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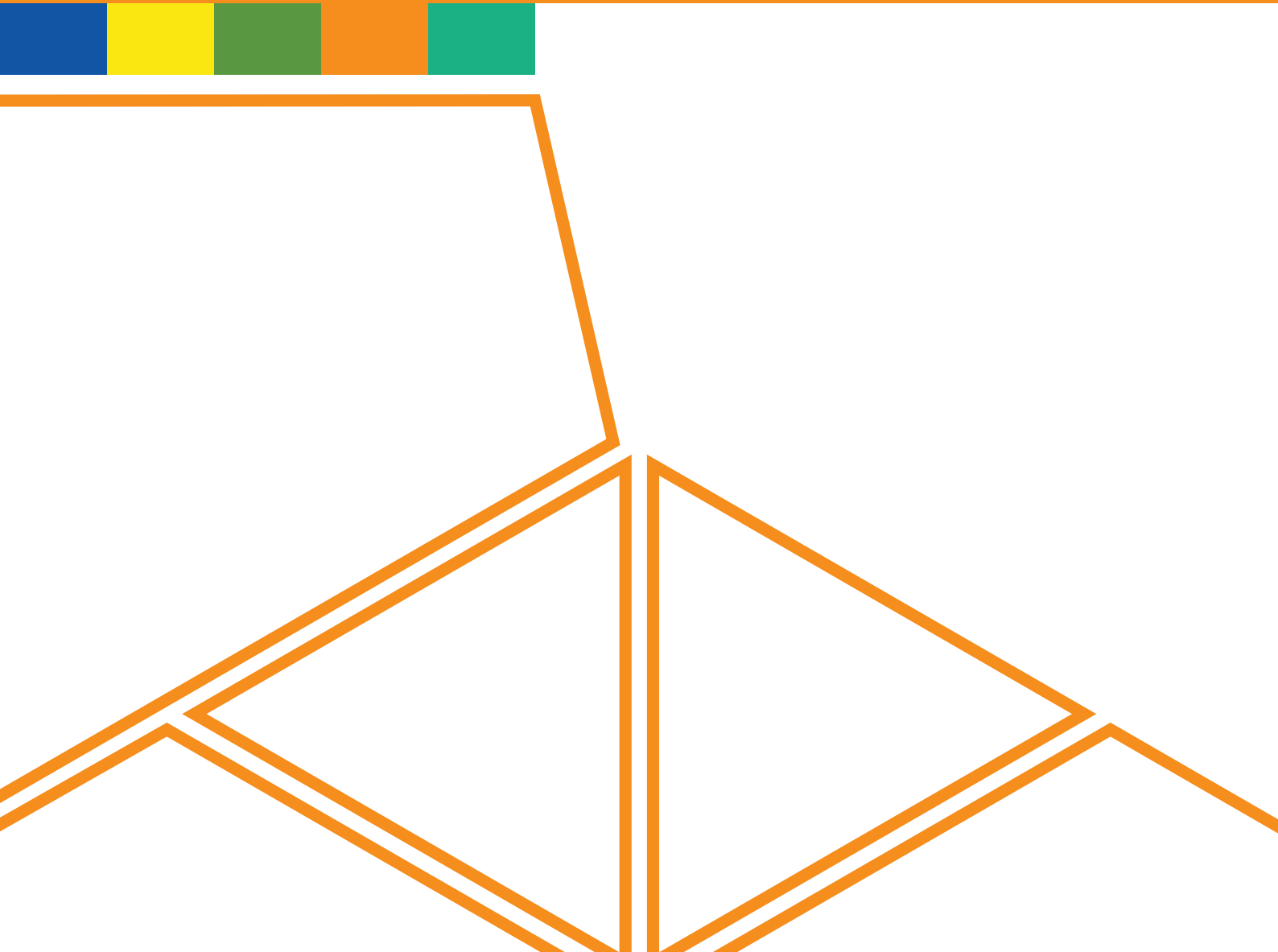


**National Endowment
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Everybody Counts!

A Handbook on Inclusion and Participation of
young people in Eastern Partnership Countries



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The project benefits from the support through the EaP CSF Re-granting Scheme. Within its Re-granting Scheme, the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (EaP CSF) supports projects of the EaP CSF members with a regional dimension that contribute to achieving the mission and objectives of the Forum. The donors of the Re-granting Scheme are the European Union and National Endowment for Democracy. The overall amount for the 2017 call for proposals is 290.000 EUR. Grants are available for CSOs from the Eastern Partnership and EU countries. Key areas of support are democracy and human rights, economic integration, environment and energy, contacts between people, social and labour policies.

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About Consortium

The project “Everybody Counts” is developed by Armenian Progressive Youth NGO in partnership with Foundation for Advancement of Moldova and Society Initiative Institute, Ukraine. The project fosters integration and participation of young people from rural and deprived urban areas through raising awareness on youth participation opportunities and providing job preparation, digital and mobility trainings. The consortium member organizations have formerly collaborated on creation of empowerment opportunities for youth from the Eastern Partnership region and have invested the best-practices and lessons learnt from the previous collaborations to ensure high and sustained impact for “Everybody Counts”.



In Armenia: The project managed to acquire strong partnerships with region-based NGOs which hosted the project activities. The formed network is now discussing the possibility of forming a consortium to initiate a similar youth empowerment project on a larger scale and covering all the regions of Armenia.



In Moldova: Partner in Moldova, Foundation for Advancement developed a training program in partnership with Youth Bank’s Network, managed by the East Europe Foundation. Both organizations are members of the Moldovan national platform of the EaP CSF. They managed to create synergy of efforts in multiplying the project results by extending the geographical area covered within the training program. This partnership brought added value to the general visibility of the project and built internal cooperation of the 4th working group at the national level.



In Ukraine: After delivering a training session on youth possibilities we had in Lviv, a group of youngsters teamed up to work on a common project under the British Council programme “Active Citizens”. Their project was connected to community development with a focus on spatial planning in Lviv district where they live. Additionally, one of the participants of the group received mini-grant for her art project.

Foreword

Low level of youth participation in rural and deprived urban areas remains one of the key issues across the Eastern Partnership countries. Specifically in Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine there is a lack of youth participation structures in rural areas. At the same time, young people are not able to join the decision-making processes on youth issues at a local level. There are either no youth consultative bodies or youth councils in the municipalities or the existing ones are formal in their nature. Moreover, there are no procedures or culture to approach young people when they deal with youth issues. This is also coupled with limited access of information and not sufficient foreign language skills among youth. Thus, mobility projects, youth exchanges, seminars, volunteering programs under Erasmus+ programme of the EU and any other forms of youth activism and participation often remain not accessible for the young people.



Our research findings suggest, that there is absence of holistic State Youth Policies which would address the existing challenges and create opportunities and environment for the development and advancement of young people. This, eventually, prevents young people from meaningful participation and impact on the governance and decision-making. Youth policies still remain “elitist” and exclusive, targeting highly educated young people who live in cities and have some resources to get a professional occupation. Thus, better educated, more privileged young people from higher social backgrounds, and from predominantly major urban areas are the ones who mainly benefit from existing opportunities. Increasing poverty, conflicts and corruption are coupled with a failure of national and local authorities responsible for youth to improve the existing infrastructure and, most importantly, to fill it with need-based and contemporary youth work methodologies.

At Armenian Progressive Youth NGO we believe that disadvantaged young people from rural and deprived urban areas should be reached through national-level and local projects that will be tailored to local needs and conducted in the local languages. In order to fill this gap of participation, together with our partners in Moldova and Ukraine we have implemented “Everybody Counts: Rural Youth Empowerment in Eastern Partnership Countries” project which aimed to empower young people and youth leaders in rural and deprived urban areas in Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine through series of workshops and awareness raising meetings and encourage youth in rural areas to become more self-confident, active in the community and more aware of the programs in the fields of education and training.

As a part of our efforts to mainstream youth inclusion and participation issues into state youth strategies and policies among the stakeholders in Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine and encourage the state authorities to put specific efforts in regional and rural youth policy development and implementation, we have developed this Handbook.

Through the publication and free distribution of this handbook, Armenian Progressive Youth NGO wishes to make a humble contribution to the efforts aimed at enhancing youth participation in the Eastern Partnership countries.

We hope that this handbook will be used by youth workers and youth leaders to multiply the project message by using the methods and content of the Handbook. Also, we hope that CSOs working with youth will use it as a start resource for the initiatives of their volunteers and for the development of their own activities.

Additionally, we do believe that concrete recommendations provided in the handbook will encourage the state authorities in the Eastern Partnership countries to put specific efforts in regional and rural youth policy development and implementation.

Grigor Yeritsyan
Executive Director
Armenian Progressive Youth NGO

Acknowledgment

This Handbook evolved from a project “Everybody Counts: Rural Youth Empowerment in Eastern Partnership Countries” which has been implemented by Armenian Progressive Youth NGO (Armenia) in collaboration with Foundation for Advancement (Moldova) and Society Initiatives Institute (Ukraine). The project benefited from the support through the EaP CSF Re-granting Scheme. Within its Re-granting Scheme, the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (EaP CSF) supports projects of the EaP CSF members with a regional dimension that contribute to achieving the mission and objectives of the Forum. The donors of the Re-granting Scheme are the European Union and National Endowment for Democracy.

Armenian Progressive Youth NGO therefore wishes to acknowledge the support extended by the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum, the European Union and National Endowment for Democracy towards the implementation of the project which was the foundation for this publication. This support has enabled us to publish this handbook for distribution and use by youth leaders and all interested organisations.

We wish to thank all our partners: the Ministries of Sport and Youth Affairs of Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine, Centre for Gender and Leadership Studies of Yerevan State University, the Human Rights Education Centre, Artashat, Vanadzor, Yeghegnadzor Civic Youth centers who supported us to conduct a research and develop this Handbook.

We would like to thank our implementing partners: Foundation for Advancement of Moldova and Society Initiatives Institute from Ukraine.

We are very grateful to the Delegation of the European Union to Armenia and the Head of the Delegation, Ambassador Piotr Switalski for continuously supporting us both institutionally and personally.

We thank the facilitators, experts, trainers and of course, our participants.

We are indebted to the project implementing team both at the Armenian Progressive Youth NGO and the implementing partners. The project team was coordinated by Ms. Diana Chobanyan.

List of Acronyms

EU	European Union
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
NGO	Non-governmental organization
RA	Republic of Armenia
RA NSS	National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
EaP	Eastern Partnership
EaP CSF	Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum
WG	Working group
APY	Armenian Progressive Youth
NP	National platform
VET	Vocational Education and Training
RM	Republic of Moldova
LPA	Local public authorities
CSO	Civil society organization

Chapter 1

Armenia

“ No-one is born a good citizen; no nation is born a democracy. Rather, both are processes that continue to evolve over a lifetime. Young people must be included from birth. A society that cuts itself off from its youth severs its lifeline; it is condemned to bleed to death.



Kofi Annan

Preamble

Two decades have passed since the Soviet Union dissolved and fifteen new states emerged out of its ashes. Each of these states has a new generation of young people who have some knowledge but do not have memory of the old order. The young generation of Armenia is not an exception.

The United Nations currently defines youth as those aged 15-24 years. This is obviously a proxy, because the age bracket by itself is meaningless. What matters is that, presently, it is precisely within this stage of life that most individuals transition to adulthood. The UN definition dates back to 1985 International Youth Year. However, given the increase in life expectancy and the delaying of previously fixed life stage events, such as leaving home and other processes related to the transition to adulthood, the UN definition may now be considered to be too narrow¹. This stage in life is an important period during which biological and psychological growth takes place and individuals question their place and role in the society². As described in Erikson's life stages theory, adolescence is a time of exploration, experimentation and questioning, as a method of individuals finding their role and place in society. During this time individuals seek greater independence and want to find a role for themselves, finding where they fit into to wider society. They are a powerful catalyst for social



change and transformation.

For the long-term democratic and socio-economic development of Armenia, the youth of Armenia is a significant asset for the country. The Republic of Armenia (RA) State Youth Concept defines young people as those in the 16-30 age group of the population. The number of young people in Armenia is 804,205, making up around 27.9% of the population³.

