



PBILD

**Peacebuilding and Inclusive
Local Development**
a joint UN Programme in South Serbia



Youth in South Serbia

Inclusive Development Social Survey
in Jablanicki and Pcinjski Districts

Belgrade, June 2011

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The Peacebuilding and Inclusive Local Development (PBILD) joint programme is a United Nations (UN) initiative working to build capacity in south Serbia for inclusive, peaceful and sustainable development. Implemented by a team based in the UN office in Bujanovac, PBILD runs from 2009 until late 2012.

The team is composed of staff from all six of PBILD's implementing UN agency partners – UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, UN-HABITAT, IOM and ILO. The six UN agencies work together as 'One UN', and in co-operation with central government as well as all the municipalities of Jablanicki and Pcinjski districts. PBILD is financed by five international donors: the Spanish Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund (MDG-F), the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), the Swiss Agency for Development&Cooperation (SDC), the Kingdom of Norway and UNDP.

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CONTENTS

I	Introductory remarks	5
II	Summary	7
III	Methodology	15
	1. Methodology of desktop analysis	15
	2. Methodology of in-depth interviews	15
	3. Methodology of public opinion survey	16
	4. Methodological approach and objectives of examining the position of youth in the survey.....	19
IV	Findings	21
	1. Degree of social inclusion and trends among youth in South Serbia	21
	1.1. Assessment of influence on the life of a local community.....	22
	1.2. Availability of public services and satisfaction with the quality of services provided by public services	26
	1.3. Satisfaction with the functioning of institutions and trust in institutions	30
	1.4. Political and social activism	35
	1.5. Safety	42

1.6. Media	44
1.7. Living standard of youth in South Serbia.	47
2. Migrations	48
3. Fields of special interest for youth.	68
3.1. Volunteerism	69
3.2. Information level among youth	73
3.3. Quality of leisure time.	75
3.4. Mobility	78
4. International relations among youth.	79
5. Overview of the development of institutional frameworks for youth.	91
V Conclusions and recommendations	97

I. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The Inclusive Social Development Survey in South Serbia was conducted during October and November 2010 to analyse the situation in the field of **migration, youth and inter-ethnic relations** and to provide data for the evaluation of the Peacebuilding and Inclusive Social Development (PBILD) programme in south Serbia's two districts of Jablanicki and Pcinjski.

The survey was conducted based on three methodological approaches:

- 1. Desktop analyses related to migration and youth.** The purpose of desktop analyses was to identify key issues in order to develop a questionnaire and provide a context for interpretation and presentation of the most important survey findings. Desktop analyses were based on relevant and available documents (local and national) as well as on previous research conducted in the field of migration and youth.
- 2. In-depth interviews with representatives of various institutions and organizations.** 75 in-depth interviews were conducted with the representatives of institutions and organizations in five municipalities from Pcinjski and Jablanicki districts - in Vranje, Leskovac, Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja. To obtain information on how institutions perceive social issues and understand their specific activities and projects, including the problems faced, the questions were designed at two levels: the first, where the capacities and activities related to basic jurisdiction of all institutions and organizations were examined, and the second, where specific topics of this survey were addressed - migration, youth and youth policy, and interethnic relations.
- 3. Public opinion survey among the general population.** The survey was conducted on a representative sample of 1,548 respondents in Jablanicki and Pcinjski districts. The survey sample was created so as to ensure 1) representativeness at the level of the five municipalities (Leskovac,

Vranje, Bujanovac, Presevo and Medvedja) and 2) representativeness at the level of the region (at the level of Jablanicki and Pcinjski districts as a whole).

The purpose of the survey was to obtain answers from the citizens who live in this region to questions related to potential migration, quality of life and understanding of the position of young people, as well as the state of permanently sensitive inter-ethnic relations in a multi-ethnic region of Serbia.

This report focuses on the youth in south Serbia, by analysing eight separate themes included in the public opinion survey - *assessment of the influence on the life of local community, trust in institutions, political and social activism, safety, availability of public services, relationship towards the media, issues related to living standards and migration*, to assess the degree of social inclusion of young people in these communities. The public opinion survey covered also additional questions important to young people - *volunteerism, information level among young people, quality of leisure time, mobility and relations with other national minorities* living in south Serbia. The main findings obtained through a desktop analysis of youth policies at the national and local levels will also be presented.

The final report of the *Inclusive Social Development of Youth Survey* findings presented here through comparative data on the perceptions and attitudes of young people within youth population groups aged 15–19, 20–24 and 25–29, in comparison to the total average for youth for the region and in comparison to the total average for south Serbia, looking also at the differences related to gender and nationality where relevant.

II. SUMMARY

The *Inclusive Social Development of Youth Survey* provides a brief overview of the situation related to development of the institutional framework of the system of care for young people and key strategic documents in the surveyed municipalities, as well as an overview of identified priorities and findings related to assessment of the capacities of institutions for young people (youth offices and youth councils) and representatives of the civil sector. The youth themselves, through the public opinion survey, have identified their most important concerns.

The Survey showed there is much space for work and improvement of the situation, both at the level of institutions addressing migration issues, youth policy and inter-ethnic relations, and at the level of awareness raising of citizens and resolving problems they face in the region. Problems in these districts, which also exist throughout Serbia though at a less magnified level, are multiplied because these are the poorest regions burdened by a weak economy, continuing depopulation and a legacy of inter-ethnic conflict in the recent past.

Based on the research findings it could be concluded that the **level of social inclusion in Pcinjski and Jablanicki districts is relatively low**. A significant part of the population feels excluded from social and political activities due to their low level of influence on the life of the local community, their low level of trust in local institutions and dissatisfaction with their functioning as well as the exclusion of a high number of people from the labour market given the high unemployment level. This conclusion shows that the existing social development model faces serious challenges the overcoming of which is a precondition for further development and accomplishment of the necessary and desired changes.

When we look at youth, we see that, as regards the level of social inclusion, they are not in a more favourable position than adults; moreover, in most of the criteria the age has been proved to be a socio-demographic characteristic that significantly contributes to differences among the respondents at the level of the whole sample in terms of their attitudes, preferences and perceptions. Age is the factor that shows the greatest connection with the readiness to migrate (the older the respondents are, the lower is their readiness to migrate). Age influences their satisfaction and trust in institutions (the older the respondents are, the higher is their dissatisfaction), on higher level of information on political issues (the older the respondents, the more informed, more interested they are in political issues), on participation in elections (participation in elections increases with age) and on the dissatisfaction when assessing living standards.

The citizens of Pcinjski and Jablanicki districts are dissatisfied with the work of the local self-government (61% are dissatisfied, 27% indifferent, and only 12% are satisfied). Adults are generally more dissatisfied with the work of the local self-government than young people (54% of youth, 63% of adults). Youth at the level of the whole sample have the greatest trust in the *religious organisations* they belong to (50%), *followed by the police* (43%) and *army* (41%).

Unlike adults, young people show higher satisfaction with availability and quality of public services and institutions. However, one third of young people report that some of the important institutions are physically not accessible for them or that they have problems to exercise their rights, especially the youngest respondents. Half of young people in south Serbia are dissatisfied with the quality of *places for cultural activities and entertainment* (mostly those in the age group 20 to 24). Gender differences are evident within the sample of youth, since young men are more dissatisfied with the work of institutions than are young women.

The citizens in south Serbia show most significant participation with regard to participation in elections. 55% of citizens regularly vote in elections. Those older than 30 are above average when voting is concerned (58%), while two groups of young people with show marginally less participation (52% aged 20 to 24 and 51% aged 25 to 29). Again gender differences are evident. A statistically significant number of young women reports that they “rarely” vote, while a considerably higher percentage of young men report that they “often” vote. As regards social activism, young people are not overly active members of the community. If they are active, they are most often members of three types of organisations: sports and recreation organisations (philately, numismatics, hunters, fishermen, pigeon breeders) – 16%, hobby

organisations – 14% and political parties – 13%. Smaller numbers of youth report that they are active in organisations such as youth organisations, student parliaments (9%), organisations in the area of culture e.g. cultural-artistic associations (8%), professional associations (8%), as well as non-governmental organisations and unions (5%).

It is indicative that all groups of youth feel safer in comparison to 2008¹ than those aged over 30 (by as much as one third aged 20 to 24). Although the data are encouraging, the fact that the greatest number of youth report that among the listed institutions they have the greatest trust in the police and army shows that the safety in south Serbia is not completely ensured, but is under a considerable level of control. Namely, trust in these two institutions represents trust in the State i.e. trust that these institutions could prevent the escalation of possible conflicts.

Based on the assessment of living standards it could be observed that young people tend to evaluate the quality of life better than adults. If we analyse the differences within the youth sample, it is noticeable, as expected, that the youngest groups of respondents tend to evaluate the economic position of their families “with more carefreeness” and that this “carefreeness” drops in older groups of youth. Similar tendencies may be found when comparing the respondents according to gender – young women tend to evaluate living standards higher than do young men. Young people mostly live from salaries and income from agriculture (as much as 78% in the total count), and that a salary is yet a more important source of income (58%).

Young people follow the electronic media, primarily TV (95%), and somewhat lesser print media (44%).

Compared to other age groups, young people have a greater wish to migrate from the municipalities in which they live! Namely, the greatest readiness to migrate is present among the youth of Albanian nationality, as much as 45%, than among those of Serbian nationality², which constitutes the majority – 35%, while the readiness to migrate is lowest among Roma – at “only” 25%. The relatively low readiness of young Roma to migrate possibly speaks more about their level of marginalisation and “invisibility” since young Roma face high levels of deprivation. Motives listed in deciding to migrate are primarily economic in nature: more than 85% of youth think about leaving primarily due for economic reasons – *lack of work and the bad economic situation, low living standards and a lack of money*. More young people report that they think about the possibility of leaving the country,

1 The question was related to comparison of the feeling of safety in the last two years.

2 The term nationality is the traditionally used phraseology which refers to the self-identified ethnic grouping; it does not refer to citizenship.

37% of youth, compared to 20% of adults. Young people are also more ready than adults to permanently leave the country.

Young people surveyed have not had many opportunities to volunteer so far. Volunteerism is significantly less present among the youth in south Serbia than among the average youth population in Serbia as a whole. The number of those who said that they have volunteered ranges from 13% in the oldest youth age group, to 8% (in the group aged 20 to 24), to only 6% in the group of the youngest ones. **On average, half of the youth population show a desire to be engaged in some kind of voluntary work.** For the young people aged 15 to 19 socialisation with peers represents a motive that is almost equally present as the motive “opportunity for future employment”. However, for the other two subgroups of young people (20–24 and 25–29) socialisation is a peripheral motive. The key motives are *opportunity for future employment, then acquiring work experience and/or altruistic motive – helping those who need help*. Difficulties in finding employment have an impact also on the issue of volunteering, and thus this type of engagement is perceived as one way to get a job.

Youth in south Serbia “suffer” from a lack of information. The younger they are, the stronger is their feeling that they do not have enough information. Thus, as much as 78% of young people aged 15 to 19 in Jablanicki and Pcinjski districts claim that they do not have enough information about the things they are interested in or that they need.

The type of information youth are interested in indicates that young people in the whole Serbia have very similar problems and needs. The most sought after information is related to employment, followed by education and professional improvement. These two types of information were quoted in all three subgroups of youth, in a different level. Thus for example, 37% of youth aged 15 to 19 in this Survey said that this type of information is the most deficient, 46% of youth aged 20 to 24 and as much as 72% of those belonging to the group aged 25 to 30. Interest for this type of information is higher among young men (31%) than young women (23%), while there are no differences when their nationality is concerned.

Youth from these two districts most often spend their leisure time socialising and going out, then watching TV and on the Internet. These three types of activities occupy around 80% of youths’ free time.

In south Serbia there are more citizens who travelled abroad (for different reasons) or lived abroad than those who have not had a chance to travel yet (57% vs. 43%). The younger the respondents, the higher are the percentages of those who have never travelled abroad. Thus, half of secondary school pupils have never left the country (47% of those aged 20 to 24, 39% of youth

between 25 and 30 years of age have not had a chance to go abroad). Even those who travelled mostly did so only once (13%). Their number is, however, above average of the whole sample, which is 8%.

Young people establish contacts with members of other nationalities more than the average population. While in the general sample only 26% of the respondents have everyday contact with members of other nationalities, among youth this percentage is 33% (in total, on the level of the group between 15 and 29 years of age).

In spite of the fact that they enter into contact with the members of other nations, ethnic distance of young people towards members of other nations is not lower, at least when young Serbs are concerned. Data shows that the distance towards Albanians and Roma is by several percentage points higher among young Serbs in comparison to the whole sample of Serbs.. Young Albanians have a somewhat lower ethnic distance than the average towards all nations. Among young Roma, just as among Serbs, ethnic distance is again somewhat higher than the average of Roma population.

In addition to data from the public opinion survey, more has been learned on the problems of youth and level of development of the local institutional framework and capacities of institutions responsible for caring about youth also through desktop analysis related to youth and on the basis of in-depth interviews with the representatives of institutions and organisations engaged in working with youth.

Analysis of the policies shows that all municipalities are in a similar phase concerning the adoption of youth strategies and establishing bodies that should implement those strategies. This phase cannot be called formative yet – these are young institutions that are in the process of establishment and documents defining their work are currently being developed, and the municipalities need support so that all these bodies could function in full capacity.

Jablanicki district consists of the town of Leskovac and five municipalities (Bojnik, Lebane, Vlasotince, Medvedja and Crna Trava). Local youth offices have been founded in all these municipalities, except in Medvedja. Local action plans for youth (LAP) have been adopted in the municipalities of Lebane, Vlasotince and Bojnik, while the town of Leskovac and municipalities of Medvedja and Crna Trava are in the process of preparation of the local action plans (their adoption is expected in 2011). The district of Pcinjski consists of the town of Vranje and six municipalities (Vladicin Han, Surdulica, Bosilegrad, Trgoviste, Bujanovac and Presevo). Local youth offices have been founded in all these municipalities, while the local action plans for youth have been adopted in the municipalities of Bosilegrad, Bujanovac, Vranje, Vladicin

Han, Trgoviste and Presevo. The local action plan for youth in Surdulica has been prepared and its adoption is expected in 2011.

Key objectives of the adopted local action plans may be grouped into four sections: a) work on youth employment; b) increasing the degree of youth activism; c) better informing youth; d) ensuring conditions that would enable young people to spend their free time in as constructive a way as possible. *The very findings of the public opinion survey among youth confirm that the identified priorities are in accordance with the real needs of youth.*

In-depth interviews with the representatives of the youth councils and youth offices confirm the findings gained by the desktop analysis and public opinion survey.

Conclusions and recommendations based on these findings are concerned with work in following areas:

- 1) **Youth activism should be increased**, especially through the forms of engagement that could bring some concrete benefits, such as acquiring work experience or opportunities for future employment
- 2) **Improvement of inter-ethnic relationships among youth, elimination of prejudices and overcoming language barriers** represent significant issues, relevant in all municipalities of these two districts.
- 3) **Young people should be enabled to have more influence on the life of the local communities and increase their feeling of integration**, which could positively motivate young people to decide to stay in their communities.
- 4) **Information level among youth should be increased**, especially in fields such as employment opportunities, additional education, informal education, re-training and additional training.
- 5) Support related to information distribution is especially important in the area of **youth economic empowerment** (active job search and starting own business).
- 6) **Informal education programmes should be developed** in areas in which young people are interested.
- 7) It should be made possible for young people to get a chance through different projects to **exchange experiences** with their peers from other countries. Also, joint activities and connecting young people from different parts of Serbia should be encouraged.
- 8) Youth should be enabled to **spend their free time more actively and more creatively** by providing facilities for youth and developing programmes in

the field of science, culture, art and entertainment.

As regards the institutions and organisations engaged in working with youth, the following steps may be recommended:

- 1) **Strengthening the capacities of youth councils and youth offices.** Since these are newly formed institutions, their work should be supported by integrating them into the local administration and making them a part of it.
- 2) **Provision of funds and support for strengthening capacities in all areas** – financial, technical and human resources.
- 3) **Networking of institutions and organisations engaged in working with young people.** Networking should be conducted both on the level of a municipality itself and on the level of the region, because the exchange of experience is an important way of capacity building. In addition to the institutions and organisations engaged in working with young people, **local community institutions** should be open to youth and be proactive in providing them with appropriate information and adjusting their work to the needs and development of youth.
- 4) The institutional framework also requires the **international relations and migration management** to be improved through creation of conditions for an efficient work of the bodies dealing with interethnic relations (such as the councils for interethnic relations) and by adopting strategies for migration management on the level of certain municipalities (at least the larger ones) in south Serbia.

When applying the findings presented in this survey it should be kept in mind that each of the included municipalities has its specificities, and therefore the recommendations and conclusions should be implemented in accordance with them. For example, on the one hand, in some municipalities the number of young people is very small, while in others the number of young people is far above the average. This is why, in some of the following phases, the youth needs assessment has to be adjusted to the specificities of the municipalities forming the Jablanicki and Pcinjski districts. Therefore, a general recommendation is to continue, in the course of the programme implementation, with additional exploration of certain topics considered to be important for better understanding of the ways for improving the position of youth in each individual municipality.

III. METHODOLOGY

The Inclusive Development Social Survey in the South Serbia was conducted during October and November 2010, by combining analytical, qualitative and quantitative methodology:

1. Desktop analysis in the field of migrations and youth,
2. In-depth interviews with representatives of different institutions and civil society organisations,
3. Public opinion survey among general population in Jablanicki and Pcinjski districts.

1. METHODOLOGY OF DESKTOP ANALYSIS

Purpose of the desktop analysis was to identify key issues to guide the development of the survey questionnaire, and to provide a context for interpretation and presentation of the most significant survey findings. Desktop analyses were based on relevant and available documents (both local and national) as well as on the previously conducted surveys on migration and youth issues.

2. METHODOLOGY OF IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

A total of 75 in-depth interviews were conducted within the project with the representatives of different institutions and organisations in the five municipalities/towns from Pcinjski and Jablanicki districts - in Vranje,

Leskovac, Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja³. The in-depth interviews were realized with the representatives of the following institutions: units of local self-government (heads of municipal/city administrations, coordinators of the service centre and its staff), centres for social work, schools (primary and secondary), National Employment Service (NES), councils for inter-ethnic relations, youth councils, Roma co-ordinators, youth offices, Coordination Body for Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja, civil society organisations, trustees for refugees and internally displaced persons, national councils of national minorities (Roma, Bulgarian and Albanian ethnic minorities) and Ombudsman Office in Bujanovac, Presevo and Medvedja. The interviews were also carried out with the returnees (voluntary returnees and those who returned on the basis of Readmission Agreements). The criteria for selection of interviewees in the named institutions were their functions. Namely, the interviews were done with the decision makers, i.e. those responsible for designing, adopting or implementing decisions within their institutions, namely presidents or managers.

A separate interview guide was prepared for each of the institutions. Face to face interviews were conducted by the interviewers specially trained for this purpose. The questions were composed at two levels: the first, where capacities and activities related to the original relevance of all the institutions and organisations were explored, and second, where specific topics of this research - migration, youth, youth policy and inter-ethnic relations were dealt with. In such manner, we wanted to obtain data on how these institutions/organisations perceive these social issues and to learn what they do (what are their concrete activities and projects) when the three subjects are concerned, and particularly, what are the problems that occur.

3. METHODOLOGY OF THE PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

The survey sample was created so as to ensure:

- 1) *representativeness at the level of five municipalities* – Leskovac, Vranje, Bujanovac, Presevo and Medvedja,
- 2) *representativeness at the level of the region* (at the level of Jablanicki and Pcinjski districts as a whole.

³ The exceptions were interviews with the representatives of the Roma and Bulgarian National Council, because their seats are in Belgrade and Dimitrovgrad, outside of the listed five towns in south Serbia.

The smallest sampling unit was a polling station. The polling station was used because it is a) a smaller unit than a settlement and thus enables more detailed specification and control of the sample representativeness and b) it provides a detailed insight into all streets and addresses it is made of, thus allowing movement in the field and selection of households, which then ensures maximum level of representativeness of the selected households.

The sampling process itself as well as the process of selection of respondents was conducted through four phases: sampling of five municipalities, sampling of south Serbia region, selection of households within the polling stations and selection of subjects in the households.

PHASE ONE – SAMPLING OF FIVE MUNICIPALITIES

In the course of the first phase, there was a selection of certain number of polling stations in the five municipalities that need to have their sub-samples.

The polling stations were identified by the method that ensured the representativeness of their municipalities as a whole (for example, the sampled number included such a number of rural and urban settlements that was proportionate to the number of the rural and urban settlements in the municipality as a whole; under such principle, the polling stations were selected in proportion to the number of residents, ethnic background of population it is made of, as well as according to other data available within the data base).

The polling stations in other municipalities was selected according to the same principle as in the first five municipalities; however, due to the number of polling stations that “belong” to a municipality in such division, the representativeness at the level of these municipalities could not be ensured.

Through such process, a total of 150 polling stations were identified, and in each of them 10 households were selected, from which the respondents were further selected.

