed as a weighted arithmetic mean, whereby the share of youth ranking a given value first was assigned a weight of 3, the share ranking a given value second was assigned a weight of 2, and the share ranking a given value 3rd was assigned a weight of 1.

Differences between youth from the ten countries are in some cases surprisingly sharp. We will focus here on two basic issues.

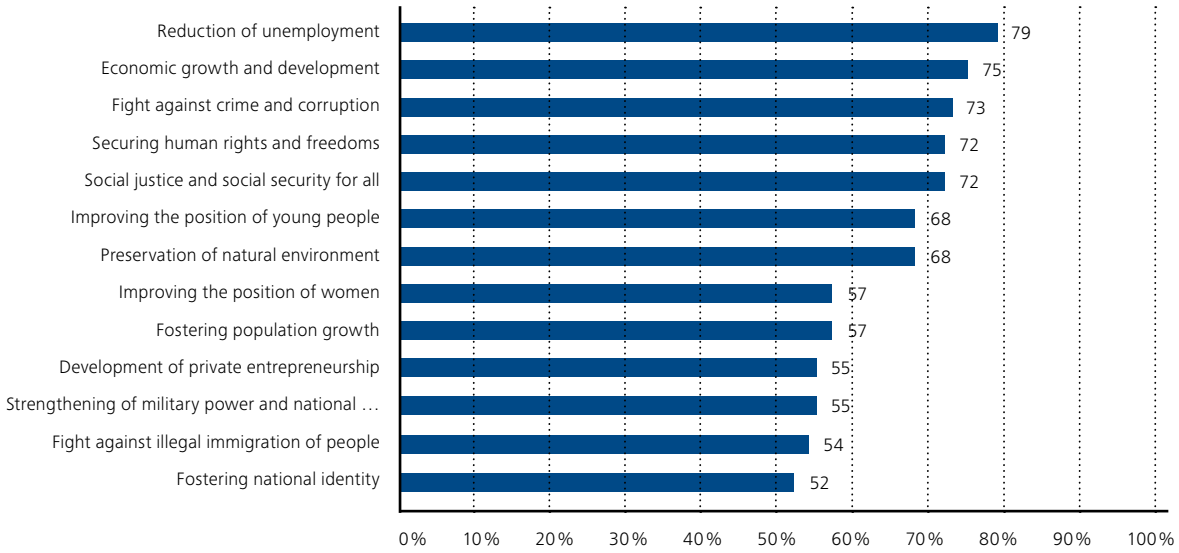
First, if we look at the region as a whole, despite significant differences between countries, employment, economic welfare, human rights and security are the most important values for youth. All of these values clearly point to a desire to secure the basic conditions for a decent living. Most young people want to live in a country which above all guarantees them basic human rights and realistic chances for securing a long-term economic existence. On the other hand, least important appear to be issues that are more abstract and less related to securing everyday existence, such as individual freedom, equality and the rule of law.[74] In order to make the results more transparent, we have computed the ratio between the importance of employment and economic welfare on the one hand, and the importance of democracy and individual freedom on the other. As discernible from the graph, this ratio exceeds 100 % in all countries,[75] clearly confirming the general prevalence of economic issues over issues like individual freedom or democracy.

Socio-political values cited by youth are focused around economic and social security. In all countries, values like individual freedom or democracy are seen as substantially less important.

We can reach a similar conclusion by looking at what youth expect from their governments.

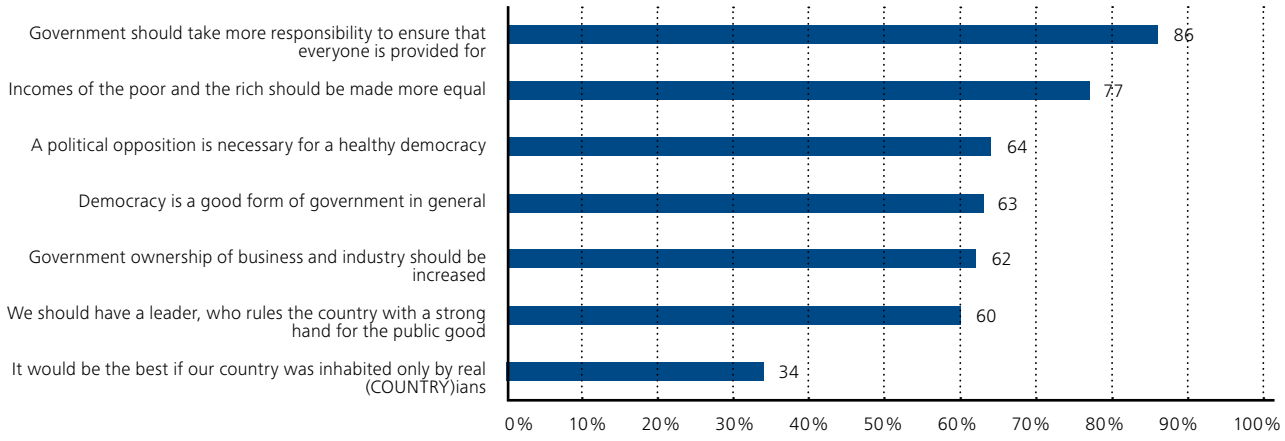
The five most important issues that, according to youth, governments should tackle relate to existential security. These issues all involve personal, especially economic, security and include a reduction in unemployment, economic growth, basic human rights, and social security. Not surprisingly, such issues are more important in countries with lower levels of existential security on the part of youth. For example, youth from countries with higher shares of young people with a NEET status are substantially more inclined towards issues like social security,[76] economic growth,[77] or the reduction of unemployment,[78] while they tend to be less in favour of issues like fostering population growth[79] or fighting against illegal immigration.[80]

FIGURE 7.2: **The relative importance of tasks that governments should focus on, entire FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 sample.** To what extent should the national government focus on the realisation of each of the following objectives?



Note: Percentages of those choosing answer 5 ('Very much') on a scale of 1 to 5.

FIGURE 7.3: **Agreement with selected statements in relation to democracy, welfare state, authoritarianism, and nationalism.** To what extent do you agree with the following statements:



Note: Percentages of those choosing answers 4 ('Agree') or 5 ('Completely agree') on a scale of 1 to 5.

GENERAL POLITICAL ORIENTATIONS

Turning to more general political orientations, we begin with a selection of some of the most interesting statements measuring socio-political values and attitudes.

The idea of a strong state ensuring a decent living for all citizens is almost universally accepted among youth.[81] Together with demands for greater equality, this idea is even more accepted than the idea of a representative democracy as a political system. Moreover, a majority of youth in the region supports an increase in state ownership of the means of production. Taken together, if one was to group the five most popular statements under a single orientation, this should probably be support for social reform in the direction of democratic socialism.

Since all SEE countries are post-socialist, such overwhelming support for a strong welfare state can be partially understood as a legacy of socialist regimes. However, we should bear in mind that these ideas resonate very well with young people's demands for a stronger welfare state and decreased social inequalities in many non-post-socialist countries. For example, in 2011 youth played an important role in supporting the Occupy Wall Street protest movement (Downs, 2011), which mostly targeted increasing inequality in the US, but also worldwide. In Europe, we have recently seen a massive political mobilisation of young people in movements oriented against the neoliberal agenda, which, in some countries, has resulted in new radical leftist parties. Moreover, in the 2016 US elections, an openly (democratic) socialist candidate for president of the US, Bernie Sanders, received enormous

support (71 %) among young voters (Stein, 2016), while something very similar, sometimes even called "youthquake," happened in the 2017 UK general elections, where the majority of young people supported Jeremy Corbyn, a democratic socialist candidate (BBC, 2017).

These events in the US and the UK have aroused tremendous public and scholarly attention, mostly looking for the answer to the question as to why the 'millennials', i.e. those born approximately between 1980 and 2000, favour socialist ideas. An interesting term, 'Millennial Socialism,' has been coined for this purpose, (Judah, 2018). The popularity of millennial socialism can be illustrated by the 2017 survey finding that the most popular socioeconomic order among the US millennials, with 44 % support, was socialism, while only 42 % of millennials preferred living in a capitalist society (Miller, 2017). It needs to be stressed, however, that pro-socialist youth are generally not opposed to free markets or private ownership of the means of production.[82] Having felt the unpleasant effects of neoliberal capitalism, such as a great increase in precarious employment, huge student loans, and the increasing degradation of the natural environment, millennials favour a strong welfare state to deal with such problems.

Looking at the results of our study, we can say that so-called millennial socialism enjoys widespread support in the SEE region as well. This can also be confirmed by the fact that youth across the region largely support the free market economy, which is typical for democratic socialist millennials. For example, as many as 78 % of our respondents, ranging from 62 % in Slovenia to 85 % in Serbia, are in favour of the idea that the government should work much or very much for the development of private entrepreneurship in their country. Furthermore, as has already been shown, consumerist values, such as being rich or wearing branded clothes, are quite popular among youth across the region. Not surprisingly, support for a strong welfare state[83] is substantially higher among youth with lower socioeconomic status.[84]

Support for a strong welfare state enjoys overwhelming support among youth across the region, and especially among young people with a lower socioeconomic status.

Another very important finding is that statistically significant correlations run contrary to what one would expect in terms of established views of the political left and the political right. For example, the self-assessed right-wing political orientation as expected correlates positively with nationalism[85] and religiosity,[86] but it also correlates positively with support for a strong welfare state.[87] In relation to the latter, the following graph tells a very interesting story.

Quite obviously, we are dealing with a typical U-shaped relationship. Support for a strong welfare state is strongest on both extremes of the political spectrum.

The perceived lack of a welfare state tends to push youth towards both political extremes.

In the next step, we conducted a series of complex statistical procedures[88] in order to enable an effective cross-national comparison of SEE youth in terms of their basic political orientations.

It is evident that there are substantial differences between countries. While Slovenian youth are by far the most liberal and, together with youth from Montenegro and Serbia, left-wing, Bulgarian youth expresses a very strong right-wing political orientation with pronounced nationalism. Youth from BiH stand out with the highest desire for 'a leader ruling the country with a strong hand for the public good' in the region.

FIGURE 7.4: **Correlation between the self-assessed political orientation and welfare state orientation, entire FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 sample**

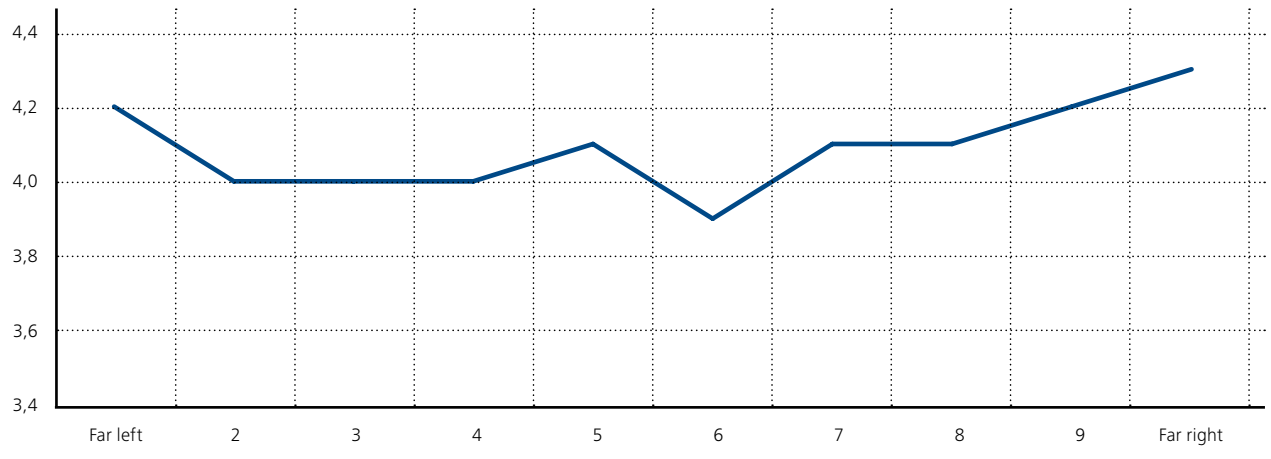
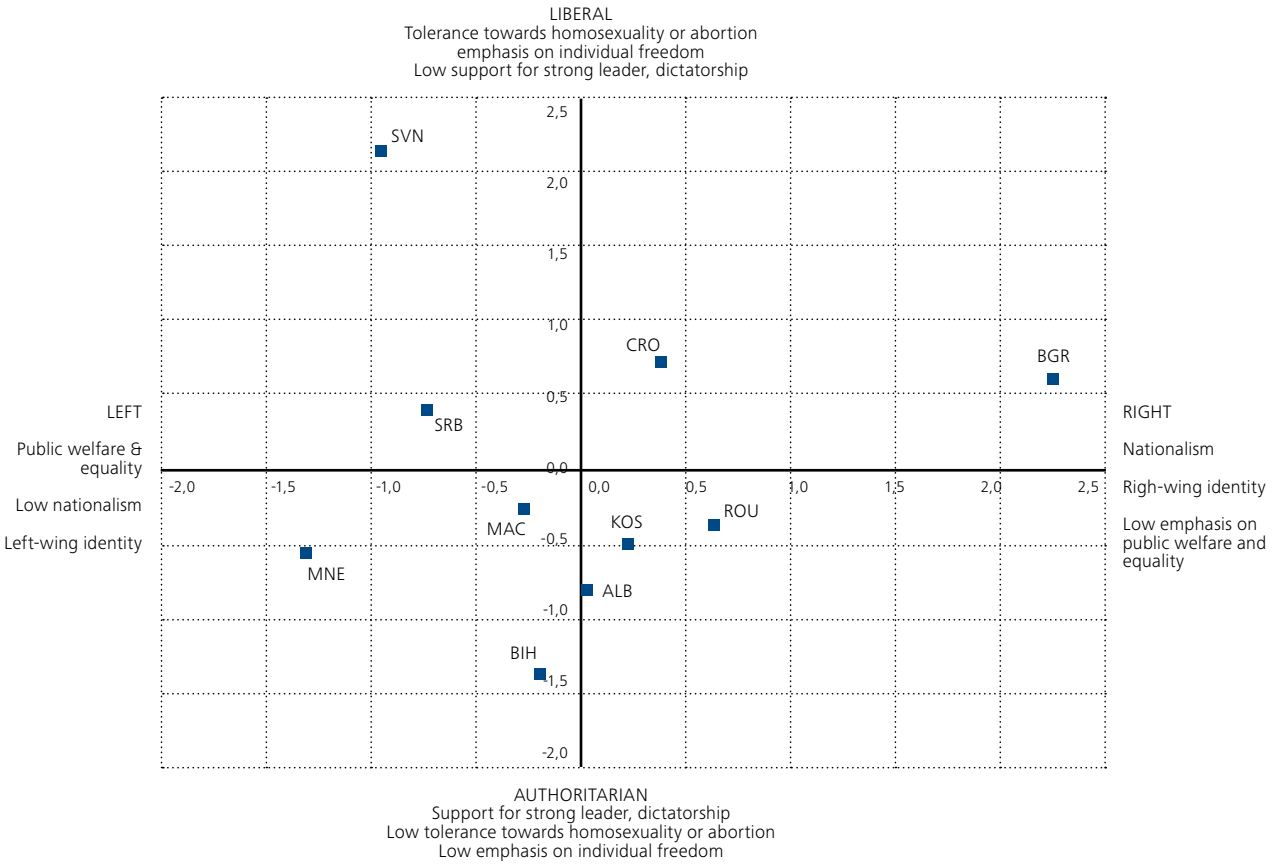


FIGURE 7.5: **Cross-national comparison of youth in SEE in a two-dimensional space**



While the left-right dimension on the above graph appears to be relatively hard to statistically explain with a limited number of factors, the liberal-authoritarian dimension can quite successfully be explained by a country's general level of socioeconomic development.[89]

A liberal political orientation is substantially more present among youth from more socioeconomically developed countries.

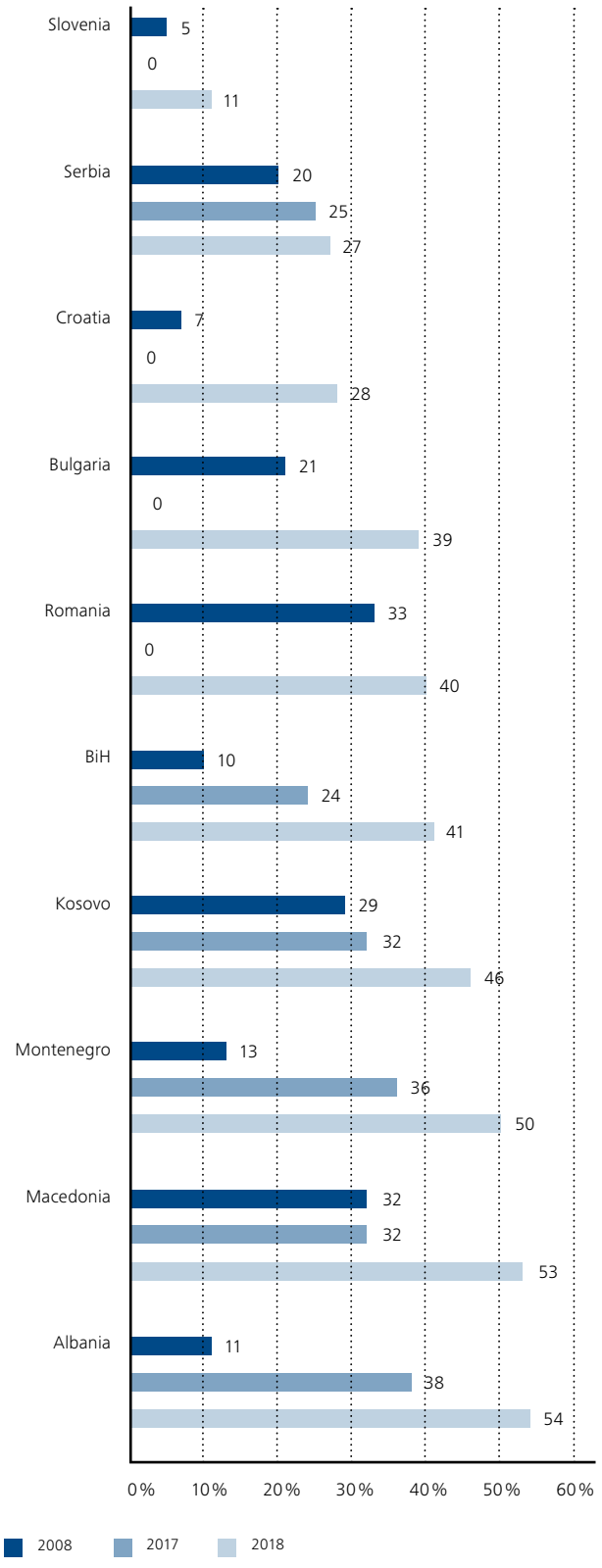
Available data also provide a longitudinal perspective on one of the central indicators of an authoritarian orientation, which is the opposite of a liberal orientation in our model.

The first thing that is to be observed on the above graph is that there are very sharp differences between countries in terms of grassroots political authoritarianism among youth. Full support for a strong leader rises from 11 % in Slovenia to 54 % in Albania, confirming our finding that general socioeconomic development as measured by HDI tends to substantially decrease authoritarian tendencies.[90] At the level of individuals, support for assertive or even authoritarian leadership is substantially more prevalent among youth with lower socioeconomic status.[91]

The second observation has to do with a very sharp rise in support for 'a leader who rules the country with a strong hand for the public good' across the region. Despite the fact that the instrument applied has not remained entirely unchanged[92] over the three surveys, the increase in the number of youth agreeing with the statement is large enough that we can safely conclude that we are dealing with a trend of sharply increasing tolerance of more assertive modes of governance among youth in SEE during the past ten years.

Since 2008, support for a strong political leader has risen sharply across the entire region. It is substantially higher in socioeconomically less developed countries and among youth with a lower socioeconomic status.

FIGURE 7.6: **Percentages of youth declaring strong support for a strong political leader, 2008–2018, by country.**



Note: Percentages of those choosing answer 5 ('Completely agree') on a scale of 1 to 5. Data for 2008 were derived from the World Values Survey, while data for 2017 were gathered as part of the INFORM[93] project.

The sharp rise in support for 'a leader ruling the country with a strong hand for the public good' calls for a somewhat deeper analysis of causes behind it. First, we should stress that these findings are very much in line with some other research dealing with the general population in Europe and the US.[94] Thus, we should understand these trends within a broader perspective of what Foa and Monk (2017) call the 'deconsolidation of democracy' – a trend which is, according to these and other authors, is substantially more salient among young people than among other segments of population. It is beyond the scope of this report to analyse the social causes for this broader trend. It is possible, however, to obtain a deeper understanding by looking at the most telling correlations within the FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 dataset. Analyses revealed that there is a very strong positive correlation between support for a strong political leader and agreement with the statement *'A political opposition is necessary for a healthy democracy'*[95] and an even stronger one with the statement 'Young people should have more possibilities to speak out in politics.'[96] Thus, support for a strong leader tends to go hand in hand with support for a representative democracy. Furthermore, support for a strong leader correlates positively with trust in state institutions[97] and even with satisfaction with democracy.[98]

Being relatively pro-democratic and satisfied with the state of democracy, why would these young people then disproportionally support the idea of a strong leader? We can solve at least one part of the puzzle if we consider the surprisingly strong correlation between support for a strong leader and support for a welfare state.[99] These findings suggest that the strong leader that most young people in the region are looking for may resemble charismatic democratic socialist leaders. However, we should also add that, among young people's main concerns, fear of terrorist attacks[100] and fear of corruption[101] correlate strongest with support for a strong political leader. If we look at the most desired goals in terms of what government should attend to, *'Strengthening of military power and national security' comes out as by far the strongest correlate of the support for a strong political leader.*[102] Thus, we can conclude that aspirations for a strong welfare state, together with fears related to national security and corruption, are among the most important motives behind the support for a strong political leader. Taken together, these motives can be boiled down to the desire for more effective governance in terms of reducing existential insecurities in citizens' everyday lives.

Youth in SEE seem to be willing to tolerate more assertive modes of leadership, if this means tackling the lack of a welfare state, threats to national security, and corruption more effectively.

Ethno-nationalism and patriotism

Ethno-nationalism[103] and patriotism[104] have partially already been included in our general model of political orientation, but as two sides of a very relevant political orientation, especially in the Balkans, they deserve to be analysed more closely. Both represent an expression of collective attachment, and they both tend to be related to authoritarianism (See for example Todosijević, 1995, 1998). For the sake of clarity, we present only single item measures for each of the two concepts.

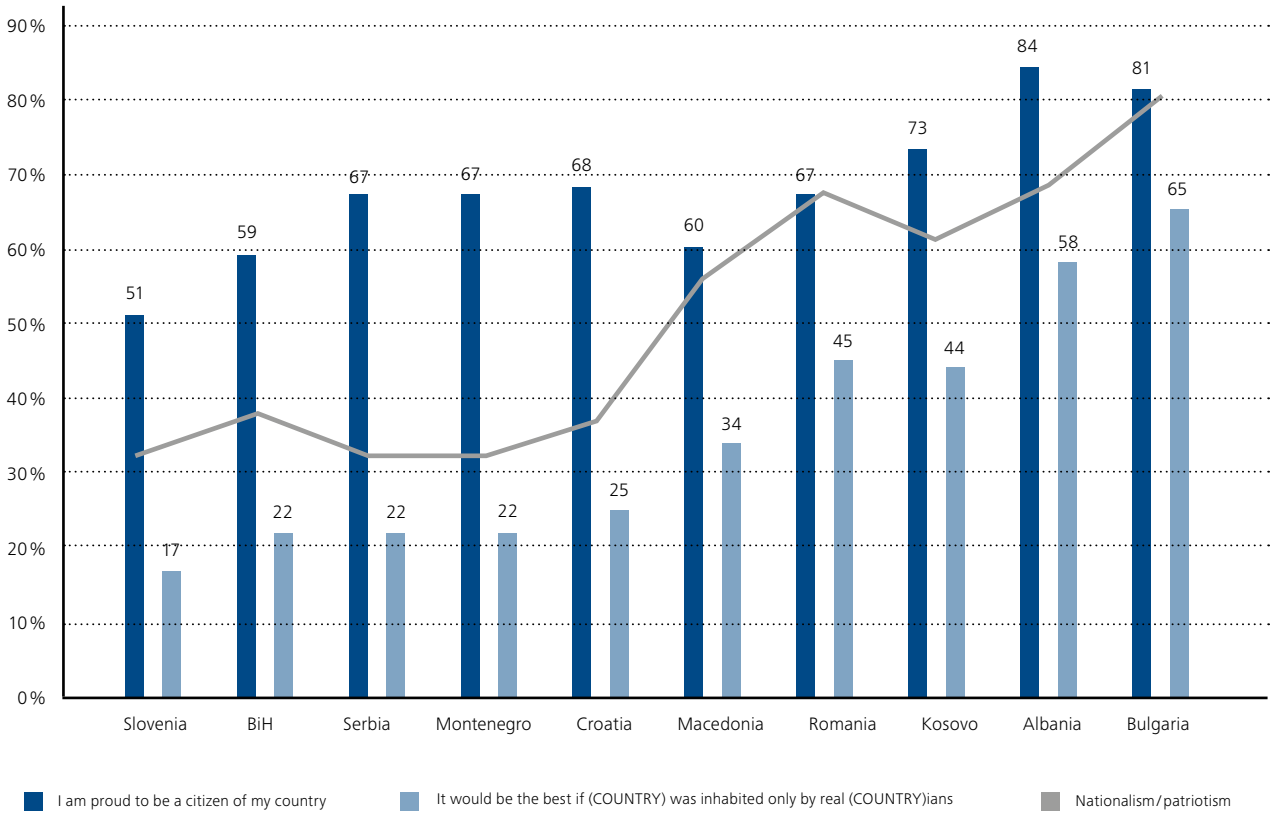
As one would expect, in all the countries observed, patriotism is much more prevalent than ethno-nationalism.[105] However, differences between countries in terms of the overall national/ethnic allegiance, which pertains to both concepts, are very sharp and tend to be rather independent of the level of general socioeconomic development.

Furthermore, overall national/ethnic allegiance is strongly related to the ratio between nationalism and patriotism. In other words, in countries with stronger national/ethnic allegiance, the relative power of ethno-nationalism in relation to patriotism tends to be higher.

Differences between countries in terms of patriotism and ethno-nationalism are very large and relatively independent of the general level of socioeconomic development. In the most patriotic and ethno-nationalist oriented countries, Bulgaria and Albania, the majority of youth would prefer to live in a country with only one ethnic group.

It should be noted that social factors behind nationalistic views largely differ between countries. For example, the cultural capital of a household[106] is strongly negatively correlated with nationalism in Albania,[107] while this correlation is also quite strong, but positive, in Bulgaria.[108] Similarly, religiosity is strongly negatively correlated with nationalism in Bulgaria,[109] while the correlation is positive, for instance in Croatia.[110] Furthermore, while support for EU membership is negatively correlated with nationalism in Macedonia[111] and Serbia,[112] the correlation is strong and positive in Montenegro,[113] Kosovo[114] and Albania.[115]

FIGURE 7.7: **Agreement with a nationalist and a patriotic statement, by country**



Note: Percentages of those choosing answers 4 ('Agree') or 5 ('Completely agree') on a scale of 1 to 5. Countries are sorted according to average agreement with both statements.

GENERAL PERCEPTIONS OF THE SOCIOECONOMIC SITUATION

Regardless of how important each of the eight stated socio-political values with which we began this chapter[116] was to a respondent, they were asked how they perceive the situation in their home country and in the EU in relation to these eight issues. Based on the results of a factor analysis, we created two composite variables out of these 16 items,[117] the first one measuring the perceived situation in the home country and the second measuring the perceived situation in the EU.

As can quite clearly be discerned from Graph 4.8, the perceived situation in the home country is, at the level of country averages, in a reverse relationship with the perceived situation in the EU. Furthermore, as the line in the graph shows, the difference in favour of the EU over the home country dramatically decreases with HDI.[118] Thus, in the most developed country of Slovenia, this difference is only 5 % in favour of the EU, while in the three least developed countries, it ranges from 59 % (BiH) to 100 % (Albania).

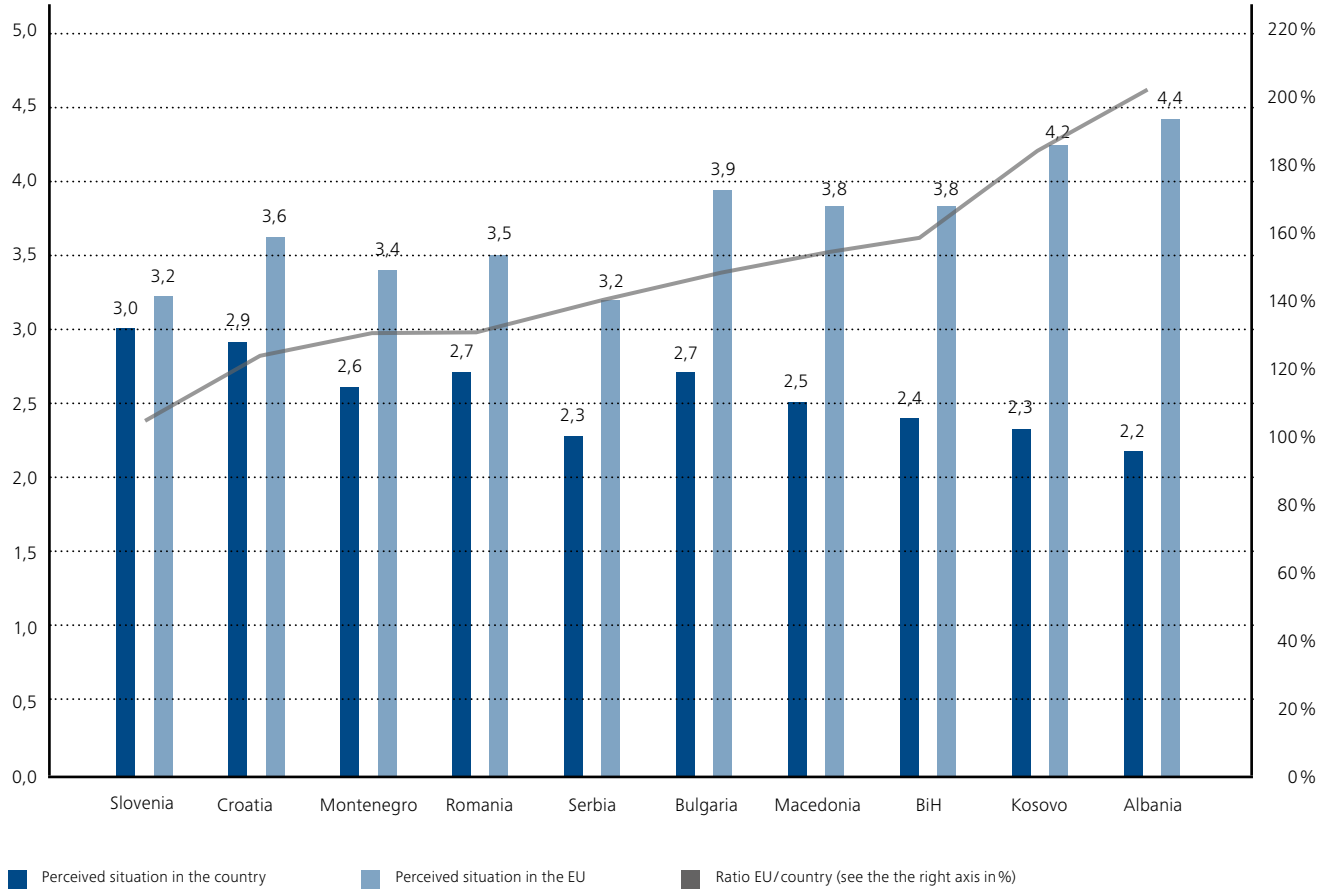
It is also important to note that in the region as a whole, the difference in favour of the situation in the EU over the home country is by far the greatest in terms of employment (89 % in favour of EU) and economic welfare (72 %), and much smaller in terms of democracy (36 %) or individual freedom (29 %).

The European Union largely has positive connotations, especially in terms of employment and economic welfare, and this is the case substantially more often among youth from socioeconomically less developed countries.

By focusing on general satisfaction with democracy, we can also analyse recent changes in youth satisfaction with the situation in their countries.

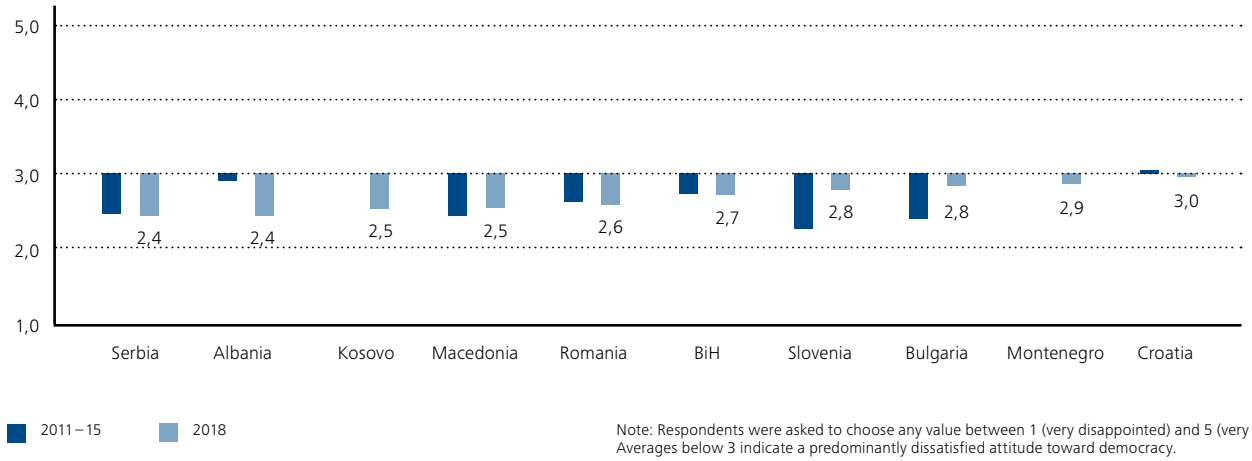
The first general conclusion from Graph 4.9 should be that general satisfaction with democracy in the region remains at a low level, and that differences between countries are rather small. In all ten countries, dissatisfaction is substantially more prevalent than satisfaction. In the region as a whole, 41 % of youth surveyed expressed dissatisfaction, while only 23 % expressed satisfaction with democracy in their country.

FIGURE 7.8: **Perceived socioeconomic situation in the home country and in the EU, by country**



Note: Respondents were asked to rate the situation in their country and in the EU in eight areas: democracy, rule of law, human rights, economic welfare of citizens, employment, equality, security, and individual freedom.

FIGURE 7.9: **General satisfaction with democracy in the home country.** How are you satisfied with the state of democracy in your country?



Note: Respondents were asked to choose any value between 1 (very disappointed) and 5 (very satisfied). Averages below 3 indicate a predominantly dissatisfied attitude toward democracy.