Young people are a crucial human resource for the development of a country. They are also the catalysts of change in the socio-economic and technological innovation sectors. However, young people in Armenia encounter many challenges, which affect their wellbeing, level of their social security and respectively, the level of trust in policy makers.

The main priorities of the RA's national youth policy are to:

1. Promote youth participation in political, economic and cultural life,
2. Promote youth employment and socio-economic wellbeing,
3. Promote healthy lifestyle,
4. Promote military-patriotic and spiritual values,
5. Promote lifelong education and non-formal education⁴.

Among post-Soviet countries Armenia has one

1. <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-definition.pdf> (Accessed 28.08.17)

2. E. Erikson (1959), *Identity and the Life Cycle*, New York, W.W.Norton& Co.

3. <http://www.erit.am/media/2016/06/1980.pdf> (Accessed 28.08.17)

4. <http://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=80598> (Accessed 30.08.17)

of the highest rates of unemployment⁵. Lack of economic opportunities, coupled with corruption and nepotism⁶, limited access to education and housing result in the demotivation of young people in labour market. As a result, nowadays Armenia faces a high level of youth emigration, which, undoubtedly, comes as a serious hazard to the overall development of the civic/political participation rate of the young people.

All the above-mentioned issues are in cause and effect relationship with the level of youth participation. In Armenia, the engagement level of young people in policy development and decision-making can hardly be considered as sufficient. What is more, young people have limited opportunities to fully exercise their potential⁷.

The problems faced by young people can also be seen in the context of wider socio-economic difficulties in Armenia, with high levels of unemployment, poverty⁸ and migration for work being an evident pattern across all age groups. Young people are competing for the few available opportunities with the older generation, which is considerably more experienced. It is within this context that young people are trying to find their place in the society and transition to adulthood. When this transition is characterised by the move from education to employment, and the move away from being children in their parents' home and starting their own family, the lack of opportunities for young people makes the transition very difficult. The absence of a holistic State Youth Policy, which would address the existing challenges and create opportunities and environment for the development and advancement of the young people, eventually, prevents this group of citizens from any meaningful participation and impact on the governance and decision-making in the country.

Context of national youth policy of the Republic of Armenia

The concept of national youth policy has become well established in Europe during the last few decades. The Council of Europe and the European Union have become strong advocates for the de-

velopment of local context tailored national policies that aim at improving the situation of young people. They are pursuing different mechanisms for encouraging their member states to undertake measures to develop cross-sectoral holistic policies that perceive young people as a resource and actively involve young people and non-governmental youth organizations in decision-making on issues that affect them⁹.

According to the World Bank's World Development Report 2007¹⁰, a successful youth policy requires working across many sectors to develop one coherent, holistic and intersectional strategy, with clear priorities and measures for concrete actions.

A successful youth policy, therefore, requires the development of a very coherent, holistic and intersectional strategy, which would effectively work across all domains of public life. This strategy should set clear priorities, indicators and measures for concrete actions and outcomes.

The comparison of these criteria with the current State Youth Policy of Armenia will reveal serious shortcomings. Thus, both the State Youth Policy 2013 -2017 Strategy¹¹ and Government Program 2017 -2022¹², have a lack of an inclusive approach to different groups of youth and the issue of their participation. As a primary goal in the field of youth, the Government of Armenia envisions the creation of "such an environment where the young people can achieve a full self-realization". However, the Government Program provides no information on a range of specific issues the youth in Armenia faces when it comes to labor, education, health, the differences of life in rural and urban areas, and alike. It is clear from the Program that the Government has no commitment to provide full opportunities for inclusion and development of the youth belonging to different national and religious groups, and with other personal and/or social differences and identities (such as young people with disabilities, LGBT youth, socially disadvantaged youth, etc).

Armenian State Youth Policy is the government's commitment and practice towards ensuring good living conditions and opportunities for the young population of the country. A successful youth pol-

5. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jun/09/-sp-profiles-post-soviet-states> (Accessed 30.08.17)

6. https://www.pf-armenia.org/sites/default/files/documents/files/PFA_Corruption_Report.pdf (Accessed 30.08.17)

7. National youth aspirations research report, Yerevan 2012, RA Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs, UNDP Armenia. P. 4

8. http://armstat.am/file/article/15._trud_2016_8.pdf(Accessed 29.08.17)

9. eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52015DC0429&from=EN (Accessed 28.08.17)

10. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/556251468128407787/pdf/359990WDR0complete.pdf> (Accessed 28.08.17)

11. <http://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=80598> (Accessed 28.08.17)

12. <http://www.gov.am/files/docs/2207.pdf> (Accessed 28.08.17)

icy should target all young people. Yet, the Armenian youth policy still remains “elitist” and exclusive in its nature, rather than inclusive: it targets highly educated young people who live in cities and have some resources to get at least a professional occupation.

The authorized state body which is responsible for the development and implementation of the State Youth Policy in Armenia in its mission is the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs of the Republic of Armenia. One of the most important bodies is the “Council of the Youth Policy” headed by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia. The Council consists of representatives of state agencies and public youth organizations, which aim to ensure the effective participation and involvement of young people and youth organizations in the decision-making processes.

The main objectives of “Strategy of State Youth Policy for 2013- 2017 years” are:¹³

- ▶ To increase the coherent implementation of national youth policies and to ensure that a respective legal framework is availed for the effective regulation of the activities of this sector;
- ▶ To develop cooperation with youth organizations and to avail governmental support for their activities;
- ▶ To ensure youth participation in cultural life, to support educational and research activities;
- ▶ To observe social and economic problems and to develop measures aimed at their solution;
- ▶ To implement programs aimed at increasing civic consciousness and patriotic education, social and political participation of young people;
- ▶ Regional support of the youth centres and the creation of youth centres in the communities by state financial support, the implementation of measures aimed at the advancement of rural youth;
- ▶ To create conditions for full self-manifestation of youth, government support gifted and talented youth;
- ▶ To provide youth with the necessary information;
- ▶ To develop international and pan-Armenian cooperation.

Official records show that 29% of young people in Armenia are unemployed. Only 35% of young people aged between 20 and 24, and 52% of young people aged between 25 and 29 are employed in Armenia¹⁴. According to a UNFPA representative, 85% of young people want to leave the country in the near future to seek a better life and employment opportunities¹⁵ and 32% of young people in Armenia are poor¹⁶.

The situation is even starker for young people in rural areas, where there is an acute lack of opportunity of any kind. Any effort to improve the capacity development and participation possibilities of young people focuses on those in cities, especially those with a high level of education. Young people in villages, with limited access to higher education and few job opportunities, do not benefit from the priorities outlined in the national youth policy.

Another factor in the situation is gender: it is even more difficult for girls, especially those in rural areas, to meaningfully participate in the social and civic life. Patriarchal attitudes continue to pervade across rural communities and girls are not encouraged to further their careers and participate. The role that is outlined for them is far too often that of a wife, mother and housewife, and nothing beyond. The cultural norms of rural Armenian life combined with the lack of opportunities lead to very low levels of social inclusion and participation of young women.

Promoting youth participation in Armenia

The right to participation is a fundamental human right. It is one of the guiding principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. According to the Article 27 of the Declaration “everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits”.

Through meaningful exercise of their right to participation, young people are empowered to play a vital role in their own development as well as in that of their communities, helping them to learn vital life-skills, develop knowledge on human rights and citizenship and to promote positive civic action. To participate effectively, young people must

13. www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=80598 (Accessed 29.08.17)

14. http://armstat.am/file/article/15_trud_2016_8.pdf (Accessed 29.08.17)

15. <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/26527325.html> (Accessed 30.08.17)

16. <http://www.un.am/up/file/Armenia%20-%20UNDAF%202016-2020%20-%20ENG.pdf> (Accessed 28.08.17)

be given the proper tools, such as information, education about and access to their civil rights¹⁷.

The Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life was adopted in 2003 by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, one of the pillars of the Council of Europe. It was adopted as a recommendation by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in 2006¹⁸, upon the unanimous decision of all member states, which gives it a strong leverage as a document that all member states should comply with. The charter stresses that:

- ▶ participation of young people in local and regional life must constitute part of a global policy of citizens' participation in public life,
- ▶ all sectoral policies should have a youth dimension,
- ▶ various forms of participation must be implemented, including consultation and cooperation with young people and their representatives,
- ▶ the participation by young people from disadvantaged sectors of society must be promoted¹⁹.

Young people should also be encouraged to participate in issue-based programmes that affect them, such as education, social protection, reproductive health, environment, community life, etc.

Community participation can be loosely defined as the involvement of young people in a community's life both in the context of raising and solving the issues of the community, including those that are specifically targeting the interests of the young people. The youth cannot be forced to participate to any activity or project, which affects their lives but should be given the opportunity to choose. This is a basic human right and a fundamental principle of democracy.

Non-governmental youth organisations should play an important role in any youth participation model or mechanism, and should have a strong recognition and support from the government. As civil society organisations, they involve many young people and have experience and expertise that is very relevant to policy-making regarding young people. Therefore, they have a democratic right to be heard on issues that are of concern

to young people. Most of the countries in Europe have national youth councils, which are umbrella organisation for the non-governmental youth organisations. In Armenia, this council is a politicized body, which includes representatives from the ruling party²⁰.

These councils should play a privileged role as a government partner in the development of youth policy. Involving non-governmental youth organizations in youth policy development and implementation has indeed become a strong European standard, and is expected to take place at any level of governance.

However, there are also many young people who are not members of any youth organisations, and the government through its youth policy should also give them an opportunity to be heard and consulted on issues that impact their lives. This approach should especially be followed when the government is developing a new national youth strategy targeting those whose voices are not heard.

In the financial perspective, state budget allocation to the State Youth Policy is a very small fraction of the overall budget²¹. The main part of Armenia's GDP is spent on the military and the ongoing-armed conflict with Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh. Having a hostile situation on the borderline, Armenia needs to prioritise military spending as a matter of survival, leaving little money for other areas. This is the biggest challenge for the overall development of the country.

Even though the concept of youth participation in government decision-making has become recognized as one of the basic and important features of Armenian State Youth Policy, the practical implementation of this principle is still not there. This is especially true when we go down to the municipal level of government. Sometimes the reason for a lack of participation is rooted in the mentality of the established decision-makers. They may feel that young people, many of whom have not even reached the "legal age" or voting age, cannot possibly contribute to the processes of making responsible decisions. Politicians and government officials may be convinced that they alone have the mandate to take political decisions and develop and implement policy, and that it would be wrong

17. <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-participation.pdf> (Accessed 30.08.17)

18. The Committee of Ministers is the highest decision-making body of the Council of Europe.

19. www.youth-partnership.net/youth-partnership/ekcyp/BGKNGE/Participation (Accessed 28.08.17)

20. <http://www.panarmenian.net/arm/news/68786/> (Accessed 28.08.17)

21. http://www.parliament.am/draft_docs5/K-862/K-862_orenq.pdf (Accessed 28.08.17)

to let “special interest groups” influence these decisions. However, the reason for not making the decision-making process inclusive and open for the youth, often, can also do with the simple fact that these politicians and officials do not know actually how to bring the young people into the process. They might have no prior experience in involving youth, and there might be lack of examples of good practice for how it can be done.

These factors make the existing youth policy of Armenia not sustainable in the long run. Without meaningful youth participation, the youth policy will never reflect the real needs of its target.

Youth participation can be strengthened by including young people in the design, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of instruments, strategies and programmes of the State Youth Policy. In this way, a clear message is sent to young people that their involvement is wanted, needed and is a part of the solution. By being a part of the creation and monitoring of strategies and programmes of the policy, young people will be more invested in the policy, which so far has failed to include them. Youth participation can also be improved through a number of approaches, such as education and capacity development. Youth-friendly information and materials can be developed by young people themselves, through means of traditional and inclusive technologies. The material must be accessible to young people with disabilities.

Political participation of young people in Armenia

The profile of youth within a political system and how they are treated by the political elite of a given state can tell a lot about the nature of a given the political system and the prospects for change. The youth in the Soviet Union was an object of policy and not expected to participate in politics or in the running of the country. Despite the fact that Soviet ideology promoted the notion of youth as the leading cultural paradigm, the youth had a definite place within the administrative and agricultural structure, and was mainly used as a working power, without any access to the highest level of decision-making. Promising young people joined the Komsomol (the Communist Union of Youth), where

they served their time and if they were considered suitable, they were allowed to join the “adult” party—the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Policy on youth was usually dealt with in the same offices as sports, culture, and sometimes tourism. Despite the focus on youth in terms of ideology, the Soviet system ultimately failed to integrate young people into the authoritarian structures of the USSR and ended as a failing gerontocracy²².