PHASE TWO - SAMPLING OF THE REGION OF SOUTH SERBIA

In order to provide the representativeness of the sample at the level of the whole region, the pondering of sample was done post festum, so that the answers of the respondents from each of the municipalities were taken to the level of share of each of the municipalities in the total population of

the region⁴. This procedure was applied for each of the 13 municipalities and in this way a pondered sample, representative for the region as a whole was obtained.

PHASE THREE - SELECTION OF HOUSEHOLDS WITHIN THE POLLING STATIONS

Each of the polling stations contains a detailed description of streets, house numbers and other items it is made of (quarters, hamlets, parts of parts, etc). Based upon such description of polling stations, firstly a starting point for work of the field interviewers was determined by the method of random selection. According to defined rules, the selection of one in two or one in three households was made (depending on whether it was an urban or rural polling station); this ensured: 1) systematic randomness in the selection and that; 2) the polling station is evenly covered. Throughout this phase, a detailed interview log was kept, which is a basis for monitoring of the movement of interviewers as well as for performance of possible controls.

PHASE FOUR - SELECTION OF INTERVIEWEES IN A HOUSEHOLD

In order to provide randomness of selection of the interviewees within a household (avoiding the situation where only the one at home or the one who wants it answers the questions), the following method was used - the interviewee in the household was the one whose birthday comes the first. If that person was not at home or did not want to answer the questions, the interviewer went to the next household; this means that in the former household no one else could become an interviewee.

The total sample consisted of 1,548 examinees, male and female citizens living in Jablanicki and Pcinjski districts. In this way the structure of the population represented was fully respected. As mentioned before, a special questionnaire was prepared for this purpose developed on the bases of the expressed needs recognised by the client ordering the survey, goals of the project and based on the findings, i.e. topics identified in the desktop analysis.

⁴ For example, Vranje with its 200 interviewees makes 13.7% of the non-pondered sample; however, the population of Vranje makes 18.3% of these two districts which means that the sub-sample for Vranje was multiplied with the quotient that took the sub-sample for Vranje to the level of the real share of the population of this city within the region.

4. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH AND OBJECTIVES OF EXAMINING THE POSITION OF YOUTH IN THE SURVEY

Youth is a special period in life when, together with physical and mental maturing, the process of integration of individuals into the social community also takes place. During this period young people are expected to develop skills and capacities for taking over permanent social roles in all areas of human activities. This process, as a rule, lasts until an adequate level of social autonomy, responsibility and independence is achieved. This is exactly why every responsible State recognises young people as the most important social resource and a capital in which it invests with care and in a planned way.

In May 2007, when the Ministry of Youth and Sports was formed, Serbia made the first significant steps in developing an institutional framework that includes the creation of institutions responsible for taking care of youth and policies guiding this care. Soon after that the first policies and strategic documents were created – the National Strategy for Youth and National Action Plan. Simultaneously, intensive work started on developing the institutional framework for youth care at the local level– local youth offices and local youth councils. Significant attention by donors and civil society assisted youth programmes and developed capacities of the newly formed institutions. The Peacebuilding and Inclusive Local Development programme recognises youth as a target group and developed a component that focuses especially on improvement of their position.

One of the important initial steps in planning the programme activities focused on improvement of the position of youth in south Serbia was also conducting a survey in this field to “measure” and identify the situation of youth at the beginning of the project so as to enable planning of future activities in accordance with the needs. Therefore, a special segment within the *Inclusive Social Development of Youth Survey* was devoted to youth.

The goal of the youth survey was to identify the position of youth, i.e. quality of life of young people aged 15 to 30 in the municipalities of Pcinjski and Jablanicki districts. We have learned about the position of young people i.e. quality of their life and main problems they face in three ways:

- 1) **desktop analyses of the development of local institutional framework – institutions and policies** related to youth from all municipalities of these two districts based on relevant and available documents (local and national) and on the previous research conducted in the field of youth.
- 2) **using quantitative methodology, conducting in-depth interviews** with decision makers, representatives of institutions and representatives of

the civil sector (the interviews were done with the representatives of the **youth councils** and **youth offices** from Bujanovac, Presevo, Vranje and Leskovac, and apart from the representatives of the institutions, the interviews were done with the representatives of local organisations dealing with youth from Bujanovac *Youth Forum for Roma Education (OFER)*, from Leskovac *Education Centre and Resource Centre*, from Medvedja *Elan* and *Goja*, from Vranje *Nexus* and *Generator*, and from Presevo *Junior skills* and *Green World*),

- 3) Direct survey of attitudes and perceptions of young people regarding opportunities and problems they encounter through the **public opinion survey** (proportion of youth in the sample and the structure of the sub-sample corresponds to the proportions and structure of the population of youth in these two districts).

This report will provide a brief overview of the situation with regard to development of the institutional framework of the system of care for young people and key strategic documents in the surveyed municipalities, as well as an overview of the identified priorities. An important part of the findings is related to the analysis of the quality of life and the level of social inclusion of youth within eight separate topics addressed in the survey of public opinion: *assessment of the influence on the life of the local community, trust in institutions, political and social activism, safety, availability of public services and activities, relationship towards the media, issues related to living standards and migration*. Special attention was devoted to the findings related to the following topics: *volunteerism, information level among young people, quality of leisure time, mobility and relations to other national minorities* living in south Serbia. In the end the results related to the assessment of the capacities of institutions for young people obtained based on the interviews with decision makers, representatives of youth institutions (youth offices and youth councils) and representatives of the civil sector will be presented.

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS

1. DEGREE OF SOCIAL INCLUSION AND TRENDS AMONG YOUTH IN SOUTH SERBIA

Inclusive social development means that all members of a community have a prevailing sense of belonging and involvement in the governance in the community where they live. The lack of a sense of involvement and lack of trust in those who make and implement decisions, renders it difficult to resolve the major problems within the community and obstructs the process of harmonization and the possibility of reaching social consensus which is a precondition for any kind of serious change. There is no place for the concept of social development if all members of a community do not have confidence that those who govern their community are doing their job to the best of their ability and in the best interest of all their citizens. Social exclusion of certain population groups does in fact indicate the existence of the open suspicions, doubts and dilemmas whether the community is moving in the right direction and whether it offers the same possibilities to all its citizens. The degree of inclusion / exclusion affects the perception of *community strength*⁵ of the community where these citizens live.

The public opinion survey conducted in **Jablanicki and Pcinjski districts** reveals that the **degree of social inclusion is relatively low**. Very low level of influence on the life of the local community, low trust in local institutions and dissatisfaction with their work as well as the exclusion of a large number

⁵ The term community “strength” is taken and operationalised from the indicator specified in the PBILD Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and Plan – July 2010

of people from the labour activities i.e. high unemployment rate point to the fact that a significant part of the population feels excluded from social and political activities. This conclusion shows that the current social development model faces serious challenges, the overcoming of which is a precondition for further development and bringing about desired changes.

The findings of the survey show that in terms of social inclusion, **women** are a more vulnerable group **than members of national minorities** who, in certain spheres, especially in communities where they constitute the majority, show a higher degree of social cohesion.

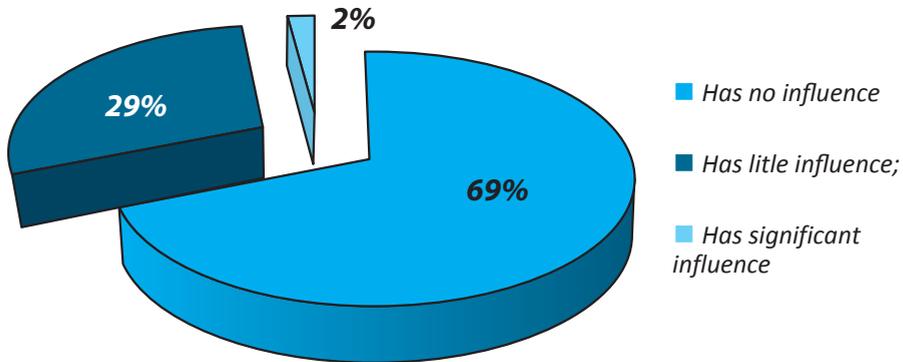
In further findings the degree of social inclusion of the youth in south Serbia is addressed in greater detail, based on **eight** topics covered in the survey: *assessment of the influence on the life of a local community, trust in institutions, political and social activism, safety, availability of public services, attitude towards the media, issues related to living standards and migration.*

1.1. ASSESSMENT OF INFLUENCE ON THE LIFE OF A LOCAL COMMUNITY

Generally, Serbia is a society in which there is little trust in institutions and great dissatisfaction with their work. Moreover the feeling of inclusion into the management of the community is also low, while the dissatisfaction with the level of inclusion into the life of community is high⁶. The situation is no different in the south of Serbia. The citizens feel they have no influence on the life of a local community. On average two thirds of the population in the region believes that they have no influence on the activities in the local community, and this negative trend prevails among the youth of this region. The number of those who think they have an important or extremely significant impact on the life of the local community is at the level of statistical error! Public opinion survey conducted on the territory of Jablanicki and Pcinjski districts shows that **69% of the interviewees of both gender feel that they have no influence on the life of their local community, 29% feel that their influence is small, whereas only 2% of them think their influence is significant.**

⁶ Research within the project “Promotion of Debate on Social Inclusion” (implemented by a consortium of seven organizations led by the Social Innovations Fund) showed that the self-assessment of influence on decisions related to the life of a local community is one of the predominant indicators of social exclusion – 68% of the interviewees at the level of Serbia feel they have no influence on the life of their community

Graph 1. Assessment of the influence on the life of a local community in total population (in %)



The assessment of influence on the life of a local community at the level of the whole sample is slightly lower among women (72%) than among men, compared to the average. Also, if we analyze how different ethnic groups evaluate the possibility of influencing the life of a local community it can be said that the members of the Roma population (89%) and members of the Albanian ethnic minority (79%) feel that their influence is lower than the average⁷.

As regards **youth**, they generally have a feeling of less influence on the life of their community. Within the youth sample certain differences are perceived, and the feeling that a young person is able to influence the life of his community becomes stronger with age – the youngest (age group 15-19) in 83% of the cases claim not to have any influence; within the group of 20 to 24 years of age 56% of young people share the same feelings; whereas in the group of 25 to 29 years of age, 65% of young people feel the same (average for youth is 68%).

From the perspective of the gender structure of youth, there are no significant differences, except that there are more young women who feel they have small influence on the life of a local community (one in four).

⁷ Due to the demands specified in the PBILD Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, the data in this part of the report were mostly differentiated based upon the gender and ethnic background of the interviewees.

Table 1. The level of influence of youth on the life of a local community in terms of gender in the sub-sample of youth (in %)

	<i>Has no influence</i>	<i>Small influence</i>	<i>Moderate influence</i>	<i>Great influence</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Female</i>	65	28	7	0	100
<i>Male</i>	69	19	11	1	100
<i>Average</i>	67	23	9	1	100

Young Albanians and Roma of both genders usually think that they have no influence on the life of their local community whatsoever (95% of Roma and 81% of Albanians), whereas the percentage of youth within the majority population who felt the same is less (62%).

Table 2. Nationality and the level of influence of youth on the life of a local community in the sub sample of youth (in %)

	<i>Nema nikakvog uticaja</i>	<i>Mali uticaj</i>	<i>Osrednji uticaj</i>	<i>Veliki uticaj</i>	<i>Ukupno</i>
<i>srpska</i>	62	28	10	0	100
<i>albanska</i>	81	9	8	2	100
<i>romska</i>	95	5	0	0	100
<i>Prosek</i>	67	23	9	1	100

In the south of Serbia only 9% of citizens are satisfied with the degree of influence that they have on the life of a local community (6% of youth). That feeling of satisfaction is more prominent within the oldest group of young people (one in ten is very satisfied with the influence she has); such findings are to be expected given that we are dealing with the members of young population who have graduated from university, who are mostly employed, and who have some decision-making power in the social hierarchy. On the other hand, nearly two thirds on average is not satisfied with the level influence they have.

Table 3. Satisfaction with the level of influence the youth have on the life of a local community (in %)

	<i>age gr. 15–19</i>	<i>age gr. 20–24</i>	<i>age gr. 25–29</i>	<i>Youth average (15–29)</i>	<i>Over 30</i>	<i>Average</i>
<i>I am not satisfied</i>	68	59	64	64	64	64
<i>I am somewhat satisfied</i>	26	39	26	30	26	27
<i>I am very satisfied</i>	6	2	10	6	10	9
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

Looking from the perspective of the gender structure of youth, there are no significant differences, except that young men's level of dissatisfaction with their influence on the life of their local community is above average (two thirds in total).

Table 4. Gender and satisfaction with the level of influence of youth on the life of a local community in the sub-sample of youth (in %)

	<i>I am not satisfied</i>	<i>I am somewhat satisfied</i>	<i>I am very satisfied</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Female</i>	59	37	4	100
<i>Male</i>	67	25	8	100
<i>Average</i>	63	31	6	100

The level of dissatisfaction of young Albanians and Roma with their influence on the life of the local community is above average compared to Serbs (95% of Roma and 83% of Albanians).

Table 5. Nationality and satisfaction with the level of influence of youth on the life of a local community in the sub-sample of youth (in %)

	<i>I am not satisfied</i>	<i>I am somewhat satisfied</i>	<i>I am very satisfied</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Serbian</i>	56	37	7	100
<i>Albanian</i>	83	15	2	100
<i>Roma</i>	95	0	5	100
<i>Average</i>	64	30	6	100

And finally, one of the key preconditions for social inclusion of the population in the life of a local community is their employment, and a certain quality of life. In other words, social inclusion will not happen without the active employment of citizens. The situation in south Serbia in terms of employment is alarming, since almost half of the population does not have permanent employment, or is currently unemployed. If we take away from the total population the number of those who are economically inactive (29% of pensioners, pupils, students, and those unable to work) the number of the unemployed *in the structure of the working population* would even be higher (66%, about two-thirds). Compared to men, women are more disadvantaged in terms of their status in the labour market, since more of them are unemployed, and furthermore there is not a single woman in the sample who runs her own business or a shop. The unemployment rate among the young is higher than the average (58%). It is for this reason that, on the level of the whole population, the community is to a much lesser

extent regarded as a place where an individual should invest, both personally and professionally, to contribute to the development of the community.

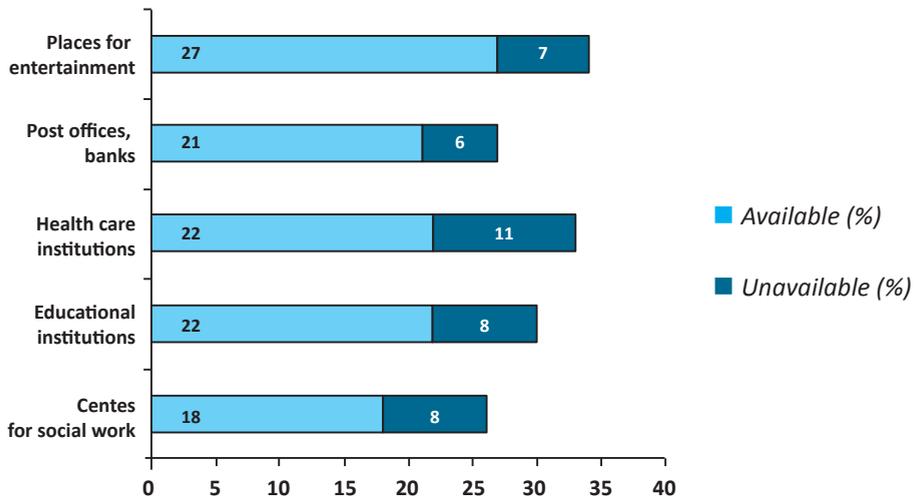
1.2. AVAILABILITY OF PUBLIC SERVICES AND SATISFACTION WITH THE QUALITY OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY PUBLIC SERVICES

The availability of public services to youth and their level of satisfaction with the quality of these services is a sure sign of the inclusion of youth in the life of a local community as well as their exclusion from it. It can also tell us a lot about how much the community invests in creating conditions to meet the basic needs of this population group. As part of the survey special attention has been dedicated to the evaluation of the work and availability of the following institutions/services: *availability and quality of public transport, availability of places for shopping and their quality of service, availability and quality of educational institutions, health care institutions, post offices and banks and the availability of places for entertainment and cultural activities and quality of programmes implemented there.*

AVAILABILITY OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS/SERVICES

At the level of the whole sample of youth, which includes all three age groups, about one-third of the respondents stated that, due to different reasons, they face problems in exercising their rights. About 20% of the respondents within this sample claim that the services / institutions are inaccessible, and about 8% of young people within this sample also stated that they have problems in exercising their rights in spite of the services / institutions being physically accessible to them. A more detailed analysis in terms of what services/institutions are “less available” to young people shows that the majority of young people listed precisely those institutions that are of particular interest to them: *centres for social work – 26% (unavailable 18%, available but has problems exercising his rights 8%), educational institutions - 30% (unavailable 22%, available but has problems exercising his rights 8%), health care institutions – 33% (unavailable 22%, available but has problems exercising her rights 11%), post offices, banks – 27% (21%, 11%), places for entertainment and cultural activities – 34% (27%, 7%).*

Graph 2. Unavailability of public services / institutions in the sub-sample of youth



The graph clearly shows that particularly high percentages are related to the availability of cultural institutions and health and educational institutions. However, in this aspect the young people do not differ much from other residents of these communities, those aged over thirty. The unavailability of *educational institutions* and *places for cultural activities and entertainment* is slightly higher, but the percentage of adults who have need for these services is less. There is a certain advantage in favour of young people in terms of availability of services of *health care centres*.

Similar tendencies occur in assessment of the availability of *public transport* and *places for shopping*. Public transport is unavailable (physically distant) for 14% of young people in this region, while 8% experience problems when using public transport in spite of it being in their vicinity. The percentages are even higher when the availability of the places for shopping are concerned: as much as 18% of young people says that these places are physically distant; one in ten has a problem to exercise their rights in spite living in the vicinity of these places. Similar tendencies are observed in the sample of citizens older than 30.

When we observe the variability within the youth sample, two aspects are particularly worrying. It is disheartening to discover that, on average, one fifth of young people say that their educational institutions are physically distant, and 29% of them are in the age group between 15 and 19. It was also noted that most of those who have problems in exercising their rights

in the *Centre for Social Work* are young people between 15 and 19 years of age - 13%.

The following tables offer more information regarding the availability of public services/institutions.

Table 6. Availability of a centre for social work in the vicinity (in %)

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Youth average	Over 30	Average
<i>Not a user</i>	42	46	51	47	58	56
<i>Physically distant</i>	19	19	17	18	16	17
<i>It is close, but I have problems to exercise my rights</i>	13	8	4	8	6	6
<i>I have no problems to exercise my rights</i>	26	27	28	27	20	21
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 7. Availability of educational institutions in the vicinity (in %)

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Youth average	Over 30	Average
<i>Not a user</i>	12	29	45	29	57	52
<i>Physically distant</i>	29	22	15	22	15	16
<i>It is close, but I have problems to exercise my rights</i>	9	8	7	8	7	7
<i>I have no problems to exercise my rights</i>	50	41	33	41	21	25
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 8. The availability of health care institutions in the vicinity (in %)

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Youth average	Over 30	Average
<i>Not a user</i>	5	1	10	5	9	8
<i>Physically distant</i>	24	20	21	22	31	29
<i>It is close, but I have problems to exercise my rights</i>	10	15	8	11	11	11
<i>I have no problems to exercise my rights</i>	61	64	61	62	49	52
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 9. Availability of places for entertainment and cultural activities in the vicinity (in %)

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Youth average	Over 30	Average
<i>Not a user</i>	12	7	18	12	49	42
<i>Physically distant</i>	24	29	27	27	18	20
<i>It is close, but I have problems to exercise my rights</i>	10	6	7	7	7	7
<i>I have no problems to exercise my rights</i>	54	58	48	54	26	31
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

SATISFACTION WITH THE QUALITY OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY PUBLIC SERVICES/INSTITUTIONS

We asked those who said that they have access to the above mentioned services / institutions to rate their quality. Evaluating the quality of services, the youth, on average, stated that they were more satisfied than dissatisfied with the following services - *quality of places for shopping* (38% dissatisfied versus 51% satisfied), *quality of services of educational institutions* (36% dissatisfied versus 42% satisfied), *quality of the services provided by the health care institutions* (32 % dissatisfied versus 44% satisfied) and finally *the post offices and banks* (30% dissatisfied versus 51% satisfied).

Young people are equally satisfied and dissatisfied with the quality of services provided by *centres for social work and the public transport*.

An especially alarming statistic is that nearly a half of young people in South Serbia, is dissatisfied with the quality of *places for culture and entertainment* (particularly those between 20 and 24 years of age). The truth of the matter is that a much higher percentage of adults is also dissatisfied with these services. Yet, we take the liberty to say that the dissatisfaction of youth should be treated as more alarming, since culture, entertainment, and leisure time are important topics for young people. The assessment whether or not there is an offer of activities that meet the current needs of young people makes a community more attractive for staying there or points to another reason for leaving this community.