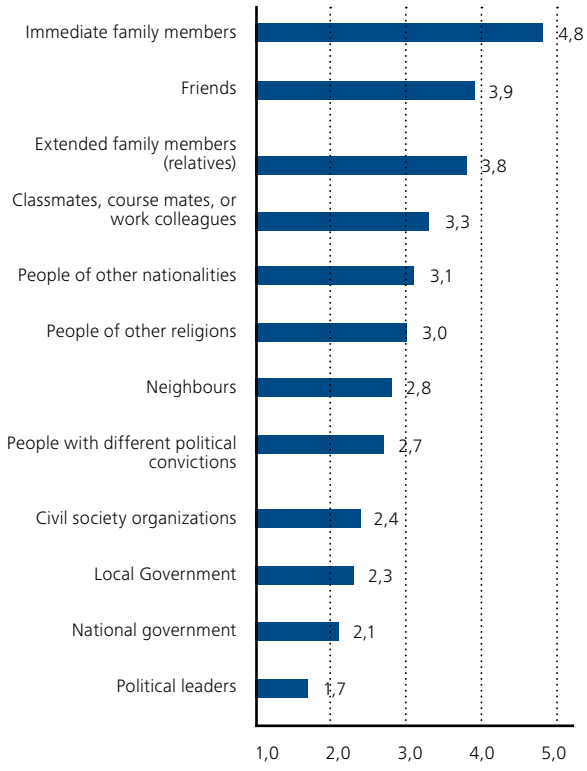
The second set of findings relates to changes between 2011 – 15 and 2018. While things did not change much in most countries, we have witnessed a substantial decline in general satisfaction with democracy in Albania and Kosovo, and a substantial increase in Slovenia and Bulgaria. Factors underlying these changes are diverse and complex, but one cannot help but notice that satisfaction increased in two EU Member States and decreased in two countries that are not members of the EU. Indeed, additional analyses showed that, on average, general satisfaction with democracy has increased by 9 % in the group of EU Member States, while it has decreased by 6 % in the group of non-member states.

Across the SEE region, youth remain predominantly dissatisfied with democracy in their countries. However, over recent years, satisfaction has significantly increased in Slovenia and Bulgaria, while it has substantially decreased in Albania and Kosovo.

MATTERS OF SOCIAL TRUST

Numerous studies have shown that social trust is crucial for effective social and economic functioning of any social group or society (e.g. Almond & Verba, 1963; Welch et al., 2005). When it comes to the functioning of wider groups or entire societies, an important question relates to the so-called radius of trust, that is, to the question of how general social trust is. This radius of trust, according to Delhey, Newton, & Welzel (2011), varies considerably across countries, with a tendency for wealthier countries having a wider radius. These authors furthermore maintain that the radius of trust is an important factor underlying civic attitudes and behaviour, which, as Robert Putnam (2000) famously shows, are crucial for an effective democracy.

FIGURE 7.10: **Trust expressed in different social groups and institutions, entire FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 sample** To what degree do you trust …



Note: Respondents were asked to rate their trust on a scale of 1 ('Not at all') to 5 ('Very much').

The main image of youth in the region has not changed significantly since the FES Youth Studies SEE 2011 – 15 wave. Youth continue to place the greatest level of trust by far in the immediate family, followed by friends and relatives. The second, substantially lower level of trust relates to the different groups of people

one usually meets in everyday life (neighbours, classmates, members of other religions, etc.). The third and the least trusted group is composed of political institutions, whereby the level of trust declines with the generality of the institution (from NGOs and local governments to national parliament). At the absolute bottom of the ladder of social trust, we find, not surprisingly, political leaders.

Youth express very high levels of trust in family members and extremely low levels of trust in state institutions, above all in political leaders. The overall picture shows a narrow radius of trust, indicating a low democratic potential of youth.

SOCIAL TOLERANCE

Social tolerance was measured in two dimensions: in relation to sexual and reproductive practices (TSR)[119] and in relation to informal economic practices (TIE).[120] The first measure (TSR) reflects liberal values and is often used as an indicator of the so-called 'emancipative values', which have been convincingly demonstrated to be conducive to democracy (e.g. Inglehart & Welzel, 2005).

On the other hand, tolerance towards informal economic practices (TIE) is a reflection of values that are quite obviously in opposition to the rule of law, because they favour/tolerate solving issues in an illegal manner.

Taking both measures together, we can assume that a higher TIE/TSR ratio generally indicates a lower youth potential for liberal democracy because it means a greater inclination towards informality and/or lower tolerance of different lifestyles.

In five out of ten countries, informal economic practices, such as cheating on taxes, appear more tolerable to youth than homosexuality or abortion. Of course, this ratio largely depends on the concrete informal practice in question. For example, bribery is substantially more tolerated than homosexuality in BiH (by 25 %), Montenegro (by 24 %), and Albania (by 10 %), but substantially less tolerated in Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia.

Youth in Montenegro, Albania, Romania and BiH expressed a substantially lower tolerance of homosexuality or abortion than bribery or cheating on taxes.

As stated in the introduction, this morality is rather unfavourable for the development of liberal democracy and rule of law. The causal forces underlying it are undoubtedly largely economic in nature. In economically less secure circumstances, so-called 'survival values', which include low tolerance to different lifestyles, tend to prevail (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005). On the other hand, economically less secure circumstances also call for alternative survival strategies, which often include informal practices. This notion can be supported by the finding that relative tolerance of informal economic practices tends to rise with indicators of economic insecurity, such as a lower level of material possessions of

FIGURE 7.11: **Tolerance in relation to sexual and reproductive practices and in relation to informal economic practices**

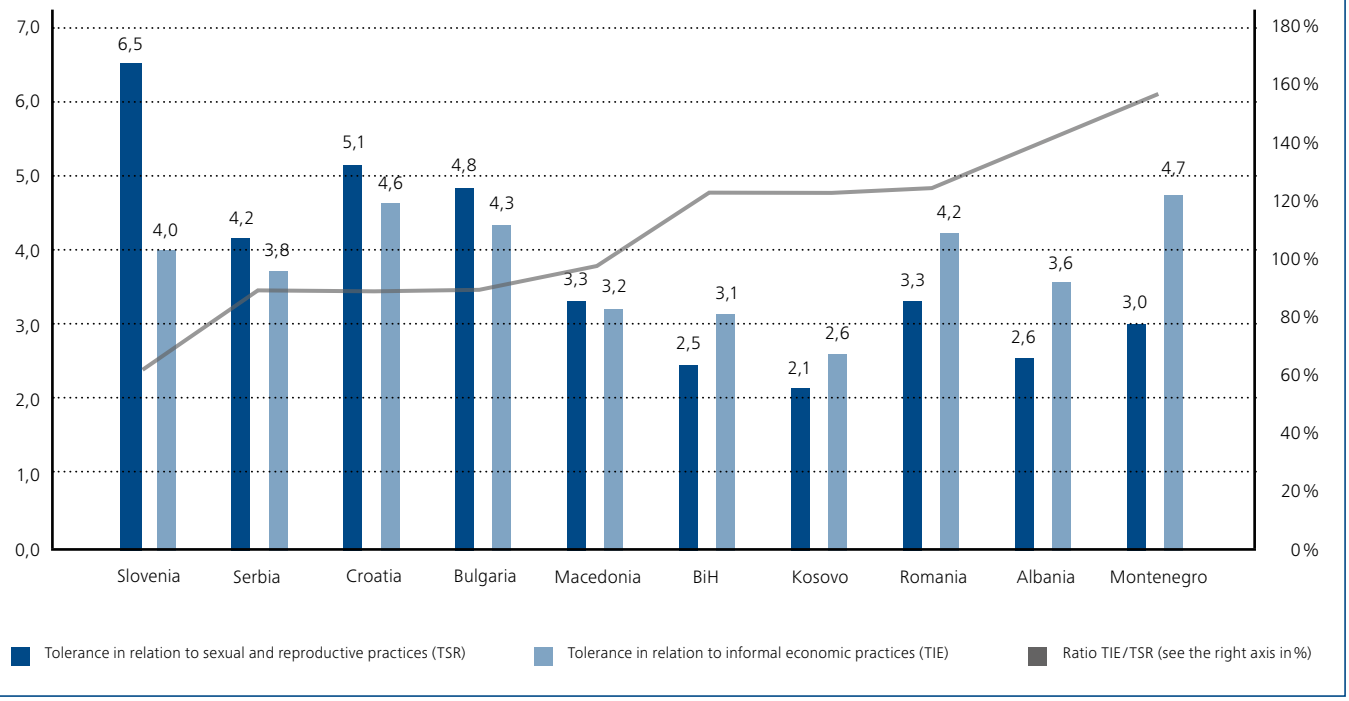
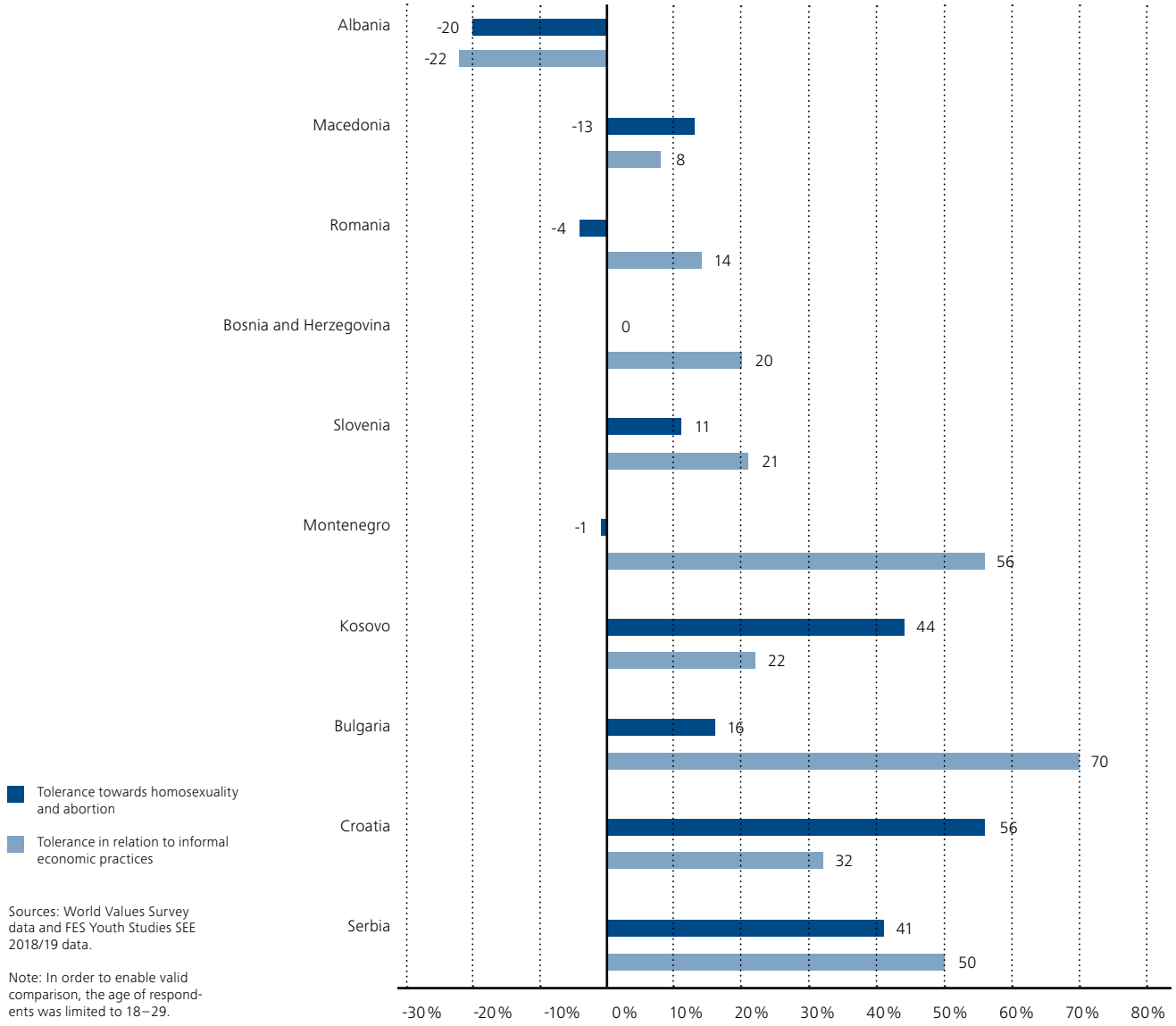


FIGURE 7.12: **Relative (in %) changes in tolerance in relation to sexual and reproductive practices and in relation to informal economic practices in the 2008–2018 period.**



Sources: World Values Survey data and FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 data.

Note: In order to enable valid comparison, the age of respondents was limited to 18–29.

the household,[121] lower levels of parents' education[122] or being unemployed.[123]

Since some of the above-mentioned items[124] were also used in the World Values Survey (Inglehart et al., 2014), we can also observe longitudinal trends from approximately 2008[125] to 2018. To enhance transparency, we computed the relative (%) change for both indicators.

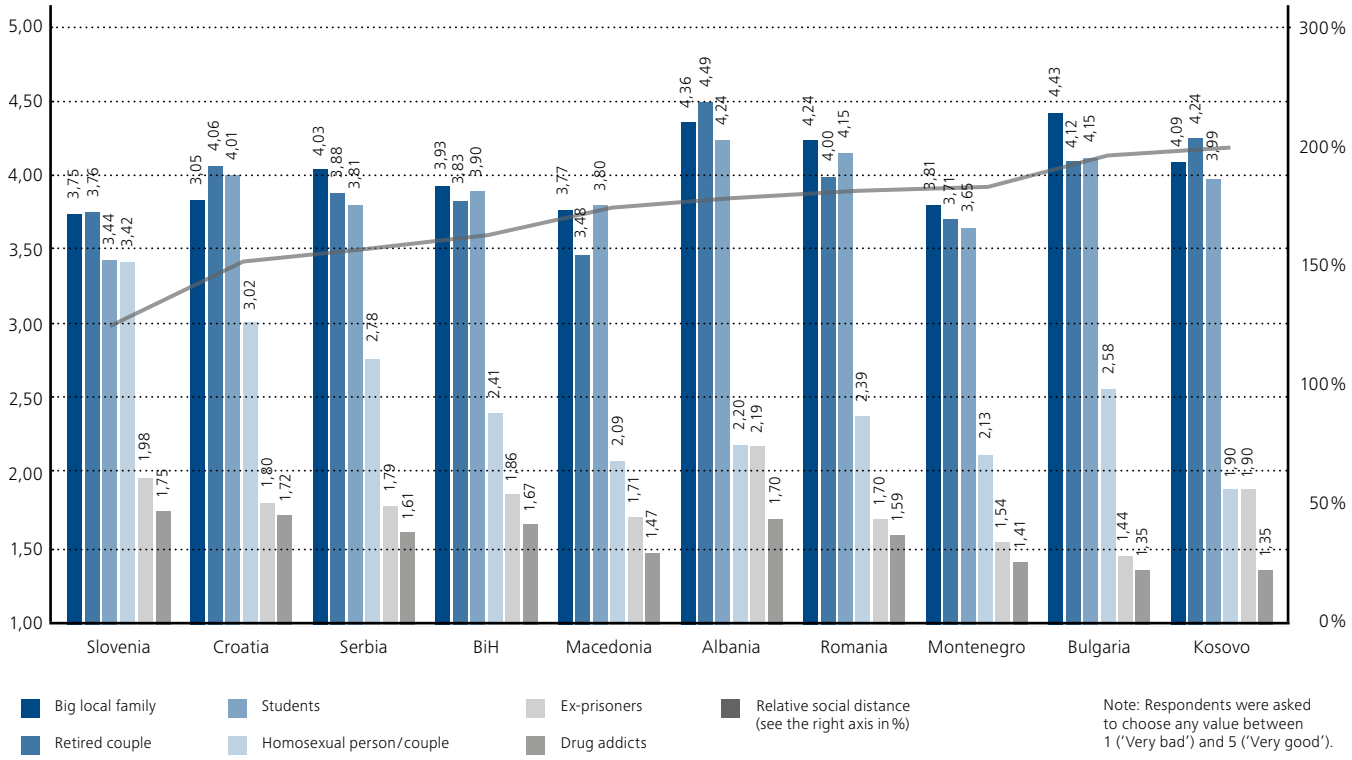
With the exception of Albania and in part Macedonia and Romania, youth in the SEE region appear to have become more tolerant in both observed respects. However, while tolerance towards informal economic practices rose on average by 27 %, tolerance towards homosexuality and abortion only rose by 13 %.

Not surprisingly, support for the rule of law[126] is negatively correlated with TIE,[127] especially so in Montenegro,[128] Croatia[129] and Bulgaria,[130] some of the most problematic countries in terms of tolerance of informal practices.

Since 2008, youth in the region have become somewhat more tolerant towards homosexuality and abortion, but even more so in relation to informal economic practices. The relative liberalisation of attitudes on informality is problematic from the point of view of rule of law and economic development, and is most extreme in Bulgaria and Montenegro.

These findings should also be considered in relation to findings in other chapters indicating very high levels of perceived corruption in areas of education, politics and employment. Especially among youth from WB6 countries, it is a very common perception that university exams can be bought and that being a member of a political party and/or having connections with people who are in power are important factors when finding a job – especially a job

FIGURE 7.13: **Social distance towards six social groups, by country.** How would you feel if _____ moved into your neighbourhood?



in the public sector. Taken together, these findings point to a situation which is sometimes termed ‚normalisation of corruption' (Ashforth & Anand, 2003). In such situations, corrupt practices tend to be taken for granted and are being perpetuated through a negative spiral, whereby more and more people feel that they have little choice but to go along with what most others in society seem to be doing (Karklins, 2005). The fact that this kind of situation is substantially more typical for the WB6 countries than for the SEE countries in the EU suggests that the level of Europeanisation, at least as measured by full membership in the EU, most likely has an impact in terms of reducing the extent of corrupt (and other informal) practices.

SOCIAL DISTANCE

Social distance was measured in relation to nine different groups of persons, among which the three most and the three least socially desired groups are shown in Graph 4.13.

In order to measure 'relative social distance' towards marginalised groups, we computed a ratio between the social desirability of the three most desired groups (local family, retired couple, students) and the social desirability of the least desired groups (homosexuals, ex-prisoners and drug addicts). This ratio is a good indicator of everyday social discrimination of marginalised groups, because it shows how differently these groups are treated in comparison to majority groups. As such, this ratio is a good indicator of relative social tolerance towards marginalised groups and can thus be considered as another indicator of inclusiveness and therefore democratic potential of youth as well.

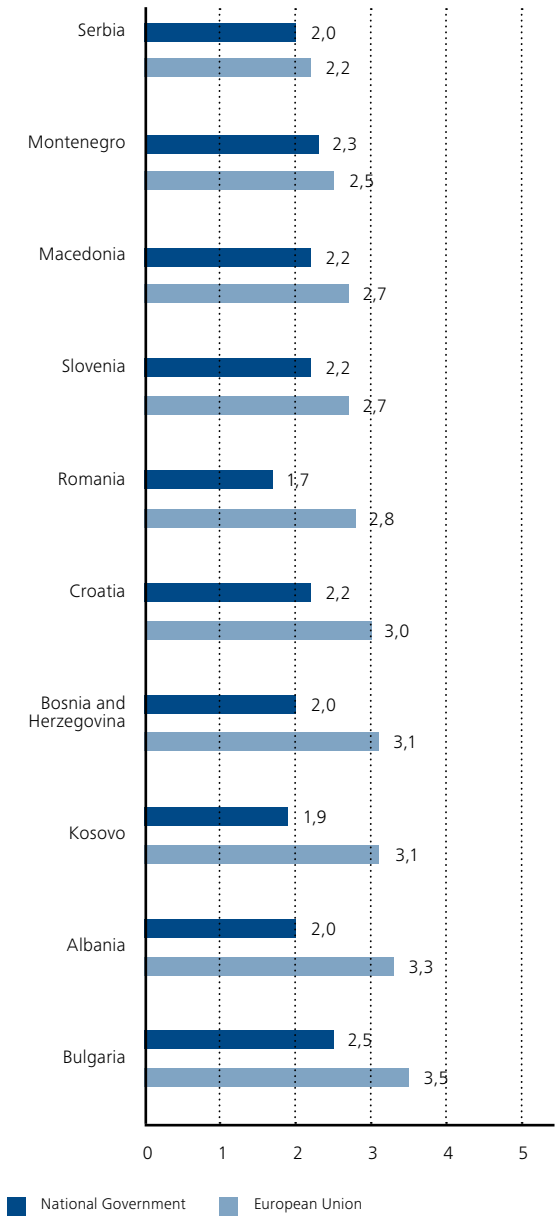
From this perspective, Slovenia and Croatia show the highest inclusive potential, while youth in Kosovo and Bulgaria display worldviews that are relatively exclusive socially speaking. As in many cases before, this indicator of democratic potential also tends to rise with HDI values.[131]

Youth from more socioeconomically developed countries, especially Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia, tend to express substantially more inclusive attitudes towards marginalised social groups.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE EU

We begin our analysis of attitudes towards the EU by comparing trust in the EU with trust in national government.

FIGURE 7.14: **Trust in the European Union vs. trust in the national government**



Note: Averages on a scale from 1 ('Not at all') to 5 ('Very much').

Youth across the region place substantially greater trust in the EU than in their national governments.

Trust, however, is not to be confused with identity. As can be seen in graph 4.15, young people from countries with the greatest trust in the EU (Bulgaria, Albania, Kosovo) tend to express the lowest levels of 'net European identity.'[132]

In fact, at the national level, the average 'net European identity' is strongly negatively correlated with the average level of perception of the situation in the EU.[133] This clearly shows that Euroscepticism among young people must be understood separately from young people's European identity. The very great trust placed in the EU by youth from countries like Albania, Kosovo, or BiH can be, at least partially, explained by the so-called 'honeymoon period.' That is, young people in these countries do not know the EU very well, which is part of the reason for the low level of identification with the EU. But the very low level of familiarity with the EU makes it possible for youth from these countries to idealise it, especially given the fact that all of these countries see a brighter future for themselves precisely within the EU.

European identity tends to be the weakest in countries where youth have the most positive image of the EU. This apparent paradox can be explained through the logic of idealisation of the as-yet not well-known EU on the part of youth from some of the non-member states.

An even more important finding emanating from Graph 4.15, however, relates to the fact that identification with the EU, as well as cosmopolitan identification, is not much less prevalent than the national one.

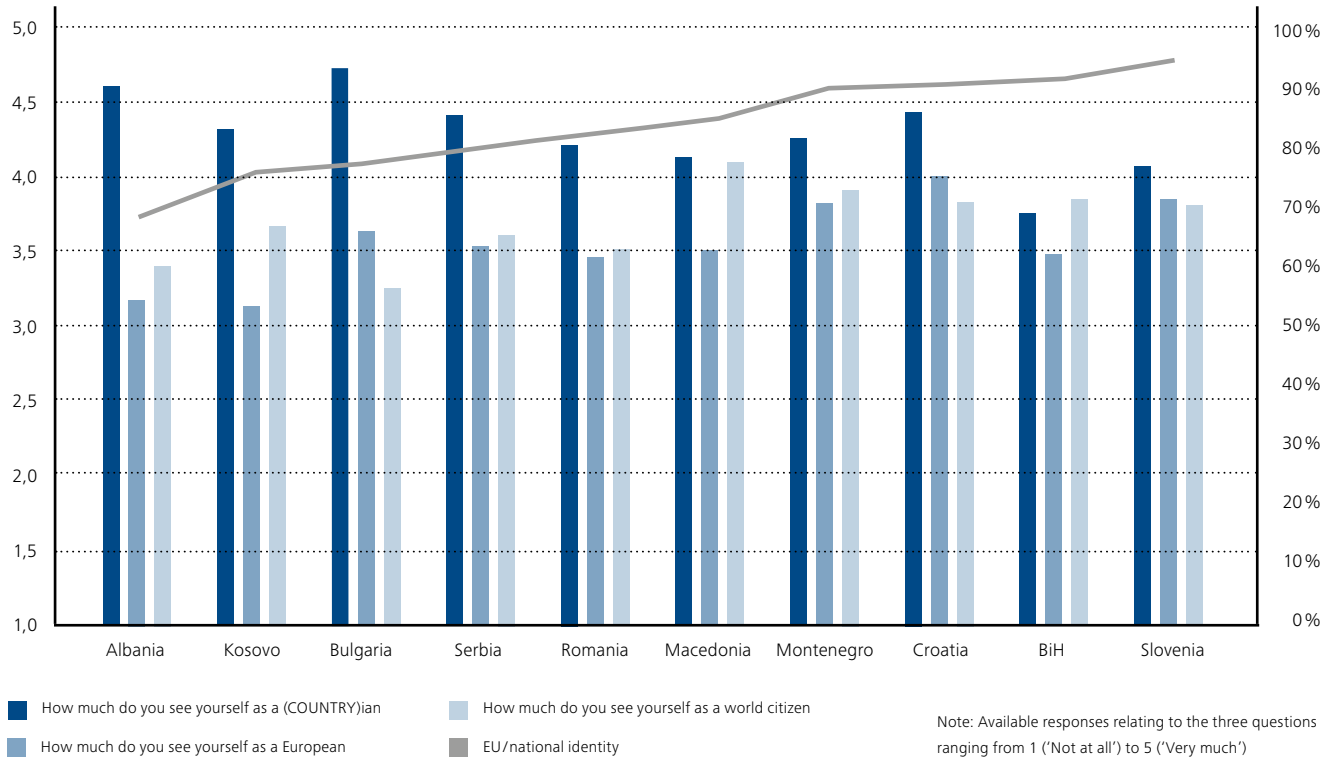
European identity is relatively prevalent and ranges from 68 % (Albania) to 94 % (Slovenia) of national identity. Cosmopolitan identity is, on average, even slightly more pronounced than a European one.

In this sense, youth in the region appear to be relatively open to the processes of Europeanisation and globalisation.

This notion is further supported by the fact that, with the exception of Serbia, youth in SEE are (still) overwhelmingly in favour of their countries' being members of the EU (Graph 7.16). Furthermore, our comparisons with FES Youth Studies SEE 2011 – 15 results lead to the conclusion that this support has increased over the past several years.[134]

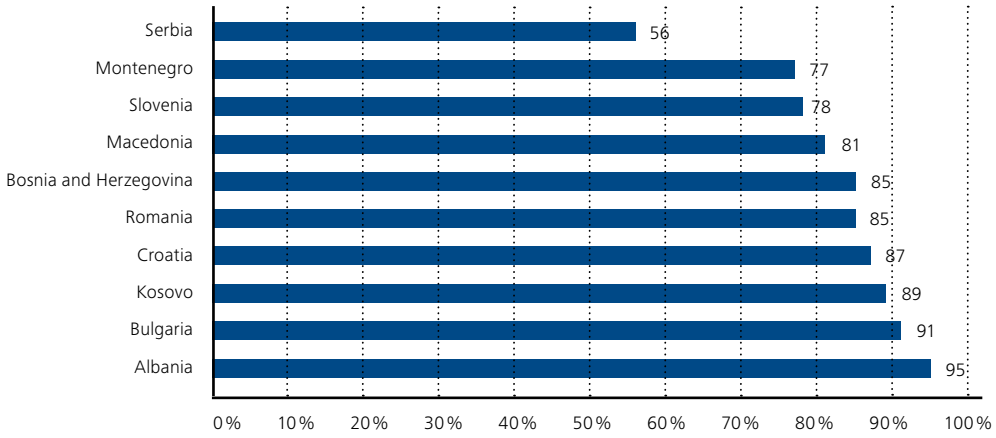
Regardless of the current status of individual countries, membership in the EU enjoys increasing support by a majority, ranging from 56 % in Serbia to 95 % in Albania.

FIGURE 7.15: **National, European, and cosmopolitan identification of youth, by country**



Note: Available responses relating to the three questions ranging from 1 ('Not at all') to 5 ('Very much')

FIGURE 7.16: **Support for membership in the EU, by county.** Should, in your opinion, your country stay in/enter the European Union?



Note: Percent responding with 'Yes'

Thus, it could be said that the rhetoric adopted by the European Commission, referring to WB6 youth as *'our future EU citizens'* (European Commission, 2018a) aligns very well with the attitudes of the majority of young people in the region.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Youth across the SEE region yearn most of all for more economic welfare and security. They are largely dissatisfied with the state of democracy and the economy in their countries. It is therefore not surprising that the vast majority of youth support the idea of a strong welfare state, while the desire for 'a leader ruling the country with a strong hand for the public good' has substantially increased over the past ten years. Lacking economic security can also be seen as part of the cause behind the relatively pronounced

and increasing tolerance for informal economic practices, such as using connections or cheating on taxes. At the same time, youth in the region are overwhelmingly and increasingly pro-European, whereby the EU is predominantly seen as a means for achieving general economic welfare.

MAIN FINDINGS:

1. Socio-political values of youth are focused on economic and social security.
2. Support for a strong welfare state enjoys overwhelming support, especially among youth with lower socioeconomic status.
3. The perceived lack of a welfare state tends to push youth towards both political extremes on the left-right spectrum.
4. A liberal political orientation is much more pronounced among youth from more socioeconomically developed countries.
5. Since 2008, support for a strong political leader has risen sharply across the entire region. It is substantially greater in socioeconomically less developed countries and among youth with a lower socioeconomic status. Youth in the region tend to see a strong political leader predominantly as an enhancement of a representative democracy who can deal more effectively with problems like threats to national security or corruption.
6. Across the region, youth for the most part remain dissatisfied with the state of democracy in their countries. While trust in family members is very high, trust in state institutions and political leaders is extremely low.
7. Tolerance towards informal economic practices, such as using connections, bribery or cheating on taxes, is relatively high and has substantially increased since 2008. It tends to be negatively correlated with support for the rule of law.
8. In some countries, especially in Bulgaria and Albania, there are relatively strong ethno-nationalist tendencies among youth.
9. Youth across the region strongly identify as being European and place relatively great trust in the EU. Membership in the EU enjoys strong and increasing support, whereby the EU is especially strongly associated with greater economic welfare. Pro-EU stances are especially widespread among youth from socioeconomically less developed countries like Kosovo or Albania.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Policy-makers should strive to transform youth aspirations for general economic security and a strong welfare state into real and tangible political action, which should also directly involve young people. It is crucial that young people feel that their largely democratic-socialist attitudes and actions have real political and social consequences.
2. Similarly, young people's aspirations and optimism in relation to EU integration should be transformed into civic and political action. This would benefit both European processes of integration on the one hand and youth civic and political participation on the other.
3. In order to reduce young people's problematic tolerance of informality, rule-of-law principles should be promoted and implemented on a large scale.

8

POLITICAL AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION

By Mirna Jusić and Miran Lavrič

The past decades have seen ever-greater recognition in the international empirical literature of a decline in young people's political participation, manifested both in lower youth voter turnout and a deterioration in political party membership (Sloam, 2017, p. 287). Given the importance of youth engagement for democratic citizenship, such a decline may inevitably end in a crisis of citizenship (Macedo et al., 2005) and of political systems (Stoker, 2006). As evidence indicates a propensity on the part of young people not to vote in subsequent elections if they fail to cast a vote when they come of age, low turnout levels for young people "are symptomatic of falling levels of electoral participation for all ages over time" (Sloam, 2017, p. 292). Young people's political disengagement may especially impact countries marked by incomplete democratic consolidation (Merkel, 2007).

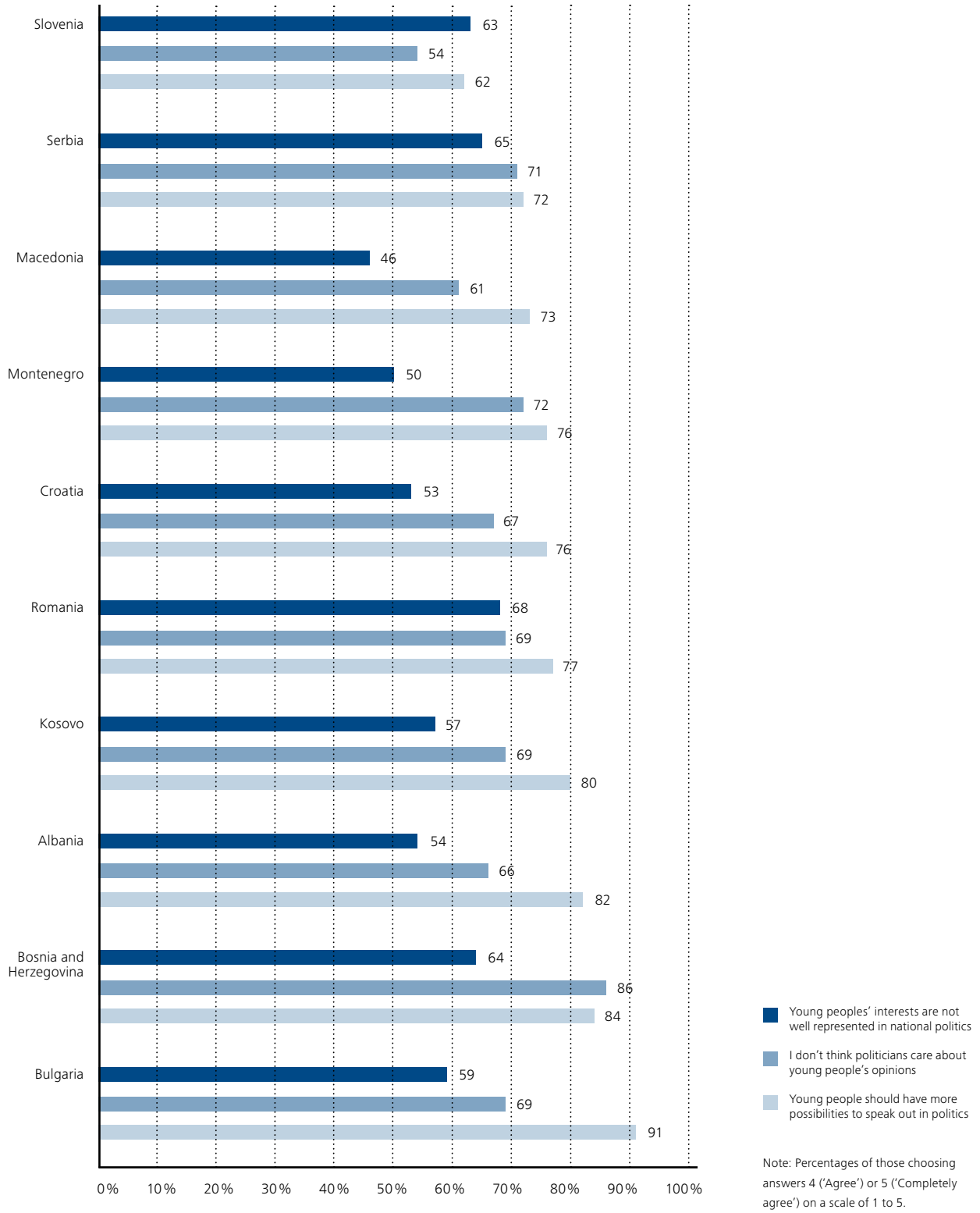
Disillusionment with mainstream politics, however, does not necessarily equate with political apathy. According to Norris (2002), young people have changed their *repertoires* of engagement, choosing alternative means of engagement such as street protests over the traditional act of voting; moreover, they have changed their *agencies* of engagement, replacing political parties or labour unions with non-governmental organisations. A typology of political engagement suggested by Teorell et al. (2007) goes beyond electoral participation to include the participation of the citizen as a consumer, in a political party, as a protest activity or by contacting institutions or politicians. Young people's engagement is also seen to be increasingly fuelled by specific issues; such issue-based engagement may manifest itself in activities such as signing petitions, participating in demonstrations or joining boycotts (Sloam, 2017, p. 290; also see Inglehart & Welzel, 2005).