"I wish I knew this when making my first CV. Now I know why I wasn't shortlisted for an interview. "

Training participant

A common understanding of youth participation among the policy makers is that it presents the opportunity of appreciating democracy, responsibility and ownership. Young people who learn early to deal with democratic values and human rights will later contribute to build up stable democratic and peaceful structures in their countries. The promotion of youth participation is, thus, of utmost importance to the enhancement of good governance and avoidance of disenchantment with politics²³. The European Governance White Paper considers (youth) participation as one of its five principles ensuring that young people are consulted and more involved in the decisions which concern them and, in general, the life of their communities, while Article 165 of the Lisbon Treaty states that one of the aims of the EU action should be focused towards encouraging the participation of young people in democratic life in Europe²⁴.

22. <http://www.ned.org/docs/179-196-Diuk.pdf> (Accessed 28.08.17)

23. Institute for Social Research (2013), Youth in a time of crisis First IDIZ-Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Youth Survey, Zagreb

24. http://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/1017981/7495153/Analitical+paper_why_participation.pdf/8fd463d5-b40f-4ad1-b8aa-df66607aa9d1 (Accessed 28.08.17)

Youth involvement in public decision-making has a range of rationales and benefits, not only that it is compliant with Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child²⁵, but it provides a platform for the exercise of active citizenship.

Like all other social groups, young people have a legitimate voice and important role in the society, but that voice is not heard adequately and their contribution to the society is not always universally recognized. Traditionally in Armenia, young people are perceived as being incapable of making decisions on their own. This has led to the underrepresentation of youth in decision-making processes, which today can be viewed as a real threat to the future of participatory democracy. Moreover, human rights and political rights are guaranteed to all citizens, not just some. Young people face real obstacles to fully exercising their rights. In comparison to women and ethnic minorities, young people perceive their own generation as the group which is the most politically disadvantaged. In modern society, age-based discrimination (ageism) has yet to become a political issue to the degree gender discrimination has, but it makes sense to assume that inequalities based on age will gain more importance following the more frequent articulation of demands for changing the current situation. In addition, it is vital for the voice of young people from different sections of society to be heard. This means, for example, that girls as well as boys must be included, and there must be involvement of young people from villages and rural areas, and not just the cities, it must involve poor as well as rich, with or without disabilities, Armenians and the representatives of national and religious minorities and youth from other groups on the equal basis. In this way, participation is increased and any policies created following this are much stronger as a result.

Education and Employment opportunities for youth in Armenia

Education is a fundamental human right. It supports development and improvement of the lives of young people globally and, as such, has been identified as a priority area in internationally agreed development goals, including the World Programme

of Action for Youth. Education is important in eradicating poverty and in promoting sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth. Increased efforts towards the accessibility, quality and affordability of education are central to every country's youth policy.

Since 2005, Armenia has officially been integrated into the European Higher Education Area (EHEA 2014). See Armenian education system in the diagram. (page 19)

According to RA NSS data, the education status of the young people looks the following way: 22.1% of young people have completed higher education, 50.4% have completed secondary school education, part of which is in the process of getting a higher education. 0.3% of young people have not received elementary education²⁶.

The main findings of Youth study implemented by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Foundation in 2016 in Armenia, in the field of education suggest²⁷:

- ▶ The young people attend higher education institutions with pleasure, because there they can socialise and mingle with their peers, as well as make new acquaintances.
- ▶ The time spent on extracurricular studies is statistically tied to progress in school/college, but not to progress in higher education.
- ▶ The scarcity of necessary financial resources for acquiring a good professional education is a serious problem. 24.3% of youth cannot continue their education due to the lack of finances.
- ▶ According to the youth (10.2% school/college and 0.8% in higher education), it is possible to "buy" marks and exams; however, the majority of them says that they have not received their marks through bribery.
- ▶ The knowledge gained by the youth does not guarantee finding a job in their chosen line of work. Only 35.4% of them work in their chosen profession and 13.5% have jobs related to their specialisation.

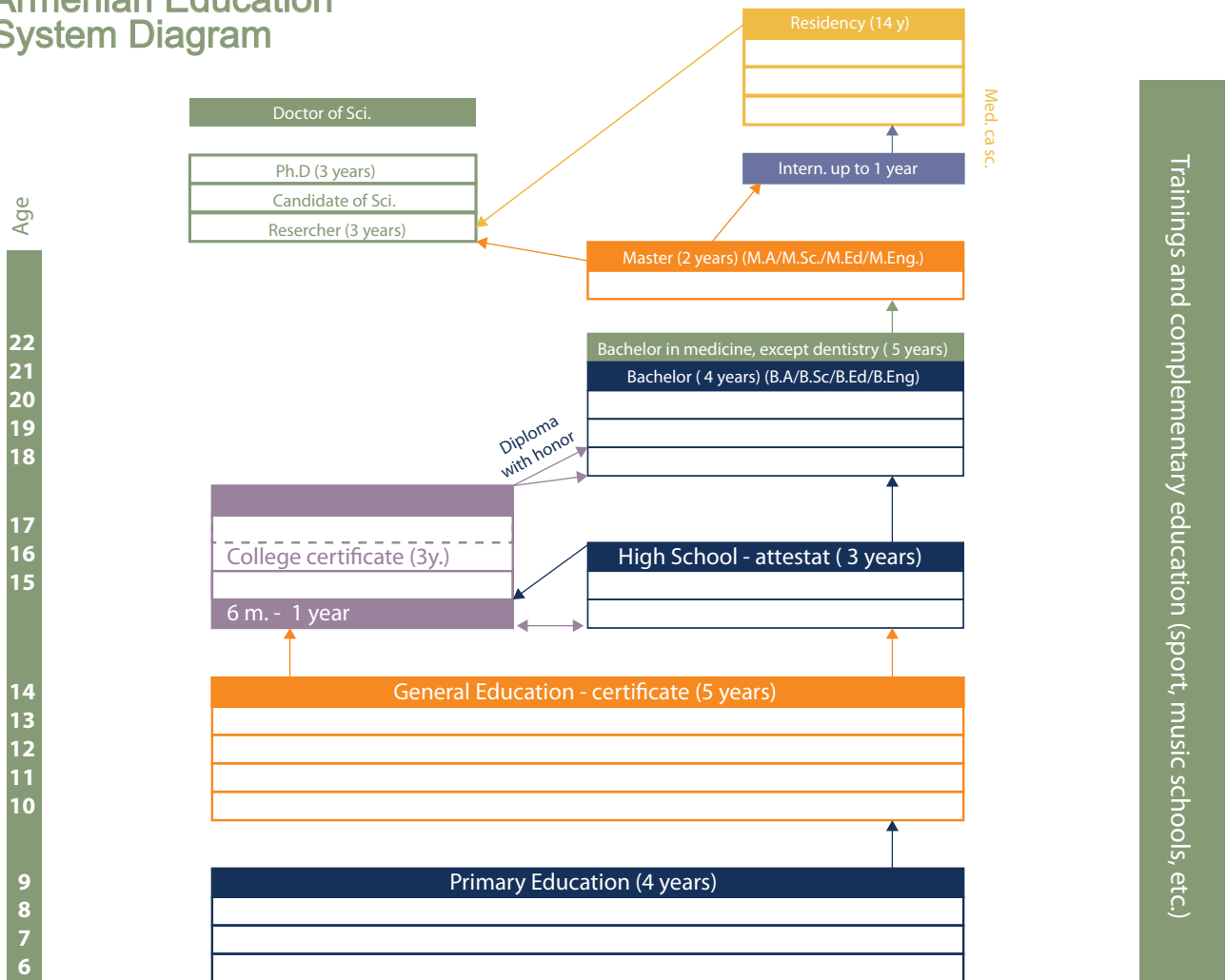
The problems in the education system, specifically the higher education system, arise from a number of different factors. At the government level, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs each implement separate policies regarding the youth. At the wide social level, as mentioned above, there is the financial

25. <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/crc.pdf> (Accessed 28.08.17)

26. The issues of youth employment in the RA, review of the findings of the sociological research, Yerevan, 2013, p. 17.

27. Independence Generation, Youth study, 2016, Armenia, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Foundation. P. 22.

Armenian Education System Diagram



problem, which leads to problems of access to education for many young people. This is even more obvious in rural areas, where many children need to work with their parents and earn money for the family, and so cannot attend high school or university. Parents take out bank loans to pay for their children's education, leading to high levels of debt. Another core problem in Armenia has to do with cultural stereotypes and the misplaced ideals of parenthood. Often parents do not ask their children what they want to study, how they want to build their life and the career and make the decisions instead of them. For example, law and economics are two very popular areas of study and are considered prestigious, but the country does not need more lawyers or economists and so there are few opportunities for young people qualifying in these areas. This problem also has clear gender dimension: for many parents it is more preferable to pay for their son's education rather than that of the daughter. Even if there are no boys, often families

do not consider it worthwhile to allow a girl a higher education. Fieldwork carried out by the Women's Resource Centre of Armenia in Gegharkunik region in September 2016 found many such attitudes. In just one case, a grandmother refused to allow her granddaughters a higher education due to fears of harm to their reputation and fears they may find a boyfriend. The grandmother preferred to have them stay at home in the village, have them married and then let the husbands decide what the girls can do.²⁸ These kinds of attitudes are endemic across rural Armenia and play a huge role in holding young women back.

Despite this, Armenia has an extraordinary reservoir of talent in the area of higher education. This is proven, among others, by the number of students - but also academics and other professionals - who leave the country year after year and make excellent careers abroad. Sadly, it appears that the prospects for this remarkable pool of talent to find their place in the local labour market are way too low.

28. Women's Invisible life in Gegharkunik, situation analysis. Women's Resource Center Armenia, 2017.

Significant reforms are needed, within and outside higher education, to address this situation²⁹.

The Republic of Armenia State Youth Policy 2013-2017 has prioritized the “Employment and socio-economic issues of young people”. This is certainly no coincidence. Employment is the key to social inclusion. When it comes to young people, the issue is even more important since it substantially affects the development of self-identity of young people, their perception of societal sub-systems and planning for their future. In addition, the mentioned issues seriously influence not only the economic sector but also the development of the society.³⁰

Data provided by the World Bank for Armenia shows the average youth unemployment in the country in 2016 is 37.62%.³¹

To compare the data see the chart below.

There was high unemployment in 1991-1993 due to the Nagorno-Karabakh war, aftermath of the earthquake and the economic downturn after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Then it looks like the situation improved and was stable for years – until the sudden increase of unemployment in 2009 due to global economic crisis.

According to the main findings of the Youth study implemented by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Founda-

tion in 2016 in Armenia, in the Employment field ³²:

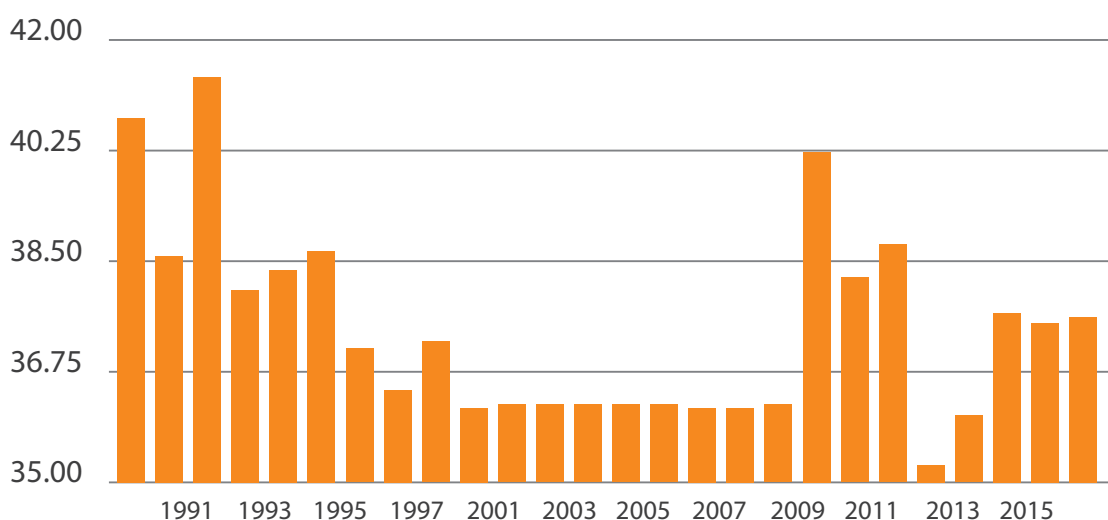
- ▶ The practice of “who you know” plays a major role in getting a job. Nepotism and patronage play an important part of building a career.
- ▶ Young people mainly start work at 23.
- ▶ Marital status and gender are significant factors related to working: 67.2% of married men work, while 76.6% of married women do not.
- ▶ Only 18.9% noted that they have a private income; the rest are forced to rely on others for support.