If we compare the level of satisfaction of youth and adults with services of public services / institutions, we can see that the dissatisfaction of adults on all issues is greater. There are no significant differences in the sub-sample of youth, either based on age factor or gender factor.

The table below gives a more detailed description of the observed tendencies

Table 10. Assessment of the quality of places for cultural activities and entertainment (in %)

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Youth average	Over 30	Average
<i>Very bad</i>	27	46	36	36	33	34
<i>Somewhat bad</i>	13	2	20	12	19	18
<i>Mediocre</i>	15	15	17	16	24	22
<i>Somewhat good</i>	17	18	14	16	11	12
<i>Very good</i>	28	19	13	20	13	14
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

1.3. SATISFACTION WITH THE FUNCTIONING OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS AND TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS

Generally speaking Serbia is a country of low level of citizens` trust in its institutions and high level of dissatisfaction with their work.

SATISFACTION WITH THE FUNCTIONING OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

If the “strength” of a community is measured against *the level of satisfaction with the work of local self-government* i.e. if the local self-government is doing its job properly and if it is leading the community towards positive development, then we could say that the citizens in Pcinjski and Jablanicki districts live in “weak communities”, communities characterized by distrust in their leaders and the system. **61% of the citizens of these two districts are either completely or mostly dissatisfied with the work of local self-government; 27% of the citizens are indifferent whereas only 12% of the citizens are completely or mostly satisfied.** There is no statistically significant difference between the genders or people of different ethnic background when it comes to satisfaction with the work of local self-government, nor is there a difference in the youth sample in comparison the others.

Special attention was focused on assessing satisfaction with the two institutions that should contribute to establishing peace in this region – the

Ombudsman's Office and the Coordination Body for Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja. The number of those who have heard of both institutions is identical – 65%. A large number of citizens do not have an opinion about the work of the *Coordination Body* and the *Ombudsman* (the feeling of *neither satisfaction nor dissatisfaction* is shared by 40% of the subjects). This suggests that they do not have enough information regarding the competences and activities of these two institutions, and that the citizens do not understand how these institutions can be of concrete help to them. However, it is alarming that more than one third of citizens (35%) have never heard of these institutions.

The level of satisfaction with the work of the institutions at the local level is quite low among the **youth**. They are most satisfied with the work of *local self-government* (26%), followed by the work of *the president of municipality / mayor* (21%), and lastly with the work of the *Coordination Body* and the *Ombudsman Office* (11%).

By analyzing the differences between youth and adults, and the differences in the sub-sample of youth, the same trends are noted when youth and adults are compared, and when different age groups and genders are compared within the youth sample. The adults are still more dissatisfied than the youth, and older members of the youth sample are more dissatisfied than the younger ones, while young men are more dissatisfied than young women.

Namely, the adults are generally more dissatisfied with the work of the local self-government than the youth (youth 54%, adults 63%). A similar trend applies to the assessment of the work of the president of the municipality or mayor (youth 49%, adults 57%), the work of the Coordination Body (youth 45%, adults 40%) and the work of the Ombudsman's Office (youth 47%, adults 41%). Variations are observed in the youth sub-sample. The oldest age group within the sample is the least satisfied (25-29 years of age), and their dissatisfaction applies to the work of all institutions. It seems that age has a significant impact on the subjective sense of satisfaction with the local self-government - dissatisfaction increases with age. This tendency is to be expected: with the "growing" need for employment, career development and starting a family, a young person faces an obstacle to achieve the desired standard of living "here and now". Their discontent is directed towards those who are perceived as decision makers in the community, and it is for this reason that their biggest dissatisfaction is with the work of local self-government and the president of municipality.

Certain gender differences are observed within the youth sample, and consequently young men are more dissatisfied with the work of institutions

than young women.

Table 11. Satisfaction with the functioning of local self-government and the president of municipality / mayor (in %)

		Not at all satisfied	Mostly dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Mostly satisfied	Very satisfied	Total
Municipality / town (local self-government)	15–19	34	14	38	9	5	100
	20–24	30	18	32	18	2	100
	25–29	42	24	20	12	2	100
	Youth average	35	19	30	13	3	100
	Over 30.	41	22	26	8	3	100
	Average	39	22	27	9	3	100
President of municipality / mayor	15–19	33	14	37	11	5	100
	20–24	32	6	35	21	6	100
	25–29	45	18	19	11	7	100
	Youth average	37	12	30	15	6	100
	Over 30	41	18	27	10	4	100
	Average	40	17	28	10	5	100

Table 12. Satisfaction with the work of the Coordination Body for South Serbia and Ombudsman's office for South Serbia (in %)

		Not at all satisfied	Mostly dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Mostly satisfied	Very satisfied	Total
Coordination Body	15–19	34	13	41	7	5	100
	20–24	27	11	46	15	1	100
	25–29	40	11	44	4	1	100
	Youth average	34	11	44	9	2	100
	Over 30.	39	12	41	6	2	100
	Average	38	12	41	7	2	100
Ombudsman's Office	15–19	33	13	42	9	3	100
	20–24	33	5	44	16	2	100
	25–29	43	13	40	3	1	100
	Youth average	37	10	42	9	2	100
	Over 30	41	11	41	5	2	100
	Average	40	11	41	6	2	100

TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS

Similar tendencies are observed when **analyzing the trust** that young respondents **have in the listed institutions**. The young have greater trust in the *president of municipality / mayor* (20%), followed by the *municipality administration* (16%). A smaller number of young people (7%) has trust in the *Coordination Body* and the *Ombudsman`s Office*. The findings related to both of these institutions that are the fourth branch of the Government, representing independent bodies of Government control over various issues of general interest (this refers to the whole population), reveal that: 1) citizens are not familiar enough with their activities and 2) there is also a correlation between (dis)trust and ethnicity (since this is related with the two municipalities where Albanians make up the majority of population, it means that these two institutions have failed to win the confidence of their citizens). These institutions share the fate of all others – distrust of citizens in them is the prevailing feeling. There are no statistically significant differences between various demographic characteristics of the respondents on this issue.

Similar tendencies are observed when comparing the young and the adults, then different age groups within the youth sample as well as youth by gender. Adults remain the most dissatisfied category along with the older youth. Men are more dissatisfied than young women.

In addition to assessing the trust of citizens in local institutions, further research has been conducted on the issues of confidence of citizens of Pcinjski and Jablanicki districts in the work of national institutions – *the government, the president, the parliament, judiciary, the army, the police and religious organizations*.

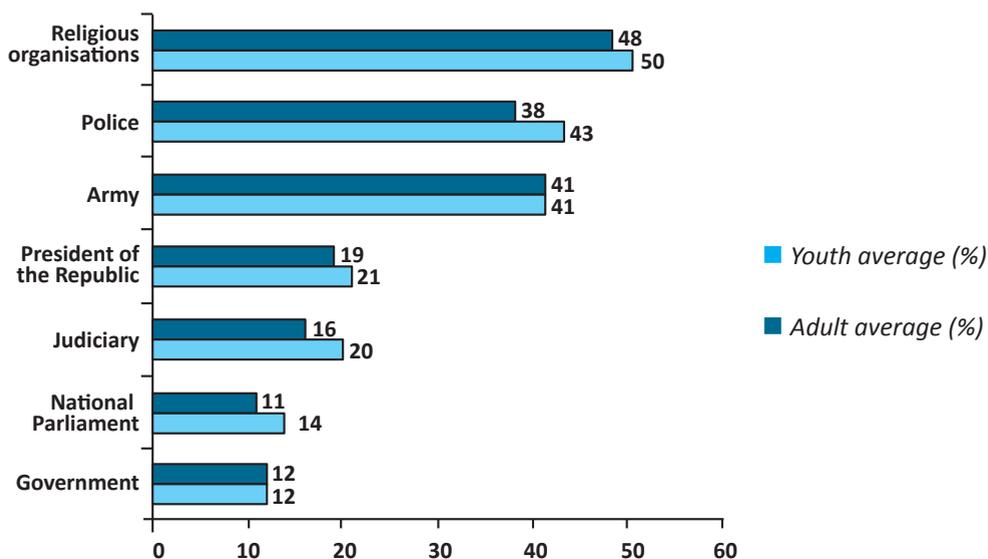
Youth at the level of the whole sample have the greatest trust in *religious organizations* (50%), *police* (43), *army* (41%), *the president* (21%), *judiciary* (20%), *parliament* (14%), and the least confidence in the *government* (12%). The findings show that the citizens have the least confidence in national institutions (the government, the parliament, the president and the judiciary), and that the level of confidence is much lower than in the case of local institutions (municipal administration and the president of municipality / mayor).

Interesting are the findings suggesting that young people have confidence in the police, military and religious communities (they belong to). This finding supports the thesis that security is still a topical issue, yet not a matter of concern for young people. Residents of these communities still believe that the institutions of the system have the capacity to prevent conflicts and to stop any potential escalation of the tensions. Religious communities are

highly ranked in terms of confidence that their citizens place in them. In “weak” communities of different national and religious composition in which citizens do not have confidence in the institutions of the system it is to be expected that religious communities are highly ranked as a very significant factor in the life of a local community which should be taken into account and considered when relevant decisions affecting the life of citizens are made.

All the tendencies already mentioned related to age and gender appear also here as significant factors. Feeling of distrust becomes more prominent with age. Within the youth sample the oldest age group (25-30) has the least amount of confidence in the institutions of the system on both national and local level (68% of them have no confidence in the Serbian Parliament). Distrust exhibited among those older than 30 is greater on average than within the youth sample. It is interesting that younger respondents have more trust in the police, as opposed to older respondents who trust the army more. Confidence in the police among young people is 43%, significantly higher compared to the average for south Serbia (38%). Above-average trust is exhibited by both groups of older youth.

Graph 3. *Trust in institutions (in %)*



1.4. POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ACTIVISM

Participation of citizens in political and civil society organisations represents another indicator of social inclusion.

Judging by that, **the level of social exclusion of people in the two districts is high, as 18% of the population participates in the activities of a political party, while 7% participates in the work of a non-governmental organisation.** Men participate in activities of political parties to a more significant extent than women. Except in the case of the Roma minority, there is no significant difference in membership between specific ethnicities when activities in political parties are concerned. Since political parties carry the “national trademark”, the citizens mostly become members and activists of “their” parties. Potential migrants participate in the work of political parties to the same (and even slightly higher) extent. Those who wanted to migrate but gave up on the idea are particularly active. One of the possible reasons why they abandoned the idea of migration might be the fact that through a membership in some political party they discovered a way to be more mobile within their local community which led them to change their mind about migrating. When the youth is concerned, only their participation in sport organizations is above average.

Social activism generally includes various ways of activism - from the political and electoral activism, through activism in various non-governmental and professional organizations, to participation in the work of assembly of tenants or local community councils. In this survey, we methodologically separated the political and electoral activism from all other types of social activism.

Political and electoral activism was examined on four levels, based on four different statements. The first two statements are related to the level of information regarding political topics and their general knowledge (political activism in a broader sense), whereas the third and the fourth statement are related to more active approach to electoral issues (electoral activism). For each of these statements we have made comparisons between the three age groups of youth with the rest of the population (older than 30 years). Our aim was to point to the differences that arise between them. The most significant conclusion is that the citizens are most active when it comes to casting their vote in the elections (more than a half of young people from both groups with the right to vote regularly votes in elections), while those older than 30 still continue to participate more regularly in elections at the polling places.

KNOWLEDGE OF POLITICAL ISSUES

Only 13% of youth *regularly collects information through the media about political issues*, which is significantly below the average for the south of Serbia. When analyzing who are the young people who obtain the information about the political situation in the country through the media, we found that the oldest age group within the youth sample (25-29) most frequently resort to media. Although one fifth of this group regularly follows political events, it is still below the average for south Serbia (25%).

Political events are never followed via media by 20% of the youth; within that sample the biggest group consists of young people aged 15 to 19 – as much as 27%, followed by 13% of young people aged 20 to 24 and finally 21% of young people aged 25 to 29.

Although the data do not seem encouraging, we could say that there is a general interest in what media report. Namely, in both groups of older youth (20 to 24 and 25 to 29) more than a half of the answers were in the range rarely-often-regularly, which can be interpreted as the tendency to follow political events more or less in a “round-about way”. A similar tendency can be observed in adult respondents, aged 30 years and older.

This question determines a statistically significant difference between young men and young women, given that young women’s response to this question in most cases is *never* or *rarely*, whereas young men’s answer to the same question is in most cases *regularly*.

Table 13. *Information level on political issues (in %)*

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Youth average	Over 30	Average
<i>Never</i>	27	13	21	20	14	15
<i>Rarely</i>	41	22	24	29	23	24
<i>Moderately</i>	23	31	23	26	21	22
<i>Often</i>	5	20	12	12	15	14
<i>Regularly</i>	4	14	20	13	27	25
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

It was interesting to monitor the influence of friends and family on forming the views on daily political events in the country or in own town. The general conclusion is that one does not talk about politics with friends and family – as much as 73% of youth and 58% of adults said they *never* or *rarely* discussed political issues with friends or family.

Within the youth sample there are significant variations based on age. Almost two-thirds of those between 15 and 19 do not discuss political issues

with friends or family, whereas this percentage is significantly lower with the oldest youth – 38% of them never talk about politics with the people they feel closest to from their surroundings.

These findings can be interpreted in two ways. The youngest, mostly high-school population, are mostly not interested in the politics, perhaps because they feel that it does not greatly affect their everyday lives. On the other hand, however, low level of interest in the political events among the adults and young adults can be interpreted as a defence mechanism as a response to the “omnipresent” politics and the lack of belief in future and that any kind of change is possible. The low level of trust in leaders and institutions speaks in favour of such interpretations.

When analysing gender based differences within the youth sample, the general impression is that young girls are more passive and disinterested compared to young men. Namely, there are a statistically significant higher number of women who answered *never* to this question compared to men, who on the other hand, in significantly higher number responded with *moderately* and *regularly* to the same question (than women of the same age).

Table 14. Discussion about political issues (in %)

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Youth average	Over 30	Average
<i>Never</i>	63	26	38	42	27	29
<i>Rarely</i>	22	43	27	31	28	29
<i>Moderately</i>	9	14	14	12	19	18
<i>Often</i>	4	7	8	7	13	12
<i>Regularly</i>	2	10	13	8	13	12
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

PARTICIPATION IN ELECTORAL PROCESSES

The citizens of south Serbia show high levels of awareness with regard to participation in elections. It has been demonstrated that this is one of the most important forms of civil activism, since the politics in south Serbia, as in other parts of the country, is seen as an important and in many cases the only instrument to improve the life of citizens in a local community. This fact reveals less about the citizens and more about the politics which is seen as the “omnipotent”, and often as the only way to bring about any kind of change.

In south Serbia, on average, 55% of citizens regularly vote in elections. The number of women who participate in the elections is smaller - 60% of men regularly vote in the elections compared to 48% of women. Election turnout rate is higher among national minorities than among the national majority. High electoral participation in municipalities in southern Serbia speaks in favour of this fact. This finding also confirms the fact that this part of the country is extremely politicized and that the politics is seen as a powerful tool for governing the community. Those older than 30 are above average when voting is concerned (58%), while two groups of young people who have the right to vote are below the average - 52% of youth aged 20 to 24, and 51% of those aged 25 to 29 vote regularly. The election turnout rate among the young people is significantly lower (36% of young people vote regularly in the elections), unlike the older population with the election turnout rate of on a,55%.

And in terms of turnout in the elections, within the group of those who tend to be indecisive (whose answers are *rarely* or *often*), young women are somewhat more passive than young men. Namely, a statistically significant number of girls reports that they *rarely* vote, while again a considerably higher percentage of young men report that they *often* vote.

Table 15. Election turnout (in %)

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Youth average	Over 30	Average
<i>Never</i>	80	13	9	34	8	12
<i>Rarely</i>	9	13	20	14	12	13
<i>Moderately</i>	3	12	14	10	10	10
<i>Often</i>	1	10	6	6	11	10
<i>Regularly</i>	7	52	51	36	58	55
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

If further analysis of the respondents' willingness to participate in the electoral process is conducted, it becomes evident that electoral activism ends or is drastically reduced when a respondent is further asked to continue his concrete engagement whether in election monitoring or in direct participation. On average, 78% of citizens in south Serbia do not participate directly in elections in any form. Older respondents, over 30 years of age, are at the average level for the region, and the two youngest groups of the youth sample are considerably below the average for the region.

Table 16. *Participation in the elections (in %)*

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Youth average	Over 30	Average
Never	96	83	72	83	77	78
Rarely	4	10	16	10	10	10
Moderately	0	2	4	2	5	5
Often	0	0	2	1	4	3
Regularly	0	5	6	4	4	4
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

SOCIAL ACTIVISM

Citizens are less active in civil society than in political parties – as only 7% of them are members of non-governmental organizations or associations of citizens. When membership in non-governmental organizations is concerned there is no significant difference between the citizens based on gender, age, and nationality or migration status.

Young people generally do not deviate from this negative trend. Although one would expect young people to be agile, ready to implement and follow different initiatives, which, after all, was the case in the nineties, the reality of things nowadays is completely different. Therefore, further research into the social activism of young people in south Serbia ought to be conducted.

As regards social activism, we could see that young people are not too active members of the community. If they are active, they are most often members of three types of organizations: sports and recreation organizations (philately, numismatics, hunters, fishermen, pigeon breeders) 16%; hobby organizations 14%; and political parties 13%.

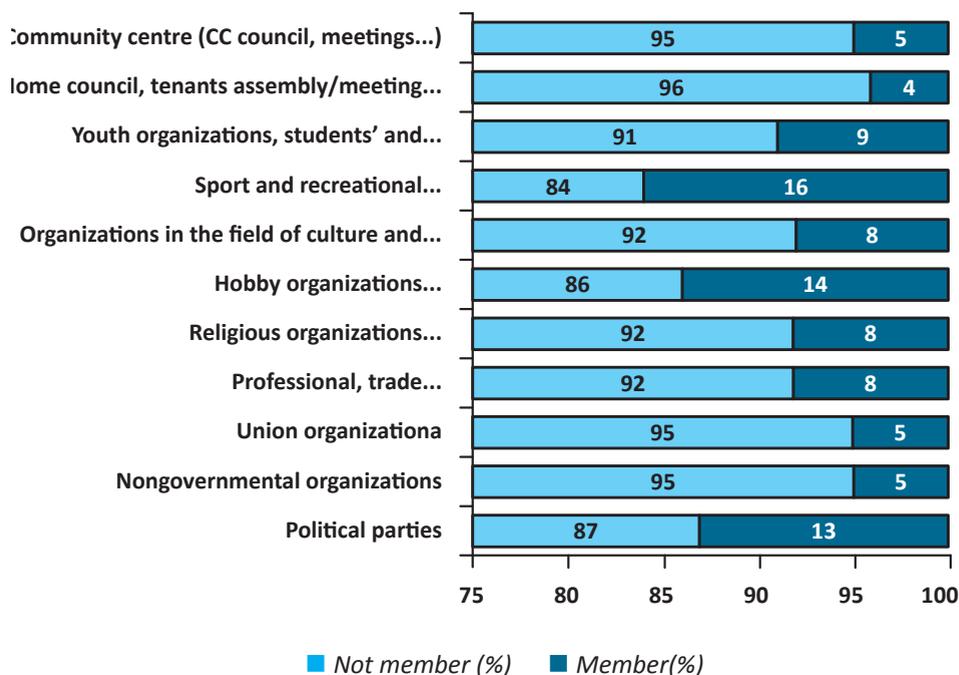
Considerably small number of youth reports that they are active in organizations such as youth organizations, students' parliaments (only 9% of them), organizations in the field of culture e.g. cultural-artistic associations (8%), as well as professional and trade associations (8%).

Young people in south Serbia are least interested in participating in the work of home councils, citizens' associations and the tenants' assemblies (only 4%), non-governmental organizations and trade union organizations (5% of youth).

The largest deviation in the youth sample compared to the average at the level of south Serbia is shown in membership of religious organisations. Namely, in the whole region 22% of citizens report that they are members of

a religious organisation, while among the young population, only 8% report that they are members of these organisations.

Graph 4. Social activism in youth sub-sample (in %)



Statements regarding membership in certain types of social organisation can provide a misleading picture of activism. For example, being a part of civil society organisations does not require active membership and the question remains whether traditional, so-called old organisations have active members. For this reason we believe that a more reliable indicator of the level of participation of youth in an organisation to what extent do they recognise themselves as active members of a certain organisation.

From the obtained findings a conclusion can be drawn that the young are still most active when hobbies and sports organizations are concerned – 37% of them reported to be very active in hobby organizations, and 29% in sports organizations. These are closely followed by political parties – 13% of the young people claim to be very active in the activities of a political party.

This finding suggests that of those young people who reported to be active members of an organization (this fact alone earned them the title of

the most active young people of the region) most of them are just pro-forma members. This is especially the case in non-governmental organizations and political parties. The majority of those who report to be active members, are actually inactive members - 47% in non-governmental sector and 45% in political parties.