Although empirical research has documented a decline in voting and party membership among young people in Europe over the years, the situation is not completely bleak. A 2017 *Eurobarometer* survey found that a large majority of young Europeans had voted in an election in the past three years, and that electoral participation had increased as much as 18 percentage points since an equivalent 2014 survey. An increase in political participation was coupled with an increase in voluntary and civic activities, especially in the local community (European Commission, 2018b, p. 4). This may be attributed, *inter alia*, to economic recovery after the 2008 financial crisis, in the direct aftermath of which "young people have felt let down by, ignored, or even victimized by public policy" under the banner of austerity (Sloam, 2017, p. 288).

THE SOCIO-POLITICAL SITUATION OF YOUTH

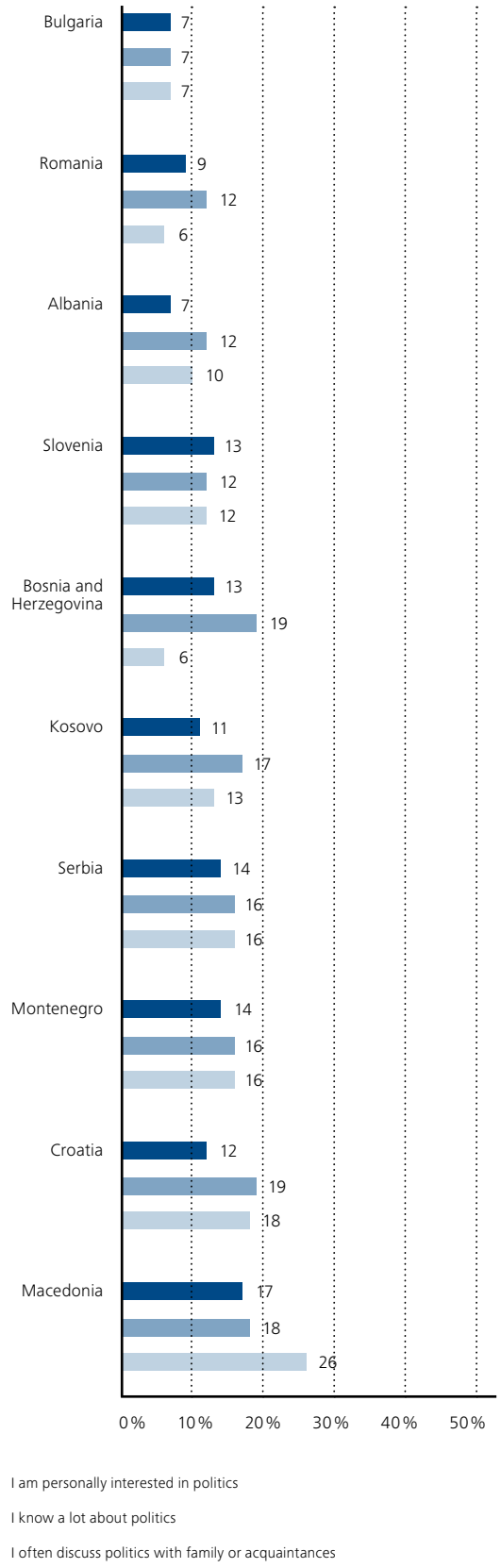
Similar to the results produced by the last round of youth surveys (Jusić & Numanović, 2017), young people across the SEE region feel rather weakly represented in national politics, with shares of dissatisfied youth ranging from 46% (Macedonia) to 68% (Romania). It is not surprising, then, that the vast majority (78%) believe that young people should have more possibilities to speak out in politics (Graph 8.1).

FIGURE 8.1: **Young people's perceptions of the socio-political situation in a national context, by country**



Note: Percentages of those choosing answers 4 ('Agree') or 5 ('Completely agree') on a scale of 1 to 5.

FIGURE 8.2: **Political interest, knowledge and deliberation about politics of youth, by country**



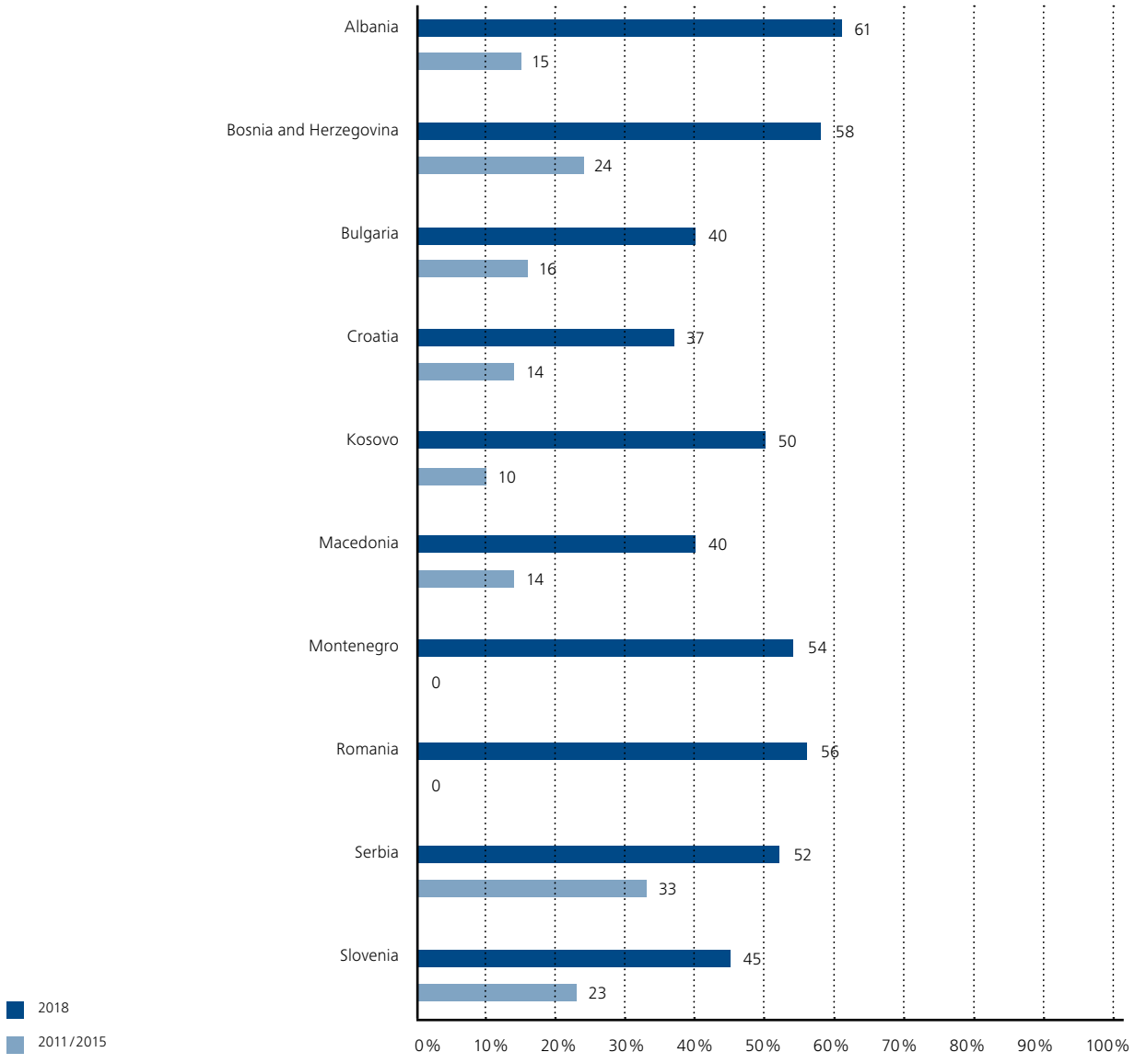
Note: Percentages of those choosing answers 4 ('Agree') or 5 ('Completely agree') on a scale of 1 to 5.

But to what extent is this enthusiasm for a stronger say in politics supported by political knowledge and interest? Quite obviously, political knowledge of young people is, according to their own opinion, very weak, with only 7% (Bulgaria) to 19% (Croatia) agreeing that they know a lot about politics, and only 7% (Bulgaria) to 17% (Macedonia) expressing a general interest in politics. At the same time, in some of the countries where young people express the least interest and knowledge of politics, like Bulgaria and Romania, they also appear to discuss politics with family and acquaintances the least (Graph 8.2).

It is interesting to note that there is a strong positive inter-correlation between political interest, political knowledge and deliberation about politics with family and acquaintances.[135] What can be deduced is that all three aspects – interest, knowledge and deliberation – appear to be a part of a general indicator of political awareness (e.g. see Bartle, 2000) that seems to vary between countries, from around 20% of youth in Macedonia to around 7% in Bulgaria. At the level of SEE, some 13% of youth seem to demonstrate such an awareness.

At the same time, it is important to note a substantial decline in interest in national politics in comparison to the 2011–2015 youth surveys (Graph 8.3).

FIGURE 8.3: **'Not interested at all in national politics': 2011–2015 and 2018 surveys (age 16–27)** [136]



The lack of political knowledge and interest does not seem problematic to many young people demanding a stronger voice in politics. Thus, as many as 57 % of those who completely disagree with the statement that they know a lot about politics at the same time completely agree that young people should have more possibilities to speak out in politics.[137]

The vast majority of young people in the region feel poorly represented in national politics and believe that they should have a stronger say. At the same time, a majority admits weak political knowledge and disinterest in politics, with the share of youth expressing no interest at all exceeding 50 % in most countries. Moreover, results suggest that political interest among youth has fallen since the last round of youth surveys.

In short, youth are largely alienated from politics, but at the same time lament not being heard. This is in line with many studies that consistently confirm a marked desire to be represented and, at the same time, a low interest in and knowledge of politics among both younger and older segments of the population in most representative democracies.[138] These findings point to an urgent need to improve the political literacy of youth. Correlates of self-expressed political knowledge[139] and those of interest in national politics[140] suggest that a promising way of doing this would be through education and by reducing poverty and economic insecurity. Nevertheless, interest is also positively correlated with trust in political institutions,[141] which has been shown to be very low across the region (see Chapter 4). This suggests that alienation from politics may also be alleviated by an improvement in the functioning of political institutions.

EXPERIENCE WITH DIFFERENT FORMS OF POLITICAL AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Despite attaching low importance to the experience of own political and civic participation (see Chapter 3), displaying low levels of interest and claiming little knowledge of politics, young people in the SEE region show relatively satisfactory levels of electoral participation, with the majority of those who were eligible to vote in the last election claiming to have voted for the national parliament. Strong turnout is especially pronounced in Macedonia, which may be attributed to a recent change of power, with a new party coming into government for the first time in more than a decade in 2017, following years of political unrest. Turnout is the lowest in Slovenia (Graph 8.4).

Results are not directly comparable with the last round of youth surveys, where a similar question enquired about having voted in all elections one was eligible to vote in, which resulted in turnout being much lower. Although the questions posed also differed somewhat,[142] results are similar to those of a recent 2017 *Eurobarometer* survey, with young people in Bulgaria (71 %) and Romania (70 %) registering a higher turnout than in Croatia (64 %) or Slovenia (49 %) (European Commission, 2018b, p. 16).

Earlier studies have shown that socioeconomic status and educational attainment are important predictors of individuals' propensity to vote. According to Sloam (2017), such findings indicate "huge social inequalities in electoral participation, and emphasise the central role of social and economic *resources* in determining political engagement" (p. 290). Statistical analysis at the regional level confirms this, as it shows significant positive correlations between voting in national elections and respondents' level of educational attainment, as well as household financial status. While the relationship between voting and parents' cultural capital is significant at the level of some countries,[143] it is not significant at the regional level. In other words, access to some sources of capital certainly appears to matter for voting.

Interestingly, voter turnout is lower in countries with a higher HDI,[144] which is not in line with expectations of the literature in this realm, which posits that in countries where voters are more informed and less focused on meeting basic needs, they are also more likely to engage in political processes (Solijonov, 2016, p. 35). There could be various reasons for this. While personal access to economic capital does matter, as shown above, HDI levels may not adequately reflect the socioeconomic status of young people. Moreover, the perceived importance of elections – for instance, the very divisive national elections in Macedonia in 2016 – may be an impetus for greater youth turnout in elections. Last but not

FIGURE 8.4: **Percentage of youth reporting having voted in last national elections and HDI levels (N = young people eligible to vote during last election in each country)**

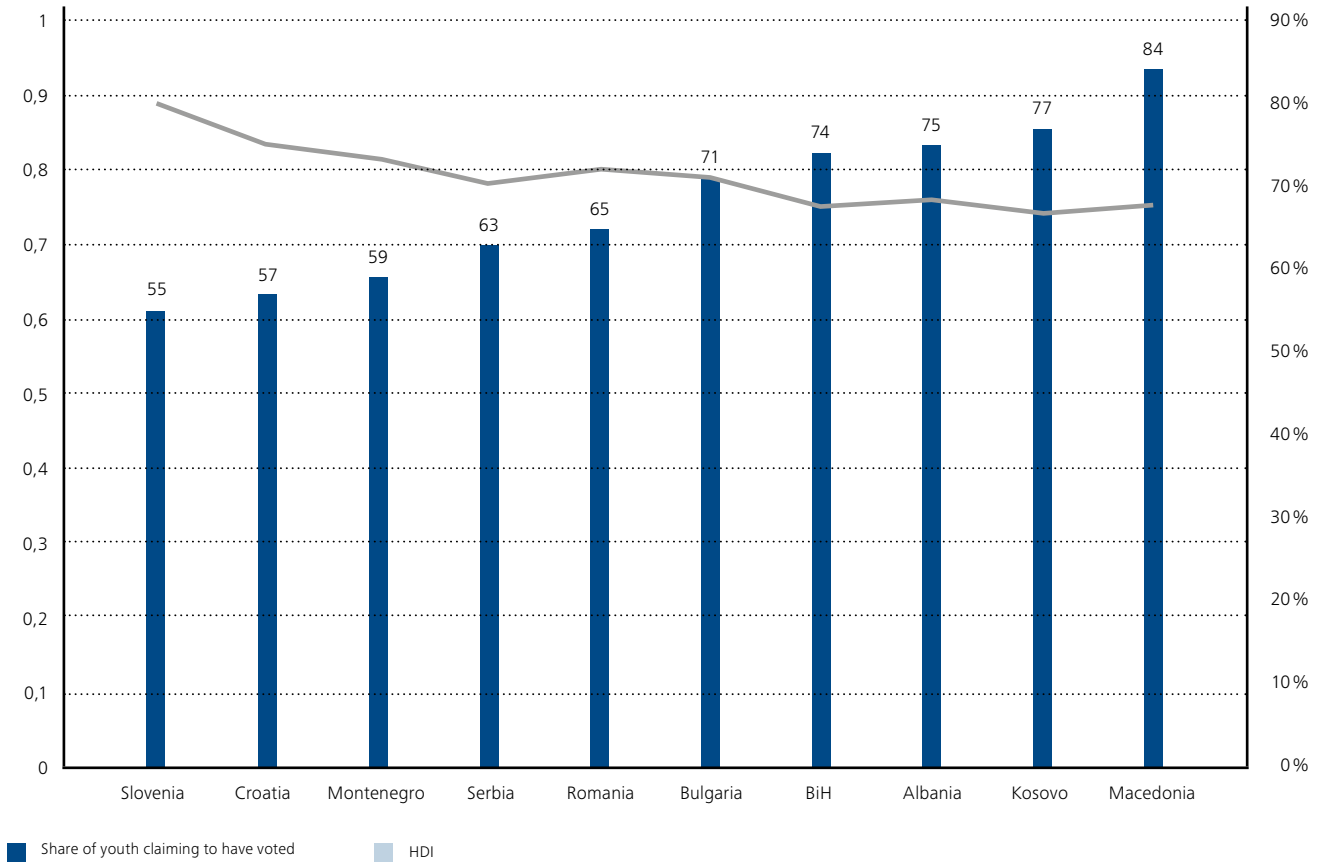
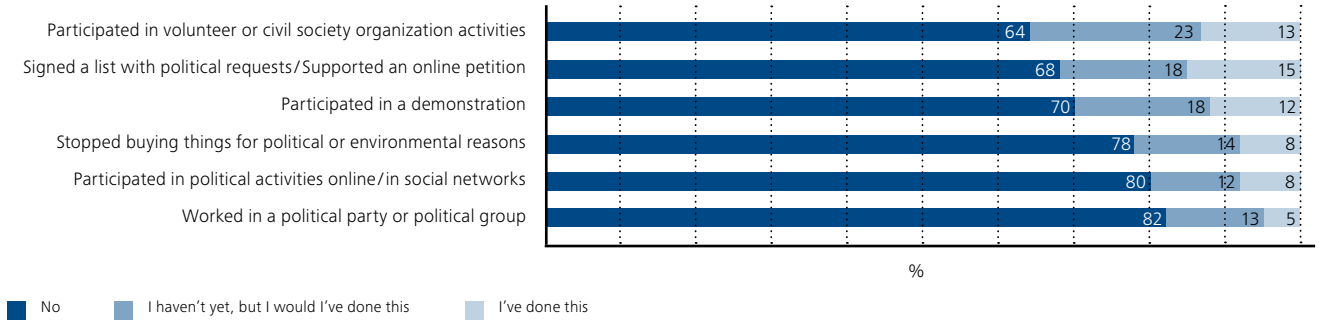


FIGURE 8.5: **Young people's experience with or interest in trying different forms of political engagement in SEE**



least, pertinent societal issues (such as unemployment, corruption, etc.) articulated and widely communicated during election campaigns may provide another incentive to go out and vote in less developed countries.

Not surprisingly, statistical analysis at the regional level also shows that young people who do not believe that their interests are being represented in national politics are also less likely to vote.[145] Moreover, having voted is positively correlated with interest in politics.[146] Older youth also appear to be more likely to vote,[147] possibly because of their greater interest in politics.

Despite pronounced disinterest towards politics, young people's electoral participation is relatively high, with the share of those claiming to have voted in the last national elections ranging from 55 % in Slovenia to 84 % in Macedonia. Interestingly, youth from socioeconomically less developed countries are more likely to vote. However, at the level of respondents, those with higher levels of educational attainment and from better-off households are more likely to vote.

Besides electoral participation, how does young people's political and civic engagement manifest itself otherwise? Generally speaking, young people in the region have very little experience with different forms of political engagement. Moreover, acting through traditional modes of engagement such as a political party appears to be very rare (Graph 8.5). Thus, one may wonder whether SEE youth has, in line with Norris (2002), really changed their *repertoire* of political engagement in the direction of 'non-conventional', more issue-based forms of engagement.

However, the percentage of youth willing to try out some of these modes of participation tends to be somewhat greater than the percentage of those with actual experience with diverse forms of political engagement. If experience and readiness are considered together, there appears to be substantial potential for activation of youth through non-conventional means of participation: for instance, 33 % of respondents have signed or would be willing to sign an online political petition or request, and 30 % have participated or would participate in demonstrations.

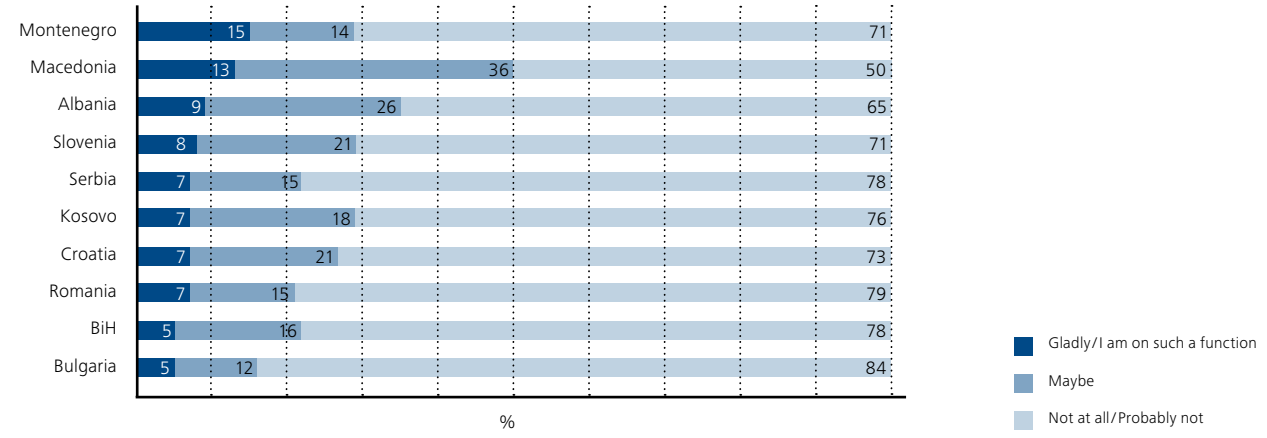
It is also important to note differences between countries: for instance, youth in Slovenia and Macedonia – where the 2016 parliamentary elections were preceded by civil society protests and student plenums (Kosturanova, 2017) – appear to have much more experience with alternative forms of participation. For instance, as many as 27 % of youth in Slovenia have signed a political request or online petition, while as many as 22 % of youth in Macedonia have participated in a demonstration.

Studies have shown that for issue-based engagement such as signing petitions, participating in demonstrations or joining boycotts, age is an important factor: older youth had greater experience with activities such as boycotts in the EU15, while the reverse was true for "*overt* forms of political protest" such as demonstrations (Sloam, 2017, pp. 290–291). Evidence is mixed on whether or not higher educational attainment predicts issue-based participation, but this has been shown to be the case for some forms of engagement, such as signing a petition or joining a boycott (ibid, p. 291).

Statistical analysis at the regional level also suggests that taking part in such forms of participation is a matter of economic and cultural capital, but also of age. For instance, experience with or interest in taking part in protest or supporting political requests or online petitions is positively correlated with one's educational level, material possessions of household and parents' cultural capital. It is also positively linked to urban place of residence. Older youth tend to support such engagement more. It is, moreover, positively correlated with countries' HDI. On the other hand, such engagement is negatively correlated with NEET status.[148]

Although very few young people in the region believe that their interests are well-represented in national politics, few would be willing to take on a political function. Indeed, close to a majority and more than half in some countries are completely unwilling to take on such a role; the exception is Macedonia, where recent political events may have triggered young people's interest in such political engagement. Survey results also indicate that a small minority of SEE youth currently hold a political position (Graph 8.6).

FIGURE 8.6: **Young people's willingness to take on a political function**



The general unwillingness to take on political functions is in line with the dominant perception of being underrepresented in national politics in their home countries. Considering young people's extremely low levels of trust in political leaders, political parties and institutions (see Lavrič, Chapter 4), a lack of motivation for political engagement may potentially stem from the conviction that such activity may be without effect. Not surprisingly, willingness to take on a political function is significantly positively correlated with trust in political institutions at the regional level.[149]

Taking on a political job also appears to be a matter of access to resources. Statistical analysis at the regional level shows that willingness to take on a political function is significantly positively correlated with respondents' educational attainment, financial situation and material possessions of households, as well as parents' cultural capital. There is a greater willingness to take on a political position in urban areas. On the other hand, it is negatively correlated with NEET status, suggesting that young people who are out of education and employment may not have the motivation or the resources to take on such positions.[150] A related question about having worked (or being interested in working) in a political party or political group (Graph 8.5. above) uncovers similar dynamics: such engagement is significantly positively correlated with respondents' educational attainment, material possessions of household and parents' educational attainment. Older youth and those coming from urban areas are more likely to work for a political party. On the other hand, youth who are NEETs are less likely to have such an experience.[151]

Such analyses reconfirm the notion that political party engagement may indeed be conditioned by access to various types of capital, be it economic, cultural or social.

Beyond voting, young people in the region have very little experience with various forms of political or civic engagement. But when interest in and actual experience of engagement are combined, there appears to be potential for greater activism. Engagement through traditional channels, such as political parties, appears to be rare and a small share of youth throughout the SEE region hold a political function. Issue- and party-based engagement appear to be linked to higher educational attainment, economic and cultural capital, suggesting inherent inequalities in political participation.

Another relevant question pertains to the relationship between political engagement and political attitudes. In this regard, statistical analysis at the regional level shows a significant positive correlation between voting and support for the welfare state, but also with support for strong leadership and nationalism. Those who are to the right of the political spectrum are also more likely to have voted.[152] The same significant relationships (with the exception of nationalism), are present when it comes to young people's inclination to vote if national elections were to be held.[153]

When it comes to other forms of political engagement, statistical analysis at the regional level suggests that, unlike in the case of voting, young people who support a strong welfare state are slightly less likely to engage in 'protest political participation,' such as petitions, demonstrations or boycotts, but are also less likely to volunteer, work for a political party or group, or participate in political activities online.[154] Similarly, those in support of a strong leader are also less likely to engage in different forms of political and civic engagement other than voting,[155] while they are more likely to vote, as shown above. Interestingly, the same is true also for those who are more pro-European[156]. Theoretically, these correlations could be explained by the higher external locus of

control among supporters of a strong welfare state (see: Kouba & Pitlik, 2014), a strong political leader, and the EU. These three ideas are all related to strong external actors (political parties/ political leaders/the EU) who should resolve the most pressing social problems. On the other hand, it should be stressed that the negative correlations in relation to unconventional political participation were very weak, indicating that supporters of a welfare state still form a large majority of unconventionally active youth. For example, as many as 63 % of those who have or would participate in a demonstration totally agree with the statement that the government should take more responsibility to ensure that everyone is provided for.

What can be concluded from the data about the sustainability and hopes associated with civic mobilisations we have observed in many places across the region? A regression analysis at the regional level suggests that, when controlling for material possessions of the household, age, parents' educational attainment, respondents' gender, settlement size, and being a NEET, the political orientations pertaining to support for a strong political leader and support for a strong welfare state have only minimal impact on young people's non-conventional political participation. The main factors that predict this type of participation appear to be the material status of households, age, and parents' cultural capital. This analysis reconfirms yet again that NEETs appear to engage less. [157]

In other words, non-conventional political engagement is largely independent of young people's political attitudes. Instead, it tends to increase with indicators of higher socioeconomic status and with age. We can deduce that the several civic and political initiatives that involved young people in the region over the recent years mostly involved youth that had a better socioeconomic background.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCE WITH VOLUNTEERING

Scholars of engagement usually differentiate between political and more "latent" forms of participation, such as civic engagement and social involvement (Amnå & Ekman, 2014). Civic and voluntary engagement is considered of great importance for democratic development, as it is seen to fuel social trust (Putnam, 2000). The majority of young people in the region never engage in volunteering activities, social projects, initiatives, or through associations (Graph 8.7). Volunteering appears to be more common in Macedonia and Slovenia in comparison to the rest of the region; these two countries have been shown to have more active issue-based political engagement among youth as well.

Survey results show that a large majority in some countries (64 % in Slovenia) and an overwhelming majority in others (93 % in Croatia) have not engaged in any unpaid voluntary activity in the last year, with 79 % of young people in the region, on average, not having had this experience (Graph 8.8). The most common form of organisation through which the share of young people with a recent experience in volunteering engages is school or university, followed by associations/clubs, NGOs and youth organisations. In comparison to the last round of survey, volunteering experience shows a decline in most countries, especially so in Croatia, Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria. These results are upsetting considering the importance of civic engagement for building social trust, reproducing civic values or contributing to a society's democratic fabric.

FIGURE 8.7: **Frequency of engagement in volunteering in social projects, initiatives, associations**

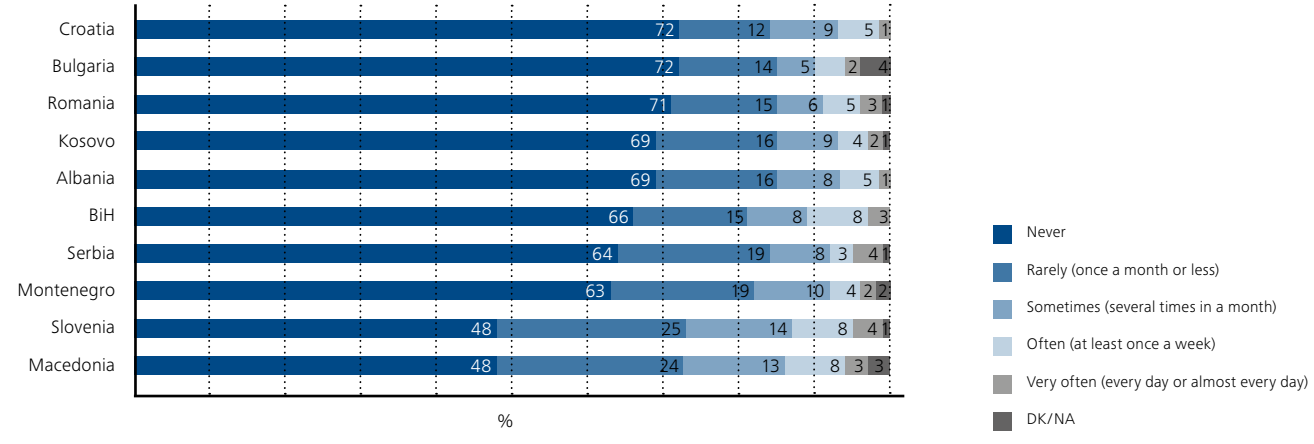
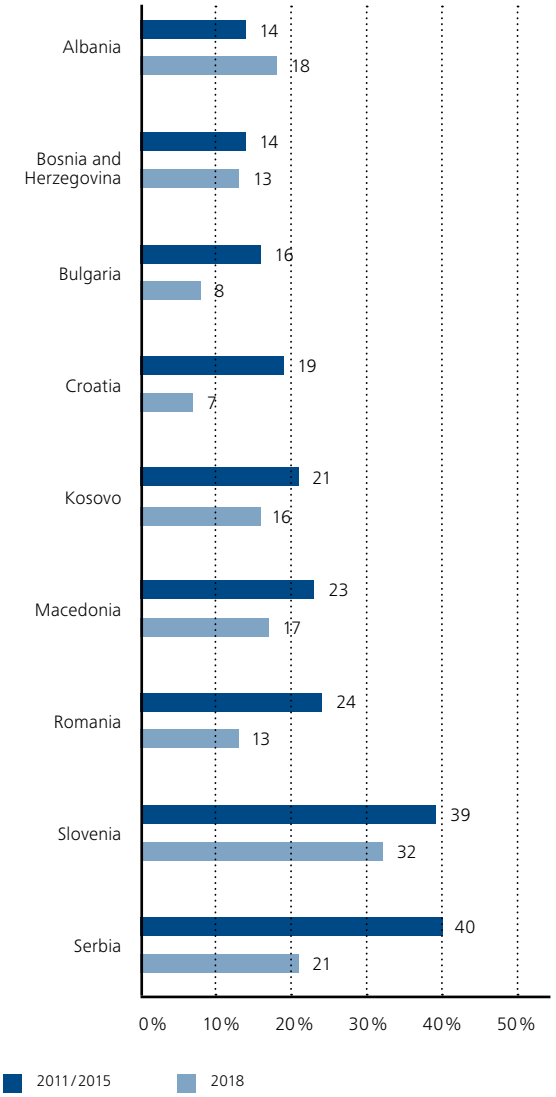


FIGURE 8.8: **Percentage of youth who have engaged in unpaid voluntary activity over the last 12 months, FES Youth Studies SEE 2011–15 and 2018 (age 16–27)**



Statistical analysis at the regional level shows that volunteering is positively correlated with respondents' perceived financial situation and material possessions of households, as well as parents' educational attainment. Younger youth are more likely to participate in volunteering activities; this may not be surprising considering that young people in the region most commonly volunteer through schools. On the other hand, there is a significant negative link between having volunteered and having a NEET status.[158] Such findings are very similar to those pertaining to various types of political participation: resources appear to matter for engagement, be it political or civic.

Despite its importance in building civic values and social trust, most young people in the SEE region have not had any experience volunteering; volunteering experience appears to be lower in most countries in comparison to the earlier round of youth surveys. Moreover, volunteering is also positively linked to material status and parents' cultural capital.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Young people in SEE are generally not interested in politics and generally claim to have little knowledge of politics. They report satisfactory voter turnout in elections, however. Experience with issue-based and other 'alternative' forms of political engagement is generally not common, but when considered in combination with willingness to engage, there appears to be potential for greater political activity among SEE youth. Volunteering is not a common experience and appears to have become even less common in comparison to earlier surveys. All types of engagement – both civic and political – are positively correlated with socioeconomic and cultural capital, and negatively correlated with being outside of employment and education, indicating that social inequality is inherent to the political and civic participation of SEE youth.

MAIN FINDINGS:

1. Survey results show that young people's interest in general politics, international politics and politics at home is generally low and considerably lower in comparison to the FES Youth Studies SEE 2011–15 surveys. The majority also claim not to know very much about politics. However, a vast majority of young people in the SEE region feel poorly represented in national politics and feel that they should have a stronger say.
2. Despite low levels of political awareness, young people reported rather high electoral turnout rates in most countries in the region, and especially so in Macedonia, where the vast majority of young people who were eligible to vote during the last national elections appear to have done so. Youth coming from socioeconomically less developed countries tend to vote more.
3. Besides voting, young people in the region generally report relatively little experience with various forms of political and civic participation, not limited to demonstrations, boycotts or the use of social media for political purposes. Slovenia and Macedonia stand out as countries where such engagement is more common. However, when combining experience and interest in engaging through certain forms of political partic-

ipation such as online petitions or demonstrations, there certainly appears to be potential for politically activating youth in the region.

4. Young people in most SEE countries appear to be very unwilling to use political parties as their *agencies* of engagement. Political party engagement seems to be a rare phenomenon, and a small share of young people across the region report holding a political function.
5. The majority of young people in SEE have not had the experience of volunteering. Such engagement also seems to be less common in comparison to the earlier round of youth surveys.
6. Voting, different types of issue-based political engagement, engagement through political parties, and volunteering are significantly positively correlated with higher socioeconomic status, educational attainment and/or educational attainment of parents. This suggests prevailing social inequalities; in other words, both political and civic engagement appears to be a matter of having access to different types of resources.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. In order to enhance civic and political engagement among SEE youth, policy-makers, education institutions and civil society organisations should seek ways to improve young people's political literacy. Innovative and effective programs of civic education should be fostered in the region. In a broader sense, our data suggest that increasing the general level of education and the fight against poverty and economic insecurity are also very important mechanisms in this regard.
2. Through cooperation with the civic sector, governments should promote opportunities for youth to engage in volunteering and other types of civic engagement. Such opportunities should be further developed and promoted through the educational system, already a key mechanism through which young people who have engaged in volunteering have acquired such experience.
3. Political representation of young people should be strengthened, both through mainstream political party structures and through representative bodies such as youth councils or committees. Putting youth and youth issues on political party agendas may be one way to foster greater youth interest in mainstream politics.
4. Given the universality of Internet use among SEE youth, and their experience or interest in politically engaging online, the e-participation of youth may be promoted through the development of tailored online platforms that provide relevant information on and opportunities for such engagement.