To sum up, there is a wide range of factors affecting youth unemployment in Armenia. The overall economic situation of the country affects negatively the number of workplaces available. In a search of a job that matches their level of education and expertise, many youngsters leave the country, which results in a braindrain.

In rural areas, where there are no opportunities at all, young men frequently leave for seasonal jobs, usually in Russia.³³ Perversely, this does not result in greater opportunities for the young women. Patriarchal attitudes prevail and the only option available to women is to marry and, if possible, work locally.

Thus, social norms and patriarchal attitudes combined with economic factors limit options not only for young men, and even more for young

Youth Unemployment in Armenia



Source: TheGlobalEconomy.com, The World Bank

29. http://www.osf.am/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/OSF_HE_report.pdf (Accessed 31.08.17)

30. The issues of youth employment in the RA, review of the findings of the sociological research, Yerevan, 2013, p. 8.

31. http://www.theglobaleconomy.com/Armenia/Youth_unemployment/ (Accessed 31.08.17)

32. Independence Generation, Youth study, 2016, Armenia, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Foundation. P. 22.

33. http://c-i.am/wp-content/uploads/policy-brief-03_2015_en.pdf (Accessed 01.09.17)

women. In cities, these issues are also seen but in a different way. As explained above, when education can be afforded, it tends to be boys who benefit rather than girls. Youth policy needs to address both education and employment considering economic and cultural factors as well. It needs to do this in order to guarantee social protection and inclusion for all citizens.

Survey findings

In the period of June-August 2017, the Armenian Progressive Youth NGO initiated research assessing youth political participation and inclusion in community life. An online questionnaire was developed and spread through different social networks. Overall, 206 people participated in the online survey.

The participants' age, gender, geographic location and educational background are illustrated in the charts. (page 22)

The questions were related to the participation of the young people in their own communities. The majority of the respondents actively participate in their communities and are involved in public and voluntary activities.

Those who answered that they do not participate in community life said this was due to lack of time, and because they are not aware what is going on and do not know how they can be involved in the community life. Here we have again the situation which we have described earlier that public bodies, especially in rural communities, do not prioritise youth involvement in community life: many participants stated this as a reason why they are not actively involved in community life.

The main problem which the respondents see in their communities is the absence of jobs. For those who are from borderline villages the other biggest issue is the geographic location and distance from big cities. Another problem raised by the respondents is migration and consequences of migration on young people, also lack of youth projects and youth activities in the regions. The majority of respondents from rural areas stated that such kind of problems are not unique for their community, but also very prevalent in other communities as well. The answers given by young people from distant villages illustrate differences with young people from big cities, with the youth in rural areas not being involved in public and cultural life as well as those in cities. Additionally, there are fewer education and employment opportunities for youth in

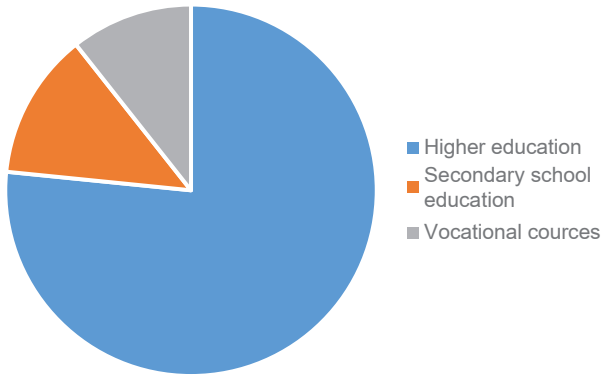
rural areas.

The young people were also asked whether they have done anything to solve the issues within their community. There was a big difference in the responses. Some of the respondents implemented activities such as grant writing or organizing informal meetings with community members on solving different issues including migration and unemployment. Other respondents have not done anything since they view these problems as global and therefore think they can do nothing to solve them. It is also interesting that all participants stated that both girls and boys are involved in community life equally, or girls are more active in the community life. All the respondents answered that it is important to involve both boys and girls in the community life, except one male representative who stated that it is not important for girls to be involved in this process. It is worth stating that half of the respondents have been involved in community decision-making, but all stated that the process is not easy since the high level decision makers are unavailable and do not view youth participation in the process as important, also young people are not motivated to be involved in these processes. Though they answered that the youth is not motivated to be involved in decision-making processes, they all view youth involvement in the process as important. For the solution of these problems, the respondents first of all see the state and state agencies as responsible, and they wish to have more access to the youth initiatives in the communities, which will allow them to be more active.

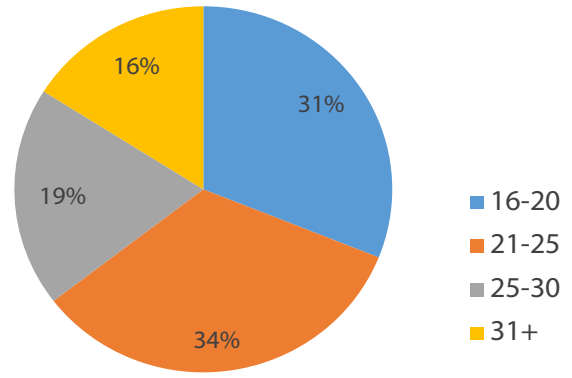
The participants in the survey also make recommendations on what will help to activate youth in the community, including different cultural events, youth initiatives, funding, development of voluntary based work. They are also motivated to develop special skills to use for further community development, including leadership skills, foreign languages, grant writing.

Overall, we can conclude that the respondents view youth inclusion and participation to the community life as important. They want gender equality in the process, but they also identify the state's responsibility to motivate youth, to create more opportunities for them to develop their knowledge and to act as active citizens. Again, general problems such as unemployment, lack of social support mechanisms for youth, geographic location and conflict with neighbouring countries affect the overall youth situation in many communities. Nevertheless, all the respondents expressed their will-

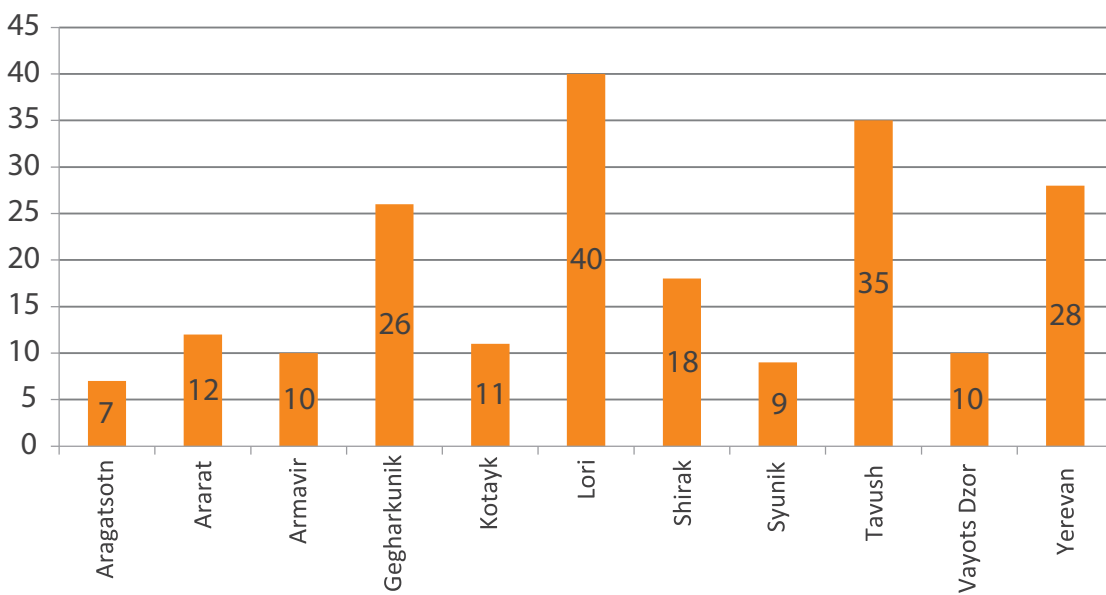
Educational background



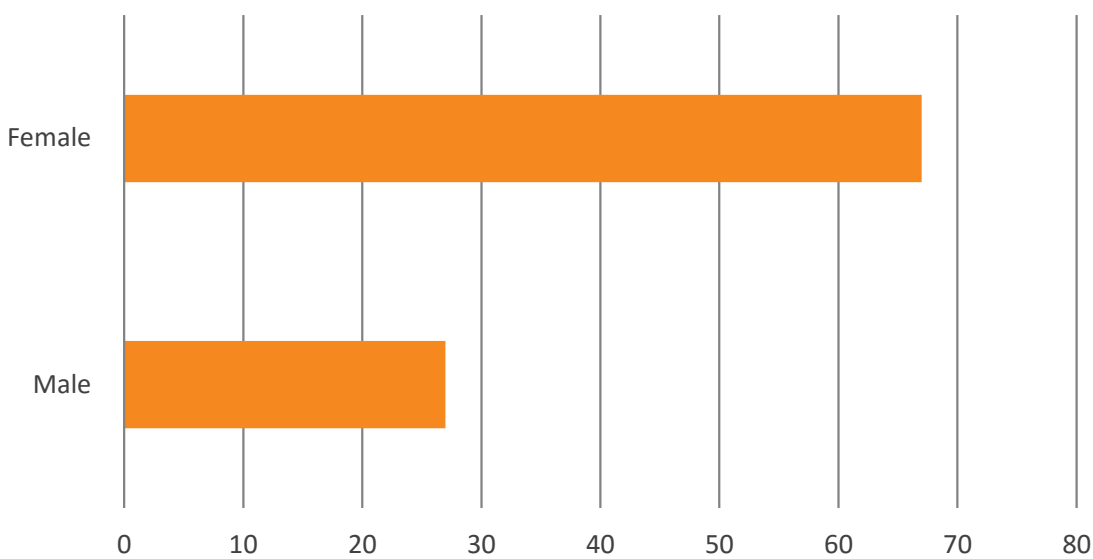
The age of the respondents



Geographic location



Gender composition of respondents



ingness to contribute in community life including political participation.

It is important to add a word of caution here, that usually young people who have some leadership skills benefit from community participation and inclusion. Very often, young people with special needs or from an ethnic minority do not get the opportunity to develop these skills and are more likely to experience exclusion from the decision-making process.

Conclusions and recommendations

It is important to agree that when developing youth policy, projects or any activity in which young people are targeted, young people must not be dismissed as lacking capabilities or being deprived by circumstance, rather young people collectively can be an asset to development; at local, national, regional and international levels.

Central to this approach is a belief in the following core principles:

- ▶ Recognising young people's agency and dynamism and advocating for it.
- ▶ Building youth-adult partnerships and understanding attitudes towards youth.
- ▶ Prioritising excluded youth.

These core principles are crucial at all levels of political strategy, programmatic development and proper management and governance (mainstreaming). Youth mainstreaming is crucial which includes working with and for youth in four key areas:

- ▶ Organisational development, e.g. formulating youth policy at an institutional level;
- ▶ Policy and planning, e.g. integrating youth at sub-national levels and in public policy-making;
- ▶ Implementation, e.g. applying the principles and lessons learnt to modify existing initiatives or to start new pilot projects;
- ▶ Monitoring & evaluation.

It is vital to acknowledge that every age cohort, social group and individual young person is unique and ever-changing. Flexibility and creativity are prerequisites for working with young people.