Among those young people who reported to be members of the home councils, associations/assemblies of tenants, (local community councils, and citizens` associations) very few of them are truly active members - only 8% actively participate in the work of the home council and meetings / assemblies of tenants, and 7% in the work of local community centres. As much as 50% of them are inactive members of home councils and 43% are inactive members of local community councils. It is obvious that young people do not see the importance of these participation mechanisms at the local level.

Within the youth sample statistically significant gender-related differences occur. It is often the case that young men rather than young women are members of certain organizations. These gender-related differences are statistically significant especially in the case of *political parties*, *hobby organizations* and *religious organizations*. It is interesting that only in the case of *youth organizations* and *student parliaments* a statistically higher number of young women state that they are members of these organizations. In the case of *sports organizations* there are no statistically significant differences between young men and young women in terms of membership, but there is a difference in the level of participation. The percentage of young men who report to be *very active members of sports and recreation organizations* is statistically significantly higher than the percentage of young women who were asked the same question. The same is true of religious organizations.

Table 17. *Activism of members in the youth sub-sample (in %)*

	<i>Inactive member</i>	<i>Somewhat active member</i>	<i>Moderately active member</i>	<i>Very active member</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Political parties</i>	45	32	8	15	100
<i>NGOs</i>	47	35	12	6	100
<i>Union Organization</i>	43	36	21	0	100
<i>Professional and trade organizations, associations of manufacturers, cooperatives</i>	21	50	17	12	100
<i>Religious organizations</i>	25	47	19	9	100
<i>Hobby organizations (philately, numismatics, hunters, fishermen, pigeon breeders etc.)</i>	28	23	12	37	100
<i>Organizations in the field of culture e.g. cultural-artistic associations</i>	31	39	17	13	100
<i>Sports and recreation organizations, clubs</i>	19	31	21	29	100
<i>Youth organizations, students` and pupils` parliaments</i>	35	35	19	11	100
<i>Home councils`, tenants` meetings/assemblies</i>	50	17	25	8	100
<i>Local community (LC councils, citizens` gatherings)</i>	43	36	14	7	100

1.5. YOUTH SAFETY

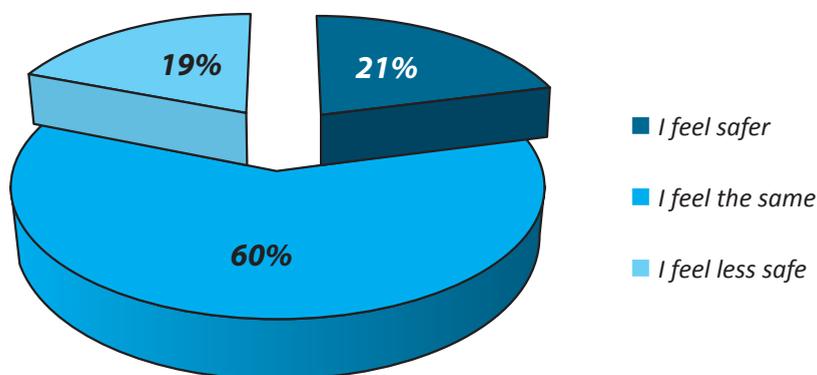
Integration of the citizens into the local community is linked to the *assessment of safety* i.e. the assessment if the area they live in represents a safe place for living both from the point of view of inter-ethnic conflicts and the lack or presence of crime.

Safety is a complex and sensitive issue for the citizens of south Serbia. In this study, we investigated whether citizens feel safer or not compared to the period of two years ago. On average, the number of those who feel safer and those who do not feel safer is almost the same (21% vs. 19%), while 60% of the respondents feel the same in terms of safety. At the same time, those older than 30 years feel less safe in comparison to young people (one fifth of them believe to be less safe compared to the period of two years ago).

When safety is concerned the citizens mostly feel the same as two years ago. The groups of those who feel changes in terms of safety are almost equal in number: those who feel less safe make up (19%) and those who feel

safer make up (21%).

Graph 5. The feeling of safety compared to the period of two years ago (in %)



There is no statistically significant difference between men and women when the feeling of safety is concerned. It is very interesting to note that members of Albanian ethnic community feel safer than two years ago. Unlike them, among the members of Roma and Bulgarian minorities there is an above average number of those who feel less safe than two years ago. The youth feel safer than average (within the age group 15-29 there are 27% of those who feel safer, and 13% of those who feel less safe).

It is indicative that all groups of youth feel safer in comparison to 2008, than those older than 30. In the age group 20-24 as much as one third of the respondents felt safe. Most young people report to have the greatest trust in the police and the army. This can also be interpreted by the fact that, when it comes to safety in south Serbia, it can be said that safety is rather controlled than completely insured - there are institutions which can prevent the escalation of possible conflicts and citizens have been satisfied with the work of these institutions. Since the questionnaire dealt with only one issue directly related to the assessment of safety, there is scope for greater investigation on the matter.

Table 18. Feeling of safety (at work, at school, in the street etc.) compared to the period two years ago (in %)

	15-19	20-24	25-29	Youth average	Over 30	Average
<i>I feel safer</i>	25	32	24	27	20	21
<i>I feel the same</i>	60	58	62	60	60	60
<i>I feel less safe</i>	15	10	14	13	20	19
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

1.6. MEDIA

Citizens are pretty indifferent when *trust in the media* is concerned. There is no significant difference in terms of trusting or distrusting local or national media. A large number of citizens „do not consume” media content, a certain number are indifferent towards the media, and within the group of those who have an opinion the feeling of distrust prevails over confidence, in the case of all media.

Young people follow the electronic media, primarily TV (95%), and to a somewhat lesser degree the print media (44% on average).

As can be seen from the table, just over a half of young people, on average, do not read newspapers (56%). Secondary school pupils contribute to such high percentage, while both older age groups in the youth group deviate from the average to a greater extent. As much as 52% of youth aged 20 to 24, and 57% of youth aged 25 to 29 read the print media. Young people living in south Serbia read the newspaper Blic (above average for the whole population), especially the oldest group of young people. Other print media are read much less.

The local print media are also read much less. Only 11% of young people read some of the local newspapers.

Table 19. *Daily newspapers readership ratings (in %)*

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Youth average	Over 30	Average
<i>I don't read</i>	76	48	43	56	56	55
<i>Blic</i>	18	32	36	28	21	23
<i>Novosti</i>	1	5	8	5	9	8
<i>Kurir</i>	0	4	4	3	3	3
<i>Press</i>	1	2	1	1	2	2
<i>Alo</i>	4	3	2	3	5	5
<i>Others</i>	0	6	6	4	4	4
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

Unsurprisingly, television is the most watched electronic media. At the level of youth average, 95% of young people watch some of the TV channels.

In south Serbia TV Pink is by far the most watched television station - 46% of young people watch it (and as much as 56% of secondary school pupils). Unlike them, nearly one third of young people (mainly the older age groups) watch TV Fox. The adults also watch TV Pink the most, but not as much as the young people – 40%, followed by RTS with 26% of the viewers.

There are some gender differences in relation to watching particular TV

stations, since a greater percentage of young women say they watch *TV Pink* whereas more young men report to watch *TV B92*.

About 20% of young people watch some of the TV stations from the region, which is higher than the overall average for south Serbia (11%).

Table 20. TV ratings (in %)

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Youth average	Over 30	Average
<i>I don't watch</i>	6	3	4	5	11	10
<i>RTS (both channels)</i>	11	15	15	13	26	23
<i>TV Pink</i>	55	43	39	46	40	41
<i>TV B92</i>	9	8	17	11	11	11
<i>TV Foks – Prva srpska televizija</i>	19	30	25	25	11	14
<i>Others</i>	0	1	0	0	1	1
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

Youth read print media below the average for the region, and in most cases they say that they do not have an opinion on whether the print media are reliable or not. However, if we compare national and local print media, young people have less confidence in the local media. They exhibit greater trust in the print media coming from Belgrade than in the local media – 18% vs. 12%.

Table 21. Trust in print media (in %)

		Does not have an opinion	Has no trust at all	Mostly distrusts	Neither trusts nor distrusts	Has some trust	Has a lot of trust	Total
Print media from Belgrade	15–19	52	11	9	16	9	3	100
	20–24	32	19	4	21	19	5	100
	25–29	35	20	9	18	11	7	100
	Youth average	40	17	7	18	13	5	100
	Over 30	43	18	7	20	8	4	100
	Average	42	18	7	20	9	4	100
Local print media	15–19	66	10	5	7	5	7	100
	20–24	43	16	4	20	13	4	100
	25–29	61	15	3	14	6	1	100
	Youth average	57	13	4	14	8	4	100
	Over 30	59	14	5	13	6	3	100
	Average	59	14	5	13	6	3	100

Unlike in the case of print media, young people when compared to those older than 30 follow the electronic media more, and have more trust in them. They also exhibit more trust in the national media, primarily the media from Belgrade, than in the local media and the media from the region – 26% vs. 15% vs. 9%.

Table 22. *Trust in electronic media (in %)*

		<i>Does not have an opinion</i>	<i>Has no trust at all</i>	<i>Mostly distrusts</i>	<i>Neither trusts nor distrusts</i>	<i>Has some trust</i>	<i>Has a lot of trust</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Electronic media from Belgrade</i>	15–19	26	11	6	33	18	6	100
	20–24	38	12	7	19	17	7	100
	25–29	18	20	11	24	18	9	100
	<i>Youth average</i>	27	14	8	25	18	8	100
	Over 30	33	16	10	26	9	6	100
	<i>Average</i>	32	15	10	26	11	6	100
<i>Local electronic media</i>	15–19	44	10	5	27	8	6	100
	20–24	48	12	6	18	14	2	100
	25–29	45	14	5	19	10	7	100
	<i>Youth average</i>	46	12	5	22	10	5	100
	Over 30	50	13	7	19	7	4	100
	<i>Average</i>	50	13	7	19	7	4	100
<i>Media from the region (Albania, Bulgaria)</i>	15–19	62	11	4	14	4	5	100
	20–24	66	13	3	9	7	2	100
	25–29	61	16	4	11	4	4	100
	<i>Youth average</i>	63	13	4	11	5	4	100
	Over 30	71	15	4	7	2	1	100
	<i>Average</i>	69	14	4	8	3	2	100

1.7. LIVING STANDARD OF YOUTH IN SOUTH SERBIA

When asked how they and their families live, the greatest number of young people say that they live an *average life* – 30%, or *well* – 22%. In comparison to the general population in south Serbia, the young ones are obviously more inclined to assess the standard of living in a more positive manner, which does not mean that it is always a realistic assessment. As opposed to them, adults in the majority of cases say they live *hardly bearably* – as much as 31% of the respondents. The older ones in general are more inclined to catastrophic assessments of their own economic position – 36% say that they live *well* and *bearably*, and 63% that they live *bearably*, *hardly bearably* and *unbearably*.

If we analyse the differences among the youth sample, it is obvious that the youngest groups of the respondents are more inclined to a carefree assessment of the economic position of their family and that that “carefreeness” drops among the older youth groups.

The similar tendency is also observed when we compare respondents by gender. Young women are more inclined to assess their own economic position in a more positive light than young men, and in a greater number of cases they say that they live *well*. As opposed to them, young men considerably more frequently say that they live *unbearably* than young women.

Table 23. *How do You and Your family live (in %)*

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Youth average	Over 30	Average
<i>Doesn't know/refuses to answer</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Well</i>	38	10	16	22	9	11
<i>Average</i>	18	50	21	30	26	26
<i>Bearably</i>	15	15	26	18	17	18
<i>Hardly bearably</i>	18	16	26	20	34	31
<i>Unbearably</i>	11	9	10	10	14	14
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

Young people mostly live on salaries and income from agriculture, as much as 78% in total. When compared to the group older than 30 years, salary is the main source of income for the youth, and that is above average when compared to the general population.

Table 24. *What is currently the main source of income of your household (in %)*

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Youth average	Over 30	Average
Salary	52	61	60	58	35	40
Pension	15	13	8	12	35	30
Social welfare or financial aid to families	5	2	12	6	6	6
Financial aid for the unemployed	0	0	0	0	1	1
Assistance from cousins /friends from abroad	5	4	3	4	1	2
Income from the agriculture	23	20	17	20	21	21
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

2. MIGRATION

The high level of social exclusion of certain groups directly causes **migration**, whether internal migration, most often towards larger centres, or external migration, towards other countries. Migration represents an expected outcome and it is often perceived as the only way out for groups which are excluded to a larger degree – the unemployed or the non-integrated, those who are not members of any significant groups in the community, for example, political parties, youth organisations, etc.

When it comes to migration, they can be divided into two groups: **1) migration of those who live in the the surveyed region and who want and plan to migrate** – *this group and topic is addressed mostly through a public opinion survey and answers to questions about the migratory potential of population in south Serbia, and 2) migration of those who mostly moved to the region of Pcinjski and Jablanicki districts against their will* (refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons) – *this group and topics were researched through interviews in institutions and organisations which deal with these groups and through interviews with returnees, because the general population sample could not cover a relevant number of representatives of these groups.*

The desktop analysis has shown that there were no systemic surveys in neither of the fields of migration and that it is necessary to start from the beginning. Activities in this field are based on conclusions of the “sound mind” that people are leaving these regions in great numbers, but without data on the actual numbers, how many people have moved out so far and

how many could move out in the near future. On the basis of the same “method”, it is concluded that those who moved to south Serbia live badly, have great problems, but there is no basic data on how many of them there are and who they are by actual name, in order to analyse the structure of these groups and their needs in more detail. That is why the report on migration, in this case the migration of youth, mostly relies on the public opinion survey, because most of the data on this subject were obtained that way.

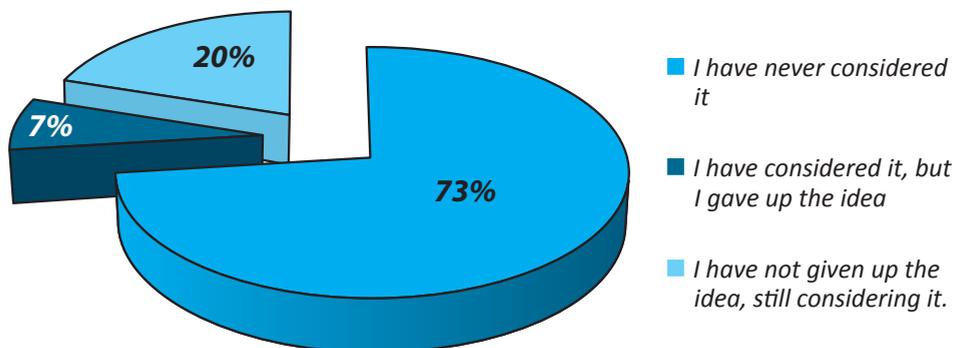
MIGRATORY POTENTIAL OF THE POPULATION IN SOUTH SERBIA

The survey on migration through a representative public opinion survey in the territory of south Serbia was first conducted as a part of this project. Surveys of migration are in general very rare and scarce in our country, especially when it comes to parts of territories or special groups of population. The desktop analysis of this subject, conducted for the requirements of this project, also supports this. The conclusions about migration in south Serbia have so far mostly been made based on national surveys or circumstantial assumptions, which take into consideration various characteristics of this part of Serbia’s territory, primarily a very bad economic situation and its multi-ethnicity which at certain times in the recent past threatened to cause new conflict. These assumptions are correct, but conclusions on the subject of migration are not always unambiguous and reliable, which will be further proven by the analysis of results obtained in this survey.

According to the findings of the survey, migratory potential in Jablanicki and Pcinjski districts is around 20%, or a fifth of the total population older than 15 years of age. It is the percentage of those who said they were considering moving out of the town in which they live and that they have not abandoned the idea so far.

The greatest number of respondents in these two districts is inert when it comes to migrations, i.e. they never considered moving out of the place in which they live (almost three thirds of them – 73%). Relatively small number of respondents considered moving out, but gave up the idea – 7%.

Graph 6. Have you considered moving out of the place of your residence due to a job or for any other reason? (in %)

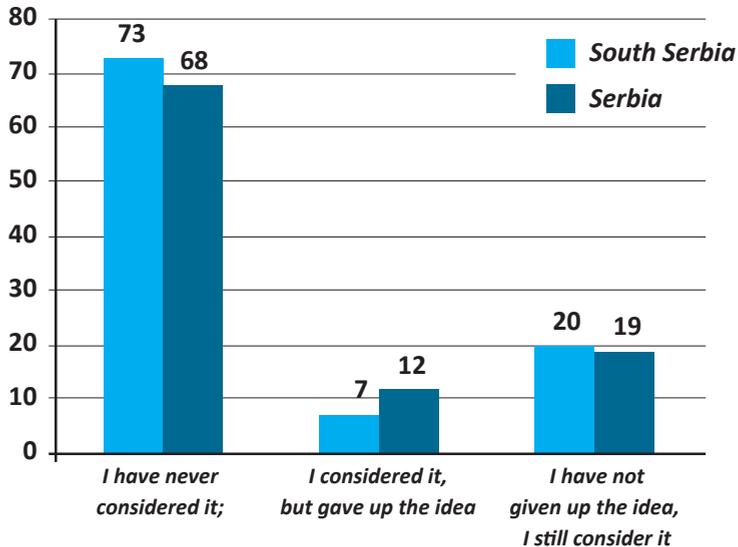


The survey fully confirms the results from the survey conducted in 2009 on the territory of the whole Serbia and published in the “Migratory Potential of Serbia”.⁸ According to that survey, migratory potential in South Serbia is very close to the average in Serbia and amounts to 20% (in the whole of Serbia it is 19%).⁹ The differences, however, between the survey in the whole of Serbia and the survey conducted in Pcinjski and Jablanicki districts are reflected in the fact that in these two districts there are more of those who have never considered moving out – 73% to 68%, and less of those who considered moving, but have given up the idea – 7% to 12% (see Graph 7).

8 Mr Tanja Pavlov, “Migratory Potential of Serbia”, Group 484, Belgrade, 2009

9 Mr Tanja Pavlov, “Migratory Potential of Serbia”, Group 484, Belgrade, 2009, page 20

Graph 7. Have you considered moving from the place of your residence due to a job or for any other reason? (comparison of results in two districts and in the whole of Serbia; in %)



Although on the basis of the assumptions mentioned in the introductory notes of this report it could be expected that the migratory potential in these two districts is greater than in the whole of Serbia, it is not the case. This means that the migrations are not solely the consequence of a wish or need, but also the consequence of an assessment of the realistic possibility – is it possible to make such a step and move out, are there enough capacities to integrate into the society which they would like to move to, are there sufficient means necessary for such a step.

Responses to these questions would become even clearer after the analysis of the profile of potential migrants, which will show that certain groups of population which could be expected to be the first to make the decision to leave their place of residence are obviously so deprived that they cannot do anything in order to improve their position, and do not even consider moving out.

PROFILE OF POTENTIAL MIGRANTS AMONG THE YOUTH IN SOUTH SERBIA IN COMPARISON TO GENERAL POPULATION

Serious and in-depth analysis of migrations includes delving into the profile of potential migrants, or, in other words, answering the question which social groups are more inclined to leave the place of their residence, which in this case relates to the citizens of South Serbia. The answer to that question indicates motives of certain groups who opt for or consider migration.

Statistically speaking, none of the social groups from these two districts, according to any characteristics, can be said to be a group dominantly prone to migration. There are dominant tendencies in various types of social groups; it is expected of certain groups to have smaller tendencies and of others to have greater. However, if we compare the different age groups, we see that **among the youth, when compared to the average sample, those who want to migrate from municipalities in which they live are in the majority!** The age is the socio-demographic characteristic which shows the greatest number of those with an intention to migrate.

The young respondents say in greater numbers that they consider leaving the country – 37% youth compared to 20% adults. Namely, as much as four of ten respondents aged between 20 to 24 say that they actively consider leaving the country. Among other two youth groups (15–19 and 25–29) the tendency to migrate is also greater than one third, which is considerably more than among the average of the whole sample.

If we take a look at the number of those who have never considered leaving, we will see that it is considerably greater than the number of young people who say they are considering it – 58%. That can only seemingly be perceived as “comforting”. We must not forget that readiness to migration is in fact the result of assessment by the individual whether they have the capacity to adjust to a “new” environment without social support from their family and friends. The fact that they say they are not considering migration does not mean that they see a future in their places of residence, or that they are ready to invest themselves and their potentials into the development of community.

Table 25. Age and attitude to migrations (in %)

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Youth average	Over 30	Average
<i>I have never considered it</i>	62	53	58	58	79	73
<i>I considered it but gave up the idea</i>	1	8	7	5	7	7
<i>I have not given up moving out, I still consider it</i>	36	39	35	37	14	20
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

At the level of the whole sample we clearly observe a tendency to consider or not consider leaving. There is a small number of those who considered it and then gave it up. The reasons for this could probably be found in the fact that nothing significant changed in the environment or personal status which would result in a significant number of respondents changing their initial decision.