9

MOBILITY AND MIGRATION

By Mirna Jusić and Miran Lavrič

The international empirical literature draws attention to young people's increasingly non-linear, flexible transitions (Pollock, 2008) and their reversibility (e.g. moving back to their parental home or becoming inactive in terms of employment) (Machado Pais, 2000). Mobility may further complicate the nature of such transitions, as youth make use of it to achieve better outcomes during their transition to adulthood. Such 'spatial reflexivity' (Cairns et al., 2012; Cairns, 2014, p. 6) appears to be of high relevance when discussing youth transitions in the SEE region.

Emigration has especially picked up its pace in the Western Balkan countries that have not joined the EU – Albania, BiH, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. Over the past ten years, travel was largely facilitated thanks to the visa liberalisation regime that countries (except Kosovo) have with the EU.[159] In 2015, in order to curb the number of asylum-seekers from the region, Western Balkans countries were declared 'safe' countries of origin by Germany; new rules on labour migration from the Western Balkans made it easier, however, for citizens from the region to work in Germany, attracting many new workers.[160] Even before their entry into the EU, Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania displayed substantial levels of migration. In 2017, Romanian citizens of working age living abroad in the EU accounted for 19.7 % of the resident population of Romania, the largest national group among EU citizens who were mobile. The shares were also considerable for Croatia (14 %) and Bulgaria (12.5 %), bearing in mind the EU average was 3.8 % for the same year (Eurostat, 2018a).

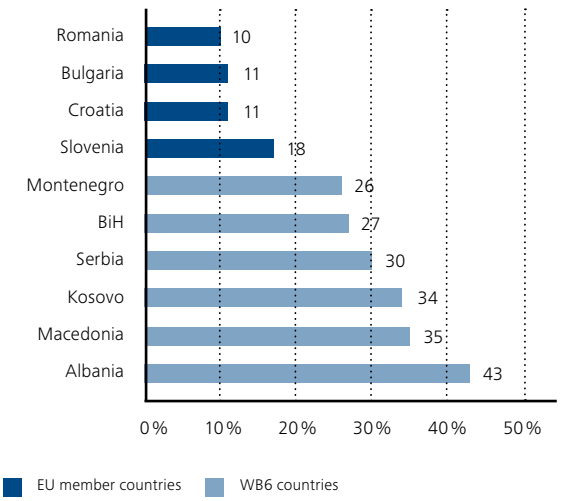
A recent World Bank and Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies (wiiw) report notes that the majority of emigrants from the WB6 countries[161] in 2015 were between 20 and 39 years of age (Vidovic et al., 2018, p. 43) and had relatively high levels of education. Such a brain drain may in turn have adverse effects on countries' growth, competitiveness and economic convergence in the long run (ibid, p. 45).

Beyond migration, mobility[162] offers a chance for young people to explore learning, career and other opportunities abroad. While the range of mobility platforms that are available to youth from the SEE region has increased in recent years, many of them financially supported by the EU,[163] there is still room for improvement when it comes to governments' policy efforts to facilitate mobility within the SEE region and the EU (see, for instance, Popović & Gligorović, 2016, for the Western Balkans).

EMIGRATION POTENTIAL OF SEE YOUTH

Survey findings on the desire of SEE youth to emigrate indicate a significant contrast between those countries that have and those that have not joined the EU. Young people from Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia and Slovenia show the least interest in emigration, which is understood here to mean moving to another country for more than six months. On the other hand, a substantial share of youth from all Western Balkan countries – and especially Albania – voice a strong to very strong desire to emigrate (Graph 9.1).

FIGURE 6.1: **Percentages of youth expressing a strong or very strong desire to move to another country for more than six months, by country**



We get a quite similar picture if we look at the anticipated duration of young people's stay abroad. The shares of young people who would like to leave their home country for more than 20 years are substantially higher in the countries that have not joined the EU. Conversely, a majority of youth from Romania, Bulgaria and Slovenia plan much shorter stays abroad. In other words, being part of the EU seems to significantly reduce the motivation of a country's youth to emigrate long-term (Graph 9.2).

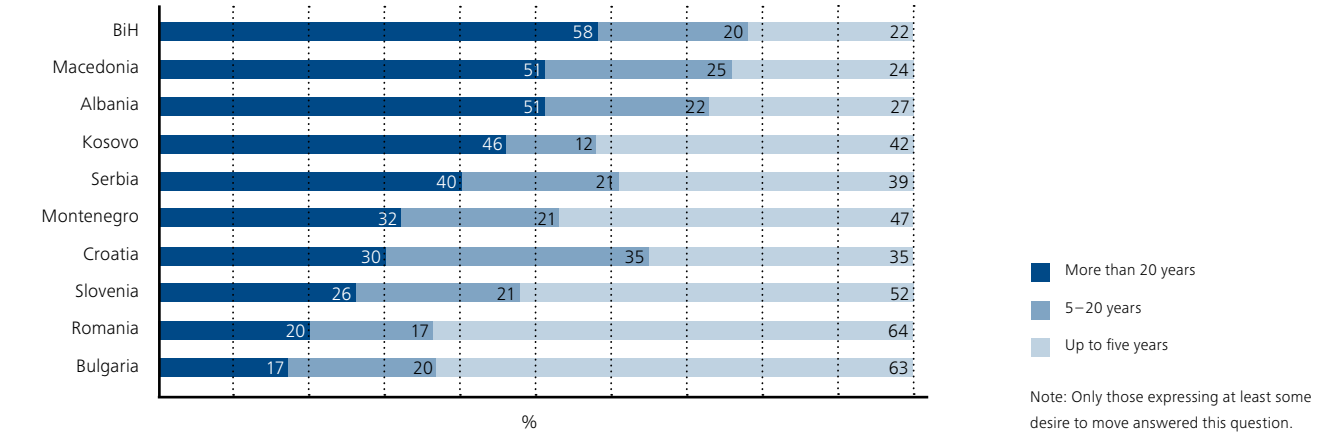
Youth from EU member countries are substantially less motivated to emigrate (especially long-term) as compared to youth from the WB6 countries.

Despite some differences in the survey questions used, we can also compare results with the 2011–2015 round of FES youth surveys in the region. As discernible from the graph, the share of youth with no intention to emigrate increased since the last round of surveys in a number of countries, sizably so in Bulgaria, Croatia, and Romania (Graph 9.3), three EU member countries. Taken together with the above findings on differences between the WB6 and the EU member countries, this indicates that changes relating to membership of a country in the EU might, at least in the longer term, significantly reduce the extent of youth emigration. In explaining the decrease of emigration desire in most SEE countries, one should also consider that the last round of surveys was carried out imminently after the 2008 economic crisis in most countries, therefore young people's less pronounced desire to leave home may possibly be attributed to the amelioration of living standards and job opportunities at home.

The intent of youth from SEE to emigrate remains high, though it appears to have decreased over the last approximately five years in most countries.

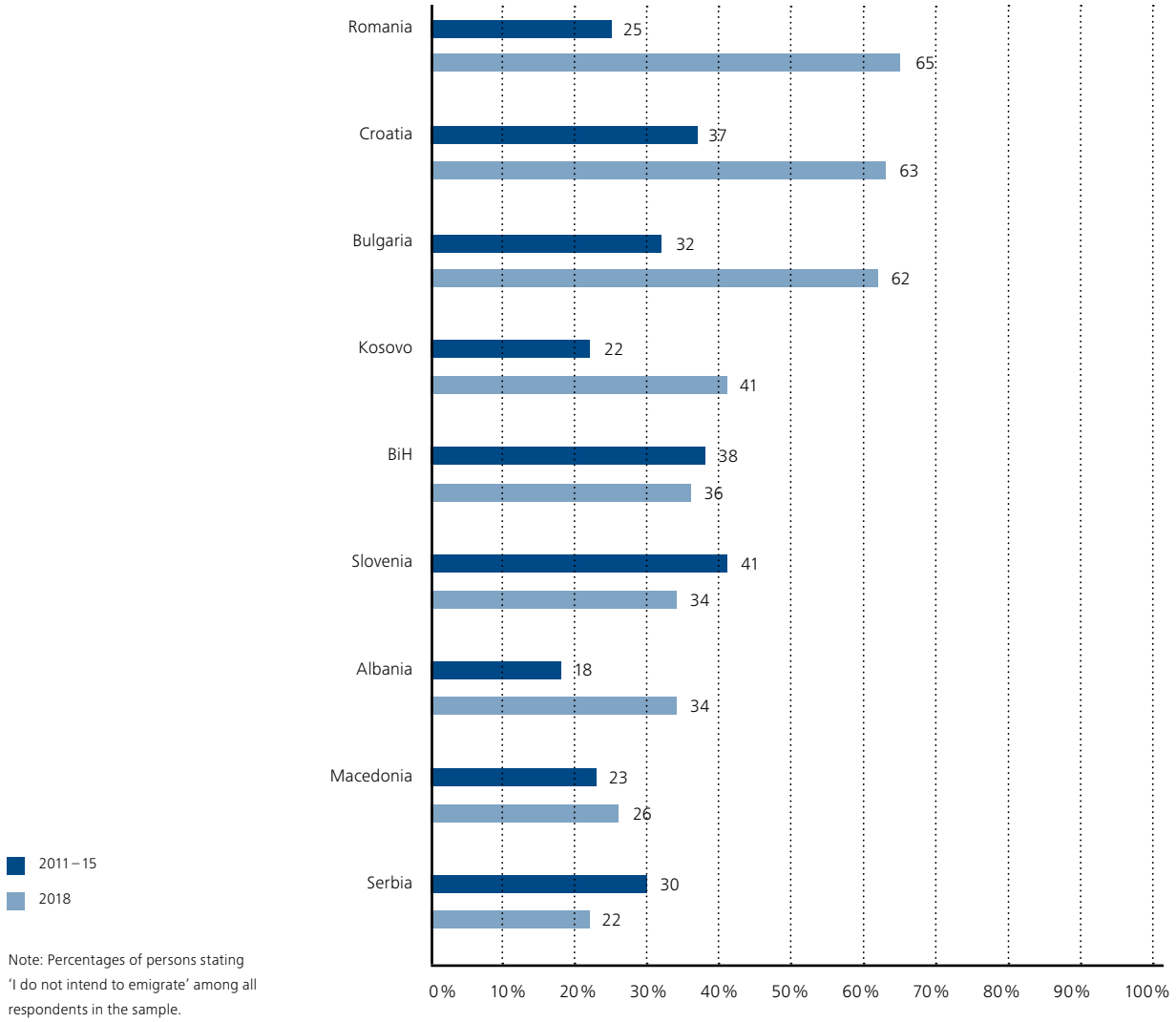
What personal or societal factors (Cairns, 2014) contribute to young people's inclination to move abroad? Statistical analysis at the regional level suggests a significant negative correlation between one's desire to move abroad and level of educational attainment. Young people from urban areas are more likely to express a desire to leave than their peers from rural areas. One's desire to move abroad is also significantly negatively correlated with the perceived financial status of one's household at the regional level. Employment status also matters, as those who are employed are more likely to state that they do not intend to move abroad, while the opposite is true for the unemployed. Moreover, in line with the finding that young people from EU Member States – which are economically more developed – are less inclined to leave, desire to emigrate is significantly negatively correlated with countries' HDI.[164]

FIGURE 9.2: **Period of desired stay abroad, by country.** How long would you like to stay abroad?



Note: Only those expressing at least some desire to move answered this question.

FIGURE 9.3: **Percentages of youth with no intention to emigrate**



Note: Percentages of persons stating 'I do not intend to emigrate' among all respondents in the sample.

We obtain quite similar results if we focus on factors dealing with the planned duration of the stay abroad. At the regional level, wanting to emigrate for longer than 20 years is significantly negatively correlated with countries' HDI. Long-term emigration plans also correlate negatively with one's own and parents' educational attainment. On the other hand, young people who are outside of the labour market and education or training (NEET) are more likely to leave for longer than 20 years, as are those who report fewer household material possessions and are worse off in terms of their households' financial situation.[165] All these findings suggest that young people with the desire to leave their country for long periods of time may do so predominantly in hope of finding greater economic security elsewhere.

Nevertheless, differences do exist between countries with regards to the profile of youth desiring to move abroad. For instance, significant negative correlations between the desire to move and educational attainment exist only in the case of four countries: Romania, BiH, Bulgaria and Macedonia.[166] In Croatia, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia, young people who wish to leave are also more likely to have better educated parents.[167] While youth who perceive their household's financial status to be less favourable are more likely to express a desire to leave in most countries, in some – such as Croatia, Montenegro, Romania and Slovenia – those who report a greater number of household possessions are more likely to express a desire to leave.[168]

The desire to leave may, in general, also be interpreted as an expression of dissatisfaction with young people's perception of the situation at home or the future of their country rather than any serious plan to emigrate. Statistical analysis shows that young people who are dissatisfied with respect to the state of affairs in their country are more likely to wish to emigrate;[169] the same holds for youth who perceive their country's future to be bleak.[170] Such perceptions may not necessarily correspond to reality or only be conditioned by respondents' socioeconomic or cultural capital; they may also be affected by media narratives and political statements surrounding emigration. In other words, constant and especially exaggerated criticism of the situation in the country coming from media and policy-makers logically leads to more negative perceptions of the home country among youth, which significantly increases their desire to emigrate. This also tends to increase

the brain drain problem, which in turn tends to have a negative effect on the situation in the country.

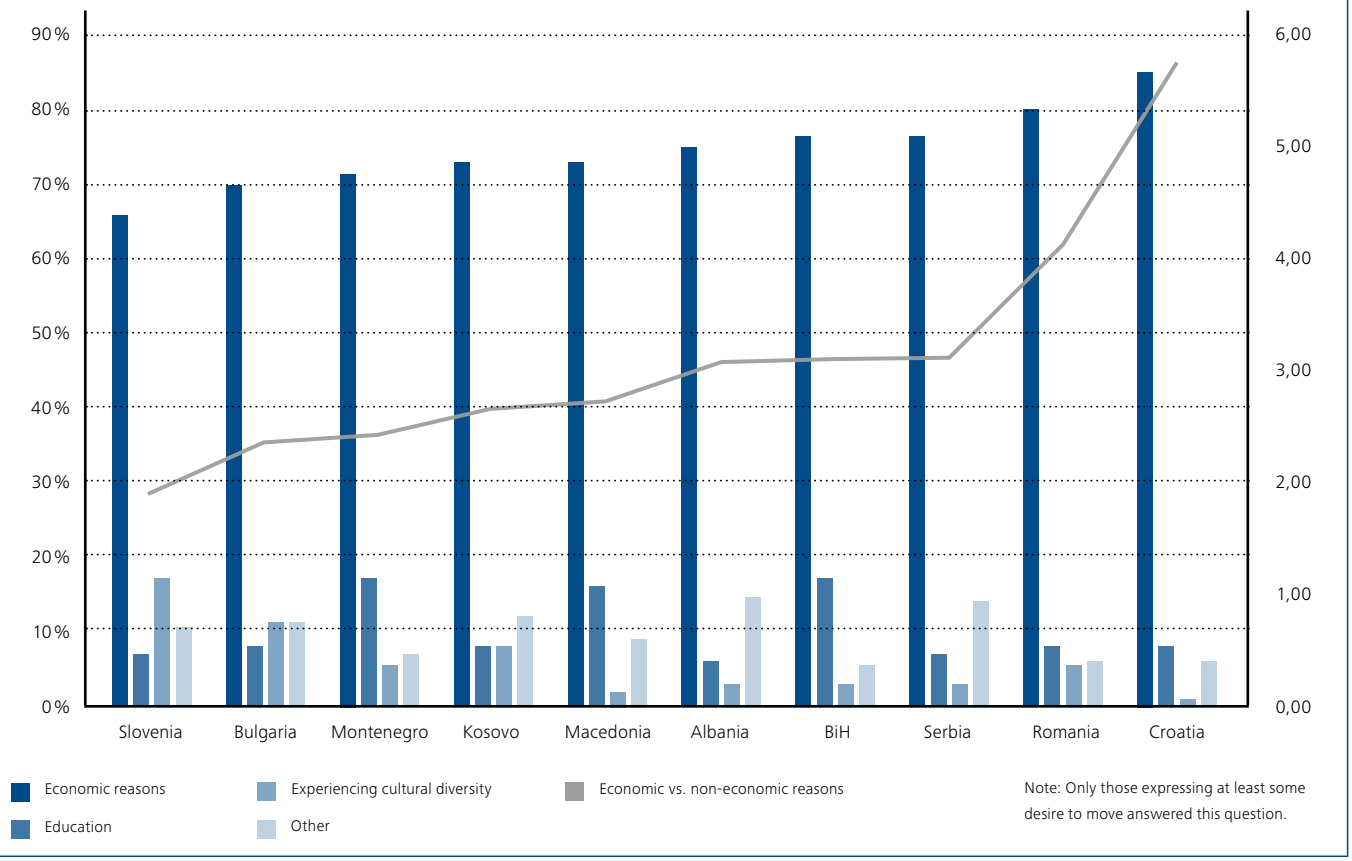
Another way of looking at motivational factors is directly measuring the reasons expressed for emigration. Not surprisingly, and in line with the above findings, survey results indicate that youth from SEE predominantly want to emigrate for the sake of improving their living standard, receiving a higher salary and finding better employment opportunities. In other words, economic reasons appear to be an overwhelming factor underlying young people's intent to emigrate, especially so in Croatia, Romania and Serbia (Graph 9.4). Educational reasons are second most important, but with an enormous gap behind economic ones. In Slovenia, reasons relating to experiencing cultural diversity are relatively important in comparison to other countries, indicating that pull factors in youth emigration tend to be relatively strong, which is to say, rather than 'being pushed' from their country due to a lack of jobs or other economic reasons, relatively many young people leave Slovenia mostly because they are 'pulled' by the opportunities they perceive in foreign countries.

Such findings are in line with the previous round of FES youth surveys, as improving young people's living standards, followed by broader employment opportunities, were the dominant reasons given for leaving one's home country (Jusić & Numanović, 2017, p. 51). Findings are also in line with other research on the region: according to a recent World Bank and wiiw report, large gaps in income levels compared to other countries are a significant driver of emigration from the Western Balkans (Vidovic et al., 2018, p. xii).

Not surprisingly, statistical analysis at the regional level suggests that expressing desire to move for economic reasons is significantly negatively correlated with countries' HDI. Those who are unemployed are more likely to want to emigrate for economic reasons than those who are employed or outside of the labour force. Those who are NEETs are also more likely to leave for economic reasons. Socioeconomic and cultural capital also appear to play a role, as youth of parents with lower levels of education, from households with fewer material possessions and in a worse financial situation are more inclined to cite economic reasons for leaving.[171]

While migration for educational purposes also negatively correlated with HDI, young people who want to move for educational purposes are less likely to be NEETs. They are more likely to be outside of the labour force, and are most likely in education. Their parents are more likely to be better educated, and they are more likely to come from financially better-off households. The desire to leave for educational reasons is negatively correlated with respondents' own level of education, possibly suggesting that young people would like to complete their studies abroad.[172] Similarly, the very small minority of youth who want to emigrate for cultural reasons are more likely to come from households with a greater number of material possessions, are better educated and have parents with higher levels of cultural capital, and come from urban areas.[173]

FIGURE 9.4: **Reasons expressed for moving to another country.** What is the main reason why you would move to another country?

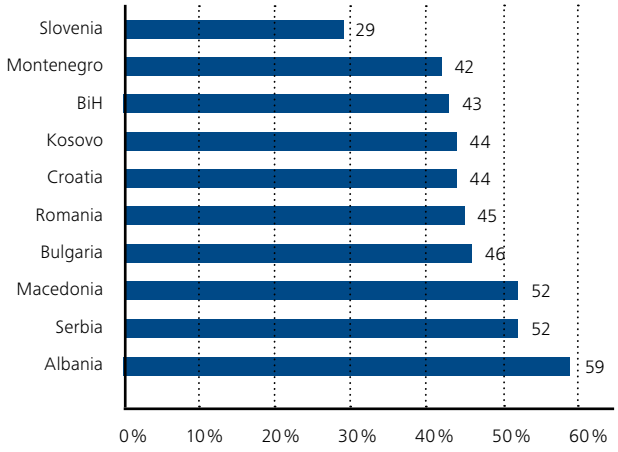


In the region as a whole, economic reasons and negative perceptions of the situation in one's home country appear to be the strongest motivational factors for emigration. However, motivational factors for emigration are complex and largely differ between countries.

Young people's emigration potential, however, cannot be evaluated by looking at the desire for emigration alone. Telling indicators may also be the actual steps that young people have taken to make their trip abroad a reality. Although some differences do exist between countries, survey results show that in most countries of the region, the majority of young people (57 %) have not taken concrete steps to prepare for a move abroad, including contacting an embassy, finding employment, securing scholarships, etc. Nevertheless, a relatively substantial cohort of young people (20 %) in most countries reports having contacted friends and relatives in the country that they would like to emigrate to. This potentially signals that young people are primarily counting on their social networks to facilitate their move abroad. In support of such an assumption, a large cohort of young people from the region who would like to move abroad claim that they have the invitation or support of individuals who live in the desired country of stay, suggesting that the existence of a diaspora that has already emigrated to the host country largely contributes to future emigration to that country (Graph 9.5).

The importance of social networks becomes even more apparent if we remove Slovenia, which is obviously an exception, from the analysis and limit our scrutiny only to young people with a very strong desire to emigrate.

FIGURE 9.5: **Invitation or support in country abroad by individuals that respondents know**

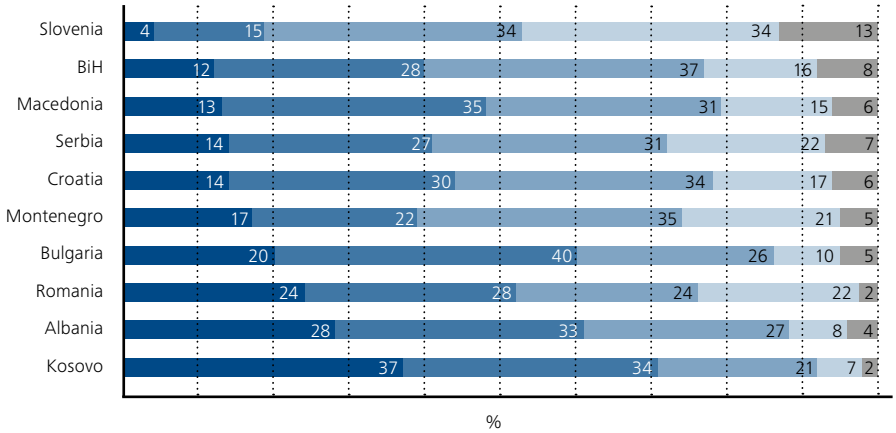


Note: Only those expressing at least some desire to move answered this question.

Existing social contacts abroad are a very important facilitator of migration. With the exception of Slovenia, as much as 60 % of youth in the SEE region with a very strong desire to emigrate have an invitation or support from their social networks in the host country.

Whether or not young people are planning to make a move in the near future is another tangible indicator of their emigration potential. A majority of youth are looking to move in the short-to-medium term period of six months to two years in Kosovo, Albania, Bulgaria and Romania; conversely, with some 81 % of young people looking to move within the period of five years and longer, relocation does not appear to be an imminent plan for youth from Slovenia (Graph 9.6). Such a finding makes the lack of personal support or invitation for a move

FIGURE 9.6: **Planned period of leaving home country**



Note: Only those expressing at least some desire to move answered this question.

abroad that a majority of Slovenian youth report (Graph 9.5 above) less surprising.

Statistical analysis at the regional level indicates that planning to leave within the next six months is significantly negatively correlated with HDI. Employment status also matters: 22 % of those who were unemployed, as opposed to 13 % of those employed, expressed a desire to leave within six months. Leaving within six months was, furthermore, significantly positively correlated with NEET status. Youth with parents with lower educational attainment, those with a lower number of household material possessions, and a worse household financial position are also more inclined to leave soon.[174] Last but not least, youth from rural areas also appear to be more inclined to leave.

Young people's familiarity with the desired country of residence adds another dimension to the palpability of their emigration plans. Survey data appear to suggest that there are only minor differences between individual aspects of life in a new country that young people from SEE claim to be familiar with, such as cultural norms and values, educational systems, employment, healthcare, housing and welfare systems, or legal permission to remain in the country. A substantial cohort of young people from SEE – between 32 % and 39 % on average – claim to have great familiarity with the norms and institutions of their prospective host country, especially so in the realm of employment.

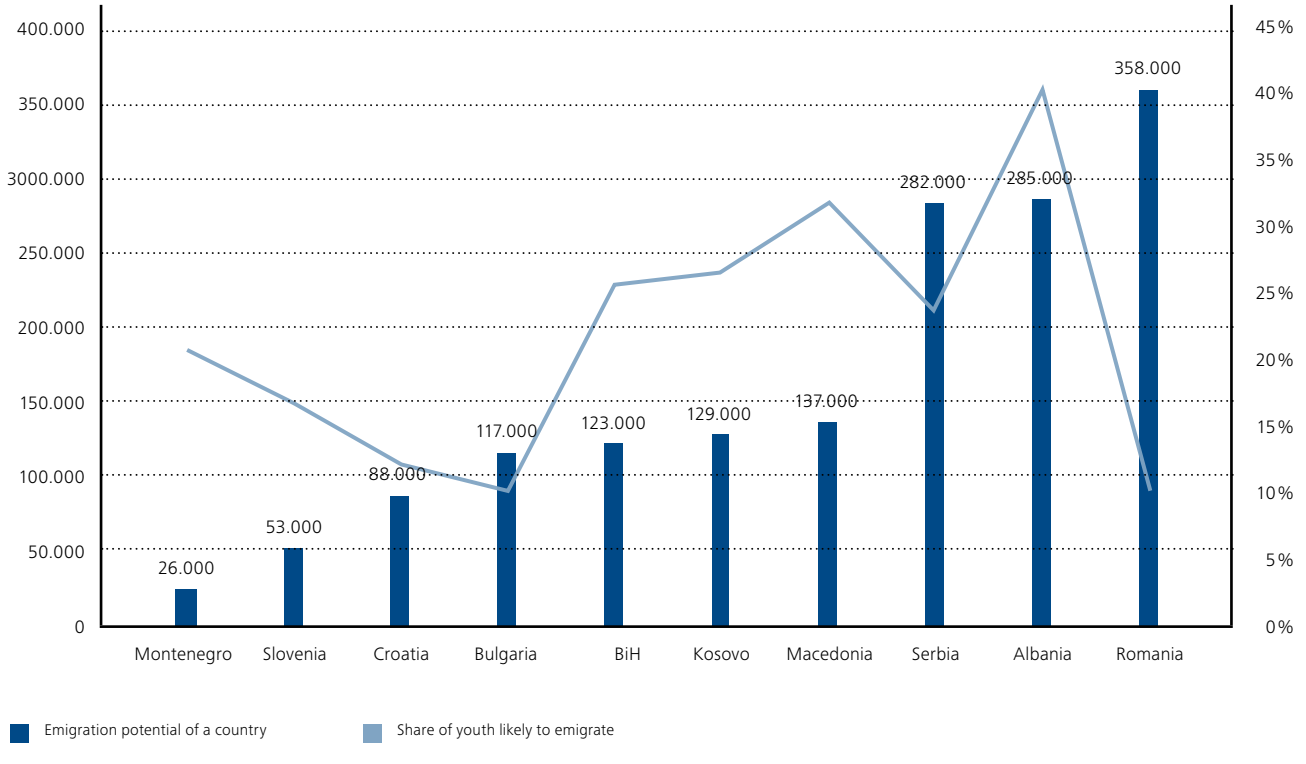
All of the stated aspects of young people's desires, steps taken, support for emigration and familiarity with potential host countries are important dimensions of their emigration potential. In order to draw a more coherent picture of respondents' likelihood of emigrating and the proportion of potential emigration as a phenomenon, an emigration potential index was constructed for individuals from SEE. The emigration potential index constitutes the six dimensions mentioned above, with its values ranging from 0 to 1, whereby value 1 means:[175]

- A very strong desire to emigrate
- Planned departure within the next 6 months
- Planning to stay for longer than 20 years
- Having support or an invitation from someone living in the host country
- The highest level of familiarity with the country
- Having taken all six concrete steps of moving.[176]

Based on the calculated emigration potential for each individual, we were able to compute the emigration potential for each country. This variable represents an assessment of the number of young people in each country who display a serious likelihood of emigrating according to the six dimensions of emigration potential.[177]

Results indicate that the emigration potential of SEE youth is quite substantial. An estimated 1.6 million or 18 % of today's SEE youth are likely to emigrate within the next 10 years. However, it is important to contextualise the data in Graph 6.7. For instance, while a relatively small share (10 %) of Romanian youth display a true intent to emigrate, given the country's large youth population, this yields the greatest emigration potential (358,000) in the region. On the other hand, as much as 40 % of youth from Albania exhibit a strong likelihood of leaving, but due to a much smaller population, Albanian youth emigration potential is substantially

FIGURE 9.7: **Youth emigration potential, by country**



lower than the Romanian one. It should also be mentioned that, by this measure, EU countries have the lowest shares of youth with a strong likelihood of leaving. Although the emigration potential might seem high for individual countries, it is also important to note that 45 % of respondents in the entire sample had an emigration potential of 0. In other words, while emigration intent is a common occurrence among youth throughout the region, there is still a significant number of young people without plans of leaving home.

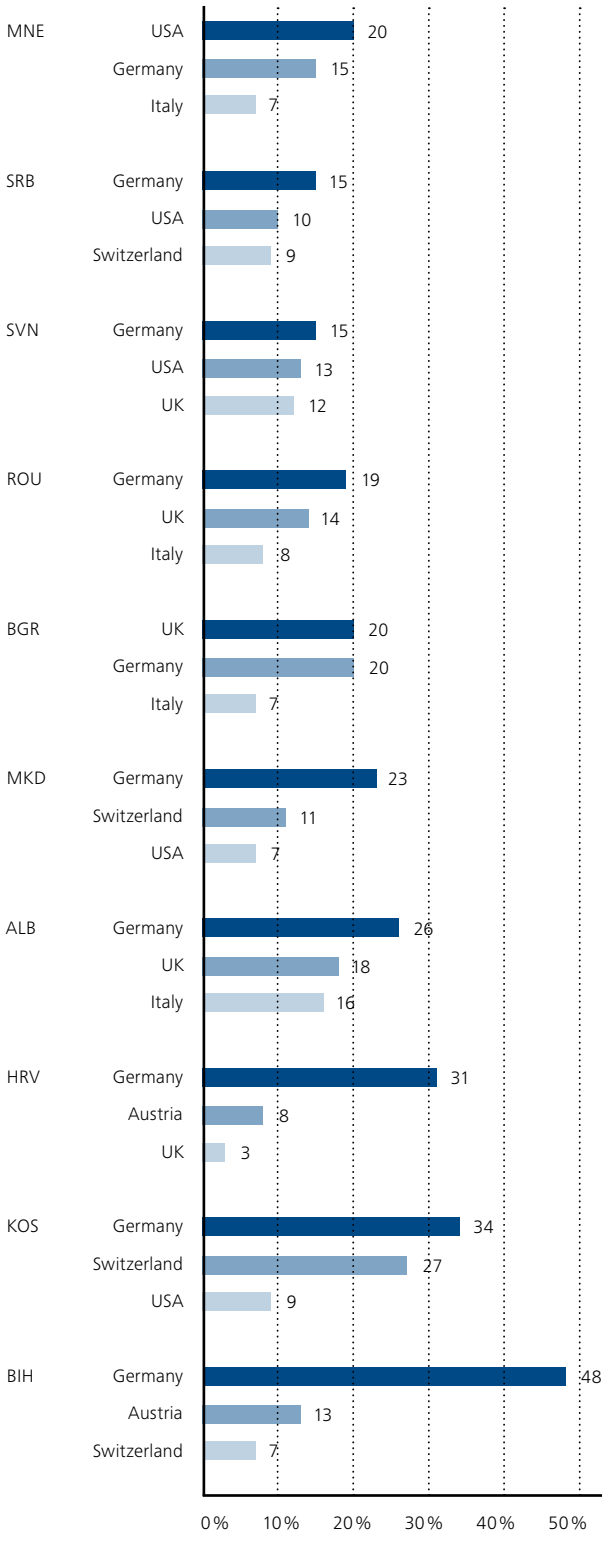
In terms of the profile of the young people who display strong emigration potential, the risk of brain drain appears to largely vary across countries. When using the proxy of socioeconomic status of youth for brain drain,[178] correlations with emigration potential suggest that brain drain may represent a serious issue for Albania and Montenegro. In Serbia, Slovenia and Croatia, positive correlations were weaker, albeit still significant, also indicating a brain-drain tendency. Correlations were insignificant in the case of Romania, BiH and Kosovo, and significant and negative in the case of Bulgaria and Macedonia, suggesting that youth with emigration potential from these countries are less likely to be well-off, have lower levels of cultural capital and lower levels of education.[179]

The extent of the brain-drain problem varies significantly across countries. It appears to be strongly present in Albania and Montenegro, while in Bulgaria and Macedonia, youth with lower levels of economic and cultural capital are more likely to emigrate.

MOST DESIRED HOST COUNTRIES

With the exception of Bulgaria and Montenegro, most young people from the region listed Germany as their first choice of countries to move to (Graph 9.8). In fact, Germany is most frequently listed as the first and second choice country of destination throughout the region. Other countries of interest as destinations include Great Britain for Bulgaria, the US for Montenegro, Switzerland for Kosovo and Italy for Albania, which are also traditional diaspora hubs of these respective countries. The overwhelming preference of BiH youth for a move to Germany can be attributed to Germany's mass acceptance of Bosnian refugees during the 1992–1995 war, with many families subsequently settling in Germany and preserving links with their homeland.

FIGURE 9.8: **Most frequently chosen countries for emigration (first choice)**



Note: Percentages choosing a country as the first choice among those expressing at least some desire to emigrate.