It is very important to realize that youth participation is not something which we can achieve implementing one project, it is something long-term and requires a change in the way of thinking of policy makers and state representatives who should consider youth as an important catalyst for social change. Therefore it is important to undertake some steps, which include but are not limited to the following:

- ▶ Develop more specific programs for different groups of youth, which will promote their participation. For young people with fewer opportunities, participation is a step in successfully integrating into society. To succeed, participation strategies should be tailored to the needs and shaped together with them.
- ▶ A better recognition of non-formal education. State Youth Policy should recognize the importance of non-formal education from an early age for the participation and integration of different groups of young people.
- ▶ Promotion of key employment areas where labour is required in the country and to encourage young people to train in those areas / professions.
- ▶ More support for youth workers, youth leaders and youth organisations. Support from skilled youth workers is a key element for the participation of young people with fewer opportunities. Youth workers are also a link between these young people and the society. This necessitates sustainable funding of youth projects as well as of quality youth work. Therefore, the continuous training of youth workers should be prioritised.
- ▶ Empowerment of different youth groups and development of their leadership skills.

Chapter 2

Moldova



Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.



Maegaret Mead

Context of national youth policy of the Republic of Moldova



In 2014, the Government of Republic of Moldova adopted the National Strategy for Youth Sector Development 2020 and an Action Plan for its implementation. Their purpose was to develop and consolidate the youth sector in six years, contributing to the creation of an adequate environment that ensures the growth of each young individual both professionally and personally, including those with limited opportunities.

In September 2017, the former Ministry of Youth and Sports of Moldova (Ministerul Tineretului și Sportului) merged with the Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Education, and together they formed the Ministry of Education, Research and Culture. The latter has the main responsibility in the effective implementation of the strategy objectives.

The Strategy vision is to develop, enhance and recognize youth sector as a stakeholder in the country development process and thus to ensure the socio-economic integration of youth.

The main objectives of "National Strategy for Youth Sector Development 2020"³⁴ are:

- ▶ Youth participation
- ▶ Services for youth
- ▶ Economic opportunities for youth
- ▶ Strengthening and consolidating the youth sector

Furthermore, the action plan mentions the social inclusion of youth with fewer opportunities as its main theme and assumes an inter-sectoral approach towards youth needs, so that more stake-

holders take ownership of their own progress.

Also, the Ministry created a Reference Group which exercises the monitoring role in the Strategy implementation process, conducting periodical evaluation of the implementation, fostering advocacy and dialogue with the relevant actors. The reference group consists of central public institutions and civil society representatives.

During the implementation phase two intermediate independent evaluations for assessing the objectives set for 2017-2018 years will be developed. Results on the Strategy implementation will be issued on a bases of a final, independent assessment of the youth sector, as well as on the achieved results on each strategic priority and of the Strategy as a whole.

An important aspect for the Strategy implementation is partner involvement. The expertise and experience of the development partners in attracting different funds and external financing can greatly contribute to accomplishing the strategy goals.

In order to support youth policy development in Moldova several good practices have been implemented on national level;

- ▶ Ministry of Education, Research and Culture (Youth Programs Department) – Youth Capital, Youth Grant Program, Developed National volunteer framework (including recognition of volunteering experience); National Program on developing inclusive education ((2011- 2020) ³⁵, National Scholarship Program for youth with limited oppor-

34. http://www.mts.gov.md/sites/default/files/document/attachments/anexa1_strategia_nationala_de_dezvoltare_a_sectorului_de_tineret_pentru_anii_2014-2020.pdf

35. <http://lex.justice.md/viewdoc.php?action=view&view=doc&id=339343&lang=1>

tunities (for VET and HE).³⁶

▶ Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family – Grass-root assistance program on social service, National Youth Employment Services.

▶ Ministry of Economy – National Program of Economic Abilitation of Youth (PNAET) ³⁷.



"I am very pleased and happy that I have had the opportunity to attend this workshop. I consider that civic education and youth involvement is not only volunteering, but also learning and developing personal soft skills. I found out many things / tips, which you cannot find in Internet or school books."

Training participant

Thus, it becomes obvious that the youth policy requires a cross-sectoral approach, while certain objectives can be attained exclusively through conjunct efforts made by the Central Competent Body and by other Central Public Administration bodies. It is increasingly justifiable to carry out a transversal assessment and use a simple and efficient toolkit for evaluating the impact of such measures both on the adult population, in general, and on youth, in particular.

The realities of the social, civic, political and economic situation of the Moldovan youth show moderate and negative dynamic in terms of their

welfare and progress. The following highlights of the recent research data from Youth in Moldova 2016³⁸ shows new findings and tendencies in the areas of 1) democracy and civic participation; 2) migration; 3) employment; 4) education; and 5) health.

1. Democracy and civic participation

The Republic of Moldova experiences serious challenges in the engagement and satisfaction of its youth (age 15-29) with the political life of the country.

▶ Youth with a low education level and low socio-economic status report being disengaged from politics; only 20.0% report engagement. More highly educated and well-off youth report greater engagement at 33.3%.

▶ The majority (60.0%) of young people report dissatisfaction with how democracy is functioning.

Lack of voter participation and perception of political marginalisation by young people bear out these perceptions.

▶ About 20.0% of youth report never having voted in national or local elections since having reached the voting age of 18.

▶ The majority (66.7%) of voting and non-voting respondents believe the youth vote influences governance little or not at all.

Youth engagement with politics happens mainly via the Internet and TV. The Internet is the main source of information about the country's political affairs for 80.0% of youth.

Young people report caring a lot about issues in civil society. Most notably, 50.0% report caring about economic issues, such as poverty, wages and lack of jobs, while 50.0% report a high level of concern over corruption.

Young people report benefiting from services provided by youth centres. However, 75.0% remain unaware of their existence. Youth who do participate in centre services and opportunities do so mostly for volunteering (50.0%), information (50.0%) and life skills training (33.3%).

Less than 50.0% of the young people from Moldova report being satisfied with their lives. The socio-economic situation in Moldova has had an impact on young people. Moreover, life dissatis-

36. <http://mecc.gov.md/ro/content/burse-pentru-tinerii-dezavantajati-editia-vii>

37. <https://www.odimm.md/ro/instruiri/instruiri-pnaet.html>

38. <http://mecc.gov.md/content/prezentarea-rezultatelor-studiului-sociologic-privind-problemele-valoriile-si-aspiratiile>

faction increases with age. About 75.0% of youth aged 14-18 are satisfied with their lives, falling to 33.3% for those aged 25-29.

2. Migration

About 33.3% of Moldovan youth have at least one family member, relative or friend working abroad. A further 33.3% have themselves either gone abroad for work in the past two years or intended to go abroad in the next six months. About 80.0% mentioned improving their standard of living as a reason for going, while 40.0% cited higher chances of finding work. Migration is a prevalent theme for Moldovan youth, affecting their lives in many ways.

3. Employment

Less than 50.0% of employed young people work where they live. This confirms the prevalence of internal migration for employment purposes. Youth from rural areas are more likely to travel for work, mostly to a city in another region. Most youth work in the hospitality industry and service sector.

Many young people face being exploited by their employers.

- ▶ As many as 33.3% of young people work without a work contract. Where a contract is provided, 25.0% of the contracts exclude terms regarding work length, and 10.0% exclude terms regarding annual leave.
- ▶ For 75.0% of young people, unsatisfying wage is the primary reason for looking for another job. Other reasons include unsatisfying work environment (25.0%) and stressful work conditions (25.0%).

About 50.0% of young people believe they have little access to work. The phenomenon is more pronounced in rural areas. 40.0% also expresses interest in finding a job in Moldova. The most selected constraints to find decent work are low wage (33.3% response rate), poor working conditions (25.0% response rate) and skills mismatch (25.0% response rate). Consequently, 25.0% of respondents consider starting their own businesses in the next two years.

4. Education

Over 33.3% of respondents are enrolled in education institutions. Regarding their opinions on education, women are slightly more enthusiastic about their studies than men (46% vs. 42%), whereas those from rural areas are substantially

more enthusiastic about education than those from urban areas (49% vs. 38%).

There is a pronounced gender difference in approaches to education. 33.3% of young women devote three or more hours per day to study outside of classroom vs. 12.8% for young men. It is not surprising, then, that 60.0% of young women aspire to continue their studies to obtain a good degree in the future vs. 40.0% of young men. More than 33.3% of young people report that constraints in access affect their ability to pursue education.

5. Health

Few young people know about Youth Friendly Health Centres (YFHCs), which limits the expansion and demonstrated effectiveness of such centres. While 20.0% of young women and 12.5% of young men know about YFHCs, 16.7% of those who are aware report having benefited from their services.

About 33.3% of sexually active youth report always using contraception. Still, 25.0% report never using contraception, and 5.0% report not knowing what contraceptive methods are.

Promoting youth participation in Moldova

Since Moldova gained its independence in 1991, the issues of youth participation and youth development have received increasing attention on the government's political agenda. The National Youth Policy states "developing, enhancing and recognizing youth sector as a stakeholder in the country's development processes, which will ensure the socio-economic integration of youth" as its main goal. Indeed, structures and forms of youth participation have expanded, including creation of youth councils, youth NGOs, teams of peer-to-peer educators, youth volunteering groups, etc. The National Law on Youth highlights the importance of the National Law on Volunteering, providing a legal platform to volunteering activities, and the establishment of Youth Resource Centre all across the country, giving youth access to information and services, activities related to non-formal education, vocational trainings and leisure time activities. Local and National Youth Councils facilitate dialogue among young people and different community actors, in order to foster their involvement in the design and implementation of youth policies at the national and local level. Notwithstanding such progress, main barriers towards meaningful youth participation are

persistent, including lack of awareness and opportunities, exclusion of disadvantaged youth groups and insufficient funding.

Youth participation in all contexts of life is characteristic of a society based on values such as democracy, tolerance and prosperity. Only through active participation and involvement, young people can learn to be responsible citizens, able to cope with the challenges of life. Being consumers of the formal education system, young people apply the knowledge and skills accumulated during the years of study in everyday life. In particular, from the perspective of active youth participation, the applicability and relevance of the acquired knowledge is manifested by the level of involvement in activities at local, regional or national level.

For this very reason we felt it necessary to present a series of data on the level and dimensions of participation of the young people in the Republic of Moldova. It is important to mention, however, that various research presented in this article discusses not just the youth group of Moldova, but also other age groups. We assume that this could be a limitation to the current study.

We will examine the youth involvement in Moldova's development processes in various dimensions, such as that in civic, economic, political and other dimensions and will try to picture a comprehensive image of any possible disparities between the Youth involvement policy and the country's reality.

Civic participation of youth in Moldova

The Sociological Study "Youth Participation in the Republic of Moldova"³⁹ presents the participation of young people in the civic life of the community through several types of actions, namely: volunteering (61.1%), cultural actions at community level (53%), fundraising and writing projects (41.3%), and community sanitation (ecological actions) (37%). Also, an important role in the participation of young people in civic life has the right to association. However, despite the fact that there are different youth structures, 41.9% of the young participants surveyed said they did not belong to any group or organization; about 18.4% of young people mentioned to be part of a sports club / section, 16.6% of the youth respondents were part of

a community-based school media group, 15.7% were members of the community non-governmental youth organizations, and 12% were part of the local youth councils.

At the same time, National Bureau of Statistics⁴⁰ 2015 data on volunteering in Moldova concludes that 42% of the population aged 15 and over have helped people from other families or worked without payment for community benefit. Moreover, the data reveals that most volunteers are women (57%), rural (62%). At the same time, by age and gender, most volunteers are men aged 25-34 and women aged 55-64.

From the above data we can infer that the group of young people (15-25 years) is less active in community life or possibly community perceptions are different in terms of voluntary activities. It is noteworthy that the Law on Volunteering defines an activity as voluntary if it involves participation in offering services, knowledge and abilities, or the performance of activities in areas of public utility, on its own initiative of the person called volunteer⁴¹.

The same survey specifies the most widespread activity among volunteers was community work (57% of total volunteers), followed by aid to other families for agricultural work (26.7%), support for other families for household (21.1%) and help (unpaid) for schools, kindergartens, religious / charity / culture, NGOs, trade union, town hall, business / firm or party (16.8%).