This tendency can be fully observed among the youth as well. If they considered leaving, the young people mostly did not give it up – as much as 93% of youth on the average still considers moving out. As opposed to them, in the general sample of potential migrants, respondents aged above 30 did not give up the idea to leave Serbia. The difference is significant.

The reasons stated as potential reasons for giving up migration mostly have low statistic values and cannot be considered reliable answers to this question. The most frequent answer is the fear from maladjustment (in the oldest group of young people, aged between 25 and 29), and much more rarely fear from changes, or, improvement of economic situation (aged between 20 and 24) and family obligations (in the group aged between 25 and 29).

Table 26. If you considered moving out and gave up the idea, what are the reasons for your giving up?

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Youth average	Over 30	Average
<i>I have not given up moving out</i>	100	94	86	93	76	81
<i>For family reasons, due to family obligations, family ties</i>	0	0	3	1	7	5
<i>Got a job in the meantime, economic situation changed</i>	0	3	0	1	1	1
<i>Difficulties with visa or other documentation</i>	0	0	0	0	1	0
<i>No opportunity to leave – lack of money and similar</i>	0	0	0	0	4	3
<i>Due to age</i>	0	0	0	0	1	1
<i>I am afraid I will not manage, adjust, lack of resoluteness</i>	0	0	8	3	0	1
<i>Something else</i>	0	3	3	2	10	8
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

If we take a look at gender variations, we will see that at the level of whole sample, *males* are somewhat more prone to considering migration than *females* in the whole sample. Namely, the average answer in the whole sample is 20%, while the percentage in case of males is somewhat higher,

23%, while among females it is somewhat lower, 15%.

Table 27. Gender and attitude to migrations (in %)

	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Average</i>
<i>I have never considered it</i>	77	70	73
<i>I considered it but gave up the idea</i>	8	7	7
<i>I have not given up moving out, I still consider it</i>	15	23	20
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100

Gender in the youth sample is also a significant variable which affects the readiness of the youth to migrate and which differentiates the youth in that respect. We see the same tendencies as in the whole sample, but considerably increased. Among the youth there are more males (than average), as much as 44%, who have not given up the idea of moving out of Serbia and still consider it. That percentage is considerably lower among young women, 27%. As much as two thirds of young women from Pcinjski and Jablanicki districts never considered leaving Serbia.

Table 27a. Gender and attitude to migrations in the sub-sample of youth (in %)

	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Average</i>
<i>I have never considered it</i>	66	51	58
<i>I considered it but gave up the idea</i>	7	5	6
<i>I have not given up moving out, I still consider it</i>	27	44	36
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100

Citizens with the *lowest level of education* are least prone to move out – only 11% speaks about the unchanged level of readiness to move (out). As the level of education grows, the readiness to migrate grows too, but this tendency is not consistently linear. It seems that some other factors have more effect on readiness to migrate than education. In this case, the group “pupil/student” shows that the influence of age is more significant than the level of education. We see that the group of those with secondary school (fourth degree of education) have the greatest tendency to migrate; their readiness is seen as greater than the readiness of those with high education and university degree, who are still considered being able to find some possibility and find accomplishment in the community which they live in.

Table 28. Education and attitude to migrations¹⁰ (in %)

	Finished primary school or less	Two-year or three-year secondary school	Four-year secondary school	Higher school or university	Pupil/student	Average
<i>I have never considered it</i>	85	76	68	62	52	73
<i>I considered it, but gave up the idea</i>	5	7	6	15	5	7
<i>I have not given up moving out, I still consider it</i>	11	17	26	23	43	20
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

On the other hand, when it comes to youth population and its attitude to moving out of Serbia, those who consider it more are pupils/students (43%), or youth with finished higher school and university degree (41%), while almost 70% of those who only finished primary school (or less) never considered it, or those who finished school and are facing the beginning of their professional career are more prone to considering leaving as an option which has its advantages.

Table 28a. Education and attitude to migrations in the youth population (in %)

	Finished primary school or less	Two-year or three-year secondary school	Four-year secondary school	Higher school or university	Pupil/student	Average
<i>I have never considered it</i>	69	57	58	52	52	57
<i>I considered it, but gave up the idea</i>	2	6	7	7	5	6
<i>I have not given up moving out, I still consider it</i>	29	37	35	41	43	37
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

The similar tendency, related to education, is observed in the case of understanding *influence of respondent's occupation* on readiness to migrate. Occupation is the feature in significant relation to the level of education – those at the lower level in social hierarchy when it comes to occupation have a lower degree of education, and it is expected that they have a similar attitude to migrations.

10 The pupil/student group includes those who are still attending school.

Although it is expected that poorer people have higher need for migrations, it is not the case. The average monthly income per household member does not make a difference in the presence of a wish to migrate nor does it speak about any regularity in this case. It just confirms once again the thesis that the need for moving out is not based solely on the wish, but on the assessment of opportunities as well. The poor, although they may want to try to go somewhere else, assess that they do not possess the initial conditions and opportunity, so they show less readiness to migrate.

Table 29. Average monthly income (in thousands of dinars) per household member and attitude to migrations (in %)

	Up to 10	10–20	20–40	Over 40	Doesn't know/refuses to tell	Average
<i>I have never considered it</i>	72	73	74	64	84	73
<i>I considered it, but gave up the idea</i>	6	9	12	18	11	7
<i>I have not given up moving out, I still consider it</i>	22	19	14	18	5	20
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

Previous conclusion is also confirmed by the result according to which there is no significant correlation between the answer to the question *how do you and your family live* and intention to move out. Although it was expected that the differences would be greater, among those who claim that they live *unbearably* “only” 24% plan to move out (average at the level of the whole sample is 20%). On the other hand, even among those who claim to live well there are 15% of those who plan to change the place of their residence.

Although results confirm that economic motives are dominant reasons for considering moving out in all structures of respondents, there is a significant difference in migratory potential according to another criterion – *belonging to certain national groups* that live in this territory. Namely, migratory potential is considerably greater among ethnic minorities than among the majority population of Serbian nationality.

Table 30. Nationality and attitude to migrations (in %)

	<i>Serb</i>	<i>Albanian</i>	<i>Bulgarian</i>	<i>Roma</i>	<i>Average</i>
<i>I have never considered it</i>	76	62	41	70	73
<i>I considered it, but gave up the idea</i>	7	5	16	5	7
<i>I have not given up moving out, I still consider it</i>	16	32	44	25	20
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100

The observed tendencies repeat themselves even in the groups of youth and they are considerably more pronounced there. Namely, the greatest readiness to migration is found among the youth of Albanian nationality – as much as 45%. They are followed by the youth of the majority, Serbian nationality – 35%, while the Roma have that readiness at the lowest – “only” 25%. These data directly confirm the degree of deprivation of certain youth groups with regard to their national background. The most deprived is the group of young Roma. The fact that almost 70% of young Roma never considered moving out of Serbia supports the interpretation that the readiness to migration is the result not only of the need but also the assessment of opportunities to migrate, which is why the poorest, least educated layers of society do not opt for this step.

Table 30. Nationality and attitude to migrations (in %)

	<i>Serb</i>	<i>Albanian</i>	<i>Roma</i>	<i>Average</i>
<i>I have never considered it</i>	58	49	70	57
<i>I considered it, but gave up the idea</i>	7	6	5	6
<i>I have not given up moving out, I still consider it</i>	35	45	25	37
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100

NATURE AND DEGREE OF THE YOUTH’S READINESS TO MIGRATE

Above average number of young people compared to the whole sample say that *they have always lived in the same place*. This is not an unexpected result, especially when we have in mind that the sample includes population of youth between 15 and 19 years of age, who are still attending school in the town in which they were born. It is interesting that there is a statistically significant difference by gender in the whole sample when it comes to realized migrations. Namely, a greater number of females than males claim

that they came from the nearby village/neighbouring place. This is explained by the fact that on the average young women leave their town for marriage more frequently than men.

Table 31. Since when do you live in your current place of residence? (in %)

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Average youth	Over 30	Average
<i>I have always lived in the same place of residence</i>	91	85	82	85	74	76
<i>I moved here from the nearby village</i>	6	5	11	8	14	13
<i>I moved here from the next place/town</i>	2	7	2	4	7	6
<i>I moved here from some other town in Serbia</i>	0	3	4	2	2	2
<i>I am a refugee from Croatia</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>I am a refugee from Bosnia and Herzegovina</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>I moved here from Kosovo</i>	0	0	0	0	2	2
<i>I came back from abroad</i>	1	0	1	1	1	1
<i>I was returned as a part of the program of return of foreigners from the EU</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

The youth's readiness to migrate is considerable in comparison to other respondents in the sample. The young people in general demonstrate greater wish to see themselves in some other place in the future – in a larger town or abroad. The interesting thing is that the respondents from the younger (15–19) and older (25–29) age groups want to go abroad to a higher degree, while aspirations of those between 20 and 24 years of age are more directed to moving to a larger city (Beograd, Pristina, Nis, Novi Sad). It is very likely that the difference in the choice of a place for migration in these two age groups is conditioned by the fact that respondents aged between 20 and 24 are currently studying in a larger centre and that they naturally consider staying there. In both cases, readiness to migrate is greater than among the adults or in comparison to the average in the whole sample. There are no considerable differences when it comes to gender of the respondents.

If we go a step further in trying to determine how much the young are really prepared to migrate, we get the impression that a significant number of them are considering a concrete town, city or state as their possible choice for moving out and starting a new life. Young respondents on the average

most frequently say that their choice is a larger city in Serbia (Nis, Novi Sad or Belgrade) – the average for the young is 48%, somewhat larger than in the whole sample, and only then comes the choice of a European country – 39%.

Table 32. Concrete town/city/state to which they plan to move? (in %)

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Average youth	Over 30	Average
<i>To a neighbouring town in the region (all the towns of Pcinjski and Jablanicki districts)</i>	7	12	0	6	7	6
<i>To another, smaller town in Serbia</i>	0	2	0	1	3	2
<i>To a larger city in Serbia (Nis, Novi Sad or Belgrade)</i>	42	53	48	48	46	47
<i>To a neighbouring country (Bulgaria, Albania, Macedonia...)</i>	0	5	6	3	3	4
<i>To a European country</i>	48	26	42	39	34	35
<i>To an overseas country (USA, Canada, Australia...)</i>	0	2	4	2	6	5
<i>Somewhere else</i>	3	0	0	1	1	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 32a. Where do you plan to move? (in %)

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Average youth	Over 30	Average
<i>To a neighbouring town</i>	3	7	0	3	5	4
<i>To a larger city (Belgrade, Pristina, Nis...)</i>	44	54	44	48	47	47
<i>To abroad</i>	53	39	56	49	48	49
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

The already observed tendencies in the total youth sample, which includes the youngest (15–19), medium (20–24) and elder respondents (25–29) appear here as well. The greatest deviations were observed among the youth aged between 20 and 24 in comparison to other youth age groups which are more inclined to internal migrations – those above average wish to go to a neighbouring town in the region, or, especially, to a larger city in Serbia. As opposed to them, the other two youth groups would be more ready to emigrate, leave Serbia and go to a European country. If we continue monitoring how the tendency changes in the adult population, we will see that the number of those ready to migrate outside the country reduces in favour of those ready to seek better opportunity in one of the larger cities

in Serbia. This only confirms the already observed tendencies that there is a combination of influences of various factors such as *age, marital status, and employment*. Namely, starting a new life in a certain community, whether one is creating a family or seeking employment and starting professional development, reduces one's readiness to make a big step such as starting from scratch in another place without social support from the family and friends. That is why "peaks" of readiness to migrate are the highest in those groups which are at their "beginnings"—secondary school students who are choosing whether they will resume their school or start working somewhere else, and those who finished their education and still haven't found appropriate employment or created a family. There is an impression that the decision on migration represents the result of assessment on how much they already invested in a certain community, how much they expect from it, whether and in what way they are still tied to the community which, let us not forget, they perceive as "weak".

Beside variations within youth age groups, there is also a significant statistical differentiation of gender. Namely, a greater number of young women says they have never considered leaving than it is the case with young men. Also, young women are more ready to move to a larger city, even in neighbouring countries (Belgrade, Novi Sad, Nis, Sofia).

It is interesting to resume monitoring reasons and motives which the young people specify as crucial for making a decision on leaving. As it is obvious from the enclosed table, over 85% of young people say that motives which make them consider leaving are primarily economic in nature. The main reason for which the young would be ready to make a decision on leaving is unemployment, concretely *lack of work*. On the average, as much as 54% of the young, as opposed to 38% of adults, say that this is their main reason which makes them consider leaving, or planning leaving. Of the remaining specified motives, the second place is held by motives which are also essentially economic in nature – *bad economic situation, standard of living, lack of money*. The impression is that as much as the third of young people think that even finding a job in the town in which they live would not help them reach the satisfactory standard of living.

If we look at the variations within the youth sample, especially dissatisfied with the *lack of work* are two groups of youth (20–24 and 25–29) – 62% and 60% of them list this motive as a dominant one when creating an attitude on the possibility of leaving. The result is not unexpected: these are young people who are at the beginning of their professional careers, who are entering the labour market at this point, and they are focused on this problem "here and now". The next level of problems, which some see as significant even when they are not employed, is the fact that employment does not necessarily

mean securing a satisfying standard of living.

Table 33. Fundamental reason for wanting to leave your place of residence? (in %)

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Average youth	Over 30	Average
<i>Bad economic situation, standard of living, lack of money</i>	48	26	21	32	54	46
<i>Lack of work / impossibility to find a job</i>	42	62	60	54	30	38
<i>Better job, better-paid job, career advancement</i>	3	5	2	3	5	5
<i>Better outlook, more possibilities...</i>	0	3	11	5	6	6
<i>Political instability, political reasons ...</i>	0	0	0	0	1	1
<i>Education, training, additional education – personal</i>	7	0	0	2	0	1
<i>Education, training, additional education – of children</i>	0	2	0	1	1	1
<i>Sense of insecurity, bad international relations</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Family ties</i>	0	0	0	0	1	0
<i>Gaining new experience, travel</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Other</i>	0	2	6	3	2	2
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

The survey allows a better understanding of the behaviour of young respondents with regard to identifying their readiness to daily migrations from their town to other towns. The youth in South Serbia is, in comparison to average in the sample, more ready to do daily migrations within Serbia. Those above average (27%) travel daily from their village to the closest town, or some other town (13%).

In accordance with expectations, the greatest percentage of those who travel daily to a larger town is within the population of the youngest respondents (37%), and these migrations are school-related. Also, it is interesting that as much as 23% of those between 20 and 24 years of age commute to another town several times a week; their motives are more varied and include other necessities of the young beside education.

Table 34. Do you travel to another town because of the job or school every day or several times a week (in %)

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Average youth	Over 30	Average
No	57	57	66	60	75	72
Yes, I travel from the village to the closest town	37	20	24	27	19	21
Yes, I travel to another town	6	23	10	13	6	7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

THE YOUTH'S READINESS TO MIGRATE OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY

Special attention in the questionnaire was dedicated to identifying a degree of **potential migration of the youth abroad**. Through the survey we attempted to find how many young people, and to what extent, are ready to migrate outside of the country and what is the nature of the motives which drive them to leave or keep them stay.

In the part that follows we will try to describe in more detail the position, thinking and degree of readiness to leave the country of those young people who declared themselves as potential migrants, i.e. those who said that they plan to move out somewhere abroad. The following data is obtained through a **sub-sample of potential migrants, i.e. within those 20% of respondents from the whole sample who said that they plan to move out abroad and did not give up the idea**. In further analyses the share and behaviour of young people in the sub-sample of potential migrants will be presented.

If they declare themselves ready to leave the country, the young people are further divided to those ready to do it *permanently* (48%) and those who would do it for *several years* (45%).

If we analyse fluctuations in the youth sub-sample, especially prominent in this segment is a large percentage of young people between 15 and 19 who are ready to leave for *several years* – as much as 68%. It is also possible that they are considering migration in the context of resumption of studies. As opposed to them, older groups of young people are more ready to, if they decide to leave the country, do it *permanently*. This tendency can be observed in the answers of older respondents, those above 30, as well. We could say that the readiness to permanent migration rises with age.

Table 35. To what time period would you leave the place of your residence? (in %)

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Average youth	Over 30	Average
<i>For several months</i>	3	2	8	4	0	1
<i>Between one and two years</i>	0	5	2	3	3	3
<i>For several years</i>	68	29	38	45	37	39
<i>Permanently</i>	29	64	52	48	60	57
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

In an attempt to find out how much the context contributes to the growth or reduction of potential migration, respondents were asked the question aimed at identifying the years which were especially critical for them, and increased the wish for migration.

One fifth of the respondents in the whole sub-sample could not specify the years which were more critical and thus contributed to increased readiness to migrate. Namely, among those over 30 years of age fluctuations relate to the 1990s, the period of wars and intensive economic crisis, while the older young people (25–29) specify years between 2000 and 2004, and especially the last three years, 2008–2010. The last three years are seen as critical also in the sub-sample of the youngest (15–19) and in the middle youth group (20–24), but not among older respondents (25–29).

We should interpret these findings cautiously, not directly. This is further supported by the fact that in the sub-sample of adults the last three years, which were objectively more turbulent in the economic sense, do not stick out as especially critical. Fluctuation which we see in the youth sub-sample should rather be interpreted by various developmental positions, needs, topics which appear as current. Thus, for young people aged between 25 and 30 the period of 2000–2004 was a period when a certain number of them was entering the labour market and actively sought for a job (those who finished the fourth degree of high school, or higher or university studies). The following period, 2004–2008, is the period when some of these issues were resolved, when the young got employment in a certain way, and the number of those who specify these years as more critical than others is slowly dropping. The next “peak” for this age group is the period of world economic crisis, 2008–2010. The similar tendency can be seen among other youth age groups as well. The joint “peak” for all are the last three years, the years of world economic crisis, which radicalised the existing problems in South Serbia as well.

Table 36. *When did you think about leaving the most? (in %)*

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Average youth	Over 30	Average
<i>I don't know exactly</i>	26	20	19	22	28	26
<i>Until 1989</i>	0	0	0	0	4	3
<i>1990–1999</i>	4	5	4	4	14	11
<i>2000–2004</i>	0	7	13	7	15	13
<i>2005</i>	0	2	8	3	9	8
<i>2006</i>	0	7	8	5	4	5
<i>2007</i>	0	7	8	5	4	4
<i>2008</i>	13	10	6	10	9	9
<i>2009</i>	0	17	15	11	5	7
<i>2010</i>	57	24	19	33	7	13
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

On average, citizens of South Serbia do not show too serious an attention to move abroad – most of them went no further than inquiring how is the life abroad, whether through people they know and who live abroad, or by gathering information on their own. The young people are above average if we talk about independent information gathering (75%) or inquiring through friends or relatives (85%).

Tables 35 and 36 give a comparative overview according to all age categories of what the citizens of South Serbia concretely did in order to leave Serbia.

When it comes to concrete steps, most of respondents in this sub-sample (21%) say that they *sought for a job abroad*. 13% of them *sought accommodation*, and 11% *applied for visa*. All the other steps are present in less than 10% of cases. The interesting thing is that in all these categories the young are below average: *job abroad* was sought for by only 18% of young people, *accommodation* 7%, and 4 % of young people *applied for visa* (see tables 37 and 37a).

We certainly have to have in mind that a group of secondary school students affects the lower average rate of young people, who have done very few concrete steps towards leaving Serbia, which is expected having in mind their age. The other two groups of young people are either average or somewhat below. The greatest deviation (when it comes to concrete steps) is noted in groups of those aged between 20 and 24 – 37% of them *sought for a job abroad*, which is a large discrepancy from the average for the whole region (21%).

The youth sub-sample also contains certain fluctuation regarding gender. Greater number of young males than females *gathered information on destination of possible migration*. The same tendency is seen when it comes to *inquiring through friends and relatives*. These differences are statistically relevant.

Table 37. I – Which concrete steps have you undertaken to move abroad? (in %)

	Age	Yes	No	Total
<i>I gathered information on the country of destination by myself</i>	15–19	55	45	100
	20–24	80	20	100
	25–29	89	11	100
	Average youth	75	25	100
	Over 30	65	35	100
	Average	69	31	100
<i>I have made inquires through friends and relatives who live abroad</i>	15–19	85	15	100
	20–24	80	20	100
	25–29	90	10	100
	Average youth	85	15	100
	Over 30	77	23	100
	Average	80	20	100
<i>I sought assistance from agency/ international organisation</i>	15–19	0	100	100
	20–24	10	90	100
	25–29	3	97	100
	Average youth	4	96	100
	Over 30	7	93	100
	Average	6	94	100
<i>I applied for visa</i>	15–19	0	100	100
	20–24	5	95	100
	25–29	7	93	100
	Average youth	4	96	100
	Over 30	15	85	100
	Average	11	89	100

Table 37a. II – Which concrete steps have you undertaken to move abroad? (in %)

	Age	Yes	No	Total
<i>I sought an apartment/accommodation</i>	15–19	0	100	100
	20–24	10	90	100
	25–29	10	90	100
	Average youth	7	93	100
	Over 30	16	84	100
	Average	13	87	100
<i>I sought a job</i>	15–19	0	100	100
	20–24	37	63	100
	25–29	18	82	100
	Average youth	18	82	100
	Over 30	22	78	100
	Average	21	79	100
<i>I applied for a work permit</i>	15–19	0	100	100
	20–24	5	95	100
	25–29	0	100	100
	Average youth	2	98	100
	Over 30	13	87	100
	Average	9	91	100
<i>I applied for a residency permit</i>	15–19	0	100	100
	20–24	5	95	100
	25–29	3	97	100
	Average youth	3	97	100
	Over 30	13	87	100
	Average	9	91	100

RETURNEES FROM ABROAD IN THE YOUTH GROUP

In order to have a clearer picture of all aspects of migration, a part of the survey is dedicated to those who returned from abroad, their motives for the return and quality of life after their return from abroad.