Since Germany is by far the most desired host country among youth from the region, an immigration potential index was constructed for this country. For each country from the region, the share of youth who both chose Germany as their primary target

FIGURE 9.9: **Immigration potential of SEE youth to Germany, by country of emigration**

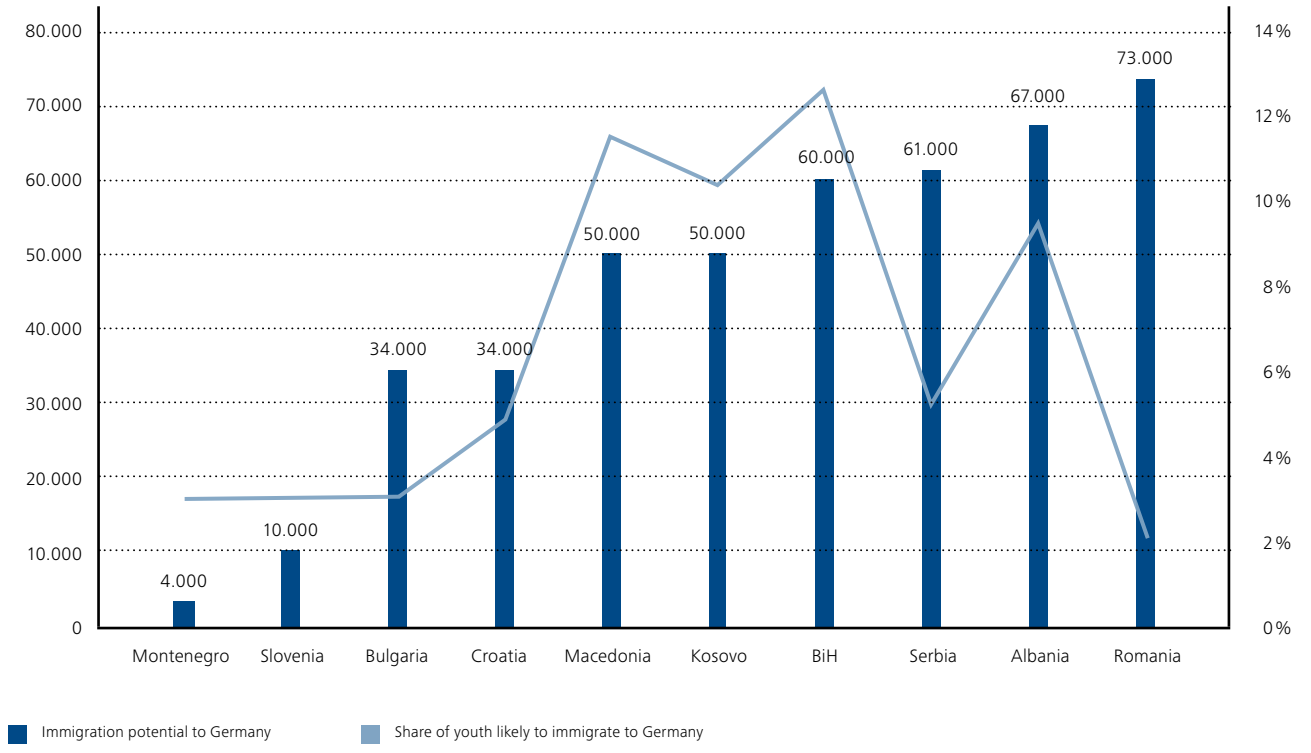
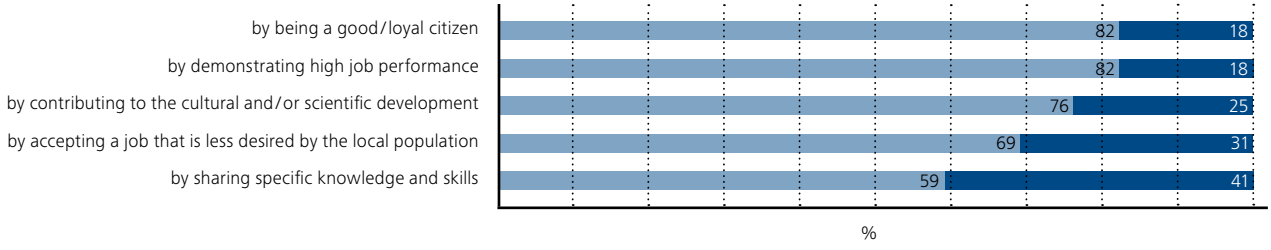


FIGURE 9.10: **Dimensions of young people's perceived contribution to host country**



Note: Analysis was limited to respondents with high (> 0.50) emigration potential.

country and had a high (0.50+) emigration potential was computed. The absolute numbers in Graph 6.9 were computed in relation to the actual number of young people aged 15 to 29 living in each country in the region.

Results suggest that the greatest share of youth who desire to leave their home country for Germany may be found in BiH, followed by Macedonia, Kosovo and Albania. On the other hand, Germany can expect the most young immigrants to come from Romania, Albania, Serbia and BiH.

READINESS TO INTEGRATE IN THE HOST COUNTRY

While good or excellent language proficiency may not necessarily be the main impetus beyond young people's readiness to move abroad, SEE youth exhibit exceptionally high willingness to learn the language of their destination country. Among those with a high emigration potential, 87 % show (very) high willingness to learn the language, while 78 % speak the language of their potential host country. Moreover, 58 % claim familiarity with the employment possibilities available to immigrants in their respective host country.

Simultaneously, young people who desire to leave overwhelmingly see their own contribution to their prospective host country to manifest itself in superb job performance and citizenship, followed by the ability to contribute to cultural and scientific development. With some exceptions, a substantial cohort of young people across SEE also show an awareness that their contribution may lie in their readiness to accept a job that is less desired by the native population of their prospective host country (Graph 9.10).

Statistical analysis at the regional level suggests that the willingness to accept a job that is less desired by the local population is negatively correlated with countries' HDI and is positively

correlated with NEET status. Young people more willing to accept a 'sub-par' job are more likely to come from rural areas, have lower levels of educational attainment and have parents with lower levels of educational attainment. They are also more likely to come from financially worse-off households with fewer material possessions.[180]

Young people from SEE display a high level of readiness to integrate into the fabric of their future societies of choice. This is demonstrated by their readiness to learn the language of their host country, but also by their willingness to be a good and productive citizen who does not shun from jobs that are less desired by the local population.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACTUAL EXPERIENCE WITH MOBILITY AND MIGRATION

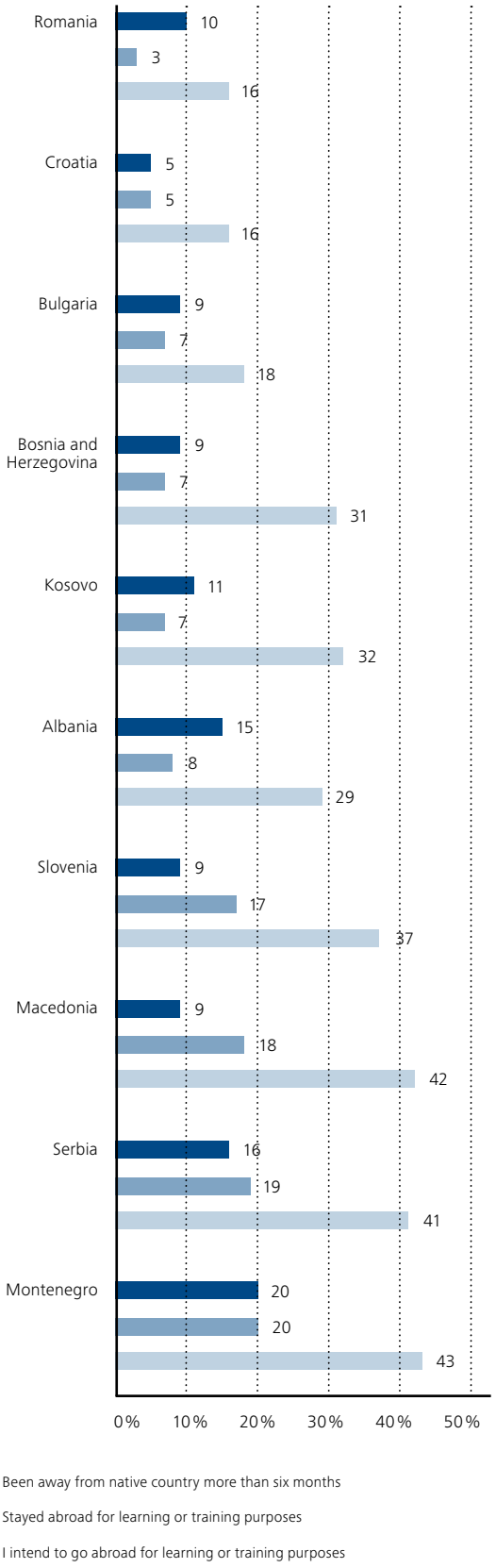
Despite their desire to emigrate, survey data show that young people from SEE have had very little experience with living abroad for longer periods of time. In fact, the vast majority have not spent more than six months in another country. SEE youth also have very little experience with staying abroad for the sake of education, which usually represent temporary, shorter stays and may be understood as mobility rather than migration (Graph 9.11).

When it comes to staying abroad for learning or training purposes, we are clearly dealing with two groups of countries. While in Montenegro, Serbia, Macedonia and Slovenia, about one-fifth of youth have had such an experience, in all other countries, these shares are substantially below 10%. We can discern a quite similar situation if we observe intentions of moving abroad for educational purposes. Interestingly, educational mobility is the lowest in three EU Member States: Romania, Croatia and Bulgaria. Low international mobility of youth appears to especially affect Croatia, where both alternatives of experiencing foreign countries are reported by only 5% of respondents, and intentions with regards to educational mobility are also very low.

Finally, it is crucial to report some of the effects of being abroad for educational purposes. Those who report such an experience[181]

- are substantially more interested in politics,[182]
- report substantially greater knowledge of politics,[183]
- are much more willing to take on a political function,[184]
- are much more active in terms of non-conventional political participation,[185]
- are substantially less supportive of nationalist ideas,[186]
- and are much more likely to emigrate.[187]

FIGURE 9.11: **Experiences and plans of staying abroad for learning or training purposes or being away from the home country for more than six months**



Note: Percentages of youth claiming to have respective experience/intent in relation to being/going abroad.

In other words, studying abroad is a great tool for developing young people's potential and elevating their civic and political engagement, but it is also a strong factor that increases the likelihood of emigration.

The vast majority of youth in SEE have not had the experience of living abroad for longer than six months or staying abroad for the sake of education or training. The latter substantially increases the civic and political engagement of a young person, but it also substantially increases his or her likelihood of emigrating.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The emigration intent of youth seems to be decreasing in many SEE countries, but overall it remains relatively high, especially in countries that have not yet joined the EU. This is undoubtedly related to the fact that throughout the region young people's intentions to move are mainly conditioned by economic factors. Importantly, youth intending to emigrate show a great willingness to adapt to the society of the chosen host country and in many cases already have contacts there. Despite young people's marked intentions to emigrate, actual experience in foreign countries is rather limited, especially in Croatia, Romania and Bulgaria. The relatively weak desire and limited experience of youth with respect to moving abroad for educational purposes appears to be a major missed opportunity for encouraging civic and political engagement and non-nationalist attitudes.

MAIN FINDINGS:

1. The emigration intent of youth from SEE remains high, though it appears to have decreased since the last round of youth surveys in most countries.
2. In the region as a whole, economic factors and negative perceptions of the home country's situation appear to be the strongest motivational factors for emigration. Youth from EU Member Countries are substantially less motivated for (especially long-term) emigration in comparison to youth from the WB6 countries.
3. The extent of the brain-drain problem varies significantly across countries. It appears strongly present in Albania and Montenegro, while in Bulgaria and Macedonia, youth with lower levels of cultural capital are more likely to emigrate.
4. Existing social contacts abroad are an important facilitator of migration. With the exception of Slovenia, as many as 60% of young people from the SEE region with a very strong desire to emigrate have received an invitation or support from their social networks in the desired host country.
5. Young people from SEE display a high level of readiness to integrate in the fabric of their future societies of choice. This is demonstrated by their readiness to learn the language of their host country, but also by their willingness to be good and productive citizens who do not shun jobs that are less desired by the local population.
6. Last but not least, despite young people's high emigration potential in a number of countries in the region, the vast majority of SEE youth have not had any experience of living abroad for longer periods of time or staying abroad for the purpose of education or training. The latter substantially increases civic and political engagement of a young person, but it also substantially increases his or her likelihood of emigrating.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Given the beneficial effects of international educational mobility, countries should encourage participation in existing mobility programs, such as the EU's ERASMUS+, and consider establishing new schemes to foster greater educational mobility.
2. Since educational mobility is related to a higher likelihood of emigration, governments should seek ways to prevent educational mobility from largely becoming a diving board for long-term emigration and in this way exacerbate the brain-drain problem. Policies should motivate youth with the experience of studying or working abroad to return to or stay within their home country.
3. Policies to deter emigration need to be enhanced, especially in SEE countries that have not joined the EU. The development of such policies needs to adopt an integral, multifaceted approach, targeting economic insecurity, weak job opportunities and career prospects as the most significant motivational factors of migration.
4. Since educational mobility is related to a higher likelihood of emigration, incentive measures to encourage return migration should be developed. These policies should largely involve cooperation between sending and receiving countries. For example, incentives for employers in sending countries to hire professionals with experience or education from abroad could stimulate those professionals to return to their home countries.

10

FAMILIES AND THE TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD

By Smiljka Tomanović

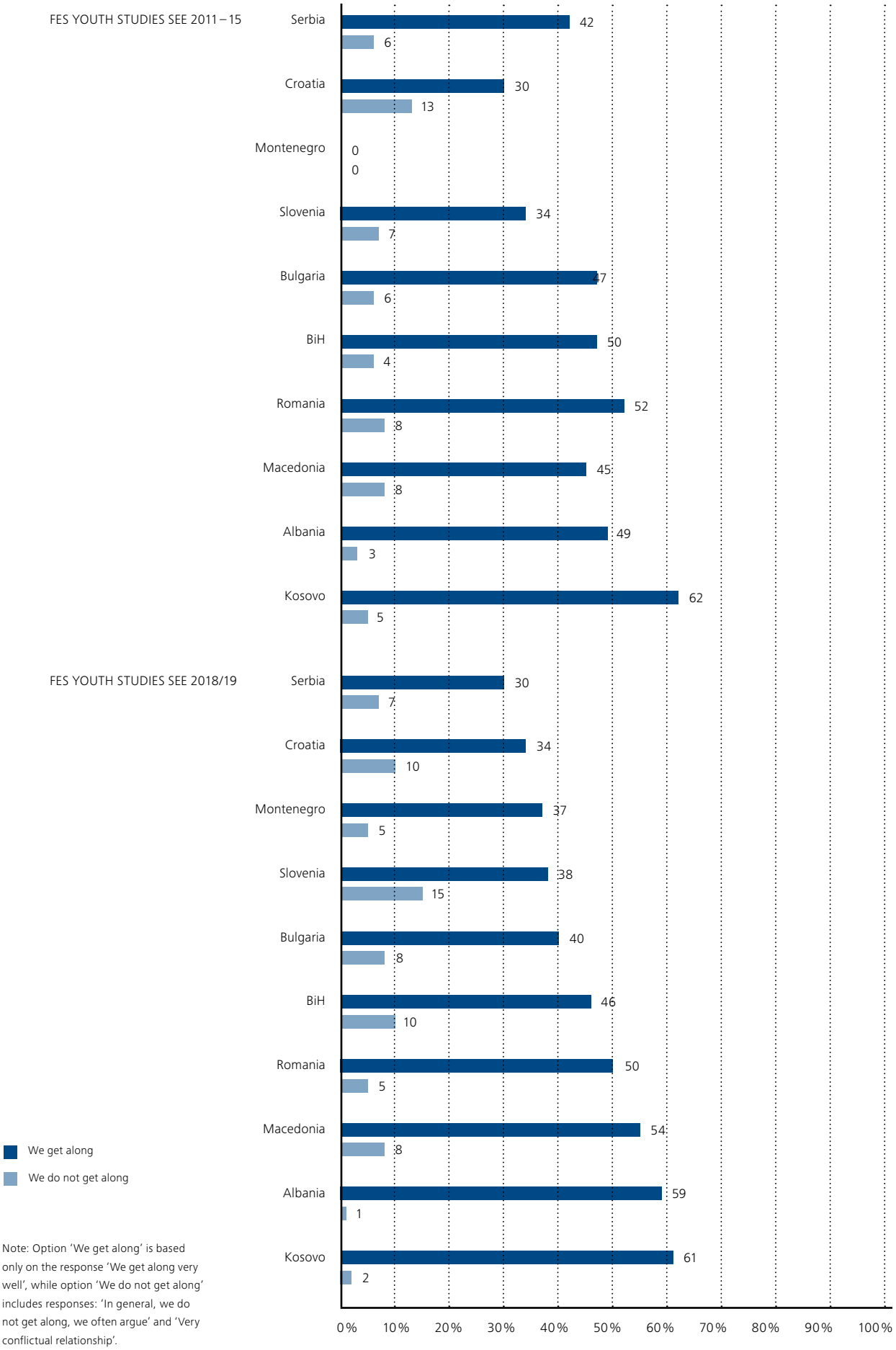
Global economic and political changes in the structural environment lend special importance to family resources in the transition to adulthood (Togouchi Swartz & Bengtson O'Brien, 2009). Global trends are associated with extended and fragmented education-to-work transitions, as well as changing patterns of family transition, notably delayed parenting, which affects the patterns of housing transition (Mulder, 2009). The inevitable consequences of these processes are changes in intergenerational relations within the family, which are also an expression of contradictions between the individualistic norms of the autonomy of the young person and the significant importance of parents to adolescents and young adults. The changes are reflected in the move from relations of autonomy and dependence to relations of cooperation and interdependence (Turtianen et al., 2007). The new relations of interdependence put in question the very notion of transition into adulthood as a linear path to achieving independence from parents, as different forms of dependence and independence, as well as semi-dependence and interdependence, occur and are negotiated between young people and their parents in different life phases (Lahelma & Gordon, 2008).

Considering several ways of approaching the issue of young people in association with the family, we have decided to concentrate our analysis on three interrelated perspectives: 1) as related to their parental family and support; 2) as related to the formation of their own family; and 3) as related to transitions to adulthood.

RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENTS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF PARENTAL INFLUENCE

In terms of their main features, SEE countries belong to the so-called 'Southern' cluster, characterised by 'strong' family ties, later home-leaving, and a more family-based sense of solidarity (Iacovou, 2010). One comparative research finding is that "parents across Southern Europe, and parts of Eastern Europe value family togetherness more highly than independence for themselves or their children, while their children are in their twenties" (Ibid, p. 160). The dominant, so-called familistic or sub-protective welfare regime builds upon these cultural features of intergenerational solidarity (Walther, 2006), while its post-socialist modifications also exist within the transition to adulthood regimes in SEE (Walther & Stauber, 2009). The cultural constant of family relations in countries in the region is the emotional connection between parents and children (Ule & Kuhar, 2008; Lavrič, 2011; Ilišin et al., 2013; Flere et al., 2014; Kuhar & Reiter, 2014; Mitev & Kovacheva, 2014; quoted in: Tomanović & Stanojević, 2015, p. 44). Our assumption that SEE countries are experiencing a change from authoritarian to authoritative and permissive parenting styles (Baumrind, 1971) is partly confirmed by FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 findings: authoritative (democratic) parenting style is dominant in all the countries, while authoritarian and, unexpectedly, permissive styles, are both less prominent.[188]

FIGURE 10.1: **Perception of relationship with parents among young people aged 16–27 (in %)**



Note: Option 'We get along' is based only on the response 'We get along very well', while option 'We do not get along' includes responses: 'In general, we do not get along, we often argue' and 'Very conflictual relationship'.

Significant differences in perceptions of the relationship with their parents exist between young people from different countries (Graph 10.1). Among young people from Kosovo, Albania, Macedonia and Romania, the dominant assessment of the relationship is unconditionally 'very good,' which is even frequent in Albania and Macedonia than in FES Youth Studies SEE 2011–15 (Flere, 2015, p. 72). In the rest of the countries, the relationship with parents is predominantly perceived as harmonious, with expressed differences in opinions. Young people from Slovenia described the relationship as discordant and conflicting more than their peers from the other countries, and even more so in FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19. The analysis in relation to different parenting styles revealed that young people from families with a dominant authoritative style perceive the relationship as better, both at the comparative level of all FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19[189] countries and in every single country. On the other hand, young who were raised in families with dominant authoritarian[190] and permissive[191] upbringing reported that they get along worse with their parents.

Parental influence on a young person's decision-making is recognised in all FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 countries. Similar to FES Youth Studies SEE 2011–15 findings (Flere, 2015, p. 75), the mother is recognised as the person with greater influence, except in Albania and in Kosovo, where the father's influence dominates. The importance of the father's influence decreases among children of more educated parents,[192] while the mother's dominant influence is correlated with better education of parents.[193] The father's and the mother's influence are both correlated with authoritative upbringing,[194] and they are also less prominent among young people raised in families with a dominant authoritarian[195] parenting style. A permissive parenting style has a negative correlation with the father's[196] and no significant correlation with the mother's influence on a young person's decision-making. We can conclude that parents' influence is based on a positive relationship rather than obedience, which is in accordance with the above finding of a better relationship between youth and their authoritative parents.

The dominant authoritative style of parenting in SEE countries is positively associated with a better relationship between young people and their parents, with a significant influence of both parents on their lives, but also with more independence in a young person's decision-making.

Similarly, authoritative parenting relates to a young person having more independence in making important decisions[197] (Graph 10.2):

Differences between the countries are evident, with young people from Romania and Slovenia reporting more independence, while youth from other countries prefer to consult their parents when making important decisions. These differences relate to a country's socioeconomic development, since independent decision-making is in a positive correlation, while deciding jointly with parents is negatively correlated with HDI.[198] The young who reported a strong influence on their decision-making by the father[199] and the mother[200] are less likely to be independent in decision-making as compared with those stated that no one has influence and that they decide independently.[201]

Young people from more developed countries tend to make their decisions independently of parents, while the young from less developed countries are more inclined towards deciding jointly with their parents.

FIGURE 10.2: **Independence in decision-making in relation to parents (in %).** Do your parents influence important decisions affecting your life?

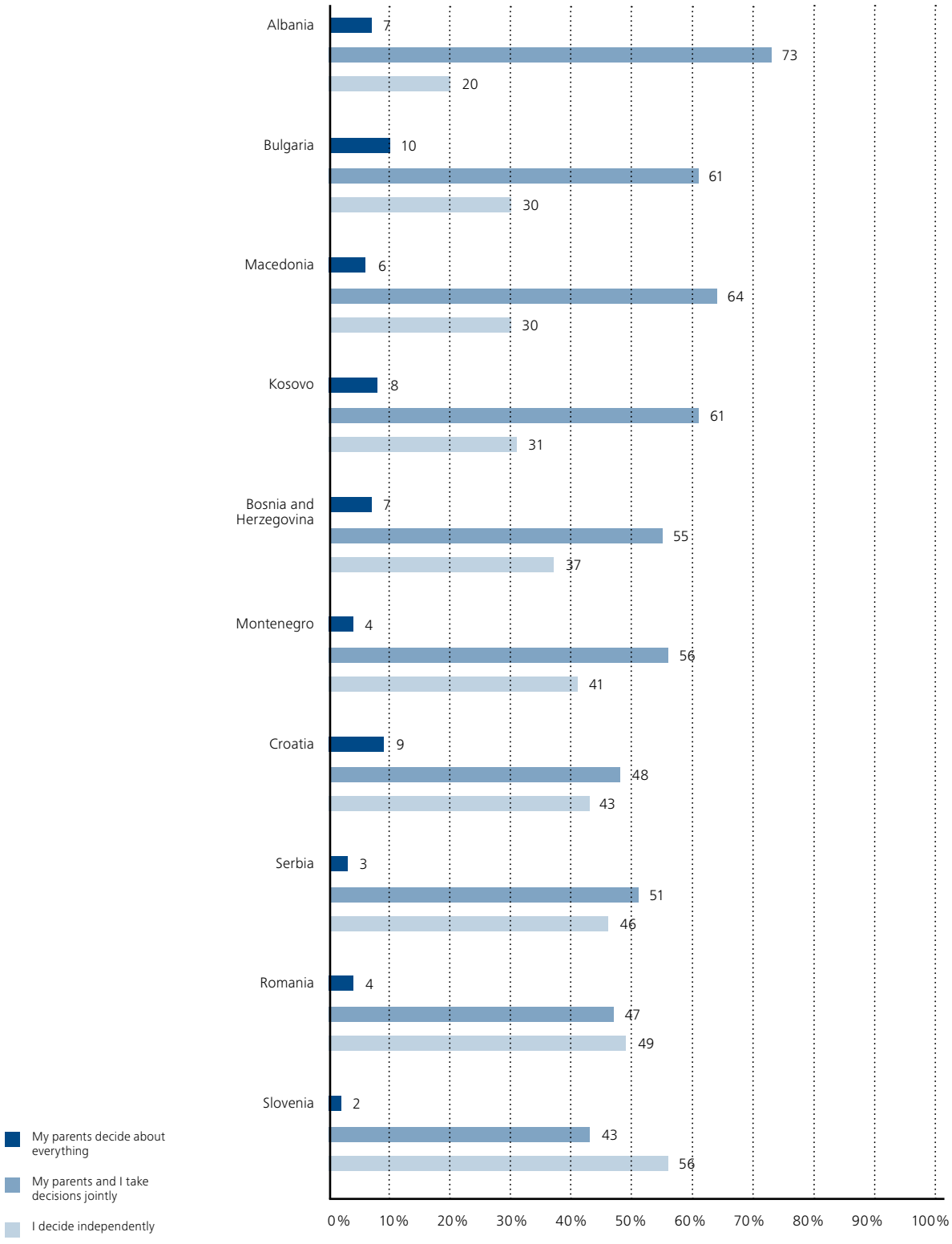
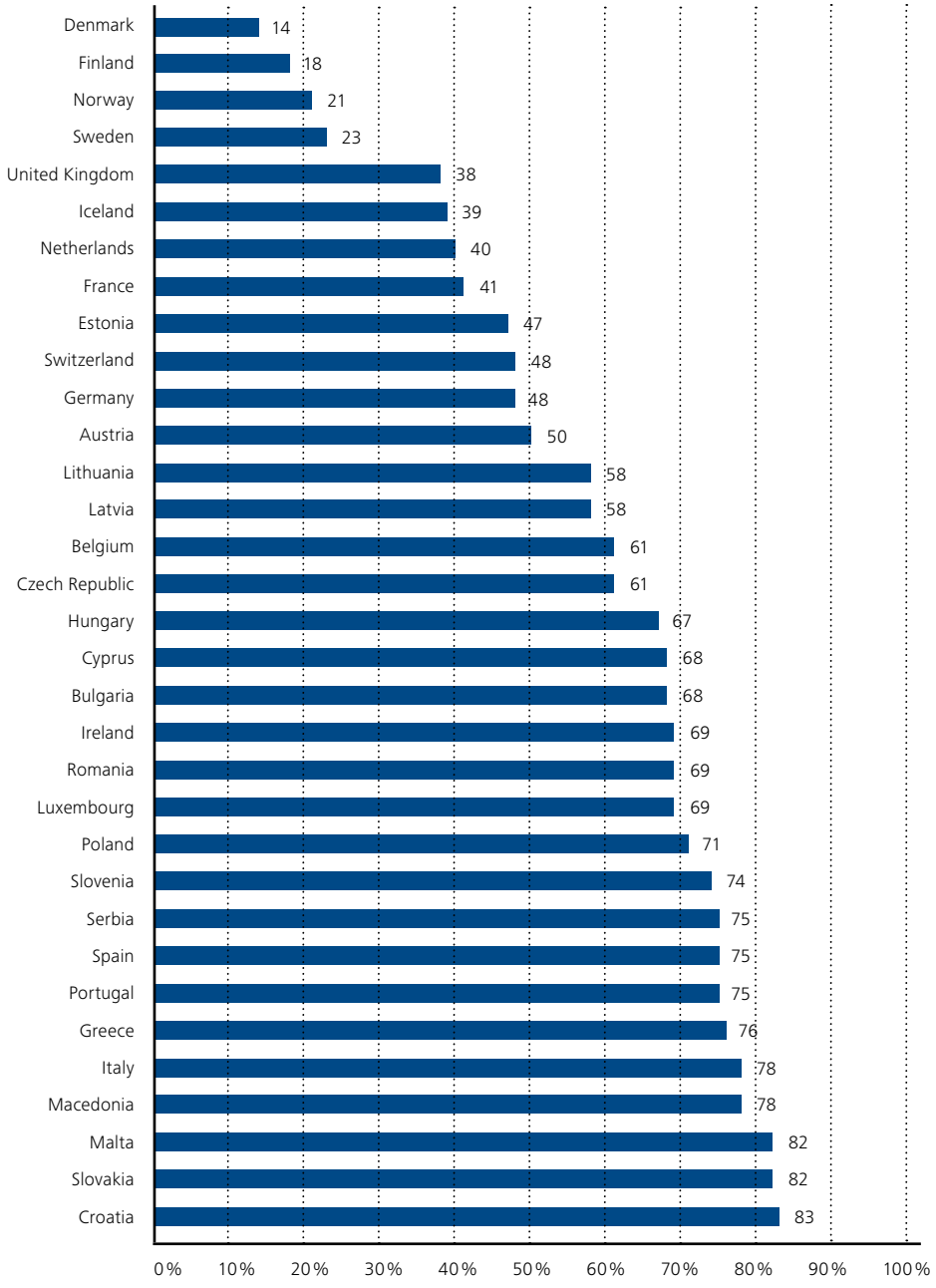


FIGURE 10.3: **The share of young people aged 20 to 29 who lived with their parents in 2016 (in %)**



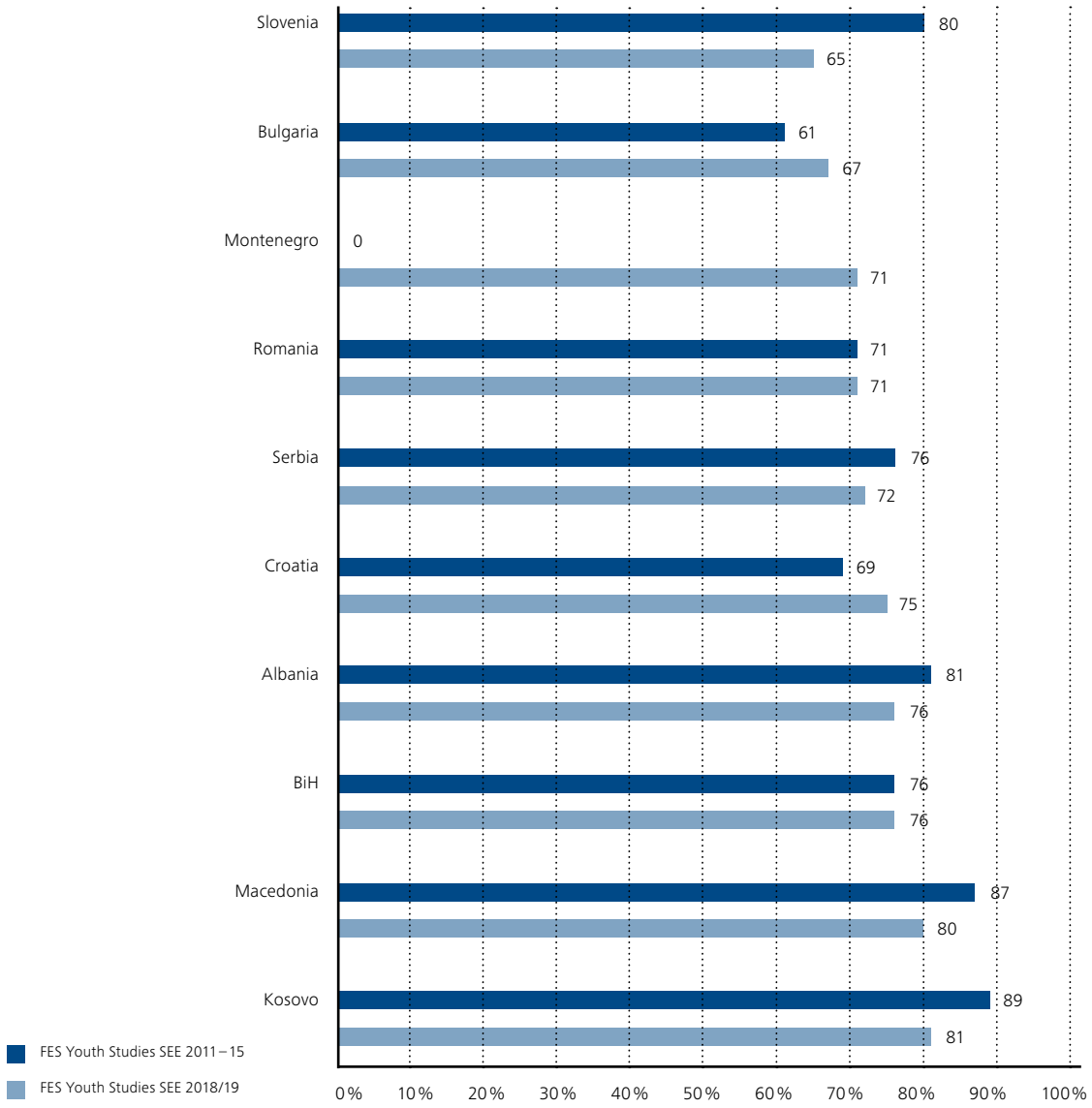
Source: Eurostat (2016)

LIVING WITH PARENTS VS. IN AN INDEPENDENT HOUSEHOLD

Southeast European countries belong to the cluster of countries where home-leaving occurs very late (Graph 10.3), and households with extended families are a common strategy of pooling together family resources: "In those countries delays in leaving home may be the result of economic necessity rather than of a preference of parents to keep their children near them" (Iacovou, 2011, p. 8).

The assumption that SEE countries belong to the so-called 'Southern type' of housing transitions has been supported by findings of comparative studies on the housing situation of young people, drawing on FES Youth Studies SEE 2011 – 15 (Flere, 2015, p. 79; Jusić & Numanović, 2017, p. 20). Graph 7.4 shows that there were no significant changes in housing independence between the two waves of surveys, except in Slovenia. As in FES Youth Studies SEE 2011 – 15, a majority of the young people involved in FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 who are older than 18 live in their parental home – from around two-thirds in Slovenia and Bulgaria to four-fifths in Kosovo and Macedonia.

FIGURE 10.4: **Living the in parental home**. Share of young people aged 18 to 27 who live in their parental home



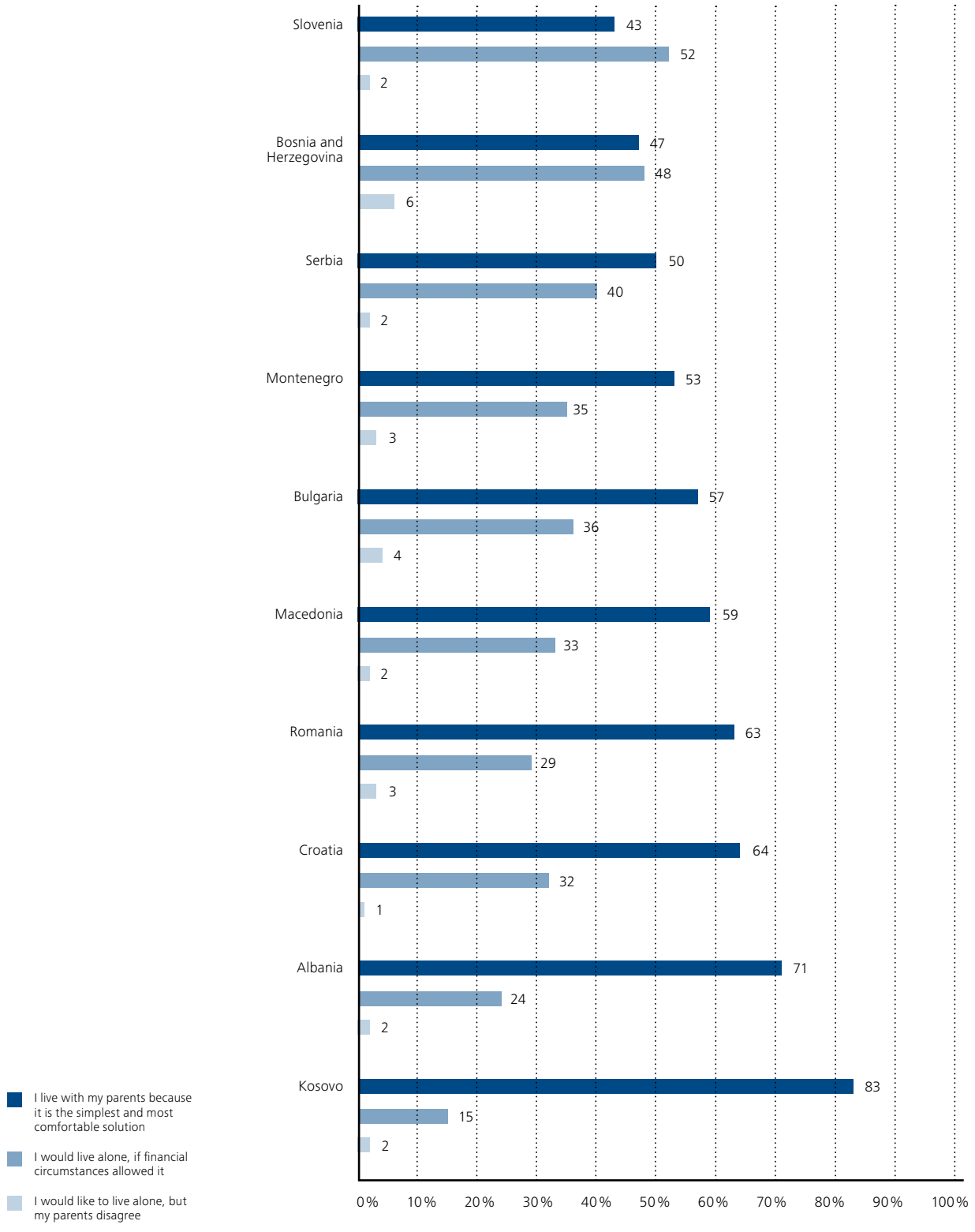
A great housing dependence persists among young people in SEE countries.