Still, in the recent years, due to the joint efforts of the civil society and relevant central government bodies, volunteering activity is becoming more popular among young people in Moldova. Volunteering is more prevalent among the more educated and is more popular among urban than rural youth (23.3% vs. 14.1%). The largest percentage of those, who volunteer are those enrolled in educational institutions and young people aged 14-18.

Economic participation of youth in Moldova

Another dimension of youth engagement is participation in economic life. From the economic point of view, young people represent the main active force in the labor market and the most appropriate age segment for their own successful business development.

39. Munteanu, P. (2011), Sociological study "Youth participation in Moldova", 2011, East Europe Foundation

40. http://www.statistica.md/public/files/publicatii_electronice/Voluntariat/Voluntariat_2014.pdf

41. Law on volunteering activity, nr. 121 from 18.06.2010, available on <http://lex.justice.md/viewdoc.php?action=view&view=doc&id=336054&lang=1>

In this respect, the state, through ministries, agencies and with the support of non-governmental organizations (NGO) and country development partners, has initiated a range of empowerment programs for socio-economic development of young people, not only to increase their employability, but to also encourage the entrepreneurship among them.

Despite all the mentioned efforts, young people are reserved on current economic opportunities in the Republic of Moldova, as existing jobs are poorly remunerated and unattractive for young people. In addition to that, the Youth Index 2015⁴² mentioned that four out of five unemployed persons in Moldova are young people aged between 20-29 years, and 7 out of 10 are from rural areas.

There is also an evident trend of the youth wanting to go abroad to study or to work. While the ones who want to work in Moldova are usually oriented towards regional centers or the capital. In rural areas, there is a problem of aging population and lack of labor in all sectors, including education and health. Employers frequently express dissatisfaction with the quality of the training of young specialists, and young people blame the mandatory employment experience as an a priori condition.

From another point of view, initiating and developing businesses could be a solution for young

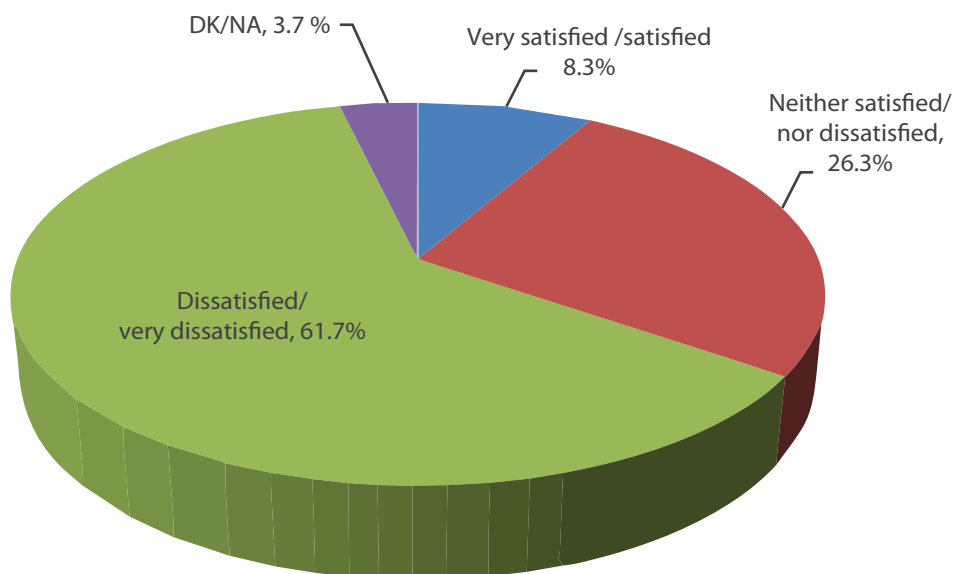
people with innovative ideas, but in most cases they lack the necessary financial resources and knowledge and entrepreneurial skills. Although there are support programs for young entrepreneurs (ex. PNAET, UCIPIFAD, etc.), their contribution is relatively small.

In this regard, economic education of young people from many perspectives, as well as understanding of the functioning economic systems, also their empowerment for effective participation in economic life, would contribute to a full and inclusive participation and active citizenship.

Even if, theoretically speaking, the cultural dimension of youth participation implies knowledge of skills related to the development and practice of common values connected to citizenship, belonging to a group / intercultural community, it also implies the development of various leisure methods, such as the attendance to cultural events (theater, various exhibitions, cultural houses' programs, etc.).

And even though there are approximately 258 extracurricular public institutions in Moldova, which are subject to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research of which 46 creative centers, 87 sports schools, 112 art schools and others, the observation and data gained within the research demonstrates that young people most often prefer to

Figure 1. How satisfied are you with the way democracy works in the RM?



Note: In all figures and tables, DK/NA = Do not know/Not applicable.

42. National Youth Council from Moldova, Youth Index 2015, Policy Paper, <http://cntm.md/ro/resurse>

browse the Internet (70%), communicate through social networks (64% / facebook, odnoklassniki, skype, etc.), watch TV (TV as a source of information continues to be in the top of preferences, according to Public Opinion Barometer⁴³, 45,9% of the population considers TV to be the most important source for information). Thus, various volunteer programs, summer schools, long - term projects and community action, artistic events and sports venues fill the free time of young people who want to get involved. There is, however, a territorial discrepancy on this issue, as the young people living in villages and small towns do not have many opportunities to spend their free time as the ones from the big cities, such as: Chisinau, Balti and Cahul do. This fact could partly explain the low interest of some young people towards these types of leisure modes.

Political participation of youth in Moldova

According to various studies, Moldovan youth views democracy as a challenge in the Republic of Moldova (RM). According to the recent data ⁴⁴, only 8.3% of young people report satisfaction with democracy in the country, while 61.7% are dissatisfied/very dissatisfied. Those dissatisfied have a higher education level and are employed.

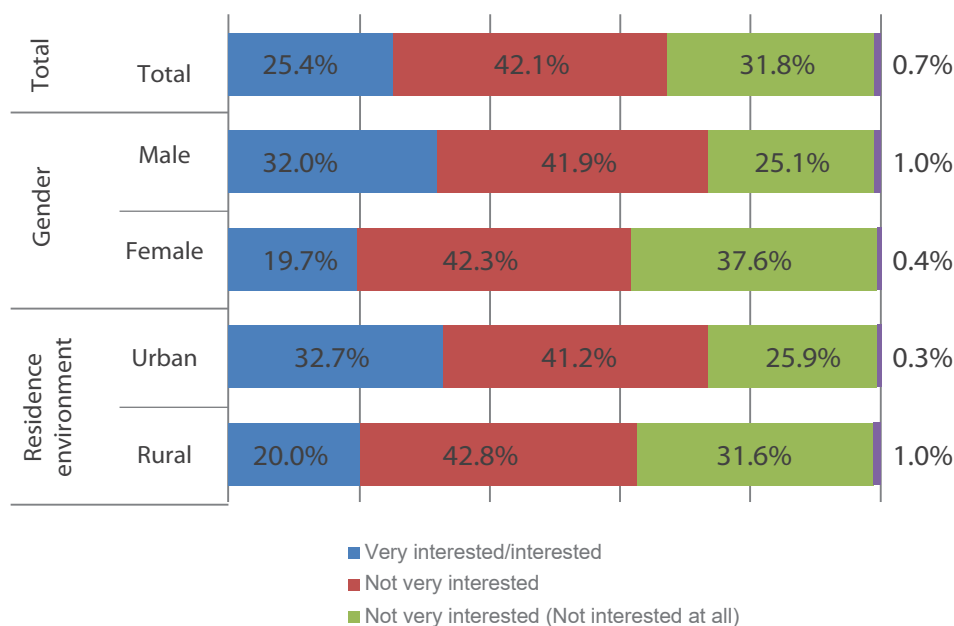
Political interest

Interest in politics is extremely low among young Moldovans. Only 25.0% of youth say they are very interested/interested in politics. More young men than women show interest in politics (32.0% vs. 19.7%). Urban youth show marginally more interest than rural youth (32.7% vs. 20.0%) (Figure 2).

Interest in politics depends on both socio-economic status and education level. Roughly twice as many respondents with high socio-economic status and education levels (vs. low levels for both characteristics) report being very interested in politics (Figure 3).

Regarding their sources of information about the political life of the country, 80.0% choose the Internet, 62.2% choose TV, and about 20.0% choose their close social circle (friends/acquaintances/ colleagues or family/parents). The Internet is the main source of information for approximately 97.7% of young people with a high education level and 93.9% of housewives. TV is the main source of information for young people aged 25-29 (approximately 69.0%) and for those with a high education level (approximately 69.0%). In addition, 26.0% of respondents mention discussions with friends, acquaintances and colleagues; 23.5% of respondents enrolled in educational institutions mention discussions with family/parents; 23.1% of house-

Figure 2. How interested are you in politics? (By gender and residence environment)



43. <http://ipp.md/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Prezentarea-publica.pdf>

44. <http://mecc.gov.md/content/prezentarea-rezultatelor-studiului-sociologic-privind-problemele-valorile-si-aspiratiile>

wives cite radio; and 17.4% of respondents with a high education level refer to newspapers.

Young people prefer not to discuss politics with people closest to them (family, friends and colleagues). Only 19.2% of the young people mention discussing politics very often/often, and approximately 60.0% discuss politics rarely, very rarely or never. The 25-29 age group is the one who discusses politics the most (approximately 25.9% select very often/often). In terms of education, young people with a high education level discuss politics the most (approximately 31.0% answer positively).

Pro-West and pro-East sentiment splits Moldovan society and is reflected among young people. When they are asked to rate their views on a scale of 1 (Pro-West) to 10 (pro-East), approximate-

ly 35.0% of respondents describe themselves as pro-West (choose 1 to 4) and 37.2% as pro-East (choose 7 to 10), while 16.5% hold less strong views (choose 5 or 6). 11.2% do not know or do not want to express their political views (Figure 4).

Results show certain tendencies by residence environment, with urban youth being slightly more oriented to the West and rural youth being slightly more oriented to the East. Thus, 36.9% are pro-West among urban youth (choose 1 to 4), while 33.3% are pro-East (choose 7 to 10). Among rural youth, 33.3% are pro-West while 40.0% are pro-East (Figure 4).

Socio-economic status is also correlated with tendencies in political point of view: high status being pro-West and low status being pro-East.

Figure 3. How interested are you in politics? (By socio-economic status and education level)

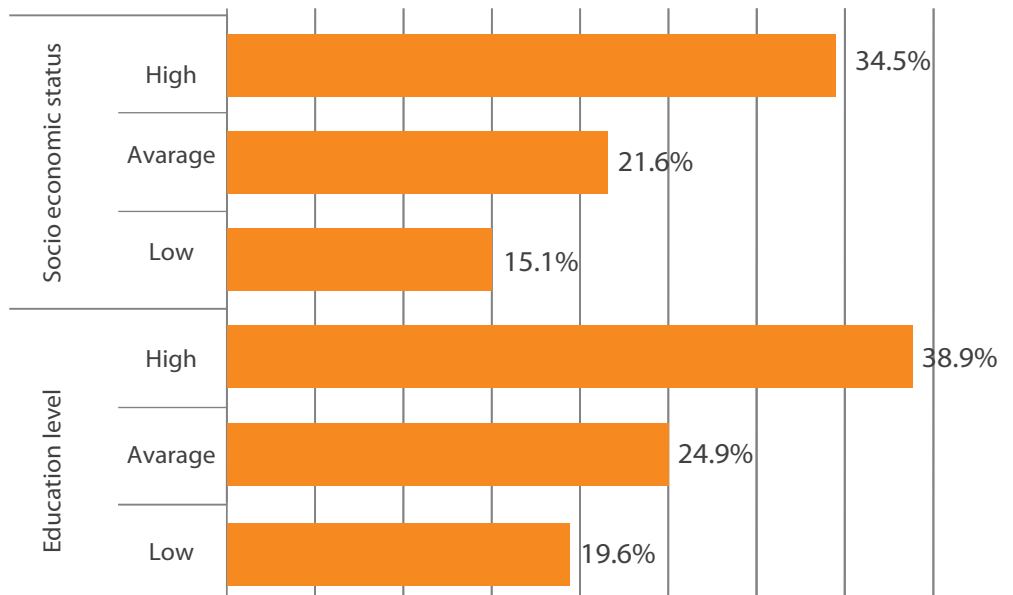
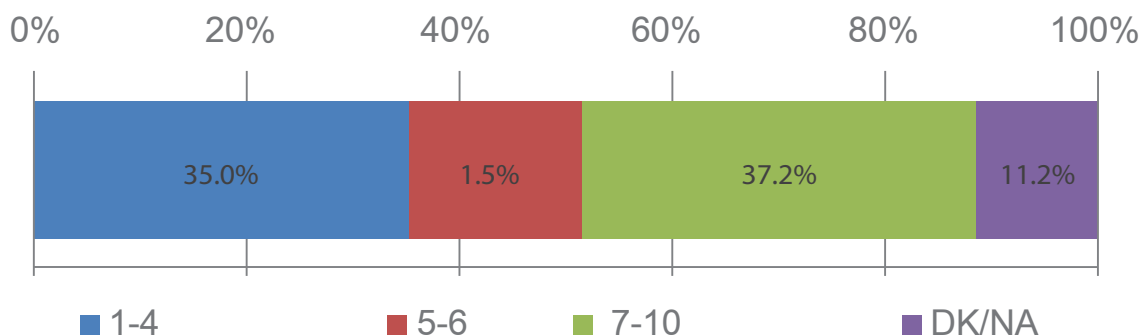


Figure 4. On a scale of 1 (pro-West) to 10 (pro-East), where would you put your political point of view?