The sub-sample of returnees consisted of the total of 8% of respondents in the whole sample. A small number of them (19%) returned voluntarily after they retired. A majority returned for various “negative” reasons, for

example, due to an inability to get a permanent job abroad (24%), because of nostalgia (17%), because of family members (15%), because they did not find their way their (12%) or because they could not earn a living (4%). This group also included 9% of respondents who were **returnees on the basis of readmission**.

The greatest number of young people from Serbia did not live abroad (96%), which is more than the average for this region (which is 92%). In fact, the percentage of those who lived outside Serbia is between 3% and 5% (the oldest group of young people). **Further analyses are related to this group of young people who make 3% to 5% of youth from this territory.**

This group also features statistically relevant gender differences – a greater number of young males had the opportunity to live abroad than young females.

Table 38. Have you ever lived abroad? (in %)

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Average youth	Over 30	Average
Yes	3	3	5	4	10	8
No	97	97	95	96	90	92
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

When we analyse the reasons for the return, we see that there are two basic reasons a) not getting work or a residency permit (35%) and b) “involuntary” return as a part of the programme of return of foreigners from the EU (22%). Some of the reasons most often stated are also a failure to find their way abroad and nostalgia for their homeland (a two-digit percentage).

The greatest discrepancy is noted among those aged between 20 and 24, with 60% of them said they returned because they did not get work or a residency permit (the average for the young is 35%, and for the whole population 24%). The second big discrepancy in comparison to the whole population is with all three groups of young people when it comes to return as a part of the programme of return of foreigners from the EU (all discrepancies greater than 10%).

Table 39. **What are the reasons for your returning to Serbia? (in %)**

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Average youth	Over 30	Average
<i>I did not get work or a residency permit</i>	25	60	20	35	22	24
<i>I did not find my way, there was no work...</i>	25	0	20	15	12	12
<i>I could not earn a living</i>	0	0	0	0	5	4
<i>Nostalgia, I missed my hometown</i>	0	20	20	13	17	17
<i>I voluntarily returned or retired</i>	25	0	0	8	21	19
<i>I was returned as a part of an EU readmission programme</i>	25	20	20	22	7	9
<i>Taking care of old and sick family members</i>	0	0	20	7	16	15
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

A majority of returnees from abroad claim they now live worse off than before going abroad, as much as 59%. Young people, in all age groups, are below that average.

Table 40. **After returning from abroad, how do you and your family live? (in %)**

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Average youth	Over 30	Average
<i>Better than before leaving</i>	0	0	14	5	15	14
<i>The same as before leaving</i>	67	50	29	39	25	27
<i>Worse than before leaving</i>	33	50	57	46	60	59
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

3. FIELDS OF SPECIAL INTEREST FOR YOUTH

Through the public opinion survey we have learned from youth themselves more about the most significant problems of young people that have been identified also in the desktop analysis of policies and in interviews with the representatives of institutions and civil sector. In the following section we will present the main findings related to the following topics: *volunteerism, information level among youth, quality of leisure time and mobility.*

3.1. VOLUNTEERISM

The devastation of society and poverty in south Serbia are problems the resolution of which requires intensive and years of work primarily in the domain of economic development of this part of Serbia. At the moment the available funds and resources for growth and development are limited and this is hard to influence. It is not probable that passive waiting for something to happen would bring about more significant changes for the inhabitants of these towns. Exactly for this reason promotion of activism and encouraging young people to work proactively on improving their position represents the only reliable way to have some more significant changes happen.

The public opinion survey among youth shows that they are, just as the general population, rather minimally engaged in different organisations and institutions, even in those that are primarily intended for them. **For example, only 9% of youth is active in youth, pupils` or students` organisations, 16% in sports or recreational organisations, while 13% reported being active in certain political parties.**

The concept of volunteerism in Serbia, generally, is not well developed, however it can significantly increase the volunteerism of youth, especially when they are ready for such kind of engagement.

Youth in south Serbia have not had many opportunities to be volunteers. Among the youth in south Serbia volunteerism is far less present than on average in Serbia. The number of those who report that they have volunteered goes from 13% in a group of the oldest youth, 8% in the group aged 20 to 24, to only 6% in the group of the youngest ones.

Table 41. *Have you volunteered anywhere so far? (in %)*¹¹

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Average youth (15–29)	Over 30	Average
Yes	6	8	13	9	7	8
No	94	92	87	91	93	92
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

¹¹ For the purpose of this survey a separate analysis has been conducted on three categories of youth (from 15 to 19 years of age, from 20 to 24 years of age and from 25 to 29 years of age); all findings have been analysed also for these three sub-samples, as well as through comparison of these findings with the group of respondents older than 30. .

Although volunteerism is not much present in the whole of Serbia, it is present more than in these two districts. For example, on average, between 15% and 22% of youth in Serbia has volunteered.

A desire to volunteer among the youth in south Serbia is lower than in Serbia on average. Thus, among the youth aged 15 to 19 in the entire Serbia there is 61% of those who said that they would like to volunteer, while in the South this percentage is 50%; in the youth group aged 20 to 24 this percentage in Serbia is 59%, and in this survey it is 54%; in the group of the oldest ones, aged 25 to 29, as much as 60% of youth in Serbia would like to volunteer, while among youth in the south Serbia this percentage is 45%.

Although the desire to volunteer among the youth in south Serbia is lower, this desire is certainly higher than the real opportunities for this type of engagement. **On average, a half of the youth population expresses a desire to do some kind of voluntary work** (in case of the youngest group it is exactly 50%, as regards the group aged 20 to 24 it reaches 54%, and in case of the oldest group it is somewhat lower, 45%).

There are significant differences among the three sub-groups of youth when the **motives for volunteering** are concerned. These differences should be taken into consideration by those who would be engaged in the promotion of voluntary engagement of youth in future. For youth aged between 15 and 19 the motive *socialising with peers* is almost equally represented as the motive *opportunity for future employment*. However, for the other two sub-groups of youth socialising is a peripheral motive, and the key motives are *opportunity for future employment*, followed by *acquiring work experience* and/or altruistic motive – *helping those who need help*.

As it could be seen, economic motives, i.e. difficulties in finding employment have impact also on the issue of volunteering, and thus this type of engagement is perceived as one of the ways to get a job.

Table 42. Would you like to volunteer and what would be your motives for volunteering? (in %)

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Average youth (15–29)	Over 30	Average
<i>I would not like to volunteer</i>	50	46	55	50	74	70
<i>I would like to volunteer</i>	50	54	45	50	26	30
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Motives for volunteering in the group of those who show desire to volunteer</i>						
<i>Work experience that I would acquire</i>	8	24	20	17	15	16
<i>Opportunity for future employment</i>	38	54	44	45	35	39
<i>Socialising</i>	32	2	7	14	4	6
<i>Helping those who need help</i>	20	19	20	20	31	26
<i>For common good of the community</i>	2	2	9	4	15	13
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

As regards the motives of youth for volunteering in Serbia, the most important motive was *acquiring work experience* (on average, in the whole group of youth this response was chosen by 40%, and in south Serbia only 17%). Then follows the motive *opportunity for future employment* which was chosen by 25% of youth in Serbia, while this motive is dominant in south Serbia – 45% of youth chose it.

When we speak only about the youth in south Serbia, females are, compared to males, more interested in volunteering (57% vs. 43%). Among females who would like to volunteer the most important motive is *opportunity for future employment* – for over 50% of females this is the main motive.

Table 42a. Gender and motives for volunteering in the subgroup of youth (in %)

	<i>I would not like</i>	<i>I would like</i>	Tot.	<i>Work experience that I would acquire</i>	<i>Opportunity for future employment</i>	<i>Socialising</i>	<i>Helping those who need help</i>	<i>For common good of the community</i>	Tot.
<i>Female</i>	43	57	100	19	53	7	20	1	100
<i>Male</i>	57	43	100	18	37	19	17	9	100
<i>Average</i>	51	49	100	18	45	13	19	5	100

Among young Serbs there are more of those who would like to volunteer than among the representatives of other nationalities. A dominant motive among all representatives of national minorities is the same – *opportunity for future employment*. However, certain differences could be noticed with regard to nationality. Among the young Albanians a dominant motive for volunteering is the *opportunity for future employment* (72%). All other motives are minimally present. Other nations, apart from this motive which is dominant, chose also other motives in greater number of cases.

Table 43. Nationality and motives for volunteering in the sub-group of youth (in %)

	<i>I would not like</i>	<i>I would like</i>	Tot.	<i>Work experience that I would acquire</i>	<i>Opportunity for future employment</i>	<i>Socialising</i>	<i>Helping those who need help</i>	<i>For common good of the community</i>	Tot.
<i>Serbian</i>	45	55	100	19	43	13	22	3	100
<i>Albanian</i>	65	35	100	5	72	6	0	17	100
<i>Roma</i>	67	33	100	29	43	28	0	0	100
<i>Average</i>	51	49	100	18	46	13	18	5	100

Youth in Jablanicki and Pcinjski districts rather differ among themselves when it comes to the place where they would like to volunteer the most. For the group aged 15 to 19 the most attractive are *foreign companies* (40% of youth would like to volunteer there). For the group aged 20 to 24 the most desirable is volunteering in the *state administration* (44%), and for the oldest group in *state companies or public enterprises* (48%). These differences are hard to explain. Older groups of youth, who are in a situation to look for an employment, obviously value state administration and state companies or public enterprises more, from the perspective of job security. Private domestic companies are not popular at all, and neither are civil society organisations.

There is no significant difference among youth in the surveyed region and youth in the whole of Serbia regarding the place where they would like to volunteer. The order of the institutions is the same, and the only difference is that in Serbia as a whole somewhat larger number of youth would like to volunteer in a civil society organisation (around 25%, on average), while this type of organisations is not too popular among the youth in the South (11%).

Table 44. Where would you like to volunteer? (Subsample of those who answered, in %)

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Average youth (15–29)	Over 30	Average
<i>In state firms / public enterprises</i>	18	33	48	33	39	36
<i>In a domestic private firm</i>	4	5	2	3	9	7
<i>In a big foreign firm</i>	40	16	24	27	17	21
<i>In state administration (Republic, town, municipality)</i>	12	44	10	22	9	14
<i>In citizens` association / non-governmental organisation...</i>	18	2	12	11	17	14
<i>Somewhere else</i>	8	0	5	4	9	7
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

Conducting different volunteering programmes is a good direction for linking two youth related problems – low level of activism and unemployment, i.e. lack of practice and experience necessary in current market conditions that have long ago overcome the education system.

3.2. INFORMATION LEVEL OF YOUTH

The problem of **insufficient levels of information** is recognised as one of the main problems that considerably contributes to the vulnerability of youth, both in Pcinjki and Jablanicki district, and in the whole of Serbia. Analysis of policies conducted within the desktop analysis and in-depth interviews with the representatives of local institutions for youth and with the representatives of civil society organisations active in these regions testify to the high presence of this problem among the youth in this territory. The public opinion survey clearly supports their statements and shows that the youth themselves recognise that they are insufficiently well-informed. The survey has also identified the types of information that the young people lack the most.

Youth in south Serbia “suffer” from the lack of information, as do their peers in the entire Serbia, even somewhat more.¹² The younger they are, the stronger is their feeling that they do not have enough necessary information. Thus, **as much as 78% of young people aged 15 to 19 in Jablanicki and**

¹² Comparative data for this and other topics are given based on the CeSID public opinion survey conducted for the Ministry of Youth and Sports in December 2009, on a representative sample in the whole Serbia (4515 respondents).

Pcinjski districts claim that they do not have enough information about the things they are interested in or that they need. When the other two sub-groups are concerned, lack of information “drops” to about two thirds. The situation is the same both among young males and young females.

Types of information that the young people are interested in indicate that youth in the whole of Serbia have very similar problems and needs. The research done so far, both in these two districts and on the national level, show that the most sought after information are related to **employment**, and then **education** and **professional improvement**. There are significant differences in the sub-sample of youth in how they assess which information are more important for them. As regards employment, in the research conducted by CeSID in the whole of Serbia¹³ these types of information are perceived as important and deficient by 37% of youth in a group 15 to 19 years of age, 46% of youth aged 20 to 24, as much as 72% of those in the group aged 25 to 29.

Among the youth in south Serbia information related to health, safety and ecology as well as in the field of scholarships, loans and money are less in demand than among the average youth population in the whole of Serbia. Nobody among the youth in South Serbia has reported that they need information about the work of organisations, although a certain number of them said that they needed information about “social happenings” (this answer was not offered in the research for the whole of Serbia).

13 CeSID Survey conducted for the Ministry of Youth and Sports, 2008.

Table 45. *In which fields you lack information the most? (in %)*

	15–19	20–24	25–29	Average youth (15–29)	Over 30	Average
<i>I have all information that I need</i>	23	37	35	31	51	47
<i>I do not have all information that I need</i>	78	64	65	69	49	53
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Type of information (from the group of those who said that they „lacked information“)</i>						
<i>Possibilities for employment</i>	37	46	72	51	52	52
<i>Education, professional improvement</i>	29	23	16	22	9	12
<i>Health, safety, ecology</i>	2	8	1	4	15	12
<i>Acquiring scholarships, loans, money</i>	3	2	3	3	10	8
<i>Culture, arts</i>	0	2	0	1	2	1
<i>Sport</i>	11	5	4	6	2	3
<i>Leisure time</i>	3	0	0	1	2	2
<i>Going out, travelling, hobby...</i>	5	8	1	5	3	3
<i>Voluntary engagement</i>	8	0	1	3	1	1
<i>Social happenings</i>	2	7	3	4	4	4
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

3.3. LEISURE TIME

Passive and low quality leisure time represents one of the characteristics and one of the main problems of youth. The survey only confirms the presence of this problem, the consequences of which can “cost” this society very much.

Youth in south Serbia spend their leisure time most often **socialising and going out**, then **watching TV programmes** and on the **Internet**. These three activities comprise around 80% of the free time of youth.

There are certain differences in three sub-groups of youth. Watching television as the most frequent way of spending free time increases with the age of the respondents – the group aged 20 to 24 is the one that most often spends leisure time watching television and, especially the group aged 25 to 29, which, with regard to this characteristic, is getting closer to the age group over 30. Youth aged 25 to 29 watches TV twice as much as do teenagers

(those aged 15 to 19).

As regards socialising with peers and going out, the situation is reverse in relation to watching TV – as the “older” the youth are, the less they socialise and go out.

Using the Internet as the most frequent way of spending their free time is very similar in age groups from 15 to 19 and from 20 to 24 and it abruptly falls down in the group aged 25 to 29.

A relatively small number of youth practices sports or reads books in their free time, and there is a very small number of those who use their leisure time for additional education or studying. A creative hobby is something which is almost on the level of statistical error, and it is interesting that no respondent in any of the age groups reported spending free time working in an organisation or association, or going to the cinema, theatre, museums, which were also among the offered answers.

Table 46. How do you spend your free time most often? (in %)

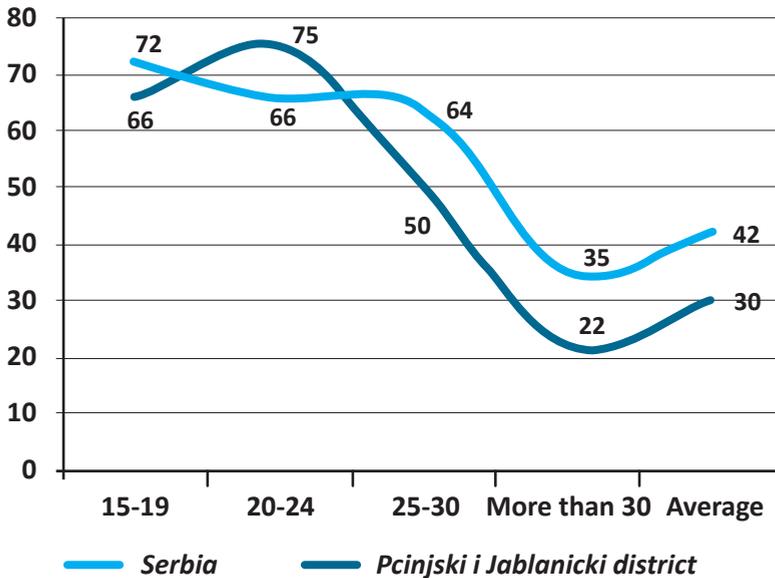
	15–19	20–24	25–29	Average youth (15–29)	Over 30	Average
Watching TV	22	29	34	29	69	62
Socialising and going out	33	25	22	27	14	16
Reading books	6	7	7	7	4	5
Reading newspapers, magazines	0	2	2	2	3	3
On the Internet	23	26	14	22	3	6
Education, studying	1	3	2	2	1	1
Sports, recreation	7	6	4	6	2	3
Listening to music	7	1	3	4	2	2
Creative hobby (painting, writing...)	0	0	3	1	2	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

The Internet is a medium which youth extremely often use, and that at the same time represents an important channel for increasing the level of information and communication among youth.

Young people in the two districts in south Serbia use the Internet on average less than the youth in the whole of Serbia. The exception is the group aged between 20 and 24 that uses the Internet more than the same age groups in the whole of Serbia. In Serbia, the use of the Internet evenly decreases as the age increases, while in the regions in south Serbia young people aged 15 to 19 use the Internet less than the next category of youth

(66% compared to 75%); use of the Internet abruptly declines in the group from 25 to 29 years of age, to 50% of this group.

Graph 8. Using the Internet – comparative data for Pcinjski and Jablanicki district and for Serbia (in %)



Youth use the Internet most often at home, and far less they use the Internet in cafés. In schools and or at work the Internet is used very little, it can almost be ignored.

Table 47. Where do you most often use the Internet? (in %)

	15-19	20-24	25-29	Average youth (15-29)	Over 30	Average
<i>I do not use the Internet</i>	34	25	50	36	78	70
<i>Yes, in school/at the faculty</i>	5	8	2	5	0	1
<i>Yes, at work</i>	0	2	5	3	3	3
<i>Yes, at home</i>	44	56	40	47	18	24
<i>At Internet cafés</i>	17	8	3	9	0	2
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

3.4. MOBILITY

One of the important characteristics that “colour” a profile of a young person in Serbia is a very low mobility in comparison to the young people in Europe. Youth in Serbia have grown up in a “closed” and violent society that is qualified as hostile by the rest of the world. An inability to leave the country, meet other nationalities, compare different ways of life, analyse advantages and disadvantages of life in a transitional Serbian society in comparison to other countries in Europe, certainly represents a significant factor that has been slowing down changes, contributing to lack of understanding related to the EU accession process, and supporting a paranoid and violent image of “others”. In addition, an (in)ability to travel testifies also about the quality of life.

In the south of Serbia there are more citizens who have travelled (whatever the occasion might be) or lived abroad than those who have never left the country, 57% vs. 43%. The younger the respondents are, the higher is the percentage of those who have never travelled abroad – **half of high school students have never left the country**, i.e. 47% of those between 20 and 24 years of age and 39% of those aged 25 to 29. Even those who have travelled mostly did it only once – all youth groups are above average for the south of Serbia. (8%).