A significant factor underlying increasing housing independence is the respondent's age. The relationship with SES is reverse – the young from households with a lower material status and from families with lower levels of education live less frequently in their parental home.[202] This is presumably due to the fact that those young people get married earlier and simultaneously set up their family households, in accordance with the Southern pattern of family transitions (Iacovou, 2002). It appears that the parents with higher SES direct their resources more towards their children's education than towards housing. This finding also corroborates Maria Iacovou's (2011) conclusion that

> across Southern and parts of Eastern Europe, the opposite occurs – parents with higher incomes appear to use their resources to encourage their offspring to remain living in the parental home for extended periods, and it is only at a relatively late stage in their children's lives—the late twenties for daughters, and the mid-thirties for sons—that parents begin to use their resources to encourage their children to move away from the parental home (p.11).

Whether the young who left their parental home use more their family resources (the flat is inherited, bought or rented by the parents) or their own (buying or renting) more, as in Albania, BiH, Romania and Slovenia, most probably depends on the availability of affordable housing for renting or mortgage schemes to buy them in the particular country.

FIGURE 10.5: **Reason for living with parents among respondents older than 18 (in %)**



Most young people over 18 who still live in the parental home reported convenience as the main reason for living with their parents, except in Slovenia and BiH, where they stressed financial reasons (Graph 10.5). Young people's insufficient finances were also frequently mentioned as a constraint housing independence in other countries, except for Kosovo and Albania. This relates to structural factors inhibiting home leaving, such as high unemployment, low wages and unaffordable housing (Iacovou, 2010).

Prolonged living with parents is associated with prolonged education, since parents with a higher socioeconomic status direct their resources more towards their children's education than towards housing. Financial dependence and a lack of affordable housing are also the reasons for staying in the parental home, since between one-quarter and one-half of the young point out that they cannot afford to live independently.

FORMATION OF THE FAMILY OF CHOICE

Family formation in Europe is marked by two opposing processes. On one hand, one of the most significant changes in the life of young people in Europe is the altered understanding of partner and family relations, where partner relationships, both normative and practical, are separate from parenthood, and they are increasingly viewed as different lifestyle choices (Daly, 2005, p. 385). On the other hand, there are trends towards low and late fertility. A rapid decline in fertility has been experienced by the former socialist countries since 1990, so that Central and Eastern Europe countries along with Southern Europe constitute the group of countries with lowest low fertility (Kotewska, 2012, p. 114). This low and late fertility trend also prevails in all of the SEE countries: the rates ranged from 1.42 in Croatia to 1.79 in Montenegro in 2016 (Eurostat, 2018b), accompanied by postponement of child-birth. Having these trends in mind, we have decided to present the issue of family formation through attitudes on marriage and having children and practices of partnership and parenthood.

ATTITUDES ON PARTNERSHIP AND PARENTHOOD

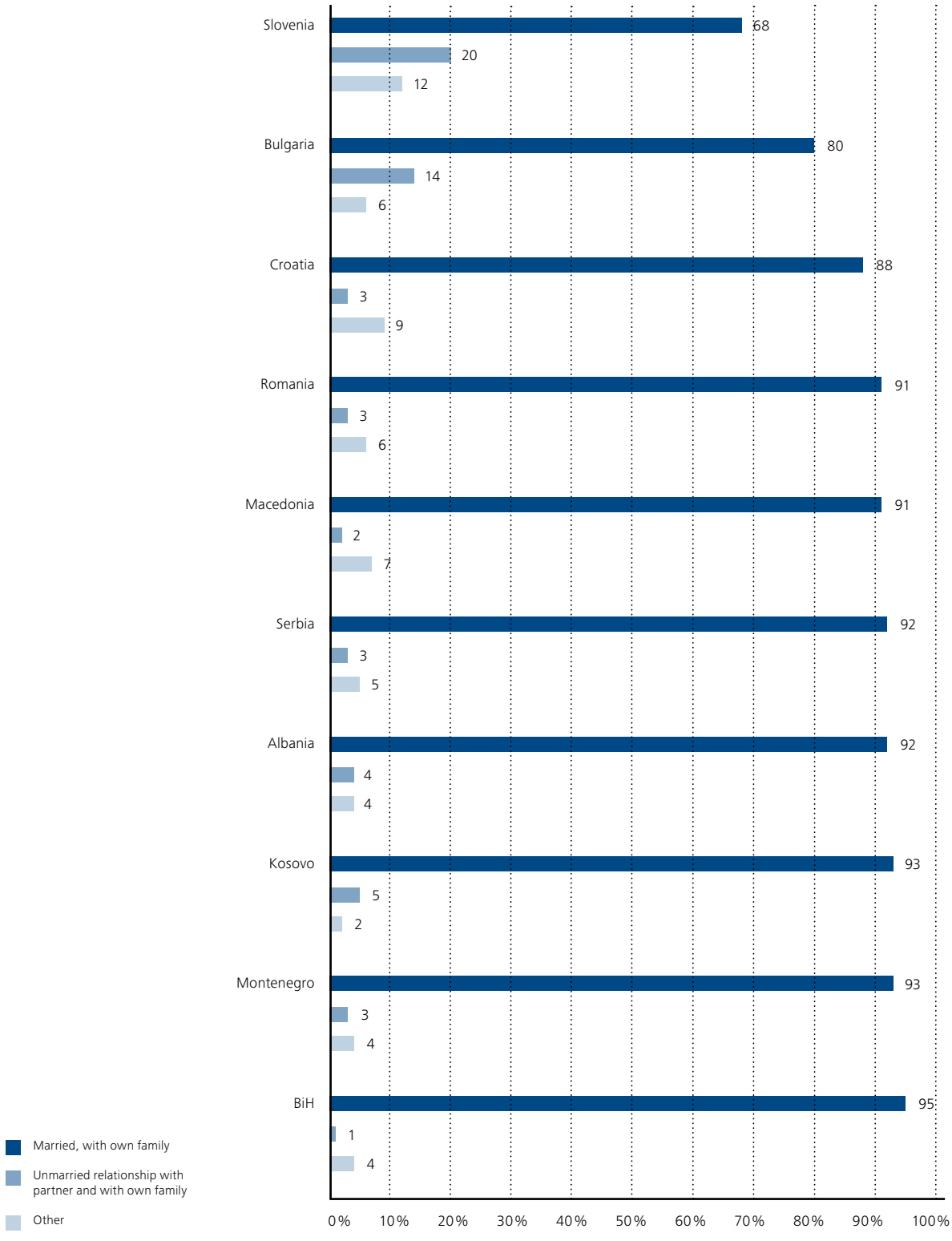
Findings in FES Youth Studies SEE 2011 – 15 surveys established that, with the exception of young people in Bulgaria and Slovenia, who anticipate and practice cohabitation, most SEE youth "can be said to generally strive towards marriage as a traditional family institution, as it plays a big part in the way they see themselves in the future" (Jusić & Numanović, 2017, p. 22). These trends persist in FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19, as confirmed by the findings presented in Graph 7.6.

The only alternatives to the hetero-normative of a married couple with children were expressed among the young in Bulgaria, with respect to cohabitation with children, and particularly in Slovenia, where young people also anticipated relatively frequently (9 %) their future without children. Having children is highly important for the young in all SEE countries,[203] while for young people in Slovenia, a partner relationship is slightly more important for a happy life than having children.[204]

Patterns of partner relationships expressed as anticipation correspond to practices: 39 % of young people aged 25 to 29[205] in Slovenia and 28 % in Bulgaria cohabitate, while the frequency is considerably lower in other countries, particularly BiH (2 %), Albania (3 %) and Montenegro (5 %). These findings also correspond to those from FES Youth Studies SEE 2011 – 15. Significant gender differences in partnership status in this age group are found in all countries, except Croatia and Slovenia, with females being twice as numerous among married youth in comparison to males of the same age. This is due to women getting married earlier than men, which is also an expectation of FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 respondents.[206] Young people who are not parents plan to have two or three children[207] around the ages of 26 and 27.

Young people in SEE strongly support traditional forms of family life – a married couple with children – except in Slovenia and Bulgaria, where they also support cohabitation, and in Slovenia, where some young people anticipate adult life without parenthood.

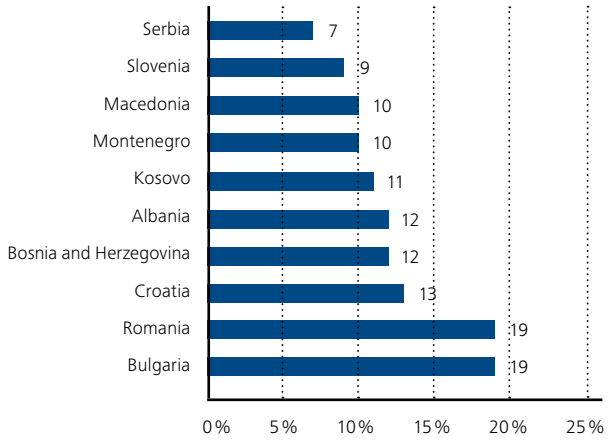
FIGURE 10.6: **Anticipation of future personal life (in %).** How do you see yourself in the future?



PARENTHOOD AMONG FES YOUTH STUDIES SEE 2018/19

Among FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 youth, 12 % are parents and they usually have one child. There are differences between countries in the share of parents among young people, with Bulgaria and Romania standing out with a significantly higher and Serbia with a significantly lower share as compared to the average (Graph 10.7).

FIGURE 10.7: **The share of parents among FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 (in %)**



In all countries, young people become parents on average around approximately similar ages: between 22 and 25. Early parenthood is associated with several socioeconomic factors, but there is no correlation with the level of socioeconomic development of a country (as indicated by HDI). Women tend to become mothers at a younger age than men become fathers in all countries.[208] The age of becoming a parent is correlated with living in rural areas, with a lower educational level of a young person's parents, and with lower household material status.[209] There is an evident correlation between attained educational level and the timing of childbirth:[210] young people who finish education earlier become parents earlier, with a greater likelihood of having more children in the course of their lives. Since the association between lower education and earlier childbirth is significantly stronger for young women than for young men,[211] it is indicative of the risk of being excluded from education and consequently from the labour market. This was confirmed by a recent study on transition to parenthood among young people in Serbia (Tomanović, Stanojević, & Ljubičić, 2016).

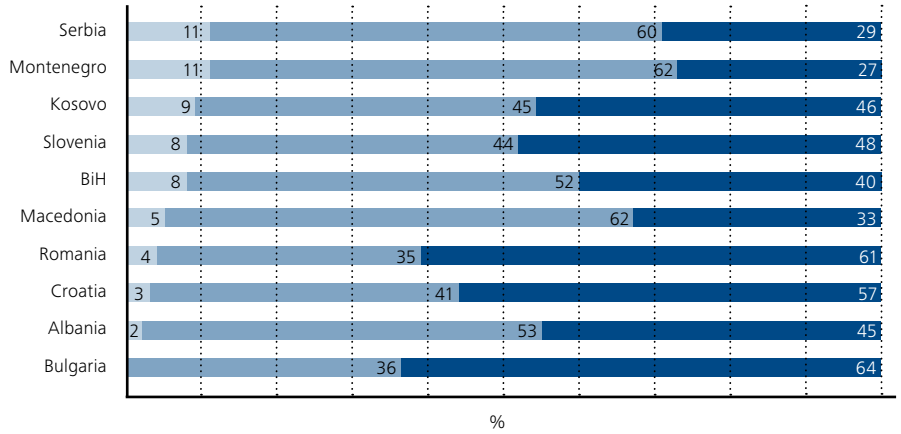
Young parenthood is associated with features of lower SES: a lower level of education, a lower household material status and living in rural areas. Young mothers are at risk of being excluded from education and employment due to early child-bearing.

TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD

The transition to adulthood comprises two interrelated processes of school-to-work transitions (from finishing school to stable employment) and family transitions (independent household and family formation): "school-to-work transitions are essential for a successful transition to adulthood. In fact, having access to paid work and a stable job is found to be the main determinant for allowing young people to afford to live independently, to live with a partner or to become parents" (Eurofound, 2014a, p. 42). The usual approach to exploring the transition to adulthood is by taking into consideration its dynamics: the pace of realising key life events ('markers of adulthood').

Our analysis of the pace of transition to adulthood draws on Galland's model of gaining independence that was applied to young people aged 16–25 from EU countries in 1996 (Galland, 2003, p. 180).[212] We have explored the accomplishment of four key life events: completing education, independent housing, stable employment, and cohabitation or marriage by a certain age.[213] For the pace of transition to adulthood, it is indicative to look at events achieved within the oldest cohort in FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19, aged 26 to 29 (Graph 10.8).

FIGURE 10.8: **Pace of transition to adulthood: score of key life events accomplished at age 26 to 29 (in %)**



Note: The numbers indicate frequencies of young people who have accomplished 0, 1 or 2, and 3 or 4 of the key life events: completed education, independent housing, stable employment, and cohabitation or marriage.

Considering the dynamics of the transition to adulthood, we can establish that all SEE countries involved in FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 are among those countries exhibiting a 'slow' transition to adulthood, which is characterised by extended school-to-work transitions and postponed housing independence and family formation due to such prolonged transitions. Findings indicate a different pace in the transition to adulthood between countries, with Serbia and Montenegro being the slowest and Bulgaria being the fastest in SEE. The exploration and comparison of shares of young people who have accomplished certain key life events by that age reveals some of the factors underlying different dynamics. The lowest share of young people who have completed education, and one of the lowest shares of independent housing and living in cohabitation/marriage is found in Serbia. The situation is similar in Montenegro: the lowest share of young people with independent housing and those living in cohabitation/marriage can be found there. Completing education is also postponed in Slovenia and Montenegro, independent housing also in Macedonia and BiH, while cohabitation/marriage is postponed in Macedonia as well. Kosovo has the lowest share of young people with stable employment. Croatia, Romania and Albania have high shares of young people who have completed education, and around half of young people aged 26–29 live independently and in cohabitation or marriage. The highest share of the young who have accomplished all four key life events as compared to their peers in other countries live in Bulgaria.

In all SEE countries, young people experience a postponed transition to adulthood, which is related to country-specific factors, such as prolonged higher education, prolonged housing dependence and a delayed entry into cohabitation or marriage.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Families, both parental families and families of choice, remain very significant to the young from SEE countries. The former is evident from the key findings on young people's good relationships with their parents. Young people reluctantly live in the parental household due to their financial dependence, which resembles one of the trends of family formation – the re-institutionalisation of families with cohabiting adult children (Kotowska, 2012). Some of the other key features of new developments in family formation, such as the postponement of marriage and childbearing and below-replacement fertility rates are evident from FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 findings. The other feature of new trends in family formation, "a declining propensity to marriage and parenthood" (Ibid, 104), was not found, since young people highly value the traditional family model – a married couple with children – both in their norms and their practices. The trend of dissolution of this model is noticeable only among some young people in Slovenia.

FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 findings confirmed that two interrelated processes are taking place: 1) protracted school-to-work transitions due to a gloomy macroeconomic situation (Eurofound, 2014b, p. 25); and 2) postponed housing independence and family formation due to protracted school-to-work transitions (unstable employment, longer financial instability and dependence) and features of the housing market, i.e. the lack of availability of affordable housing for young people (Drobnič & Knijn, 2012, p. 82). These trends have also been referred to as 'frozen transitions' among the young in the region (Kuhar & Reiter, 2012). Unwanted delays in transition events, such as a prolonged period of unemployment and job search, have resulted in young people not being able to afford their own household and young couples unwillingly delaying childbirth because of economic uncertainty. According to a recent study of the transition to parenthood in Serbia, young people stated existential security – having a stable job and a reliable income – as the main prerequisites for making the decision to have a child (Tomanović, Stanojević, & Ljubičić, 2016).

There are several consequences of a postponed transition to adulthood. On an individual level, it limits the life choices of the young person. At the level of the family, it places a great burden on parental families, which substitute for institutional deficits by providing young people with the resources (financial, housing, child-care support, etc.) needed for education, school-to-work transitions and family transitions. At the global, societal level, it translates into a major demographic risk for ageing European societies.

MAIN FINDINGS:

1. Young people report having very good relationships with their parents, who provide them with different kinds of support, such as psychological, financial, and housing, in all SEE countries.
2. Great housing dependence persists among young people in SEE countries. Prolonged living with parents is associated with prolonged education, since parents with higher socioeconomic status direct their resources more towards their children's education than towards their housing. Financial dependence and a lack of affordable housing are also the reasons for staying in the parental home, since between one-quarter and one-half of the young state that they could not afford to live independently.
3. Having children is highly valued and anticipated mostly within the traditional family form of a married couple, but the transition to parenthood has been postponed. Early parenthood is associated with features of lower socioeconomic status: lower levels of education, lower household material status, and living in rural areas. Young mothers are at risk of being excluded from education and employment due to the costs of early motherhood.
4. In all SEE countries young people are experiencing a postponed transition to adulthood, which is related to country-specific features, such as prolonged higher education, prolonged housing dependence and a delayed entry into cohabitation or marriage.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Governments in the region should provide a set of related and intersectional policies that could facilitate the transition to adulthood of young people in SEE countries, including:

1. Educational policies that facilitate school-to-work transitions (practicals, internships, training, etc.).
2. Education and employment policies that provide flexible arrangements for young people who want to combine education and work and/or parenthood.
3. Housing policies that would provide affordable housing for young people (e.g. social housing, protected rents, subsidised mortgage schemes, etc.).
4. Employment policies that guarantee stable employment with secured rights of employees.
5. A set of policies related to family planning and work-family balance (e.g. sexual education as part of education curricula, accessible contraceptives, accessible child care, etc.).

11

LEISURE AND ICT USE

By Smiljka Tomanović

LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES

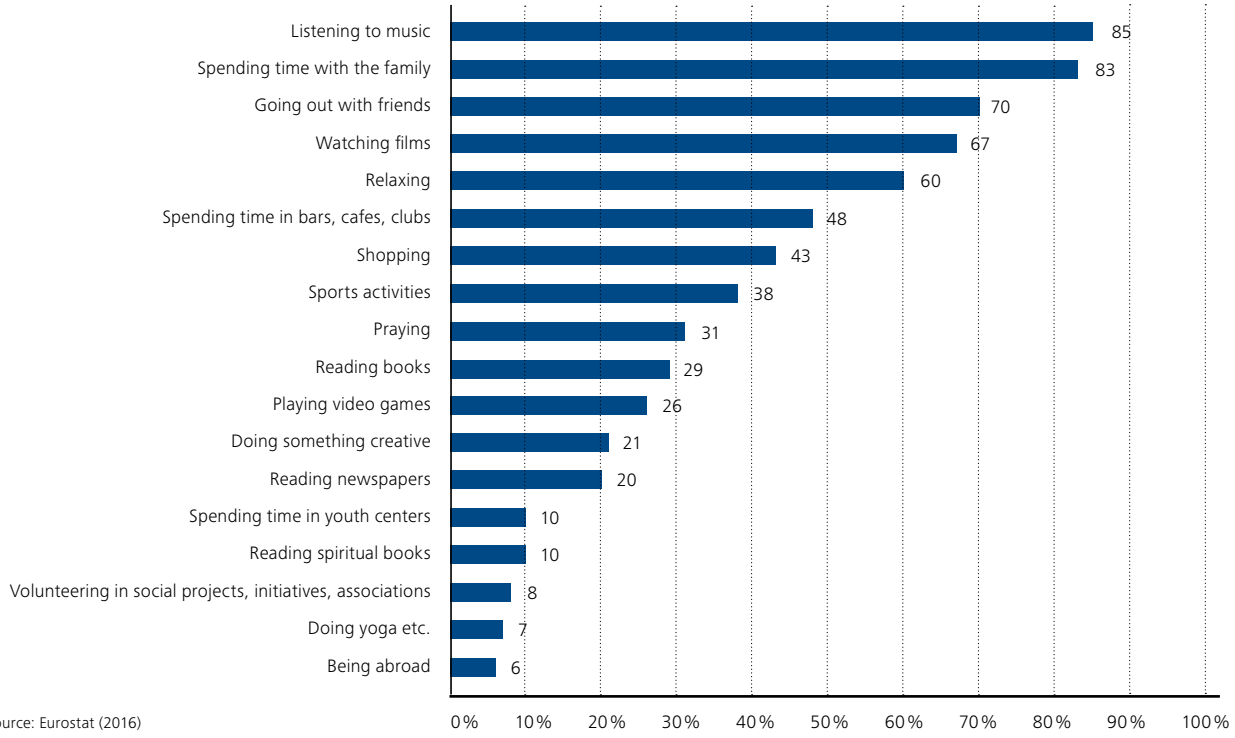
The topics of young people's leisure activities, cultures and lifestyles have a long tradition in youth studies since the mid-twentieth century, with a particular focus on interpreting these as a form of resistance to the official normative order and politics and as highly structured by factors such as social class, gender, race and geography (Furlong, 2009, p. 241). There is, nevertheless, a shift in current literature and "post-modern perspectives have become increasingly influential," with the focus on individual agency and a young person's identity, and "a readiness to overlook the significance of structures" (Ibid, p. 241). At the same time, the digital era brings with it the need to reconceptualise the notion and content of the concept of leisure itself. For instance, since a lot of leisure activities are experienced via personal ICT devices, the distinction between 'free time' and 'non-free time,' as well as between 'private' and 'public' space in leisure has become less relevant (Abott-Chapman & Robertson, 2009, p. 244).

The most frequent leisure activity among young people in FES Youth Studies SEE 2011–15 was listening to music, followed by socialising, watching TV and sports activities, while reading books and newspapers was an activity they engaged in the least.[214] These findings correspond with international comparative international ones, according to which "popular music-related activities (both listening to and making music) are especially significant for youth and are used to reinforce collective identities or to distinguish individual differences or values" (Abott-Chapman & Robertson, 2009, p. 244). Going out with friends was the second most frequent leisure activity among young people in all studied the SEE countries studied in FES Youth Studies SEE 2011–15 in spite of the fact that more and more socialising is taking place in the virtual space of digital social platforms. At the global level, it has been established that participation in sports activities is also a fairly regular leisure activity, while it is more common for young men than young women and tends to diminish with age (Abott-Chapman & Robertson, 2009, p. 244). Finally, today's youth, looked at globally, have less interest in reading for pleasure than their parents' generation because of the many competing leisure activities (Ibid, p. 244).

The most frequent single activity among youth in FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 is 'listening to music' – more than four in five young people do so 'often' (*at least once a week)* or 'very often' *(every day or almost every day*). As in the previous wave of studies, this is followed by the activities of socialising, entertainment and relaxation. The fact that a lot of young people stated 'spending time with family' as a leisure activity could suggest the great importance of family members in their everyday lives, which corroborates the other findings of FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 surveys: the significance of parental material and psychological support, and the strong support for family values within value orientations. Activities that are engaged in somewhat less often include things such as 'spending time in bars, cafes, clubs', 'shopping', 'sports activities' and 'praying.'[215] Between one-fifth and one quarter of the respondents often engage in activities that are related to reading and doing something creative. Activities that young people reported to engage in least 'often' or 'very often' are, not surprisingly, 'being abroad', 'doing yoga etc.' and 'reading spiritual books,' but also those related to civic engagement: 'spending time at youth centres' and 'volunteering in social projects, initiatives, associations.'[216]

Previous studies on young people in the region distinguished between 'structured' and 'unstructured' leisure time, as well as between particular patterns in styles of leisure (Ilišin, 2007;

FIGURE 11.1: **Share of young people who engage 'often' and 'very often' in different leisure activities.**
How often do you engage in ...



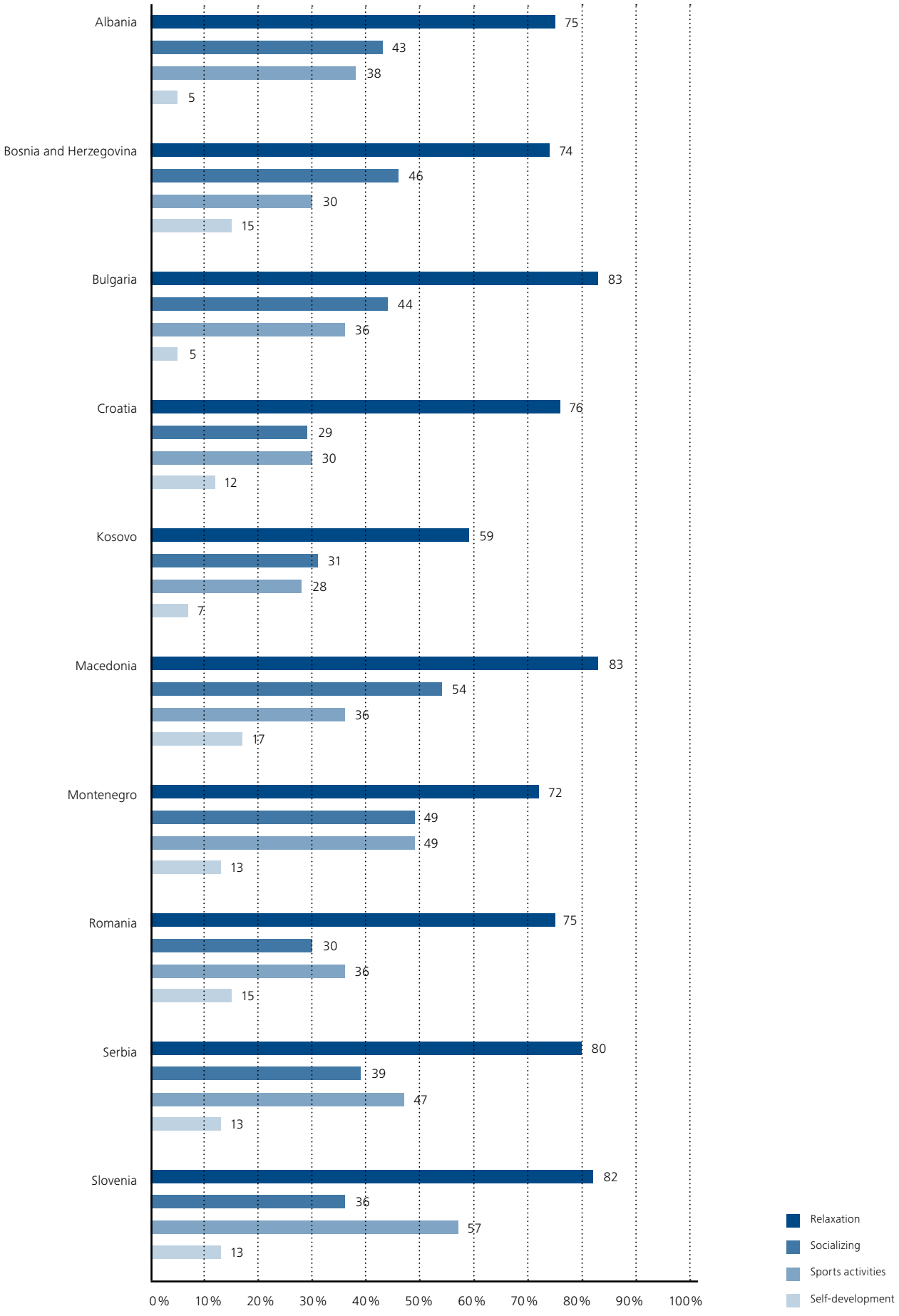
Source: Eurostat (2016)

Stepanović et al., 2009; Stanojević, 2012; Tomanović & Stanojević, 2015). In spite of their various methodologies, two patterns: one named 'academic' (or 'elite' in Ilišin, 2007) and the other 'oriented towards sports', emerged as distinctive. Building upon the above distinctions, we have decided to analyse young people's leisure activities broken down into four types:[217] 1) relaxation and entertainment;[218] 2) socialising;[219] 3) self-development;[220] and 4) sports activities. The first two types involve mainly unstructured leisure, while the other two indicate more structured activities or those oriented towards self-development. The share of the respondents from different countries who 'often' and 'very often' engage in the four types of leisure activities are presented in Graph 8.2.[221]

There are significant differences between the countries in relation to their HDI when two types of leisure activities are concerned: young people are more engaged in 'relaxation and entertainment,' as well as in 'sport activities' in countries with a higher HDI.[222] When we analyse all the countries in the region together, the analysis reveals that the four patterns of leisure are correlated with the respondent's gender,[223] household material status,[224] and level of parents' education.[225] Young women are more engaged in activities relating to self-development, while young men are more involved in all other leisure activities, including sports activities, which also represent a form of self-development. This is the case for all countries considered individually except for Slovenia, where there are no significant gender differences for any leisure activity. At the level of individual countries, there are some positive correlations of leisure activities with the material status of the household – a higher status increases a young person's engagement in all activities.[226] The influence of parents' educational attainment is stronger – young people from families where the parents have a higher level of education are significantly more engaged in all activities, particularly sports and those related to self-development. The latter holds true at the regional level, but with some exceptions at the level of individual countries.[227] Such evidence supports the assumption that patterns of leisure-time activities are more or less strongly influenced by factors such as gender, household material status and parents' educational level. In a comparative perspective, Slovenia stands out as the country marked by a kind of democratisation in terms of how leisure time is spent, with no significant differences in activities among young people related to the social factors. Nevertheless, even in Slovenia, family cultural capital, represented by the parents' educational level, influences whether or not young people would spend their leisure time in a more structured manner, defined here as patterns of self-development and sports activities.

Involvement in more structured leisure activities, such as sports and those related to self-development, tends to increase with a country's level of socioeconomic development and family cultural capital.

FIGURE 11.2: **Share of young people spending leisure time 'often' and 'very often' in different types of activities by country (as a percentage)**



THE USE OF ICTS

The everyday use of social media and information and communication technologies (ICTs) is considered to be the feature that most keenly distinguishes younger generations (born after the 1980s; 'Net generation', 'iGen', 'cyber kids') from previous ones across the globe (Collin & Burns, 2009). Although there is evidence that the digital gap – inequality in access to the Internet – has most probably been overcome in Europe (Eurostat, 2015), there still exists a digital divide that is related to 'digital literacy' or the capacity to use ICT for purposes other than socialising and entertainment (Livingstone & Helsper, 2010). This digital divide is induced by differences (economic, social, gender, geographical, etc.) and could reproduce inequalities among young people in the global information society. Research points to the importance of ICT use for formal and/or informal education and training (Eurofound, 2017, p. 98), active citizenship, job search and other purposes, but also shows that there are significant differences between young people from northern and western EU countries and those from the East and the South of Europe in using the Internet (e.g.'wikis') to obtain knowledge (Eurostat, 2015, p. 205).

Access to the Internet is so widespread in SEE that almost all young people in the region use it, with the relative exception of Bulgaria and Romania (Eurofound, 2014b). These conclusions are supported by FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 findings, which reveal that almost all young people have regular access to the Internet *(every day or almost every day* or *practically all the time;* between 93 % in Albania and 98 % in Croatia). Moreover, more than two-thirds of the young reported that they have access to the Internet *practically all the time* (between 57 % in Kosovo and 79 % in Bulgaria). Between the two waves of FES Youth Studies, the share of young people with no access to the Internet dropped significantly, particularly in Albania (from 12 % in 2011 to 3 % in 2018) and in Kosovo (from 8.5 % in 2012 to 1.6 % in 2018). In some countries, almost all young people have internet access

FIGURE 11.3: **Average hours per day spent watching TV and using the Internet.** How many hours per day do you spend watching TV / do you spend on the Internet, on average?