Electoral participation

According to the National Youth Strategy 2014-2020, the first objective set for the youth development and enhancement is to have youth-friendly methods in place aimed at promoting their participation in decision-making processes, including the youth with limited possibilities. The involvement of young people in elections by supporting their inclusion in the voting rolls is the most active way of influencing the youth policy. As per the rights ensuring the legal basis for youth participation in decision-making granted by the Electoral Code, the young people could get involved directly in the state administrative structures as a Counselor or as a Mayor.

Despite the gradual implementation of specific action for youth turnout rate in national elections, with the aim to ensure the youth participation, including the ones with limited possibilities, in all decision-making processes, the local elections held in 2015 in Moldova proved that it is not enough to have a permissive legal framework for the youth in place; a more pro-active approach is needed in training, empowerment and guidance of youth to ensure their sufficient representation in public elected positions. Article 124(2) of the Electoral Code of the Republic of Moldova stipulates that the right to be elected as a Mayor is granted to the citizens of the Republic of Moldova who are eligible to vote, and have reached 25 years of age by and including on the Election Day. To this end, for the first ballot of local elections, out of the total number of 4393 candidates, approx. 276 people aged up to 30 years were promoted, representing 6,28% of the total. As per the data furnished by the Central Electoral Commission, only half of them were elected, hence, the share of young people holding the position of a Mayor was 3.34%.

According to the Youth Index⁴⁵, participation in the decision making process mirrors a relatively low participation of youth relative to the adult involvement, although the participation of the latter is not so promising either. Only 4.1% of young people participated in the public budget consultations organized by the LPAs or by the CSOs, while some 11.3% of adults were involved in such processes.⁴⁶

The obstacles causing such a modest participation are as follows: social gap amongst the young people, lack of respect and confidence of youth to-

wards the state institutions, poor training, lack of participative education and culture amongst the youth, weak infrastructure, lack of youth representation in leading bodies, shortage of resources to conduct quality sessions and campaign to involve the youth in this process, etc. The current legal framework is lacking a comprehensive package of actions and measures to support the youth participation in the decision process. The only document pursuing a specific objective to assist the youth in the decision-making process is the National Youth Strategy 2014-2020. The enhanced involvement of the youth shall have the following impact on the society: more high-quality decisions taken by Public Authorities of any level and their outcomes. As part of a democratic process, the participation enhances also the civic commitment and the decision-making transparency, develops the understanding of youth of democracy and human rights, promotes social inclusion and cohesion in the society, fosters the involvement of other young people via positive examples, etc.

Education and employment opportunities for youth in Moldova

When looking for long-term solutions, attention inevitably goes to education. The discussions conducted as part of this survey research showed that when talking about the public system or creation of educational alternatives, all participants unanimously agree that without a major investment in education sector we cannot speak of long-term systemic impact.

We believe that the benefits of investing in education do not need further justification in this case. A good and effective education system can make an essential contribution to improving the current social and political situation in the country. In all societies, the quality of education correlates positively with the quality of life. We speak at the same time about civic education, or education for participation, which can overcome current barriers generated by different stereotypes. Furthermore, we have identified a second point of consensus among the research participants: Moldovan education system is systematically failing to provide quality education in general and, in particular, education for democratic citizenship and youth participation. Discussion on the quality of education generally goes

45. National Youth Council from Moldova, Youth Index 2015, Policy Paper, <http://cntm.md/ro/resurse>

46. <http://cntm.md/ro/publication/bugetele-publice-locale-%C8%99i-participarea-tinerilor-%C3%AEen-elaborarea-lor>

far beyond the framework of this paper. As far as civic education is concerned, we synthesized from the research some central elements for describing the problem.

The school (formal education) does not improve the skills of civic involvement and democratic citizenship, nor critical thinking. A recent study by the Promo-Lex Association⁴⁷ addresses the subject of citizenship education and formulates recommendations for the actors involved. We will not return here the conclusions of the study, but it should be noted that the Ministry of Education has been working for a few years on a comprehensive reform of the national curriculum, which could advance in the next period (2018).

At the disposal of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research there are recent methodological and research resources on teaching the elements of civic education and democratic citizenship.

However, we must note the almost unanimous opinion of the respondents that something is not working in the current system. It may be that the time elapsed since the change was adopted is too short to see a systemic or at least individual impact. Students with whom we have discussed in group discussions, generally younger than their colleagues, are unanimously critical of the teaching act and quality of the curriculum. There was consensus that "it is a good idea but poorly implemented". From the other perspective, we can highlight that the competences for active youth citizenship are not sufficiently integrated in all disciplines, because "it is not enough to study just civic education".

The ministry organized a wide-ranging public debate on school curricula during 2017. This was a good opportunity to rethink the formation of civic competences, for example by better integration with other disciplines and increasing the role of the community. On the one hand, by actively participating in the debate, youth groups and organizations made their voice heard and learn about engagement. On the other hand, ensuring a constructive dialogue between authorities and education experts contributed to a good curriculum with long-term impact.

Also, the non-formal / informal education still does not find its place in the public education system, yet. Simply updating the curriculum is not enough as long as the teachers called upon to

implement it are not properly trained, including by diversifying the methods and practices of working with students.

The education system supplies all the human capital needed for a sustainable development. These two areas are not just connected, but should serve as a red line in developing youth policies based on preparing the students for real life.

The employment amongst the youth is a prerequisite for fighting poverty and ensuring sustainable development. All over the world, the available statistics confirm that the unemployment rate in youth is much higher, while the quality of available jobs is poorer relative to the ones available for other age categories. The identification of the nature and scale of the issues related to the youth employment at the national level is extremely necessary for the formulation of integrated policy and for the intervention programs. To this end, by detecting the vulnerable areas in the youth employment sector, setting the measures and specific programs of intervention for them could ensure both the country economic potential growth and the capacity of their more efficient inclusion in the labor market. The wellbeing and ability to invest in the development of citizens of a specific country depends heavily on the country's economic status, its technical and scientific endowment and on the level of labor force employment.

According to the statistics presented in the recent research⁴⁸, less than 50.0% of employed young people have jobs in their resident localities. About 20.7% have jobs in other localities within their region. This confirms assumptions about hidden internal migration for employment purposes. More women than men are employed in their local communities (59.3% vs. 51.3%). Rural youth also exhibit a higher rate of mobility for employment. Only 43.4% have jobs in their community; over 50.0% have jobs in other local communities, and 33.3% work in other regions. Young people who work and study also demonstrate higher labour mobility.

Lack of employment opportunities in rural areas significantly affects the youth employment picture in the Republic of Moldova (RM). The majority of youth (76.3%) work in towns and cities. Over half of employed rural youth work in cities. This is confirmed by other statistics that highlight the concentration of young people in urban areas, particular-

47. Gordilă-Bobeico, O., Pacanean, L., Education for active citizenship. Actual situation and mechanism for further development, Promo-Lex, Chisinau, 2016.

48. <http://mecc.gov.md/content/prezentarea-rezultatelor-studiului-sociologic-privind-problemele-valorile-si-aspiratiile>

ly in big cities. The majority of young people who work in cities have a high education level and high socio-economic status.

Young people work predominantly in commerce, hotels and restaurants (18.2%), services (16.5%), construction (14.3%), transport and communication (9.4%) and industry (8.4%). About 6.0% work in public administration, education, agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing. Only 4.0% are employed in other sectors. Informal employment still exists in Moldova, and young people are no exception. About 33.3% of employed youth do not have work contracts, despite the future challenges informal employment poses. Young men are more willing than women to work without a contract: 33.3% vs. 28.2%.

The above mentioned research also looked at skills mismatch in youth employment. Given four scenarios, over 33.3% of employed respondents do not have a job-related educational background; only 27.0% do have a job related to their educational background. About 20.0% work in fields different from their educational backgrounds, while 11.4% work in fields close to their educational backgrounds. A large proportion of young people (27.4%) working in a field different from their educational backgrounds have a high level of education.

Young people also emphasise that salaries in most domains in Moldova are low compared to cost of living, and youth employment is particularly prone to this disparity. Employed respondents indicate that they cannot maintain their own standard of living, let alone whether they could with a family and children. Rural youth who cannot find jobs in

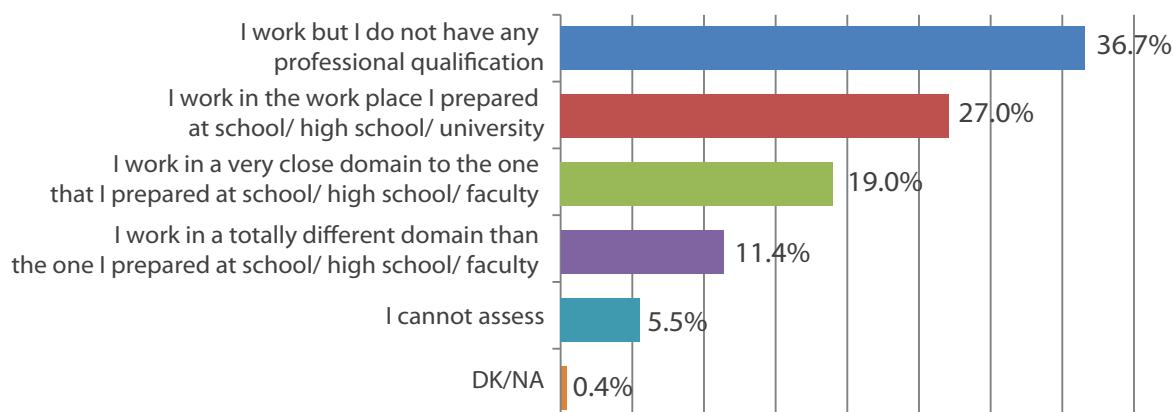
their local communities have to pay for the added costs of rent and/or transport. In order to increase their incomes and to ensure their daily needs, some young people have two jobs, and others would like to find a second job.

Young people enrolled in educational institutions (about 72.8%), those with a high education level (66.5%) and high socio-economic status (67.7%) are very satisfied/satisfied with their working conditions. In contrast, respondents with low socio-economic status (over 30.0%) are dissatisfied/very dissatisfied with their working conditions. For instance, young people enrolled in educational institutions (78.5%) and those with average socio-economic status (70.8%) are very satisfied/satisfied with the length of the work day, whereas respondents with low socio-economic status are dissatisfied/very dissatisfied with it.