Table 48. *Have you ever travelled abroad (u %)*

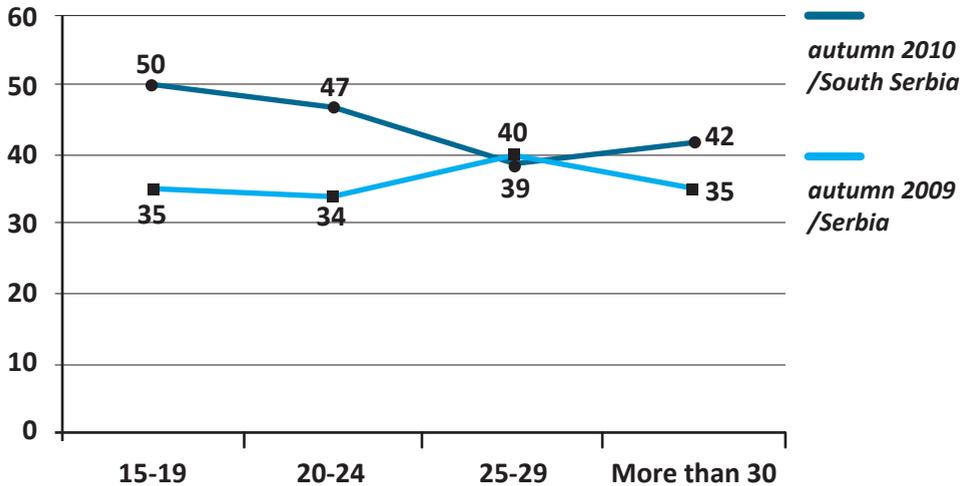
	15–19	20–24	25–29	Average youth (15–29)	Over 30	Average
<i>No, never</i>	50	47	39	45	42	43
<i>Yes, only once</i>	16	9	15	13	7	8
<i>Yes, more than once</i>	34	42	43	40	46	45
<i>Yes, I lived abroad</i>	0	2	3	2	5	4
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

In order to get as complete an assessment of the situation as possible related to going abroad, we have compared data on those who have never travelled abroad with the whole population of Serbia. Among the citizens in south Serbia, in all age groups there is a much higher number of those who have never travelled abroad than in the entire Serbian population (representative sample, without Kosovo¹⁴). Relatively equal with the whole sample are only the youth aged 25 to 29, while among all other age groups the difference is noticeably higher. The biggest difference is in the youngest

14 under UNSCR 1244

group, where as much as a half of them have never travelled abroad (unlike 35% of youth in the entire population).

Graph 9. *Never travelled abroad (Serbia – South Serbia), in %*



4. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The Balkan Peninsula is dominantly divided along the lines of national and ethnic¹⁵ differences. The relationships among ethnic groups determine social life and coexistence in one area, and they dominantly create political reality. In the southern part of Serbia, where this study was conducted, there are a number of ethnic communities. Some ethnic groups that are minority groups in Serbia have different contacts with the neighbouring countries where their mother nations live.

The largest part of this section is devoted to the ethnic distance in south Serbia. These findings will be complemented with the most important evaluations related to the situation of inter-ethnic relations in these two districts, from the perspective of institutions responsible for the inter-ethnic relations. During the interviews with the heads of town/municipal administrations we have found out that there is no discrimination of citizens

¹⁵ Terminological difference should be noted between the terms nation and ethnic community, which are often used synonymously in public discourse. A nation is a community of citizens of one country, while ethnicity is the feeling of belonging to a certain community. Therefore, in further analysis the term ethnic community will be used as an indicator of group identifications.

based on their nationality, and that the staff relationship is the same towards all. This certainly belongs to a group of expected and desirable answers; however, a small number of municipalities/towns have conducted surveys that would prove such statements also empirically. Apart from the answers received from the representatives of municipal/town administrations, very important are also the answers we have received through interviews with the authorities in the Coordination Body for Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja as well as in the councils for inter-ethnic relations. **The general conclusion is that none of the authorities point explicitly to the problems in the relations between different ethnicities, although the findings of the public opinion survey show that the ethnic distance is high and that it is mainly based on prejudices.** The authorities assess that the inter-ethnic relations in south Serbia are good, but that there are some concrete problems that the representatives of different minorities encounter. Based on these problems we have indirectly concluded that below the first level of socially acceptable answers about good inter-ethnic relationships there is a series of issues that put a burden on the relations between different ethnicities. Without resolving these problems we could hardly speak about good inter-ethnic relations, except if we set a lack of direct conflicts between them as a criterion.

What are the problems of national minorities in south Serbia the resolving of which is an inevitable condition for improving of the overall situation? **The greatest are, for sure, problems of the Roma community because they represent a group that is not integrated in society (or at least not integrated enough), whose members, as a rule, have no employment, their housing issue is not resolved, and their children often do not go to school.** Their problems are not different than in any other part of Serbia, except that they are additionally worsened by a difficult economic situation in most of the municipalities/towns in Pcinjski and Jablanicki district. Among them there are also many internally displaced persons and returnees who were returned on the basis of the Readmission Agreement. **The Roma national council has warned that discrimination is present in all fields of social, political and cultural life.** Cooperation with the relevant Ministry for Human and Minority Rights is not on a satisfactory level either. The Albanian national council also confirms that there are serious problems which the authorised bodies have not mentioned in the interviews: violation of rights related to official use of language, personal documents, as well as incongruence between the curricula and text books. However, as our analysis of ethnic distance shows (this analysis constitutes the biggest part of this chapter), **the greatest problem in the relations between different ethnicities in south Serbia is a**

lack of „real“ communication (experience) that has led to a situation that the only (or at least the most important) level of “reasoning” is based on prejudice.

A special part of the analysis is devoted to the councils for inter-ethnic relations that exist in Vranje, Leskovac and Medvedja. Without denying their importance or the good intention of state bodies to improve inter-ethnic relations by establishing these bodies, we can ascertain that they have not proved to be effective in practice. **In order to achieve the expected effects of the bodies designed in this way, there are four types of problems that need to be overcome: 1) inactiveness of council members with regard to initiatives and projected activities, 2) disinterest of “individuals” from administration and relevant institutions for realisation of programme activities, 3) lack of financial resources and 4) lack of expectations and pressure by the citizens on the councils to address the issues that they have a mandate for.** The impression is that these bodies have been established more as an obligation proscribed by the law, and less as a result of a desire to work more on improving inter-ethnic relationship. It is indicative, however, that none of the councils (that we had interviews with) has observed violation of rights of minorities, in spite of the fact that the representatives of the Roma national council and, especially Albanian council, have been pointing to certain errors. Such attitudes demonstrate that there is a certain degree of disinterest among the council members to critically view international relationships in their communities. Although this is region where there are negative experiences concerning inter-ethnic relations, it may be concluded that the authorities have forgotten that the work on improvement of inter-ethnic relations has to be done every day.

Table 49. *Inter-ethnic distance (general sample) (in %)*

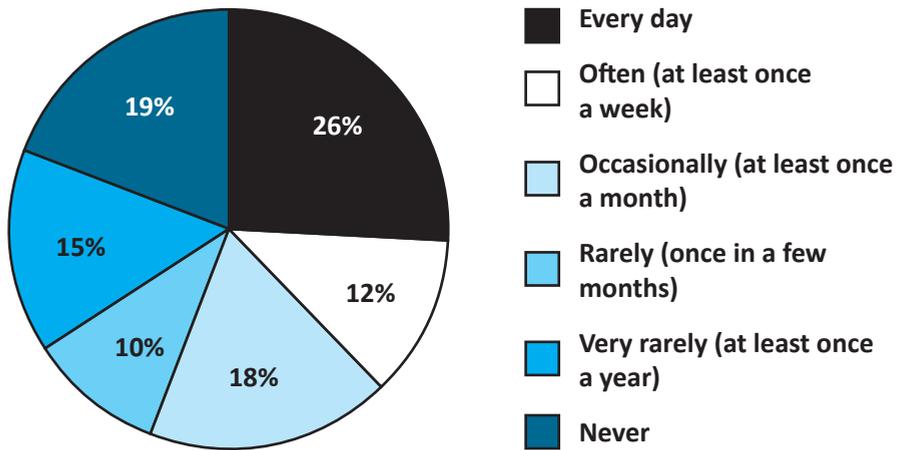
<i>Would you mind if a member of the following nations ...</i>	<i>Albanians</i>	<i>Bosniaks</i>	<i>Bulgarians</i>	<i>Monte-negrins</i>	<i>Mace-donians</i>	<i>Roma</i>	<i>Serbs</i>
<i>lived permanently in your state</i>	33	28	24	19	17	20	5
<i>was your neighbour</i>	37	31	27	20	19	27	5
<i>was your co-worker</i>	33	28	26	20	18	25	5
<i>was a teacher to your children</i>	47	41	37	29	29	38	6
<i>To socialise with him/her and pay home visits to each other</i>	39	32	28	21	20	29	5
<i>was your superior</i>	40	34	31	25	24	33	5
<i>was in a leadership position in your state</i>	58	53	51	43	44	48	6
<i>was related to you by your own marriage or marriage of your children</i>	68	67	62	44	48	70	13

For measuring the ethnic distance the Bogarus scale, generally accepted among the scientific public, was used. **By this scale an examinee is hypothetically presented situations in which he should imagine a representative of another ethnic group and then say whether he would object to various types of social and interpersonal interactions.** The scale starts from the relations that imply spatial location (citizen, neighbour, co-worker), through various types of social interaction (friend, teacher of children, superior), and it ends with the closest social relations (marriage or marriage of own children with a member of another ethnic community). **The existing scale shows that there are significant distances towards members of different ethnic communities in this region, but it also shows that they have some specificities.**

The scale shows greater resistance towards a member of certain ethnicity being a neighbour than a co-worker, as well as that there is a greater resistance towards a hypothetic situation in which a member of a certain ethnicity is a children's teacher than towards a situation in which the respondents are socialising with members of other ethnicity. In that sense this scale deviates from the expected results, where the distances go from the lowest to the highest. The greatest level of distance is expressed towards Albanians, because in all measured categories (except last one) this

ethnic group is the least desirable in social interactions. **The second position is reserved for the members of the Bosniak national minority**, for which the ethnic distance is on the second place, in all categories except in the last one. Then follows the distance towards Bulgarians, which is in some segments present among more than 50% of respondents (leaders` position and close family relations), and then follows the distance towards Roma, Macedonians and Montenegrins. In the last place are the Serbs – distance towards them is the lowest. **The case of Roma is interesting, since one type of social mimicry has been observed.** Namely, although the Roma are all until the last parameter an ethnic group towards which the distance exists among less than a half of the respondents, when the close family relations are concerned the distance towards them is the highest. It could be recognised in a stereotype „that the Roma are vagabonds and beggars and it is not good to enter into kinship with them“.¹⁶

Graph 10. *Interethnic communication*



The distance in these regions is an attitude dominantly determined by the prejudices, and we wanted to check also how much is this attitude based on a real experience. More precisely, we have tried to measure whether there is a “real” interaction between the members of different ethnic communities. **Thus, one fifth of the respondents said that they never had contact with members of other ethnic communities, one fourth said that they have contact with them every day.** The percentage of responses to other options

¹⁶ A statement of an examinee of the focus group from February 2009, within the research for the NDI in Serbia.

offered to the respondents related to the frequency of communication that have been (we offered them also: often, at least once a week; occasionally, at least once a month; rarely, once in a few months; very rarely, at least once a year) are in the range from one tenth to one fifth of the total number of the respondents.

Table 50. Cause for interethnic contacts (u %)

<i>With which of the listed nations you have the following types of contacts?</i>	<i>Albanians</i>	<i>Bosniaks</i>	<i>Bulgarians</i>	<i>Monte-negrins</i>	<i>Mace-donians</i>	<i>Roma</i>	<i>Serbs</i>
<i>In institutions where I go to</i>	30	5	21	20	15	41	94
<i>We work in the same enterprise</i>	11	2	8	10	7	15	60
<i>We have business cooperation</i>	19	5	11	13	9	23	77
<i>We socialise and pay visits to each other</i>	20	4	14	16	15	21	92
<i>We are neighbours</i>	21	2	11	10	7	26	86
<i>We have close family relations</i>	16	3	7	13	10	11	81

Apart from the experience, we wanted to see how the interaction is realised with different minority groups. It is interesting that the interaction with the Bosniak community is very low (due to small number of Bosniaks in this area), but it does not change the fact that a strong distance is fostered towards this community. **This is just one more indicator of the fact that a distance is based on prejudice, and not on a real experience.** We could talk more precisely about the experience and the distance if we analysed separately mutual relations of several ethnic communities i.e. relations of their members with members of other ethnic communities.

INTERETHNIC DISTANCES OF SERBS, ALBANIANS AND ROMA

Having in mind the specificity of the sample and the scope of the respondents covered by it, the data on the relationship between different ethnic communities can only be given for three ethnic communities – **Serbs, Albanians and Roma**. There was an insufficient number of minority groups members in the sample to be able to make relevant conclusions based on their number. Therefore, the conclusions will be related mainly to the relationship between these three ethnic communities.

Table 51. Distance of Serbs towards other ethnic communities (in %)

Would you mind if a member of the following nations ...	Albanians	Bosniaks	Bulgarians	Montenegrins	Macedonians	Roma	Serbs
<i>lived permanently in your state</i>	38	33	29	22	20	24	
<i>was your neighbour</i>	44	36	31	24	22	32	
<i>was your co-worker</i>	40	33	30	24	21	29	
<i>was a teacher to your children</i>	57	47	43	33	33	45	
<i>To socialise with him/her and pay home visits to each other</i>	46	37	32	24	24	35	
<i>was your superior</i>	48	39	36	29	27	39	
<i>was in a leadership position in your state</i>	70	61	59	50	52	57	
<i>was related to you by your own marriage or marriage of your children</i>	81	72	66	44	49	77	

Bearing in mind that the greatest number of the respondents in the sample (79%) reported that they belong to the **Serbian ethnic community**, it does not surprise that the data do not differ significantly from the average. **Serbs express the greatest distance towards Albanians and it is the highest in all measured variables. As regards the distance towards Roma, there is a certain social mimicry i.e. social distance towards Roma is lower until the closest social relations (own marriage or marriage of own children) become the topic.** On the other hand, contacts that the Serbs have with other ethnic communities and their members are not so frequent. Serbs most often have contact with Roma, and it is interesting that the interaction with Albanians is very low.

Table 52. Places of contacts of Serbs with other ethnic groups (in %)

With which of the listed nations you have the following types of contacts?	Albanians	Bosniaks	Bulgarians	Montenegrins	Macedonians	Roma	Serbs
<i>In institutions where I go to</i>	18	7	23	25	17	40	
<i>We work in the same enterprise</i>	5	3	8	12	8	14	
<i>We have business cooperation</i>	9	5	11	16	10	19	
<i>We socialise and pay visits to each other</i>	7	3	14	19	16	15	
<i>We are neighbours</i>	7	2	11	12	7	22	
<i>We have close family relations</i>	2	2	5	16	11	6	

These data show that there are considerable prejudices of Serbs towards Albanians and that the prejudices are the ones that create the distance. If we compare the data on the frequency of contacts with the representatives of the Albanian minority in Serbia, **almost half of the Serbs say that they have never had contacts with members of the Albanian national minority, or that they have had contacts very rarely.** What is even more interesting is that the lack of contact increases the distance. Those who have not had any contact or very rare contact with Albanians show by 10% a greater distance towards them (than other Serb respondents). If we analyse the demographic indicators, there are significant correlations concerning the level of education of the respondents and their residential status. Namely, the more educated ones and those who live in urban settlements show a lower distance towards Albanians than those who are less educated and those living in rural areas (far away from administrative centres). As regards Roma, i.e. the relations of Serbs towards them, there are no significant changes deviating from the average values for the whole population with regard to the relation between the contact and ethnic distance. Demographic characteristics do not make differences among Serbs when this issue is concerned.

The second largest group in the sample are Albanians (12%). They have the greatest level of contacts with Serbs and Roma, because they are surrounded by the members of these two ethnic groups. They have minimal contact with the members of other ethnic groups and the percentage of interaction in these cases does not exceed one-digit number.

Table 53. Places of contact of Albanians with other ethnic groups (in %)

<i>With which of the listed nations you have the following types of contacts?</i>	<i>Albanians</i>	<i>Bosniaks</i>	<i>Bulgarians</i>	<i>Monte-negrins</i>	<i>Mace-donians</i>	<i>Roma</i>	<i>Serbs</i>
<i>In institutions where I go to</i>		2	3	3	4	33	94
<i>We work in the same enterprise</i>		2	3	2	3	11	27
<i>We have business cooperation</i>		6	6	6	8	25	60
<i>We socialise and pay visits to each other</i>		5	6	6	8	22	77
<i>We are neighbours</i>		2	2	3	2	15	43
<i>We have close family relations</i>		3	3	3	2	4	11

The distance they show towards members of other groups is low until it comes to a hypothetical situation in which a close relationship would be formed with members of other groups by marriage of a respondent or her children. The highest distance exists towards Roma when it comes to teaching children and it amounts to one fifth. However, when the “blood kinship” is put into context, it is clear that there is a hidden distance which is not expressed. Among Albanians there is no greater deviation comparing the distance and experience of contact with Serbs. When the demographic indicators are concerned, somewhat higher number of the less educated and those who live in rural areas show higher distance than those having a higher level of education and who live in more urban residential centres. As regards Roma, no specificity marks the relationship of Albanians towards them. Among all ethnic groups, the Albanians show the highest distance towards them according to all criteria.

Table 54. Distance of Albanians towards other ethnic groups (in %)

<i>Would you mind if a member of the following nations ...</i>	<i>Albanians</i>	<i>Bosniaks</i>	<i>Bulgarians</i>	<i>Montenegrins</i>	<i>Macedonians</i>	<i>Roma</i>	<i>Serbs</i>
<i>lived permanently in your state</i>		7	7	7	7	7	8
<i>was your neighbour</i>		8	8	7	7	8	9
<i>was your co-worker</i>		8	8	8	10	9	11
<i>was a teacher of your children</i>		18	17	18	18	20	16
<i>To socialise with him/her and pay home visits to each other</i>		10	9	9	9	11	10
<i>was your superior</i>		11	11	11	11	13	11
<i>was in a leadership position in your state</i>		13	15	15	15	17	13
<i>was related to you by your own marriage or marriage of your children</i>		55	56	54	55	57	54

Roma (only 5% of whom is included in the sample) show the lowest distance towards other ethnic communities. Only in two cases the distance is present among more than a half of the Roma respondents (towards Albanians and Bosniaks), and it concerns the relations that have the closest social characteristics. Roma have the lowest distance towards Serbs and it is negligible all until the last distance. Even then it does not exceed 30%.

Table 55. Distance of Roma towards other ethnic groups (in %)

<i>Would you mind if a member of the following nations ...</i>	<i>Albani-ans</i>	<i>Bosniaks</i>	<i>Bulg-arians</i>	<i>Monte-negrins</i>	<i>Mace-donians</i>	<i>Roma</i>	<i>Serbs</i>
<i>lived permanently in your state</i>	21	21	15	12	7		0
<i>was your neighbour</i>	21	23	16	12	8		1
<i>was your co-worker</i>	23	22	15	10	5		0
<i>was a teacher of your children</i>	26	25	22	15	9		1
<i>To socialise with him/her and pay home visits to each other</i>	23	25	17	12	9		3
<i>was your superior</i>	24	28	18	16	9		3
<i>was in a leadership position in your state</i>	28	32	26	20	13		0
<i>was related to you by your own marriage or marriage of your children</i>	51	52	43	37	35		29

Table 56. Places of contact of Roma with other ethnic groups (in %)

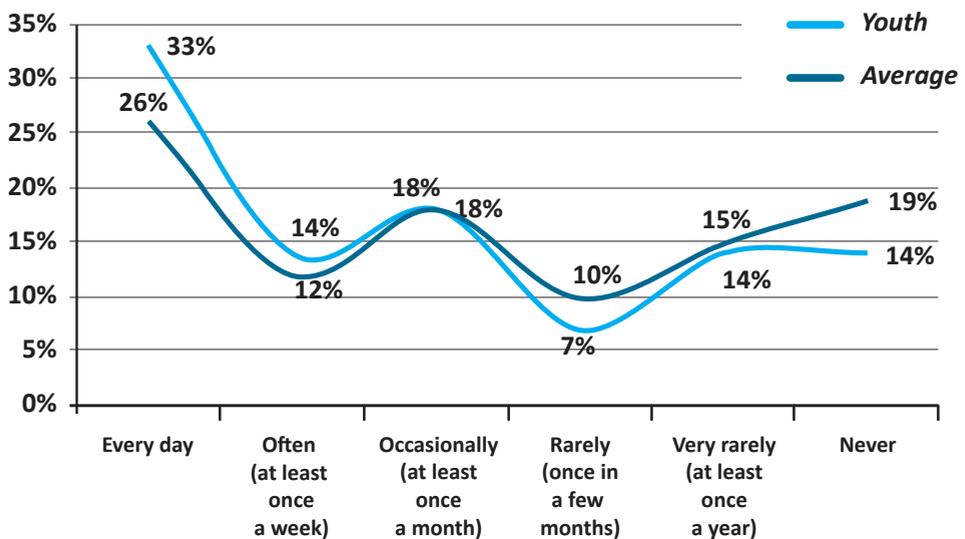
<i>With which of the listed nations you have the following types of contacts?</i>	<i>Albani-ans</i>	<i>Bosniaks</i>	<i>Bulg-arians</i>	<i>Monte-negrins</i>	<i>Mace-donians</i>	<i>Roma</i>	<i>Serbs</i>
<i>In institutions where I go to</i>	32	3	5	3	3		95
<i>We work in the same enterprise</i>	1	0	1	0	1		33
<i>We have business cooperation</i>	9	0	1	0	1		57
<i>We socialise and pay visits to each other</i>	9	0	1	3	5		81
<i>We are neighbours</i>	25	0	1	1	0		60
<i>We have close family relations</i>	0	3	0	3	3		42

Distance towards Roma is the highest when it comes to blood kinship with them. Therefore, when we discuss their full social integration, the first step should be overcoming deeply rooted prejudice about them. In this way discrimination towards the representatives of the Roma community, which the Roma national council warned about, would be avoided. Roma coordinators (we have conducted interviews with them, too) do not deny that they have good cooperation with the local self-government, but it does not mean that at the same time the position of the Roma population is improving, because “there is a lack of financial resources” for any serious strategy.