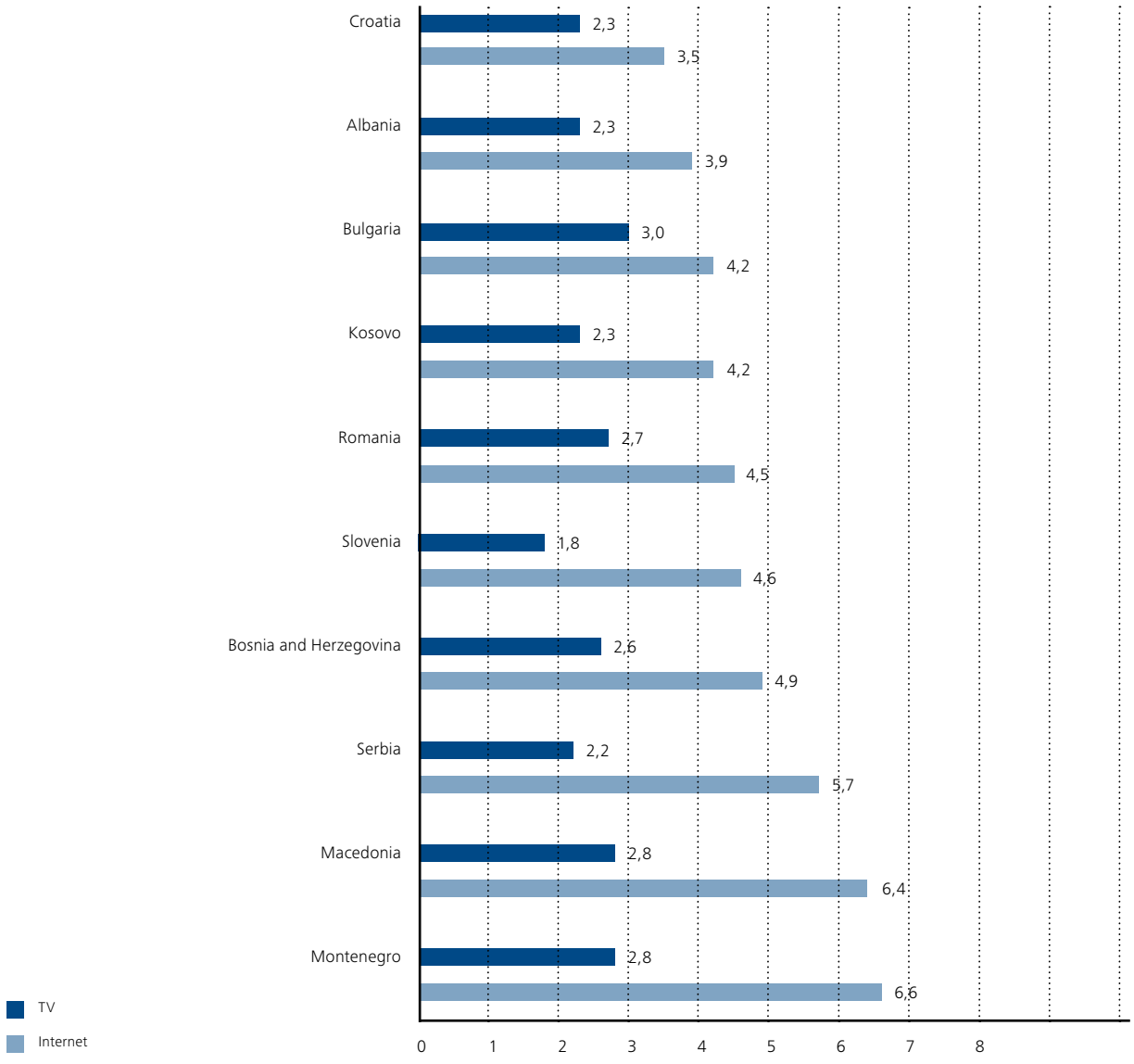
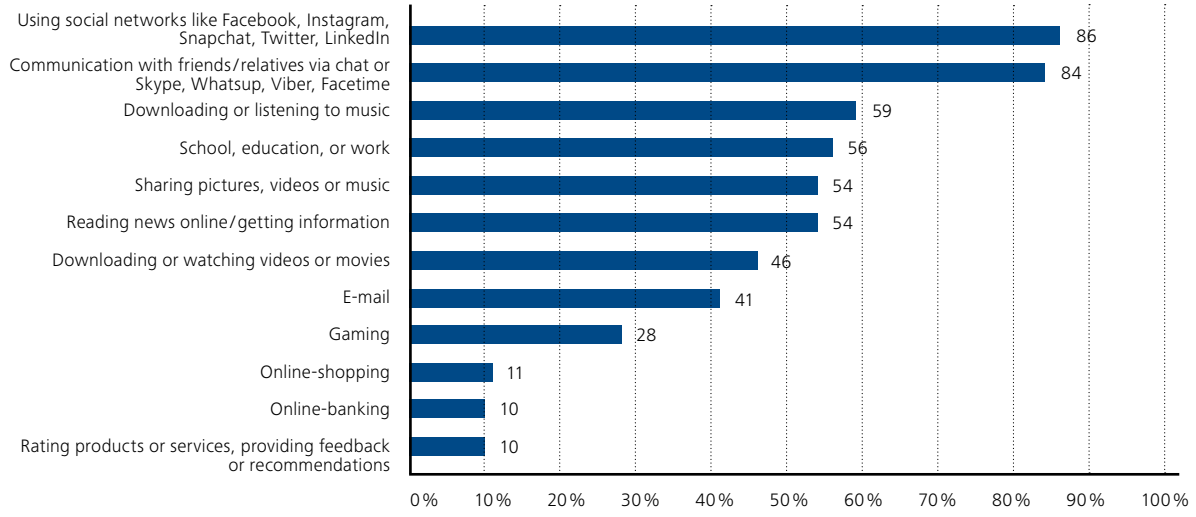


FIGURE 11.4: **Share of young people often using the Internet for different purposes (in %).** How often do you use the Internet for ...



(Montenegro, Macedonia, Croatia, Serbia, and Slovenia), while Romania stands out with a share of 4% of those with no access.

Almost all young people in SEE have regular access to ICT.

Internet use is becoming more prevalent than TV as the most favoured media in young people's leisure time (Graph 11.3). This could have been expected, since the Internet has assumed several purposes previously linked to TV: watching films and series, music videos, popular science programmes, etc.

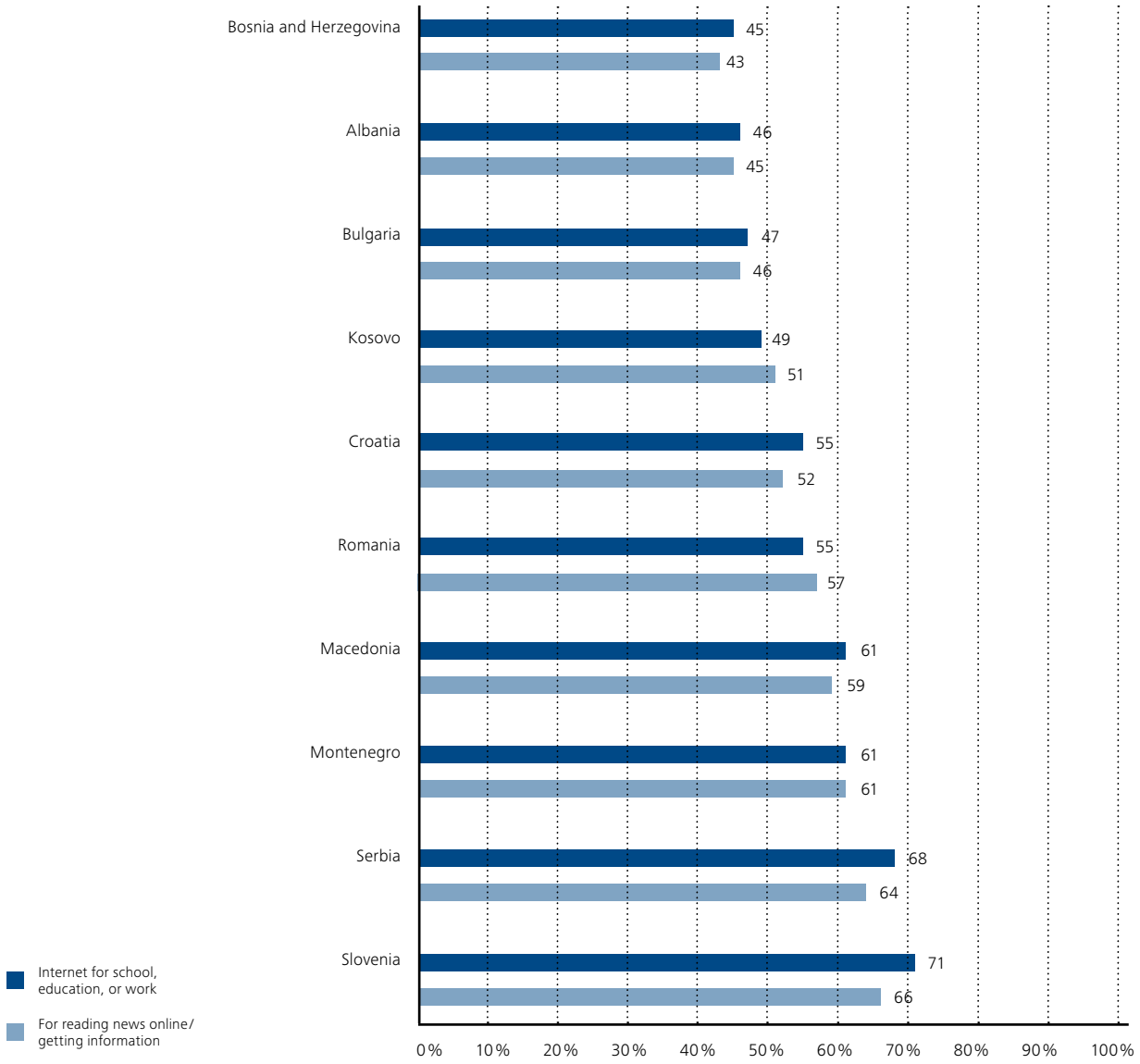
The most common use of ICT is for communication (via social networking sites and applications), followed by use for young people's favourite leisure activity – listening to music (Graph 11.4). ICT usage for instrumental purposes (such as *online-shopping; online-banking; rating products or services,* etc.) and for playing games is far less frequent, while around one-half of young people use ICT for all other purposes. We assume that the Internet is frequently used via personal ICT devices ('smartphones'), with the opportunity to hypothetically be online non-stop. The use of ICT for purposes such as communication and listening to music can take place in different everyday situations, in both private and in public spaces (Abott-Chapman & Robertson, 2009). It is, therefore, difficult to evaluate the amount of time young people consider to be 'spent on the Internet' and to interpret its meaning, particularly in terms of its effect on the quality of their everyday life and their well-being (Tileczek & Srigley, 2017).

Leisure and ICT use are substantially intertwined, since a significant part of leisure-time activities are engaged in via the Internet.

Unlike the two previous dimensions, access and frequency of Internet use, there are differences between and within countries with respect to the purpose of ICT use. We have broken down the ways of using ICT into four categories: 1) for school, education, work and/or for obtaining information; 2) for communication (*communication with friends/relatives; e-mail; sharing pictures, videos or music; using social networks*); 3) for relaxation (*downloading or listening to music; downloading or watching videos or movies; gaming*); and 4) instrumental (*online-shopping; online-banking; rating products or services etc.*).[228]

While the use of ICT for communication and relaxation/entertainment is widespread, it is less commonly used for educational and informational purposes. Moreover, there are some cross-country and intra-country variations. Graph 8.5 shows the share of young people in SEE countries who 'often' ('at least once a week') use ICT for two types of activities that belong to our first category.

FIGURE 11.5: **Use of ICT for 'school, education, work' and for 'reading news/getting information,' by country (in %).** How often do you use the Internet for ...



There are differences in the purpose of ICT use between young people from different SEE countries and these are related to HDI as an indicator of development: in countries with a higher HDI, young people more frequently use ICT for educational and informational purposes,[229] communication,[230] relaxation[231] and instrumental purposes.[232] The purpose of ICT use is also related to social factors such as gender, the material situation of the household, and parents' educational level. When all countries are analysed together, young women use ICT more than young men for education and information and for communication, as indicated by the analysed dimensions of ICT use, and for school and work as a particular activity.[233] There is also a positive correlation between a household's material status and a young person's use of the Internet for education and information, for communication, and for instrumental purposes, according to the analysed dimensions of ICT use, as well as for school or work, and reading news or getting information as particular activities.[234] Parents' educational level has the strongest positive influence on the frequency of using ICT for all analysed purposes when the countries are considered together. The positive correlation between parents' educational level and the use of the Internet for educational or informational purposes, as an ICT dimension, and for school, education or work, or as a single activity, is present in all SEE countries except Montenegro; it is the strongest in Bulgaria and weakest in Slovenia.

Better household material situation, higher level of parents' education and being female are factors that tend to increase ICT use for educational and informational purposes. This means that social inequalities also tend to reproduce themselves through different types of ICT use.

Trust in ICT, measured as trust in the responsibility of social networks in using personal data, is moderate – between 2.4 in Slovenia and 3.3 in Bulgaria (on a 5-point scale, where 1 denotes 'no trust at all'). There is a trend toward a decrease in trust in social networks with an increase in cultural capital, as indicated by parents' level of education, with significant correlations in Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia.

Young people have a lot of friends on social networks: over a half (58 %) have more than 200 and more than a quarter (27 %) have over 500. Online and offline sociability are not mutually exclusive, as there is a positive correlation between going out with friends and the number of contacts young people have on social networks.[235] This has also been confirmed by other studies.[236]

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Analysis of FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 data has revealed that young people's involvement in more structured leisure activities, such as sports activities and those related to self-development, is influenced by a country's level of development and family cultural capital. This is related to the availability and accessibility of facilities for leisure activities in more developed countries, and a higher motivation among the young from more educated families to engage in certain types of activities. The findings also indicate that leisure and ICT use are substantially interrelated, since a significant part of leisure-time activities take place via the Internet. This fact could be interpreted as a constraint in that it is leads to a greater passivity of young people in terms of how they use leisure time. However, the evidence on online and offline sociability, which are shown not to be mutually exclusive, is one indicator arguing against this kind of interpretation. Another interpretation would be to look at the strong connection between leisure and ICT as an opportunity. ICTs provide a powerful channel for different forms of fulfilment and development of a young person's potential through formal and informal education and training, accumulating information and contacts related to one's interests, fostering creativity, reading, civic engagement, and the like. Almost all young people in SEE have regular access to ICT, but there are differences in the purposes and motives of using ICT related to social factors, which could potentially lead to social inequalities among young people.

MAIN FINDINGS:

1. Involvement in more structured leisure activities, such as sports activities and those related to self-development, tends to increase with a country's level of socioeconomic development and family cultural capital.
2. Leisure and ICT use are substantially intertwined, since a great part of leisure time activities take place via the Internet.
3. Almost all young people in SEE have regular access to ICT. There are, nevertheless, differences in using ICT for educational and informational purposes, which are related to social factors, such as gender, a household's material situation, and parents' level of education. This means that social inequalities also tend to reproduce themselves through different types of ICT use.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Policy measures to increase the availability and the spatial and financial accessibility of facilities for organised leisure activities for young people in less developed areas should be adopted. Opportunities for leisure could be enhanced through extra-curricular activities at schools and various activities in community or youth centres, which may be co-financed by relevant ministries of education, culture, sports and youth.
2. Policy measures should motivate young people to participate in organised leisure activities through curricula in formal educational institutions, which is an institutional framework involving most young people.
3. Policy measures should enhance digital literacy and influence the motivation for using ICT for purposes other than socialising and entertainment, towards those related to self-development, civic engagement, creativity, etc. This can effectively be achieved through curricula at all levels of formal education.

12

CONCLUSION

The three main factors determining the situation of youth in the SEE region are economic insecurity, especially in terms of access to the labour market, low levels of satisfaction with the economic and political situation in the home country, and the pronounced pro-European orientation. These factors have an important effect on a broad spectrum of issues, such as postponed transitions to adulthood, huge support for a strong welfare state, low levels of political engagement, and a pronounced intention to emigrate.

In terms of their labour market status, young people, especially in the WB6 countries, face a serious lack of quality employment opportunities. Besides a high incidence of unemployment, in some countries – like Albania, Kosovo and BiH – more than a fifth of youth are not in any kind of employment, education or training. With some minor exceptions, the majority of employed youth in SEE tend to work in precarious jobs. In the WB6 countries, where problems with employment are the most acute, young people exhibit a very strong preference towards public sector employment, and membership in a political party is considered to play a very important role in finding a job. Youth also face significant skill-mismatches in the labour market, which indicates that school-to-work transitions are poorly facilitated by educational and labour market institutions. Indeed, young people across the region are for the most part dissatisfied with the level of connectedness between education and the world of work. There is also a very high perception of corruption in education in all SEE countries, and in most countries, such a perception has been increasing over the recent years. Nevertheless, youth are predominantly and increasingly satisfied with their countries' educational systems in general. This might be related to the fact that the presence of practical aspects in education, which tend to improve the employability of graduates, has substantially increased across the region.

In relation to the labour market and educational systems, governments have at their disposal a plethora of measures that might substantially improve the current situation. For example, to tackle unemployment and high NEET rates, youth guarantee schemes – comprised both of active labour market policies and opportunities to continue education and training – may be applied. Strengthening online job search tools and platforms may be another policy avenue to explore. In most countries, employment protection for young people should be increased in order to prevent the vicious cycle of temporary and occasional jobs. Encouraging better youth representation through labour unions may be a promising way to achieve better employment security and also to mobilise youth politically. In most countries, preventing young people from leaving school early and facilitating school dropouts' re-entry into education and training would also be an effective way to reduce NEET rates. In order to facilitate school-to-work transitions, coordination and information exchanges between employers and educational institutions should be improved. Education systems should continue efforts to include more applied knowledge and skills in curricula, also by means of apprenticeships and internships. Especially in the WB6 countries, governments should openly address the (perception of) widespread corrupt practices in terms of finding a job through political parties or connections and paying for passing exams as part of higher education.

Perceptions of economic insecurity are also reflected in young people's socio-political values, which are focused on economic welfare and security. Across the region, youth are largely dissatisfied with the state of the economy and democracy in their countries. Their major concerns are corruption and increasing poverty. It is therefore not very surprising that the vast majority of youth in SEE supports the idea of a strong welfare state, while the desire for a 'leader ruling the country with a strong hand for the public good' has increased substantially over the past ten years. A lack of economic security can also be seen as the partial cause of a relatively high, and in most countries increasing,

tolerance of informal economic practices, such as using social connections in formal procedures or cheating on taxes. In short, economic insecurities triggered the wave of the so-called millennial socialism in Southeast Europe as well. But these socialist tendencies are somewhat specific, as they tend to be accompanied by increased political authoritarianism and tolerance of informality.

There is no doubt that the millennial socialist orientation of the SEE youth implies that there is an important political potential available with which to achieve the basic goals of social democracy. Also from the point of view of political mobilisation, it is therefore important to facilitate translating youth aspirations for general economic security into tangible political action, possibly political action that would also directly involve young people. Stronger implementation of the principles of the welfare state, according to the survey data, is also potentially a very effective tool to reduce tendencies towards authoritarianism, nationalism and tolerance of informality. In relation to the latter, our survey results suggest that an enhanced promotion and effective implementation of the principles of the rule of law should reduce young people's tolerance towards socially dysfunctional informal practices. In addition, an effective fight against corruption appears to be a potentially effective tool with which to reduce an inclination towards political authoritarianism in the region.

One major problem remains the very low, and in most countries still-declining interest, in politics and civic engagement among youth. Undoubtedly, this is closely related to the fact that young people remain largely dissatisfied with the state of democracy in their countries. A vast majority of young people in the region feel poorly represented in national politics and feel that they should have a stronger say. Thus, we are dealing with a paradox in which youth overwhelmingly want a stronger political voice, but at the same time admit a low level of political knowledge and limited interest in politics. Although young people frequently express serious concerns about major public issues, such as corruption or increasing poverty, they generally do not see civic or political engagement as a viable means to address such issues. Furthermore, despite satisfactory self-reported voter turnout in elections in most countries, youth tend to report little experience with other forms of political and civic engagement. On the other hand, their willingness to take part in activities such as online petitions or demonstrations in certain countries suggests considerable potential in this regard.

In order to address the problem of political disinterest and low knowledge of politics, programmes promoting civic education should be improved, especially through schools, but also through the digital media. Governments should also promote opportunities for youth to engage in voluntary and other types of civic and political engagement. In a broader sense, survey data suggest that increasing the general level of education among youth and improving their socioeconomic position may also constitute potentially effective mechanisms to increase political and civic participation. Young people's political representation should be strengthened through political party structures and through representative bodies, such as youth councils or committees. Putting youth issues on political agendas may also be an efficient way to increase young people's interest and engagement in politics. Given the universality of Internet use among youth, and their expressed interest in online political engagement, e-participation of youth should also be promoted through the development of tailored online platforms that provide relevant information and opportunities for such engagement.

Youth across the SEE region have grown up with a European vision and today they are, as is also corroborated by the results of this study, overwhelmingly pro-European. Membership in the EU enjoys strong and increasing support, whereby the EU is especially strongly associated with greater economic welfare. Pro-EU orientations are especially strong among youth from socioeconomically less developed countries, like Kosovo or Albania. Along with the overwhelming support for a strong welfare state, this is the strongest political and social tendency across the region. Thus, policy-makers need to be aware of and make use of the potential that youth in the region have to offer in view of the region's process of Europeanisation.

On the other hand, the combination of economic insecurities at home and a pro-European orientation largely promotes young people's desire to emigrate. Despite the fact that the emigration intentions of youth seem to be decreasing in many SEE countries, these remain at high levels overall – particularly in the WB6 countries. According to our results, membership in the EU tends to substantially decrease youth intentions to emigrate long-term. However, differences between the WB6 countries and the four EU members are undoubtedly also closely related to differences in the level of economic development. Namely, throughout the region, young people's intentions to move are mainly conditioned by economic factors. It would appear important to note that the inclination to leave is not only a function of young people's objective situation – it is also largely induced by the perceptions of the state of affairs and future developments in the home country. Such perceptions may also be affected by media narratives and political statements regarding the situation in the country, including repeated messages suggesting that enormous numbers of young people are leaving the country. Another very important facilitator of youth emigration, with the exception of Slovenia, are young people's social contacts abroad. It is also worth noting that, despite young people's strong inclination to emigrate, actual experience living in foreign countries is rare, especially in Croatia, Romania and Bulgaria. The relatively low educational mobility of SEE youth appears to indicate a missed opportunity, not only in terms of more realistic and mature attitudes towards emigration, but also in terms of encouraging civic and political engagement and curbing nationalist political attitudes among youth.

Given the beneficial effects of international educational mobility, countries should encourage participation in existing mobility programmes, such as the EU's Erasmus+, and consider establishing new programs to foster greater educational mobility. On

the other hand, since educational mobility is related to a greater likelihood of emigration, governments should seek ways to prevent educational mobility from predominantly becoming a diving board for long-term emigration, and in this way deepening the brain-drain problem. These policies should motivate youth with experience studying or working abroad to return to or stay in their home country. In addition, especially in those countries such as the WB6, where long-term emigration intentions are widespread, policies to deter emigration need to be enhanced. The development of such policies needs to take on an integral, multifaceted approach, targeting economic insecurity and the lack of employment opportunities as the most significant motivational factors for migration. Besides this, policy-makers and the media should be aware that constant and especially overblown criticism of the situation in a country logically enough generates a more negative perception of the home country among youth, significantly increasing the likelihood that they will emigrate and thus exacerbate the brain-drain problem.

In terms of family life, both their parental family and their family of choice are still very important to young people in all SEE countries. Young people have a very good relationship with their parents and parental families largely substitute for deficits plaguing relevant social institutions by providing young people with needed resources, such as finance, housing, or parenting support. Housing dependency, together with prolonged education and financial dependence due to unemployment, are the main reasons for prolonged living with parents, which is a characteristic of the region underscored by other research as well. These interrelated phenomena account for a postponed transition to adulthood, and hinder, or at least delay, young people's integration in society. It should be added that over the recent years, trends have turned in the direction of slightly faster transitions in some countries.

In order to tackle the postponed transition to adulthood, policy-makers should strive to provide a set of related and intersectional policies that could facilitate the transition to adulthood for young people in SEE countries, including (1) employment policies that guarantee stable employment with secured rights for employees; (2) housing policies that would provide affordable housing for young people; (3) education and employment policies that provide flexible arrangements for those young people who would like to combine education and work and/or parenthood.

With regards to leisure-time activities, the most relevant finding is that almost all young people across the region regularly use the Internet. There are, nevertheless, significant differences in using the Internet for educational and informational purposes, which are related to social factors, such as gender, household material situation, and parents' educational level. This clearly shows that social inequalities tend to reproduce themselves also through the different uses of information and communication technology (ICT). Policy measures in this realm should encourage the use of ICT for purposes other than everyday socialising and entertainment, and more towards those related to self-development, civic engagement and creativity. This could be achieved through curricula at all levels of formal education, but also by creating attractive online platforms relating to issues like education or political and civic engagement.

In conclusion, we should note that youth in Southeast Europe are largely defined by the enduring economic uncertainties and by their relatively strong faith in the EU and processes of Europeanisation. However, the Europeanisation that SEE youth really want is largely associated with basic economic welfare for all citizens. It is not a neoliberal Europeanisation, but rather a Europeanisation based on the so-called Nordic model. That is, one that includes a comprehensive welfare state and low income inequality, while based on the economic foundations of free market capitalism. In this sense, youth across the SEE region undoubtedly offer a tremendous potential politically. This potential, however, at least if we wish to call it democratic, is also associated with some serious challenges, such as lack of political and civic engagement, high levels of emigration, increasing tendencies towards political authoritarianism, rising tolerance towards illegal informality and, in some countries, relatively pronounced nationalism. Most of these challenges have roots in the precarious position of youth in the labour market, the general socioeconomic insecurities associated therewith, and negative perceptions of the situation in the home country, in many countries particularly in relation to corruption. Though very general and well-known, these are the challenges that policy-makers most urgently need to address if they want to help youth to become an important actor in progressive social change in Southeast Europe.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Miran Lavrič is an associate professor of Sociology at the University of Maribor, Slovenia. He has worked on a number of research projects focusing on youth in Slovenia and the region of Southeast Europe and has published a number of original scientific articles in international journals on these and other sociological topics. He was the head of a comprehensive national study of youth in Slovenia (2010) and a researcher in many other youth studies in Slovenia as well as several international studies dealing with the societies of Southeast Europe.

Smiljka Tomanović is a professor of Sociology at the Department of Sociology at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade. She is also senior researcher at the Institute for Sociological Research at the same Faculty. She has participated in numerous research projects, applied projects, and also in writing of several policy papers in Serbia. She has been involved in research on and with young people in Serbia for over two decades. She has participated as a member, researcher and consultant in various meetings, seminars, and conferences concerned with youth policies, both at the national and international levels. She is author and co-author of seven books, several edited volumes, and numerous articles in international and domestic journals. She was member of Pool of European Youth Researchers (PEYR) of Youth partnership between CoE and EC, and she is a member of ESA RN13 Families and Intimate Lives and RN30 Youth and Generation.

Mirna Jusić is a senior researcher at the Center for Social Research Analitika, Sarajevo, and one of its co-founders. Mirna holds an MA degree in Public Policy from the Department of Public Policy, Central European University, Budapest and an MA Degree in State Management and Humanitarian Affairs from the Sapienza University of Rome, University of Sarajevo and University of Belgrade. She is currently a PhD candidate in the Public and Social Policy Program, Institute of Sociological Studies, Charles University in Prague. Her research interests are in the fields of governance and social policy.

ANNEX 1: METHODOLOGY

Sample

This report relies on FES youth surveys, implemented by research agencies and institutes in ten countries of Southeast Europe. In each country, surveys were based on representative randomised samples of youth between the ages of 14 and 29. Samples were stratified along key socio-demographic characteristics such as age, gender, place of residence, and type of community. The average age of respondents was 21.9, ranging from 21.1 in Albania to 22.6 in Romania. The sample consisted of 50.3 % male and 49.7 % female respondents, whereby the share of female respondents ranged from 46.7 % in Kosovo to 51.5 % in Montenegro. The sample size varied from N = 711 in Montenegro to N = 1.500 in Croatia. The average response rate was 64 %, varying from 38 % in Kosovo to 83 % in Macedonia. In Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Romania and Slovenia, data were weighted in order to better fit the target population.

Instrument and data collection

The same core questionnaire with 127 questions was applied in all ten countries. It was constructed by a wider team of experts in English and then, using a forward-backward procedure, translated into local languages. The survey was designed to determine the most important challenges young people are facing in their societies. A model and point of orientation for the study were the FES Youth Studies, carried out in the region of Southeast Europe from 2011 to 2015, and the resulting comparative regional studies. The questionnaire covered the following areas: leisure and lifestyle; values, religion, and trust; family and friends; mobility; education; employment; politics; and socio-demographic data. Each national team was also allowed to add up to ten additional country-specific items.

In all countries, face-to-face interviews were carried out using the CAPI method (computer-assisted personal interviewing), where interviewers used computers/tablets with questionnaires programmed in interviewing software. The questionnaire consisted of an oral and a written (personal) part. The oral part was administered by the interviewer, who read aloud the questions and filled in (on tablets) the respondent's answers (for certain questions, interviewers were instructed to use show-cards to make it easier for respondents to choose among the answers provided). After completing the oral part of the questionnaire, the interviewer handed over the computer/tablet to the respondent and asked him/her to personally fill in the answers for the second part. The written part included more personal and intimate questions. It was assumed that the respondents would likely give more sincere answers to such questions on their own. The average length of the interview was 58 minutes, varying from 45 minutes in Macedonia to 70 minutes in Serbia.

Analyses

For the purpose of conducting statistical analyses, different versions of IBM SPSS statistics (21 to 25) were used. Besides ordinary descriptive statistics tools, such as frequency tables, crosstabs, or mean values, inferential statistical tools were used to test the statistical significance and strength of relationships between variables. Statistical significance was interpreted at 95 percent and 99 percent confidence levels. For pairs of variables with at least one variable based on a nominal scale of measurement, Chi-squared tests were used. In cases involving pairs of ordinal or interval variables, Spearman's rho or Pearson's r coefficients were used, depending on authors' assessment. In some cases, multivariate analyses, such as factor analysis or regression analysis, were used as well. On the basis of factor analyses and/or scale reliability analyses employing Cronbach's Alpha, certain compound variables were computed and used in further analyses. Besides variables based on survey questions, data on the Human Development Index (HDI) were ascribed to each respondent, based on the latest available (2016) level of HDI for the country where the interview was conducted (UNDP, 2016).

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ANNEX 3: ENDNOTES

[1] Shell Holding Deutschland (2015): Jugend 2015. Eine pragmatische Generation im Aufbruch. Frankfurt am Main.

[2] The twelve main findings were established and policy recommendations developed based on the joint analysis of all chapter-specific main findings and policy recommendations by all three authors of this study. They represent a consensual synthesis, and in some cases also slight generalisation, of all these findings and policy recommendations.

[3] Southeast Europe encompasses countries mostly concentrated in the Balkan peninsula. While there are different understandings as to what countries fall under the SEE label, it is generally seen to include Albania, BiH, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia. Some definitions may include Greece or Turkey; these two countries were not covered by the youth surveys.

[4] Surveys were based on the German *2006 Shell Youth Study. Results were published in country reports and two regional studies. For more, Hurrelmann & Weichert, and Jusić & Numanović, 2017.*

[5] The first round of surveys did not include Montenegro.

[6] I would like to thank my colleague Dr. Dragan Stanojević from the University of Belgrade for statistical analyses and valuable comments on earlier drafts of the chapters that I wrote.

[7] The odds ratio is a measure of associations indicating probability of events. It is interpreted as a greater or smaller possibility that something will happen in a particular part of the population.

[8] Also: 4 times more likely in Montenegro, 4 times in Albania, 5 times in Kosovo, 6 times in Macedonia, 8 times in Serbia, 8 times in BiH, and 15 times in Romania.

[9] Also: 29 times more likely in Slovenia, 41 times in Montenegro, 59 times in Kosovo, 77 times in Albania, 79 times in Serbia, and 94 times in BiH.

[10] For secondary educational attainment, rho = 0.830. $p < 0.01$, and for enrollment in university, rho = 0.705, $p < 0.01$.

[11] There is a common feature of most SEE countries, with some exception in the case of Slovenia: insufficient and inadequate state support for a young person's education (e.g. grants, loans, student dormitories, study fees, transport …). One of the indicators that education relies almost solely on the financial and other support of the parental family is the finding from a Eurostudent study that for 88 % students in Serbia, 69 % in Croatia, 63 % in Romania, and 42 % in Slovenia, the only financial source are their parents, while institutional support is the main source of financing for just 7 %, 22 %, 26 % and 44 % of these students, respectively (Eurostudent database, 2017).

[12] Set at 4 % for Croatia and 5 % for Slovenia.

[13] Although Croatia has the lowest proportion of 'early school leavers' among EU countries (Eurostat, 2016), the FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 results are unexpected.

[14] In Slovenia, rho = −0.114, $p < 0.01$, Bulgaria, rho = −0.115, $p < 0.01$, Montenegro, rho = −0.189, $p < 0.01$, Romania, rho = 0.147, $p < 0.01$, Albania, rho = −0.108, $p < 0.01$, BiH, rho = −0.089, $p < 0.01$, Kosovo, rho = −0.171, $p < 0.01$, Croatia, rho = −0.073, $p < 0.01$.

[15] Albania, X^2 (4, 1207) = 24.2, $p < 0.001$, BiH, X^2 (4, 900) = 11.2, $p < 0.05$, Serbia, X^2 (4, 893) = 17, $p < 0.05$, Bulgaria, X^2 (4, 899) = 31.6, $p < 0.001$, Romania X^2 (4, 917) = 36.2, $p < 0.001$ and Slovenia X^2 (4, 899) = 11.7, $p < 0.05$.

[16] *X^2 (1,10721) = 20.2, $p < 0.001$.*

[17] rho = 0.09, $p < 0.01$. For instance, almost one-quarter of the young from the poorest households in Romania aspire towards just primary education. They are more oriented towards vocational schools, as for instance, almost one-third of the respondents in Slovenia and BiH.

[18] rho = 0.123, $p < 0.01$. For instance, among the young whose parents have a low level of education, 39 % in Bulgaria, 25 % in Romania and 19 % of youth in Kosovo aspire towards primary education only. They also aspire towards vocational education – around one-third in Slovenia and Croatia, and around one-quarter in Serbia and Montenegro.

[19] *X^2 (8,10721) = 287.56, $p < 0.001$*

[20] Particularly in Kosovo (52.2 %) and Albania (49.2 %), but also in Romania (24.6 %) and Macedonia (20.8 %).

[21] Particularly in Albania (46.5 %), but also around one-fifth of the respondents in Macedonia, Croatia and Bulgaria.

[22] From 74 % of the young people in Albania, to 90 % in Slovenia who are 'sure' or 'very sure' that they will get the level of education they are aspiring towards.

[23] rho = 0.079, $p < 0.01$, and rho = 0.032, $p < 0.05$, respectively.

[24] rho = −0.049, $p < 0.05$

[25] For Serbia, it refers to the PISA 2012 study and only to performance in mathematics (OECD, 2014, p. 5).

[26] A part of the difference could be attributed to different phrasing of the question in the two waves of FES Youth Studies. In the FES Youth Studies SEE 2011 – 15, the question was: *Do you think that the marks/exams can be 'purchased' in your school / at your university? while in the FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 it was: Do you agree that there are cases where grades and exams are 'bought' in institutes/universities in the country?*

[27] rho = −0.146, $p < 0.01$

[28] X^2 (4, 4999) = 139.2, $p < 0.001$

[29] X^2 (1, 9975) = 484.7, $p < 0.001$

[30] I would like to thank Fahrudin Memić for statistical analyses in this and other chapters I wrote in this study.

[31] The highest youth unemployment rates in the EU in 2016 were in Greece (47.3 %) and Spain (44.4 %). For more, see: Eurostat, *Youth unemployment rate – % of active population aged 15 – 24*.

[32] On the other hand, in Bulgaria, a large percentage of respondents chose 'other', most likely because they are in education.

[33] There are methodological differences in terms of the way in which labour force surveys in the region, in line with ILO methodology, capture unemployment. According to Eurostat, for instance, unemployed are considered to be those persons without work during the reference week, who are available to start working within next two weeks or have found a job that starts within next three months, and have actively been looking for employment during the past four weeks. For more see Eurostat, 2010. Youth survey questionnaires included a question on whether young people were unemployed and were actively looking for work.

[34] Pertains only to young people who are employed and those who are unemployed, but seeking employment

[35] Relationship between employment status and: parent's educational attainment, X^2 (4, 10127) = 179.9, $p < 0.05$; financial status of household: X^2 (8, 9767) = 135.5, $p < 0.05$; gender, X^2 (2, 10328) = 129.1, $p < 0.05$; place of residence, X^2(6, 10189) = 79.9, $p < 0.05$; respondents' educational attainment, X^2 (12, 10262) = 2502.6, $p < 0.05$; age, X^2 (30, 10329) = 3951.6 , $p < 0.05$.