ETHNIC DISTANCE IN RELATION TO DIFFERENT NATIONAL GROUPS AMONG YOUTH

Young people enter into contacts with members of other nations more than the average population. While in the general sample 26% of the respondents enter into contact with members of other nations every day, when the youth is concerned (in total, on the level of the group aged 15 to 29) this percentage is 33%.

Graph 11. Do you enter into contact with members of other nations and how frequently? (in %)



In spite of the fact that they enter into contact with the representatives of other nations more frequently, the ethnic distance is not lower, at least when the young Serbs are concerned. The data that the distance of young Serbs towards Albanians and Roma is by several percentages higher than in the total sample of Serbs, in all relations, is worrying.

Table 57. Distance of the youth towards other ethnic groups– Serbs (in %)

<i>Would you mind if a member of the following nations ...</i>	<i>Albanians</i>	<i>Bosniaks</i>	<i>Bulgarians</i>	<i>Montenegrins</i>	<i>Macedonians</i>	<i>Roma</i>	<i>Serbs</i>
<i>lived permanently in your state</i>	40	28	23	18	15	27	
<i>was your neighbour</i>	47	32	24	19	14	33	
<i>was your co-worker</i>	42	27	23	21	15	28	
<i>was a teacher of your children</i>	61	49	44	33	33	51	
<i>To socialise with him/her and pay home visits to each other</i>	50	35	28	21	18	35	
<i>was your superior</i>	53	34	33	27	23	40	
<i>was in a leadership position in your state</i>	76	64	56	52	50	63	
<i>was related to you by your own marriage or marriage of your children</i>	87	74	65	43	43	82	

Contrary to them, among young Albanians ethnic distance towards all nations is somewhat lower than the average.

Table 58. Distance of youth towards other ethnic groups – Albanians (in %)

<i>Would you mind if a member of the following nations ...</i>	<i>Albanians</i>	<i>Bosniaks</i>	<i>Bulgarians</i>	<i>Montenegrins</i>	<i>Macedonians</i>	<i>Roma</i>	<i>Serbs</i>
<i>lived permanently in your state</i>		7	6	6	6	7	9
<i>was your neighbour</i>		7	6	6	6	9	8
<i>was your co-worker</i>		7	7	7	9	7	9
<i>was a teacher of your children</i>		19	18	18	19	21	15
<i>To socialise with him/her and pay home visits to each other</i>		11	7	7	6	9	11
<i>was your superior</i>		9	9	9	9	13	9
<i>was in a leadership position in your state</i>		15	17	17	17	21	13
<i>was related to you by your own marriage or marriage of your children</i>		48	45	45	45	47	49

Among the young Roma, just as among Serbs, ethnic distance is again somewhat higher than in the average Roma population.

Table 59. Distance of youth towards other ethnic groups – Roma (in %)

<i>Would you mind if a member of the following nations ...</i>	<i>Albani-ans</i>	<i>Bosniaks</i>	<i>Bulg-arians</i>	<i>Monte-negrins</i>	<i>Mace-donians</i>	<i>Roma</i>	<i>Serbs</i>
<i>lived permanently in your state</i>	27	9	9	14	14		0
<i>was your neighbour</i>	27	9	13	14	18		4
<i>was your co-worker</i>	27	4	9	9	14		0
<i>was a teacher of your children</i>	32	9	22	18	18		0
<i>To socialise with him/her and pay home visits to each other</i>	27	9	13	22	22		9
<i>was your superior</i>	27	18	13	18	18		4
<i>was in a leadership position in your state</i>	27	22	22	18	18		8
<i>was related to you by your own marriage or marriage of your children</i>	70	52	52	59	59		44

5. OVERVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR YOUTH IN PCINJSKI AND JABLANICKI DISTRICTS BASED ON THE DESKTOP ANALYSIS AND ANALYSIS OF THE IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

In 2008 the Republic of Serbia adopted the National Youth Strategy. It is a basic document and all other documents addressing youth on the national and local level rely on it. After adopting this document, it has been recommended to the municipalities and towns in Serbia to start developing local institutional frameworks for youth by establishing **1) youth offices** (these offices are a part of municipal/town administration with the responsibilities in the field of planning, coordination and advocacy for youth policies in accordance with the youth needs in these municipalities/towns) and **2) youth councils**, as the bodies of municipal/town assemblies that should enable representation of youth in decision making on the local level related to everything that concerns youth. Municipalities have received incentives to develop **local action plan** which represent strategic instruments for implementation of local youth policies, through the youth offices and with the guidance from the youth councils in the places where they have been formed. Local action plans have been defined on the bases of the national Youth Strategy and local youth needs, thus at the same time representing an instrument for implementation of the national strategy on the local level. Local action plans are adopted and partially funded by the

municipal/town assemblies.

The municipalities of the Pcinjski and Jablanicki districts have responded rather well to the incentives towards development of the local institutional framework and implementation of the National Youth Strategy. The Inclusive Social Development Survey shows that, in the segment related to youth, all municipalities in these two districts are in a similar phase of development of the institutional frameworks. In **Jablanicki district** (that includes a **town of Leskovac** and five municipalities – **Bojnik, Lebane, Vlasotince, Medvedja and Crna Trava**) local youth offices have been established in all municipalities except in Medvedja. Local action plans for youth have been adopted in the municipalities of Lebane, Vlasotince and Bojnik, and they are being prepared in the town of Leskovac and in the municipalities of Medvedja and Crna Trava (their adoption is expected in 2011). **Pcinjski district** consists of the **town of Vranje** and six municipalities (**Vladicin Han, Surdulica, Bosilegrad, Trgoviste, Bujanovac and Presevo**). Local youth offices have been founded in all municipalities, while the local action plans for youth have been adopted in the municipalities of Bosilegrad, Bujanovac, Vranje, Vladicin Han, Trgoviste and Presevo. Local action plan for youth in Surdulica has been prepared and its adoption is expected in 2011.

In the process of preparation of the local action plans in all municipalities in which they have been adopted, a basic document, in addition to the National Youth Strategy, was the existing strategic plan of the municipality. In all municipalities of the Jablanicki and Pcinjski districts several areas i.e. key issues that are common when youth policy is concerned may be selected, either based on the local action plans for youth or based on the strategic plan of the municipalities:¹⁷

1) Youth participation – level of youth participation is low and this is one of the burning issues. Personal initiative to start and change something, active attitude towards the world around themselves and responsibility towards oneself (“taking life in one’s own hands”) – these are key capacities the development of which leads to a significant change of the position of youth and considerably contributes to the development of a society as a whole.

2) Informal education – there is no adequate offer for additional and continuous education of youth and for their re-training. These municipalities lack content that enable acquiring of the competences, knowledge and

¹⁷ These fields have been defined either based on the local public opinion surveys that preceded the adoption of documents, or based on the consultative meetings with representatives of different local institutions and organisations, who participated in the discussions before the documents were adopted.

skills through informal education, especially those which would change the position of youth at the labour market and those that would adequately prepare them for starting their own business.

3) Employment – unemployment is high, and the opportunities for employment of youth are scarce. Many young people search for a job, but a number of the young who are ready to undergo re-training, acquire additional qualification or start own business is low, just as the offer of such programmes is poor. Lack of educational profiles that correspond to the labour market needs has been stated as one of the problems in the municipalities of the Pcinjski and Jablanicki districts.

4) Culture and leisure time – quality of cultural life is low and there is a lack of programmes for spending good quality leisure time. In all municipalities of these two districts a problem of infrastructure and contents for youth is noticeable. Young people from this region can themselves most often identify concrete measures and activities that would enable considerable improvement of the quality of life in a town. They list very concrete contents, for example, workshops focused on acquiring knowledge and skills that cannot be acquired through regular education, concerts and other contents in the field of culture and arts that would create opportunities for socialisation and exchange of experiences with youth from different parts of the country and the region, and similar.

5) Ecology and protection of environment, together with the sustainable development, represents a concept that all municipalities have introduced into their development documents. In promotion and understanding of these concepts the youth has been recognised as a significant group, a resource that would in future implement policies based on the sustainable development in accordance with the needs of the community and standards of protection of environment.

Realisation of all the above in local communities should be a part of the mandate of two types of bodies – youth councils and youth offices. Conclusions about the capacities of these bodies to represent the needs of youth have been brought based on the interviews conducted with their representatives. The interviews were related to two topics – one was the assessment of their capacities and the other their view of the youth needs and problems.

Interviews with the representatives of **youth councils** were conducted in Bujanovac, Presevo, Vranje and Leskovac. Youth councils in these municipalities/towns were established in the period 2007–2008. **A general conclusion is that the impact of the youth councils on improvement of the position of youth is limited, that the councils have started few**

initiatives, that they are not active enough and that they do not offer concrete projects, and in some places the councils themselves rarely get together. Problems that the councils encounter in their work are twofold. On the one side those are objective problems of youth that occur as the result of unresolved social and economic situation, and on the other side the councils have no jurisdiction to independently create policies for youth (a council only provides advisory decisions to the assembly). According to the words of the interviewees, the two biggest problems related to the life of youth are **unemployment** and **frequent migration** (from villages to towns and from towns to bigger centres – Belgrade, Nis, Pristina). These issues are complex, they require co-ordination in work of more institutions, and the representatives of the youth councils think that they have no financial resources for such and similar projects.

All agree that the bad economic and social situation have influence on youth leaving their places of origin. The criticism received from Presevo is somewhat more serious – young people do not want to stay here because of the political situation in the municipality and because the state does not recognise the diplomas of the University of Pristina.

Interviews with the representatives of **youth offices** have been conducted in Bujanovac, Presevo, Vranje and Leskovac. Youth offices in municipalities/towns in south Serbia have started to be established in 2008. In the process of establishment the youth offices got support from the local self-governments, but this support mainly included only provision of space for work and nothing more than that. This is why the representatives of the youth offices in general emphasise that the greatest problems are non-integration of the new institution into the local administration, lack of resources for work and lack of activities. According to the words of the interviewed, main problems of youth in their municipalities are unemployment, insufficient information level, lack of cultural life, inexistence of adequate places for going out and insufficient integration of youth into the state system (Presevo). All these problems are multiplied when the young members of the Roma communities are concerned, because they are additionally disadvantaged by being excluded from social circles of their fellow citizens. Projects for encouraging the integration of young people who have been returned to the country through the readmission process have been implemented only in the municipality of Bujanovac (intensive courses for language learning in order to enable further schooling).

Apart through the interviews with the representatives of these two institutions, the answers related to the position of youth in the municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac, Medvedja, Vranje and Leskovac were partly obtained

through the interviews with the representatives of the local non-governmental organisations dealing with youth. In each of these municipalities there is at least one civil society organisation dealing with youth. Projects implemented by these organisations are mainly related to different ways of integration youth, who are claimed to be mostly excluded from various spheres of social and political life of the local community. This is especially related to the youth in marginalised groups, e.g. Roma, persons with special needs, etc.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The situation related to migration, problems of youth and inter-ethnic relationships in south Serbia are complex and unfavourable, and therefore their resolving arises as one of the priorities, both for state bodies and the entire social community in this region. This survey, conducted on more levels in Pcinjski and Jablanicki districts, has shown that it was completely justified that the topics included in the survey and assessed as important for youth were placed in the focus of the widest public and relevant state institutions, international organisations and representatives of the civil society. Findings obtained are significant because they show that the work on improvement of the position of youth represents an issue of life importance for further development of south Serbia and that without resolving these issues we could hardly speak about the future of this region. The survey also provides possible guidelines for the work of all institutions – what are the biggest problems of youth, what has been done so far and in which direction should we move further. Having in mind the character of the applied methodology, **the survey offers a comprehensive picture of the life in south Serbia, not only concerning migration and youth but also related to social, political and activism in elections, trust in institutions and accessibility of public services.**

None of the topics that were in the focus of the survey is an exclusive problem of south Serbia. On the contrary, those are the problems present in the entire country, but in south Serbia there is a series of circumstances that make the situation here much harder than in some other environments. We will list three: 1) difficult socio-economic context, unemployment and extreme poverty in most of the municipalities and towns of Pcinjski and Jablanicki district, 2) prominent depopulation and frequent moving out of

the population and 3) problematic inter-ethnic relations. Only when the issues of migration and the position of youth are viewed within a context of these three factors, a clear picture is obtained about how complex and sensitive the process of resolving these problems is.

We have devoted special attention in this report to understanding and exploring different problems indicating the current position of youth in south Serbia, having identified a degree and nature of the social inclusion of youth, nature, degree and motives that influence readiness for migrations within and outside the country, biggest problems of youth, constraints faced by the institutions on the local level dealing with youth, as well as the quality of international relations within the youth groups.

These are conclusions and recommendations that may be provided based on the findings of this survey:

1) Youth activism should be increased, especially through the forms of engagement that could bring some concrete benefits, such as acquiring work experience or opportunities for future employment. Volunteerism is one of the possible forms of youth activism towards which the youth is more open. Institutions and organisations dealing with youth can establish cooperation with economic and other entities that would be ready to accept volunteers for a certain period of time and enable them to acquire knowledge and experiences.¹⁸ Also, one of the priorities is encouraging socially responsible actions among young people who have become successful in their professions, which can contribute significantly to motivating others to be more engaged. It is believed that they are the ones who could motivate and move the young in a right way to be more active in thinking about and planning their future and development of their community. It is recommended also to initiate programmes focused on assistance in career guidance and professional orientation. The gender issue is especially interesting because the findings show that there are differences related to readiness and different ways of participation among young women and young men. While the young women are those who participate less in elections compared to men, they are more ready to volunteer and take part in the work of youth organisations, students' and school parliaments. Through different programmes and support measures young women should be further encouraged to realise this readiness. Also, the ways in which the participation in such initiatives should be promoted among youth, especially among young men, needs to be considered.

¹⁸ A good practice example for this could be a project „Practice Fair“ realised by the Belgrade Youth Office .

- 2) Improvement of international relations among youth, elimination of prejudices and overcoming language barriers** represent significant issues, relevant in all municipalities of these two districts. The data on ethnic distance, which is only among young Albanians lower than among youth in the rest of the population, data on the readiness of the minorities to migrate, and data on the lower number of interactions on all levels, support the fact that this problem should be addressed through well designed activities that would be realised by local communities, institutions for youth as well as civil society organisations. It is recommended that the programmes should be created and institutional interventions implemented through which the points of contact would be created indirectly. In these points of contact youth of different nationalities would be motivated to recognise common interests which would enable gathering of young people around common affinities and everything that encourages increase of everyday interactions. In addition, attention should be paid to activities promoting multi-ethnicity and multi-culturalism, which should improve the communication between different ethnicities (in this way very big prejudices about each other would be decreased). The survey showed that the Roma are disadvantaged on several levels and that they are the ethnic community most discriminated against. Therefore, special attention should be devoted to them (projects focused on their social integration, especially on reintegration of returnees who are additionally disadvantaged). Also, further empirical research is needed in order to obtain as accurate data as possible regarding perception of inter-ethnic relations in south Serbia and thus identify main needs of the citizens of different ethnic backgrounds.
- 3) Young people should be enabled to have more influence on the life of local communities and increase their feeling of integration**, which could positively motivate young people to make decisions to stay in their communities. Support to the local institutions for youth to include young people in making decisions related to the community through consultation processes is exactly a measure that could encourage a certain number of young people to be more engaged and involved in the development of their local community and contribute to its development. It is especially important to start advocacy initiatives towards those institutions and public services that the youth assess as important but not available. Strengthening a dialogue contributes to greater integration of youth. In addition, promotion of youth initiatives, informal groups and youth organisations as well as support to these initiatives to develop, design

and implement programmes can significantly increase attractiveness of local communities in the eyes of the youth. In this segment it is important that the initiatives are started by the existing youth organisations or institutions dealing with youth.

- 4) **Information level among youth should be increased**, especially related to employment opportunities, additional education, informal education, re-training and additional training. Use of the internet as a media, which is relatively present among youth in these regions, design of local web sites or networks can significantly increase the information and knowledge level among youth. Data on the information that the young people most often search for and do not get enough, can be a good indicator to those who deal with youth policies showing them how to direct their activities towards better information for youth.
- 5) Support related to information distribution is especially important in the area of **youth economic empowerment** (active job search and starting own business). Local self-governments, youth offices, youth councils and youth non-governmental organisations should work on the development of comprehensive programmes in support to the economic empowerment of youth, which includes information distribution and education of youth on how to start own business, encouraging young people to form business networks, provision of grants, mentorship by successful businessmen, promotions, and similar. Besides that, young people who are searching for a job should be provided with support regarding re-training or additional training in accordance with the current labour market needs.
- 6) **Informal education programmes should be developed**. As regards education and professional improvement, it is obvious that the young people lack alternative, informal and additional types of education in the fields they are interested in. With the support in the form of a research whose objective would be to identify the needs of young people, efforts should put into developing programmes using existing human resources in the community.
- 7) It should be made possible for the young people to get a chance to **exchange experiences** with their peers from other countries through different projects, because they do not have many opportunities for that. Also, joint activities and connecting young people from different parts of Serbia should be encouraged.
- 8) Youth should be enabled to **spend their free time more actively and more creatively** by providing facilities for youth and developing programmes in

the field of science, culture, art and entertainment.

As regards the institutions and organisations dealing with youth, the following steps may be recommended:

- 1) **Strengthening the capacities of youth councils and youth offices.** Since these are newly formed institutions, their work should be supported by integrating them into the local administration and making them a part of it. By defining clear responsibilities, resolving the status of the staff, identifying priorities and providing resources, capacities will be created for a more serious work of these institutions.
- 2) **Provision of funds and support for strengthening the capacities in all areas** – financial, technical and human resources.
- 3) **Networking of institutions and organisations dealing with youth.** Networking should be conducted both on the level of a municipality itself and on the level of the region, because the exchange of experience is an important way of capacity building.

In addition to the institutions and organisations dealing with youth, **local community institutions** should be open to young people and should be proactive in providing them with appropriate information and adjusting their work to the needs and development of youth. Young people should be better informed about the services they offer, about own rights and duties as well as about the mechanisms through which they could exercise their rights i.e. react if these rights are violated.

- 4) The institutional framework also requires the **international relations and migration management** to be improved.

In order to improve international relations on the local level conditions should be created for efficient work of the bodies dealing with inter-ethnic relations (such are the councils for inter-ethnic relations): their mandate should be clearly defined, financial support should be ensured and members of these bodies should be encouraged to be more active in initiatives for improvement of interethnic relationship and to establish a more active relationship with leaders of all national minorities.

If we take into consideration the data which claim that south Serbia is in many respects the one of the least developed regions, it is necessary to adopt adequate strategies for migration management on the level of some (at least the larger ones) municipalities in south Serbia. Both political will and willingness of the society to invest great energy and resources into systemic and sustainable solutions and not in partial and ad hoc solutions, as has often

been the case so far. In that sense the following should be done:

a) establish regular and updated statistical monitoring of migration (of numbers and all relevant socio-demographic characteristics of migrants and their families) and conduct empirical research regarding their everyday life (both qualitative and quantitative); so as to obtain accurate data on the state and dynamics of migration, which would facilitate their management as well as identification of the needs of especially disadvantaged groups;

b) potential advantages of the strong and numerous Serbian Diaspora should be exploited through encouraging investments, starting small and medium enterprises, using their human and social capital („know how“ and connections with the business world, the political circle and other elite circles in the domain of culture) and encouraging the so called circular migration i.e. stronger and continuous transfer of knowledge and skills;

c) consider the possibility of using the advantages of the “immigration concept” should be considered since the profile of the average migrant indicates that these are younger persons, single, without children, which additionally deforms the social and demographic characteristics of the domicile population (increase in the population of elderly, a further decrease in the birth rate, decrease of labour force);

d) special attention should be paid to returnees in the readmission process, who are difficult to identify, whose needs are little known, and for whose integration there is no clear programme of assistance or strategy neither in the country of admission nor in the country of origin. In this way these persons are left to their own devices, which is why they often migrate illegally again;

e) improve the position of Roma, who are additionally marginalised in all disadvantaged groups.

When applying the findings presented in this survey it should be kept in mind that each of the included municipalities has its specificities, and therefore the recommendations and conclusions should be implemented in accordance with them. For example, on the one side, in some municipalities a number of young people is very small, while in others the number of young people is far above the average. This is why, in some of the following phases, the youth needs assessment has to be adjusted to the specificities of the municipalities included in Jablanicki and Pcinjski districts. Therefore, a general recommendation is to continue, in the course of the programme implementation, with additional exploration of certain topics considered to be important for better understanding of the ways for improving the position of youth in each individual municipality.



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