[36] This could potentially be due to differences in the way that NEETs are defined in official statistics as opposed to youth surveys. For comparison, see Vidovic et al., 2018, pp. 21 – 22.

[37] Some 46 % are between 25 – 29 years of age; 40 % fall in the 20 – 24 cohort.

[38] Correlation with: age, rho = 0.159, $p < 0.01$; educational attainment: rho = 0.031, $p < 0.01$; HDI, rho = −0.120, $p < 0.01$; place of residence, rho = −0.095, $p < 0.01$; parents' level of education, rho = −0.180, $p < 0.01$; material possessions, rho = −0.184, $p < 0.01$; financial situation of household, rho = −0.123, $p < 0.01$; age of persons who have dropped out of formal education, rho = −0.339, $p < 0.01$. Relationship with gender, *X^2 (1, 10745) = 16.9, $p < 0.05$.*

[39] Such as dependent or disguised self-employment, where an employment relationship is portrayed as self-employment for the purpose of affording lower levels of protection to workers (ILO, 2018).

[40] Non-standard work as used here refers to the following survey answer options: I have a temporary contract for a full-time job; I have a temporary contract for a part-time job; I have occasional job(s). For both self-employment and non-standard employment, calculated as a percentage of youth who said they were employed in each country.

[41] Relationship between employment type and: respondents' level of educational attainment, X^2 (12, 10765) = 1159.4, $p < 0.05$; gender, X^2 (2, 10907) = 100.2, $p < 0.05$; financial position of households, X^2 (8, 10213) = 30.6, $p < 0.05$; parents' educational attainment, X^2(4, 10635) = 57.9, $p < 0.05$; participation in practicum/internship, X^2 (2, 10431) = 207.9, $p < 0.05$.

[42] Question pertains only to young people who are working.

[43] Relationship between working in jobs not within profession and: parents' educational attainment, *X^2 (2, 4291) = 44.6, $p < 0.05$; educational attainment, X^2 (6, 4326) = 196.2, $p < 0.05$; age, X^2 (15, 4353) = 142.6, $p < 0.05$.*

[44] Horizontal mismatches – being at the same level of education or qualification as that required by a job, but in an inadequate field – were not investigated.

[45] The question pertains only to young people who are working.

[46] Relationship between working at a job requiring a lower level of educational attainment than one's own and: own level of educational attainment, X^2 (6, 3905) = 53.7, $p < 0.05$; household›s perceived financial status: *X^2 (4, 3771) = 22.3, $p < 0.05$.*

[47] $r = -0.200$. $p < 0.01$

[48] $r = 0.106$, $p < 0.01$

[49] $X^2 (8, 10659) = 64.05, p < 0.01$

[50] Correlation with people in power: $r = -0.075$, $p < 0.01$. Correlation with acquaintances: $r = -0.087$, $p < 0.01$.

[51] $r = 0.064$, $p < 0.01$

[52] rho = 0.083, $p < 0.01$.

[53] See, for instance, a recommendation regarding policies to reduce early school-leaving by the Council of the European Union (2011). Also see Salvatore et al. (2012).

[54] This viewpoint from the sociology of generations has been contested in the literature and should definitely always be balanced with the so-called period effect. For a more detailed discussion see for example: Alwin and McCammon, 2003; Roberts, 2007.

[55] For example, the World Values Survey (Inglehart et al., 2014) or the European Quality of Life Survey (Eurofound, 2016).

[56] $r = 0.203$, $p < 0.01$

[57] $r = 0.154$, $p < 0.01$. For more on religiosity, see chapter 3.4.

[58] $r = 0.105$, $p < 0.01$

[59] $r = 0.098$, $p < 0.01$

[60] *Values of autonomy and responsibility include: taking responsibility,* being independent, being faithful to friends, being faithful to employer.

Family values include: having children as an important value, having children as important for a happy life, having a spouse/partner as important for a happy life, getting/being married as an important value.

Values of personal success include the importance of doing sports, healthy eating, graduating from university, and having a successful career.

Consumerist values refer to the importance of getting/being rich, wearing branded clothes, and looking good.

Values of political and civic engagement include the importance of being active in politics, participating in civic actions/initiatives, and the expressed general interest in politics.

[61] Correlation with HDI: $r = -0.216$, $p < 0.01$.

[62] $r = -0.264$, $p < 0.01$

[63] $r = 0.138$, $p < 0.01$

[64] $r = 0.115$, $p < 0.01$

[65] $r = 0.093$, $p < 0.01$

[66] Data were gathered in 2008, except for Montenegro (2001) and Macedonia (2009).

[67] E.g, Luckmann, 1967; Beyer, 1994; Davie, 2000; Pollack & Müller, 2006; Lavrič, 2013

[68] Furthermore, a comparison with the results of the FES youth study of Croatian youth in 2012 shows that the share of those who never pray has increased from 24 % to 37 % during the period between 2012 and 2018.

[69] For example, the share of youth who are not members of any religion has increased from 24 % to 38 %.

[70] $r = -0.103$, $p < 0.01$

[71] $r = -0.094$, $p < 0.01$

[72] $r = 0.159$, $p < 0.01$

[73] The Guardian characterised Vetëvendosje as a leftist political movement that introduced the vocabulary of anti-colonialism in response to the post-war neoliberal administration of Kosovo (Rexhepi, 2017).

[74] Rule of law might not be very popular, potentially due to the great popularity of the informal economy (see subchapter on social tolerance).

[75] Ranging from 121 % in Slovenia to 500 % in BiH.

[76] $r = 0.360$. $p < 0.01$

[77] $r = 0.311$, $p < 0.01$

[78] $r = 0.286$, $p < 0.01$

[79] $r = -0.285$, $p < 0.01$

[80] $r = -0.194$, $p < 0.01$

[81] Less than 4 % of youth in the region disagree with this idea.

[82] Democratic socialism as understood by millennials tends to lack many classical socialist ideas, such as state ownership of the means of production, central planning, revolutionary action, or the Marxian 'dictatorship of the proletariat.' The basic political values of millennial socialists only stress the importance of the benefits of the welfare state, such as basic economic security for all citizens – including decent employment opportunities, public healthcare, and free public schooling.

[83] The scale measuring support for the welfare state included the following items (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.642$): (1) Incomes of the poor and the rich should be made more equal; (2) Government ownership of business and industry should be increased; (3) Government should take more responsibility to ensure that everyone is provided for.

[84] The correlation between welfare-state orientation and material possessions of a household was $r = -0.200$, $p < 0.01$. In the case of parents' education level, it was $r = -0.142$, $p < 0.01$. Being unemployed and being NEET also increased the likelihood of supporting the ideas of a strong welfare state.

[85] $r = 0.030$, $p < 0.01$

[86] $r = 0.199$, $p < 0.01$

[87] The positive correlation ($r = 0.027$, $p < 0.05$) suggests that the welfare state is a slightly more desired goal among those considering themselves to be more right-wing oriented.

[88] The basic theoretical point of departure was the model devised by the FES International Policy Analysis Department, headed by Dr. Michael Bröning (see: https://www.fes.de/strategy-debates-global/). In the first step of our statistical analysis, we created several variables at the individual level:

- *Net welfare state orientation, which was computed as a ratio between support for the welfare state (agreement with: Incomes of the poor and the rich should be made more equal; Government ownership of business and industry should be increased; Government should take more responsibility to ensure that everyone is provided for ($\alpha = 0.642$))* and support for democracy (agreement with: *It is the duty of every citizen in a democracy to vote; A political opposition is necessary for a healthy democracy; Young people should have more possibilities to speak out in politics; Democracy is a good form of government in general ($\alpha = 0.695$)).*
- *Net left-wing goals,* which was computed as a ratio between typical left-wing goals (support for securing human rights and freedoms, social justice and social security for all, preservation of natural environment, and reduction of unemployment ($\alpha = 0.879$)) and typical right-wing goals (fostering national identity, fight against illegal immigration of people, strengthening of military power and national security, fostering population growth ($\alpha = 0.797$)).
- *Authoritarian orientation,* which included support for a strong political leader, support for a dictatorship under certain circumstances, and support for the use of violence in resolving certain social problems ($\alpha = 0.461$).
- *Nationalism,* which included support for the following statements: *It would be the best if (COUNTRY) was inhabited only by real (COUNTRY)ians; Non-(COUNTRY)ians living in (COUNTRY) should adopt (COUNTRY)ian customs and values; The real (COUNTRY)ian is only a person who has (COUNTRY)ian blood ($\alpha = 0.769$).*
- *Values of individual freedom,* which were computed for each respondent on the basis of whether he or she chose 'individual freedom' as the 1st or 2nd ranked option among eight political values that were offered.
- *Values of welfare and equality, which were computed for each respondent on the basis of whether he or she chose 'economic welfare of citizens' or 'equality' as the 1*st or 2nd ranked options among eight political values that were offered.
- *Tolerance in relation to sexual and reproductive practices, which included justification of homosexuality and justification of abortion ($\alpha = 0.725$).*
- *Left-right political orientation, which was an original variable from the survey questionnaire, measuring respondents' self-assessed left-wing vs. right-wing political orientation.*

In the second step, averages of these variables for each country were entered into a Principal Components procedure with Varimax rotation, whereby countries represented units of analysis. A two-dimensional solution was reached, with 73.9 % of common variance explained by the model. Factor scores for each dimension were computed and are represented in the graph for each country.

[89] $r = 0.826$, $p < 0.01$

[90] $r = -0.792$, $p < 0.01$

[91] For example, the authoritarian orientation is substantially higher among youth from households with a lower number of material possessions ($r = -0.148$, $p < 0.01$) or youth with less educated parents ($r = -0.121$, $p < 0.01$).

[92] Respondents in WVS and INFORM surveys were asked what they think of *'Having a strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament and elections' on a 1 ('very bad') to 4 ('very good') scale. Respondents in FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 surveys were asked to what extent they agree with the statement: 'We should have a leader who rules the country with a strong hand for the public good' on a 1 ('completely disagree') to 5 ('completely agree') scale. Since we are only comparing shares of those on the extreme ends of the spectrum, the*

comparison is, in our view, valid. In any case, the logical effect of change from a 4-point to a 5-point scale would be a greater dispersion of the respondents, which would tend to decrease the shares of respondents within each category, thus reducing the observed increase in authoritarianism. On the other hand, the omission of '…who does not have to bother with parliament and elections' in FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 might work in the opposite direction, making it likely that both tendencies tend to annihilate each other.

[93] An EU Horizon 2020 project titled 'Closing the Gap between Formal and Informal Institutions in the Balkans': http://www.formal-informal.eu/home.html

[94] Recently, Foa and Mounk (2017) reported that the proportion of citizens expressing approval of authoritarian alternatives to democracy has risen among most countries of the world for which a full-time series from about 1996 to roughly 2012 exist. In the United States, for example, the share of citizens who believe that it would be better to have a 'strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament and elections' rose from 24 % in 1995 to 32 % in 2011. Similar trends were identified also in relation to similar attitudes such as agreeing that it would be better to have the army rule or to let major decisions for the country be made by experts rather than the government (pp. 13–14). Especially alarming seems to be the finding by Foa and Mounk (2017) that in most European countries young people have become critical of democracy at a faster rate than older generations. They also showed that in seven major EU countries agreement of young respondents with the statement 'Democracy may have its problems, but is better than any other form of government' declined substantially between 1999 and 2017. Closer to the geographical focus of this report, Kirbiš and Flere (2017) arrived at similar findings. Exploring changes in political culture in post-Yugoslav countries between 1995 and 2008, they found that pro-democratic attitudes, as also measured by the above-mentioned indicators of support for a strong leader and support for democracy, decreased in all the observed six countries with available longitudinal data.

[95] $r = 0.223$, $p < 0.01$

[96] $r = 0.258$, $p < 0.01$

[97] $r = 0.041$, $p < 0.01$. Trust in state institutions was measured by trust in national government, national parliament, political parties, local government, the president, the judiciary, and the media.

[98] $r = 0.030$, $p < 0.01$

[99] $r = 0.291$, $p < 0.01$. The variable 'support for welfare state' consisted of the level of agreement with three statements: *Incomes of the poor and the rich should be made more equal; Government ownership of business and industry should be increased; Government should take more responsibility for ensuring that everyone is provided for.*

[100] $r = 0.103$, $p < 0.01$

[101] $r = 0.090$, $p < 0.01$

[102] $r = 0.276$, $p < 0.01$

[103] Ethno-nationalism is defined by the Oxford dictionary as advocacy of or support for the political interests of a particular ethnic group, especially its national independence or self-determination.

[104] We can understand patriotism simply as attachment to one's homeland.

[105] The item 'I'm proud to be a citizen of my country' was taken as a measure of patriotism, while the other item in the graph was taken as a measure of ethno-nationalism.

[106] A variable composed of the highest level of education of the mother, the highest education level of the father, and the number of books in the household.

[107] $r = -0.261$, $p < 0.01$

[108] $r = 0.165$, $p < 0.01$

[109] $r = -0.222$, $p < 0.01$

[110] $r = 0.168$, $p < 0.01$

[111] $rho = -0.192$, $p < 0.01$

[112] $rho = -0.079$, $p < 0.05$

[113] $rho = 0.201$, $p < 0.01$

[114] $rho = 0.106$, $p < 0.01$

[115] $rho = 0.095$, $p < 0.01$

[116] Human rights, economic welfare of citizens, rule of law, equality, employment, individual freedom, democracy, and security.

[117] Eight for the EU and eight for the home country.

[118] $r = -0.827$, $p < 0.01$

[119] On the basis of results of factor analysis, the TSR variable was composed of two variables on a 1–10 scale:

— Justification of homosexuality
— Justification of abortion

[120] On the basis of results of factor analysis, the TIE variable was composed of four variables on a 1–10 scale:

— Justification of using connections to 'get things done'
— Justification of using connections to find employment
— Justification of accepting/giving a bribe
— Justification of cheating on taxes.

[121] $r = -0.093$, $p < 0.01$

[122] $r = -0.109$, $p < 0.01$

[123] $rho = 0.038$, $p < 0.01$

[124] Justification of homosexuality, abortion, accepting/giving a bribe, and of cheating on taxes.

[125] The survey was conducted in 2001 in Montenegro, in 2009 in Macedonia, and in 2008 in all other countries.

[126] Respondents who chose rule of law as their 1st or 2nd ranked political value were compared with those who did not meet this condition.

[127] $rho = -0.068$, $p < 0.01$

[128] $rho = -0.146$, $p < 0.01$

[129] $rho = -0.131$, $p < 0.01$

[130] $rho = -0.0.109$, $p < 0.01$

[131] $r = -0.743$, $p<0.01$

[132] By Net European identity, we mean the ratio between European and national identity.

[133] $r = -0.711$, $p < 0.01$

[134] Due to differences in survey questionnaires, we were able to compare data only for four countries, limiting the analysis to the 16–27 age group. The results show that support for entry into the EU has increased from 73 % to 81 % in Macedonia; from 82 % to 89 % in Kosovo; and from 89 % to 94 % in Albania. In Slovenia, support for an exit from the EU dropped from 45 % in 2013 to only 21 % in 2018.

[135] Correlation between interest in politics in general and knowledge of politics: $rho = 0.542$, $p < 0.01$. Correlation between interest in politics in general and discussing politics with family/acquaintances: $rho = 0.597$, $p < 0.01$. Correlation between discussing politics with family/acquaintances and knowledge of politics: $rho = 0.487$, $p < 0.01$.

[136] No data for Romania is available from the earlier round of surveys; a survey was not conducted in Montenegro prior to 2018. Age range was adjusted for comparison with the earlier round of surveys (16–27).

[137] Similarly, 56 % of those who express no interest in politics at all completely agree that young people should have more possibilities to speak out in politics.

[138] Recently, these findings were widely popularised through a book entitled 'Against Democracy' by Jason Brennan (2016).

[139] Self-expressed political knowledge is related to a higher level of parents' education ($r = 0.092$, $p<0.01$), a higher level of material possessions of the household ($r = 0.074$, $p < 0.01$), and not being a NEET ($rho = -0.027$, $p < 0.01$).

[140] Correlations between being interested in national politics and: level of education, $rho = 0.206$, $p < 0.05$; household financial status, $rho = 0.075$, $p < 0.01$; household material possessions, $rho = 0.105$, $p < 0.05$; parents' educational attainment, $rho = 0.147$, $p < 0.05$; NEET, $rho = -0.072$, $p < 0.05$; HDI, $rho = 0.054$, $p < 0.05$. Political interest also correlates positively with urban place of residence ($rho = 0.054$, $p < 0.05$) and age ($rho = 0.145$, $p < 0.05$).

[141] $rho = 0.058$, $p < 0.05$

[142] Young people were asked whether or not they had voted in any political election in the last three years, ranging from local to EU level. Respondents aged 15–30 were interviewed.

[143] Correlations between voting and: financial status of household, $rho = 0.034$, $p < 0.01$; educational attainment, $rho = 0.122$, $p < 0.01$; parents' educational attainment: Croatia, $rho = 0.097$, $p < 0.01$; Kosovo, $rho = 0.119$, $p < 0.01$; and Slovenia, $rho = 0.102$, $p < 0.01$. Note: the answer option 'was not old enough to vote' was excluded from voting correlations.

[144] Correlation between voting and HDI: $rho = -0.168$, $p < 0.01$.

[145] Correlation between voting and the belief that youth are represented in politics: $rho = 0.099$, $p < 0.01$.

[146] Correlations between voting and interest in politics: $rho = 0.170$, $p < 0.01$.

[147] Correlations between voting and age: $rho = 0.122$, $p < 0.01$.

[148] Correlations between having/being interested in participating in demonstrations and: education level, $rho = 0.155$, $p < 0.05$; material possessions of household, $rho = 0.179$, $p < 0.05$; parents' educational attainment, $rho = 0.126$, $p < 0.05$; urban place of residence, $rho = 0.079$, $p < 0.05$; NEET, $rho = -0.074$, $p < 0.05$; HDI, $rho = 0.048$, $p < 0.05$; age, $rho = 0.126$, $p < 0.05$. Correlations

between having/being interested in signing political requests/petitions: education level, rho = 0.185, p < 0.05; material possessions of household, rho = 0.229, p < 0.05; parents' educational attainment, rho = 0.152, p < 0.05; urban place of residence, rho = 0.062, p < 0.05; NEET, rho = −0.072, p < 0.05; HDI, rho = 0.122, p < 0.05; age, rho= 0.141, p < 0.05.

[149] Rho = 0.048, p < 0.01

[150] Correlations between willingness to take on a political function (or holding such a function) with: educational attainment, rho = 0.071, p < 0.01; financial situation, rho = 0.033, p < 0.05; material possessions, rho = 0.074, p < 0.05; parents' education, rho = 0.092, p < 0.05; urban residence, rho = 0.044, p < 0.05; NEET, rho = −0.063, p < 0.05.

[151] Correlations between having/being interested in working for a political party/group and: educational attainment, rho = 0.094, p < 0.01; material possessions, rho = 0.128, p < 0.05; parents' education, rho = 0.066, p < 0.05; urban residence, rho = 0.034, p < 0.05; NEET, rho = −0.043, p < 0.05; age, rho = 0.059, p < 0.05.

[152] Correlations between having voted in last national elections (those eligible to vote) and: support for welfare state (composite variable), rho = 0.044, p < 0.01; support for strong leader, rho = 0.059, p < 0.01; nationalism, rho = 0.046, p < 0.01; right-wing political orientation, rho = 0.069, p < 0.01; interest in politics, rho = 0.170, p < 0.01.

[153] Correlations between readiness to vote in next national parliamentary elections (those eligible to vote) and: support for welfare state, rho = 0.050, p < 0.01; support for strong leader, rho = 0.051; political orientation, rho = 0.066, p < 0.01;

[154] Correlations between support for welfare state (composite variable) and: signing a list with political requests / supporting an online petition, rho = −0.096, p < 0.01; participating in a demonstration, rho = −0.096, p < 0.01; participating in volunteer/civil society organization activities, rho = −0.075, p < 0.01; working in a political party or political group, rho = −0.055, p < 0.01; stop buying things for political or environmental reasons, rho = −0.126, p < 0.01; participating in political activities online/in social networks, rho = −0.092, p < 0.01.

[155] Correlations between support for a strong leader and: signing a list with political requests / supporting an online petition, rho = −0.073, p < 0.01; participating in a demonstration, rho = −0.052, p < 0.01; participating in volunteer/civil society organisation activities, rho = −0.068, p < 0.01; stop buying things for political or environmental reasons, rho = −0.081, p < 0.01; participating in political activities online/in social networks, rho = −0.064, p < 0.01.

[156] Correlations between trust in the EU as compared to trust in national government and: signing a list with political requests / supporting an online petition, rho = −0.043, p < 0.01; participating in a demonstration, rho = −0.035, p < 0.01; stop buying things for political or environmental reasons, rho = −0.034, p < 0.01; participating in political activities online/in social networks, rho = −0.075, p < 0.01.

[157] Regression with non-conventional participation (its six forms indicated in Graph 5.5) as dependent variable: material possessions of households, β= 0.185, p < 0.01; age, β = 0.110, p < 0.01; parents' educational attainment, β = 0.080, p < 0.01; gender, β = 0.047, p < 0.01; being NEET, β = −0.054, p <0.01; support for welfare state, β = −0.036, p < 0.01; support for strong leader, β = −0.033, p < 0.01.

[158] Correlations with 'not volunteering': financial status of households, rho = −0.057, p < 0.05; material possessions of household, rho = −0.122, p < 0.05; parents' highest educational level, rho = −0.092, p < 0.05; NEET, rho = 0.090, p < 0.05; age, rho = 0.046, p <0.05.

[159] Visas have been suspended since December 2009 for citizens of Montenegro, Macedonia and Serbia; since the end of 2010 for citizens of Albania and BiH. For more, see European Commission, 2017.

[160] The so-called 'Westbalkanregelung', in effect as of January 2016, makes it possible for citizens of Albania, BiH, Kosovo, Montenegro, Macedonia and Serbia to work in Germany if in possession of a visa, a work-permit and a job. As a result, the number of asylum requests has been reduced, but the number of work permits for workers from the region grew. For more, see Siems, 2017; Federal Employment Agency of Germany, 2018.

[161] Pertains to Albania, BiH, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

[162] As opposed to migration, which is usually understood as permanent change of residence, mobility is usually understood as transitory movement of people in the course of their everyday lives. In this report, we refer to international migration as a change of residence to another country for more than six months, while movement to another country for a period of less than six months is considered as international mobility.

[163] Not limited to Erasmus +, Europe for Citizens and other programmes.

[164] Correlations with: educational attainment, rho = −0.067, p < 0.01; financial status of household, rho = −0.045, p < 0.01; urban place of residence, rho = 0.024, *p < 0.05; HDI, rho = −0.199, p < 0.01; relationship with employment status, X^2 (8, 9810) = 77.8, p < 0.05.*

[165] Correlation with: HDI, rho = −0.160, p < 0.01; NEET, rho = 0.093, p < 0.01; educational attainment, rho = −0.043, p < 0.01; parents' educational attainment, rho= −0.089, p < 0.01; household material possessions, rho = −0.091, p < 0.01; and perceived household financial situation, rho = −0.036, p < 0.01.

[166] BiH: rho = −0.080, p < 0.05; Bulgaria: rho = −0.109, p < 0.01; Macedonia: rho = −0.066, p < 0.05; Romania: rho=−0.161, p < 0.01. Correlations insignificant in other countries.

[167] Croatia: rho = 0.082, p < 0.01; Romania: rho = 0.087, p < 0.01; Serbia: rho = 0.089, p < 0.01; Slovenia: rho = 0.153, p < 0.01. Correlations insignificant in other countries. Correlation between desire to leave and parents' levels of education is not significant at the regional level.

[168] Croatia: rho = 0.069, p < 0.01; Montenegro: rho = 0.091, p < 0.05; Romania: rho = 0.183, p < 0.01; Slovenia: rho = 0.066, p < 0.05. In Macedonia, this correlation is negative: rho = −0.093, p < 0.01. Correlations not significant in other countries or at regional level.

[169] r = −0.178, p < 0.01; perception of the situation in the country was measured by a composite variable including respondents' evaluation of eight issues: human rights, economic welfare of citizens, rule of law, equality, employment, individual freedom, democracy, and security.

[170] r = −0.113, p < 0.01; the perception of the future of the country was measured by a single-item measure on a scale of 1 to 5.

[171] Correlation with: HDI, rho = −0.088, p < 0.01; NEET status, rho = 0.096, p < 0.01; employment status, *X^2 (2, 5342) = 120.2, p < 0.05; parents' educational attainment, rho = −0.141, p < 0.01; household material possessions, rho = −0.132, p < 0.01; household financial situation, rho = −0.088, p < 0.01.*

[172] Correlation with: HDI, rho = −0.062, p < 0.01; NEET, rho = −0.102, p < 0.01; employment status, *X^2 (2, 5340) = 231.1, p < 0.05; parents' educational attainment, rho = 0.105, p < 0.01; financial situation of households, rho = 0.072, p < 0.01; educational attainment, rho = −0.163, p < 0.01.*

[173] Correlation with: material possessions, rho = 0.046, p < 0.01; parents' educational attainment, rho = 0.042, p < 0.01; own educational attainment, rho = 0.032, p < 0.05; and urban place of residence, rho = 0.027, p < 0.05.

[174] Correlation with: HDI, rho = −0.121, p < 0.01; NEET status, rho = 0.203, p < 0.01; employment status, *X^2 (2, 5341) = 69.1, p < 0.05*; parents' educational attainment, rho = −0.129, p < 0.01; household material possessions, rho = −0.102, p < 0.01; perceived household financial position, rho = −0.050, p < 0.01; urban place of residence, rho = −0.077, p < 0.01;

[175] With respect to the procedure undertaken, values of six variables presented bellow were added together, producing a variable with values from 0 to 25. This variable was transformed into a scale of 0−1 (value / 25). Value 0 means an absolute absence of all considered elements.

[176] These steps included: contacted the embassy, contacted potential employer, contacted potential universities/schools, secured a scholarship, contacted friends/relatives, or some other action expressed by the respondent.

[177] The variable was created through the following procedure:

1. Shares of individuals with scores over 0.50 as part of the variable 'emigration potential of individuals' were computed for each country.
2. These shares were multiplied by the actual number of young people (15−29) living in each country.

[178] A composite variable, denoting parents' education, respondents' education, number of books in the household, the financial situation of households, and household material possessions.

[179] Albania: r = 0.125**; Montenegro: r = 0.110**; Serbia: r = 0.073*; Slovenia: r = 0.072*; Croatia: r = 0.065*; Romania: r = 0.063; BiH: r = −0.016; Kosovo: r = −0.024; Bulgaria = r −0.085.

[180] Correlation with: HDI, rho = −0.111, p < 0.01; NEET status, rho = 0.102, p < 0.01; rural residence, rho = −0.058, p < 0.01; respondents' educational attainment, rho = −0.049, p < 0.01; parents' educational attainment, rho = −0.125, p < 0.01; financial position of households, rho = −0.096, p < 0.01; and material possessions, rho = −0.179, p < 0.01.

[181] It should be stressed that all these correlations remain statistically significant even if, within linear regression analysis, controlled for the level of parents' education, material possessions of the household, financial status of the household, being unemployed, age and sex of the respondent.

[182] rho = 0.118, p < 0.01

[183] rho = 0.102, p < 0.01

[184] rho = 0.102, p < 0.01

[185] rho = 0.171, p < 0.01. Non-conventional political participation refers to activities such as signing petitions, participating in demonstrations or joining boycotts. In our case, it was composed of six variables presented in detail as part of the chapter on political and civic participation (Cronbach α = 0.827).

[186] rho = −0.092, p < 0.01. Nationalism was measured by agreement with the statement *'It would be the best if (COUNTRY) was inhabited only by real (COUNTRY)ians'.*

[187] rho = 0.183, p <0.01

[188] The analysis is based on a modified parenting styles scale (Robinson, Mandleco, Olsen, & Hart, 1995) and distinguished three styles of parenting. Authoritarian style was marked by the following parenting practices: 'My parents yelled or shouted at me if I misbehaved'; 'If I did not meet my parents' expectations, I was scolded and criticized'; 'I was slapped if I misbehaved'. Authoritative style was characterised by the following parenting practices: 'My parents were aware of my concerns in school'; 'Parents explained to me why I should obey rules'; 'I was allowed to take part in creating family rules'. Permissive parenting style was linked to the following practices: 'I was given rewards (toys, candies…) in order to behave good'; 'If I caused a commotion about something, parents usually gave in to my wish'; 'My parents threatened me with punishments that were never carried through in practice'.

[189] rho = 0.187, p < 0.01

[190] rho = 0.143, p < 0.01

[191] rho = 0.085, p < 0.01

[192] rho =−0.020. p < 0.05

[193] rho = 0.053, p < 0.01

[194] rho =0.053, p < 0.01; rho = 0.057, p < 0.01

[195] rho =−0.038, p < 0.01; rho = −0.066, p < 0.01

[196] rho =−0.041, p < 0.01

[197] rho = 0.086, p < 0.01

[198] r = 0.749, p < 0.05 and r = 0.743, p < 0.05

[199] X^2 *(2, 10305) = 1537.2, p < 0.001*

[200] X^2 (2, 10305) = 1237 p < 0.001

[201] X^2 (2, 10304) = 1888.3, p < 0.001

[202] Material status, X^2 *(32, 10137) = 116.8, p < 0.001; education,* X^2 *(16, 10559) = 174.2, p < 0.001.*

[203] Values on a 5-point scale, ranging from 3.90 in Slovenia to 4.62 in Bulgaria and 4.63 in Kosovo.

[204] Values on a 5-point scale, 4.3 and 3.9, respectively.

[205] In the entire sample, 30 % of the respondents are married, 13 % co-habiting, while the rest are single (39 %), in a relationship (17 %), divorced (0.8 %) or widowed (0.25 %) at ages 25 – 29.

[206] The best age stated for a woman to get married ranges from 24 in Kosovo to 27 in Slovenia, while for a man it ranges from 26.5 in Kosovo to 29 in Montenegro.

[207] The lowest mean number of planned children is 1.83 in Romania and the highest is 2.72 in Kosovo.

[208] rho = 0.247, p < 0.001

[209] rho = 0.142, p < 0.001; rho = 0.333, p < 0.001; rho = 0.115, p < 0.001, respectively.

[210] rho = 0.472, p < 0.01

[211] For young women: X^2 *(12, 1944) = 409.1, p < 0.001*; and for young men: X^2 *(12, 2166) = 113.4, p < 0.001*. FES Youth Studies SEE 2018/19 data reveal that this is particularly the case in Kosovo and Albania, where just 20 % and 23 % of young mothers, respectively (excluding those still in education), are employed.

[212] According to Galland's findings, three types of countries could be identified: Northern (e.g. Denmark, Great Britain, The Netherlands, Germany) – with features of 'fast' welfare-state centred transitions to adulthood, Southern ('Mediterranean' e.g. Portugal, Greece, Spain, Italy) – with features of 'slow' and family-centred (Iacovou, 2002) transitions to adulthood, and the intermediate (e.g. France) (Galland, 2003: 183).

[213] This is modified as compared to Galland's methodology and the one used e.g. in Tomanović & Ignjatović, 2006. We used completed education instead of financial independence, which prevents comparisons.

[214] Considering different methodologies, not limited to samples, formulation of the responses and scales, it is not meaningful to do longitudinal comparison such as trend analysis.

[215] The latter three have the most pronounced country differences: shopping, X^2 (36, 10841) = 1085.7, p < 0.001; sports, X^2 (36, 10830) = 903.3, p < 0.001; praying, X^2 (36, 10669) = 2154.2, p < 0.001.

[216] Watching TV and using the Internet are analysed separately from other leisure activities (see the analysis below).

[217] Activities such as "praying," "shopping" and "being abroad" were omitted from the analysis. Praying is analysed in section 3.4 on young people's religiosity.

[218] Including: *listening to music, watching films, playing video games, nothing/ hang out/ relaxing.*

[219] Including: *going out with friends, spending time in bars etc., spending time at youth centres, volunteering, spending time with the family.*

[220] Including: *reading books, reading newspapers/magazines, doing something creative, meditating, practicing yoga or something similar, reading about spirituality and personal growth.*

[221] We made composite indexes comprised of the degree of involvement in each of the activities (1 – never, 2 – rarely (once a month or less), 3 – sometimes (several times in a month), 4 – often (at least once a week), and 5 – very often (every day or almost every day). Indices are scaled from 1 to 5 for each of the defined types of leisure activities.

[222] r = 0.653, p < 0.05 and r = 0.671, p < 0.05 respectively.

[223] Relaxation and entertainment: rho = 0.175, p < 0.01; socialising: rho = 0.096, p < 0.01; self-development: rho = −0.139, p < 0.01; sports activities: rho = 0.243, p < 0.01.

[224] Relaxation and entertainment: rho = 0.026, p < 0.01; socialising: rho = 0.039, p < 0.01; self-development: rho = 0.066, p < 0.01; sports activities: rho = 0.090. p < 0.01.

[225] Relaxation and entertainment: rho = 0.084, p < 0.01; socialising: rho = 0.093, p < 0.01; self-development: rho = 0.201, p < 0.01; sports activities: rho = 0.196, p < 0.01.

[226] At the individual country level, the influence of household material status on increasing the engagement in all activities is the most significant in Albania, while in BiH, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia, there is no significant correlation.

[227] In Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro and Slovenia, there is no significant influence of parents' education on relaxation and entertainment activities or socialising.

[228] We made composite indexes comprised of the degree of involvement in each of the above-mentioned types of activities (0 – never, 1 – sometimes, and 2 – often, at least once a week).

[229] r = 0.649*, p < 0.05

[230] r = 0.848**, p < 0.01

[231] r = 0.669*, p < 0.05

[232] r = 0.619, p = 0.057

[233] rho = −0.063, p< 0.01; rho = −0.030, p < 0.01; rho = −0.118, p < 0.01, respectively.

[234] rho = 0.128, p < 0.01; rho = 0.116, p < 0.001; rho = 0.107, p < .001; rho = 0.124, p < 0.01; rho = 0.075, p < 0.01, respectively.

[235] rho = 0.181, p < 0.01.

[236] See, for instance, in Petrović, 2013.

TABLE OF FIGURES

IMPRINT

PUBLISHER: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung e. V.
Referat Mittel- und Osteuropa
Hiroshimastr. 28 • 10785 Berlin
www.fes.de/referat-mittel-und-osteuropa/
www.fes.de/youth-studies/

RESPONSIBLE: Matthias Jobelius, Felix Henkel
PROJECT COORDINATOR: Denis Piplaš
CONTACT: Martin Güttler • martin.guettler@fes.de
EDITORS: Mirna Jusić, Miran Lavrič and Smiljka Tomanović
PEER-REVIEW: Marius Harring, Klaus Hurrelmann
LANGUAGE EDITING: James Turner
DESIGN: Andrea Schmidt • Typografie/im/Kontext
PRINTED BY: bub Bonner Universitäts-Buchdruckerei

ISBN: 978-3-96250-287-4
DATE: 2019