Respondents interviewed during the focus group and project activities mention discrimination against certain groups (persons with disabilities, Roma people, etc.) and noted the following employment and professional development challenges:

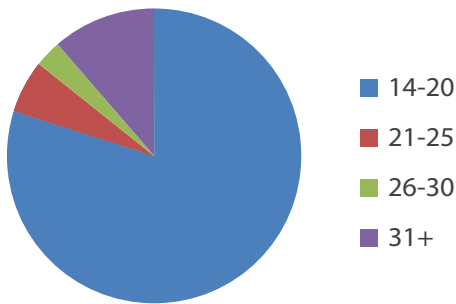
- ▶ lack of experience;
- ▶ low wages;
- ▶ nepotism and personal relationships in the workplace;
- ▶ lack of motivation based on parental financial support, particularly received from abroad;
- ▶ lack of support for young people in work collectives.

Figure 5. Which of the following statements best describes your employment-education situation?

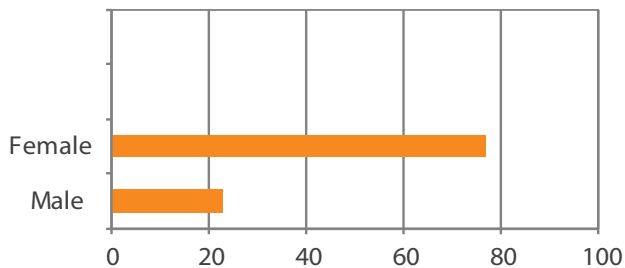


Survey results

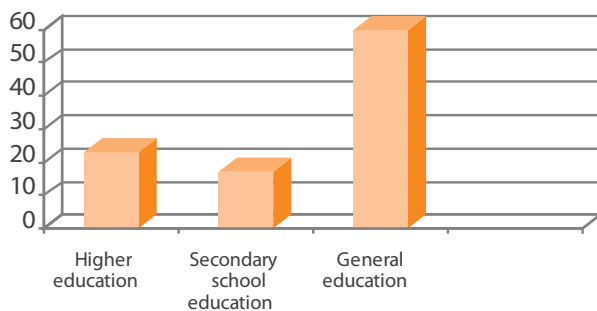
The age of the Respondents



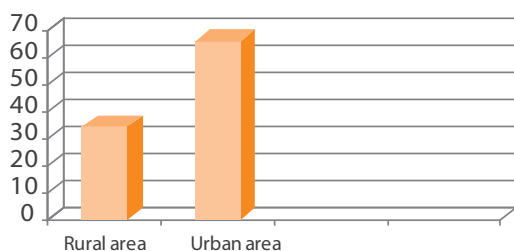
Gender composition of respondents



Education background



Geographic location



Conclusions and recommendations

This survey research that intended to scrutinize the opinions of young people in Moldova on their involvement in the socio-economic and political life of the country confirms their continued status as the country's least empowered and most vulnerable population in terms of job prospects, financial viability and recognition and supports by institutions. This appears especially true of youth in rural areas. As such, young people are a large contingent among Moldovans ready and willing to migrate to improve their standard of living.

Although, as the research analysis has shown, the Government intensified the promotion of youth policies in recent years, this study finds that the indifference of public authorities towards youth advocacy actions persists and continues to punish those with initiative at the school level. Moreover, young people with low socio-economic status do not have access to the youth centres, and youth centre services are mainly offered during prevention campaigns.

The research conducted within the project highlighted main trends of the youth policy and current situation of the youth in Moldova. Thus, we can mention that *the participation and involvement of young people in the political and civic life of the community* is still at an average level with trends towards both extremes (high level and low level of participation). The most common form of participation of young people in political life is participation in the election by voting, and the most popular way to participate in civic life is volunteering. In this respect, we can conclude that young people do not perceive other forms of political and civic participation because they are not directly involved. The forms of participation of Moldovan youth in decision-making are diverse. Young people participate by associating themselves in local youth councils, NGOs / NGOs, initiative groups, etc. In order to encourage young people's participation in political and civic life, action is needed to design joint concrete actions between Government, civil society and development partners of the country, aimed to:

- ▶ Involvement of young people in the decision-making process at local, regional and national level through model of structured dialogue;
- ▶ Acquisition of knowledge and practical experiences regarding the involvement of young people in the political life of the Republic of Moldova by participating in various political activi-

ties organized by public institutions and political organizations;

- ▶ Promoting participatory spirit and stimulating young people's initiatives in the country's public and political life;
- ▶ Increasing the level of civic and political culture among youth in the Republic of Moldova;
- ▶ Combating the stereotypes that young people have about decision makers;
- ▶ Raising awareness of the notion of democratic citizenship and participation of young people.

Youth participation in economic life. Analyzing the data reflecting the participation of young people in the economic life of the Republic of Moldova we conclude that the majority of young people do not see their possible involvement beyond their role as a taxpayer to the state or local budget through the taxes paid as an employee in the labor force. In the same context, we have to mention that when being employed, young people are not encouraged by the employer and are often subjected to age discrimination. Creating one's own business would be another way of participating but less accessible given the insufficient policies to stimulate young people's participation in economic life. Most young people are not empowered to carry out an economic activity, with limited money management and financial resource planning.

We also note that some young people are not aware of the value of money, their management being chaotic, random, based on the needs and preferences of the moment.

The lack of professional orientation of young people is another problem related to the correct choice of the profession based on the analysis of own interests and capacities, but also on the labor market study, which has a negative impact on the employment opportunities, the unemployment rate and the brain drain. The problems identified above have their etiology in the poor education of young people, the migration of their parents abroad and the insufficient actions taken in the direction of vocational guidance of young people. To encourage young people's participation in economic life, the following actions are recommended:

- ▶ Stimulating at the policy level the partnership between the all relevant Ministries in order to facilitate the referral mechanism of young people to work within educational institutions and to stimulate employers to hire young graduates of educational institutions;
- ▶ Develop a program for the vocational guid-

ance of young people by introducing this topic into the activity plan of the school psychologists, during the classes, the civic education, with implementation from the first gymnasium classes;

- ▶ Organizing free entrepreneurial courses for young people in the rural areas;
- ▶ Elaboration of economic support policies by granting preferential grants and extending programs for economic empowerment of young people throughout the country.

Youth access to education and information. The education system needs reforms, and the reform of the education system will primarily aim at improving the educational process and including in the curriculum the development of life skills and practical working skills to ensure that the majority of young people will benefit from the results of this reform.

The results of the research show that young people are not satisfied with the quality of the training obtained in the graduated educational institutions, as the current teaching methods are based on theoretical knowledge and not on practical skills, encouraging critical and independent thinking, and building the skills to make decisions that would prepare young people for their professional and personal lives. The survey results showed that the young people do not have enough access to non-formal education, which, if in place, would create better opportunities for organizational development, self-management, time management, critical thinking, decision-making or problem solving. Ensuring access to information for young people needs to be promoted as one of the preconditions and basic characteristics of young people's lives. The creation of information services is a pressuring necessity, contributing to the strengthening of communication between young people and offering various possibilities for information. To ensure that young people have access to education and information, it is necessary:

- ▶ To ensure the accessibility of education to all, without territorial discrimination, or depending on the social status;
- ▶ To support non-formal education programs and initiatives and to recognize the non-formal education;
- ▶ To ensure the access to information through various Internet sources, media and social networks;
- ▶ To introduce a new trend in education such as STEM and STEAM by collaborative effort in

reviewing the curricula and involvement of all interested parties in this process, especially the youth.

Chapter 3

Ukraine



All of us should ask ourselves the question: Have I done everything in my power to bring about lasting peace and prosperity in my city and my country?



Nelson Mandela

Preamble

Recent economic reforms in the rural areas of Ukraine have resulted in a whole range of economic and socio-cultural problems, the most severe of which are the issues of employment and youth inclusion in decision-making processes. Young people living in the countryside often feel hopeless about their future and eventually have to leave their homes in search of jobs and better luck.

According to official statistics, there are about 15 million young people in Ukraine (under 35 years of age) out of a total population of slightly more than 47 million people. Of these, 10.7 million live in cities, and another 4.3 million live in rural areas⁴⁹. This already gives one-third of the young population a much more difficult starting point for growth and progress especially in educational and employment spheres.

The problem of rural youth migration to cities is not new for Ukraine. In the context of the current socio-economic development of the country, however, this issue is greatly exacerbated and is taking on new dimensions. This problem is particularly relevant given that migration from the village to the city is often forced. Much of the rural youth migrate to the city wishing to receive higher-quality education, hoping to find better paying jobs and looking to improve their own quality of life. Today this uncontrolled phenomenon largely determines the socio-economic development and demographic structure of the regions concerned⁵⁰.



Of course, the high level of migration of rural youth has created a large interest and active discussion among authorities and scientists from different fields. Nonetheless, a lot still needs to be done to find and establish active migration processes and to estimate the actual size of this phenomenon.

Unfortunately, we still lack certain theoretical and practical developments which would explain the factors (including psychological), mechanisms and features of migration among rural youth, and moreover, could suggest solutions to this social problem. The processes of joining a new community and identifying with the new community have also not yet been adequately studied. The question remains as to the motives of a young person who wishes to migrate, as well as the strategies that those individuals then use to integrate into the urban community.

Another important aspect to consider is the process of decentralization that is currently changing Ukraine. The transfer of power and necessary financial resources given to the cities, finally, has allowed an increase in the capacity of the territorial communities and changed the vector of their movement for development. The communities are becoming strong and prosperous, and the promising future of Ukraine depends on the success of each of them.

The formation of a full-fledged living environ-

49. www.ukrstat.gov.ua/ (Accessed 14.09.17)

50. <http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2859-12> (Accessed 14.09.17)

ment for the residents of these communities, that is necessary for their comprehensive development and self-realization, is continuing. One of the components of state development programs, in the direction of decentralization, is the construction of an effective system of territorial organization of power in Ukraine. Youth, undeniably, plays a leading role in local governance. It does not only play an advisory voice in urban, rural and village councils, but also provides the basis for the successful development of communities. The development of territorial organization of power, thus, is impossible without qualitative development of youth policy, physical culture and sports and the creation of guidelines for youth associated organizations.

It is noteworthy that young people is the foundation and resource of the development of not only a strong community, but also a strong state. The level of involvement of young people in the implementation of projects for local communities largely determines both the present and the future of any country. Recognizing this implies creating an outline of the relevant sections of the youth policy and gradually introducing it to the younger generation.

The consolidation of young people, that is taking place today, will create the future of Ukraine. The formation of youth's capabilities is due to the peculiarities of this age group and their active lives which hold a high demand for education, an increased degree of mobility in relation to changes in the place of work, retraining and a development of new types and spheres of activity. The current trends of the migration movement of the young population of Ukraine put the primary task of creating conditions for personal development, social activity and employment of young people in their rural communities so that they remain, work and take an active part in the development of the community and development of their country.

Today, young people are living through a transitional period, which will result in living in an era of turbulent and profound transformations during which there will be severe shocks but also new opportunities. Youth is the future of the state; its intellectual potential, the basis of economic, political and social life relies on youth. Therefore, the formation and implementation of the state youth policy in Ukraine in the conditions of decentralization is presented in the following aspects:

- ▶ the demographic situation in the youth environment;
- ▶ youth and health; social situation and youth feelings;
- ▶ youth and marriage, problems of young families;
- ▶ employment and vocational training of youth; youth and education;
- ▶ needs and spiritual world of Ukrainian youth; risk groups and risk behavior;
- ▶ economic activity of youth, etc.

A holistic state youth policy should be based on the developed legal framework and institutional framework. At the beginning of this century in 155 countries (82% of the UN member states) national inter-sectoral youth policy was developed. In 168 countries (89%) national youth coordination mechanisms (such as the ministry, department, board or committee) were implemented.⁵¹

State youth policy in Ukraine in the conditions of decentralization is a priority and a specific direction of the state's activity and should be carried out:

- ▶ in the interests of the young person, community and state;
- ▶ taking into account the possibilities of Ukraine, its economic, social, historical and cultural development and the experience of modern European states mechanisms of supporting youth.

Context of national youth policy of Ukraine

At the present stage, the problem of the formation of civil society as an organic system is of great importance for the Ukrainian state, as it is a significant factor in the development of democracy.

During the years Ukraine has been independent, a regulatory framework has been developed that defines the legal framework for the establishment and operation of civil society institutions. These are the Laws of Ukraine "On Citizens' Associations"⁵² (current edition dated May 26, 2015), "On Youth and Children's Public Organizations"⁵³ (1997), "On Philanthropy and Charitable Organizations" (1998), "On professional creative workers and trade unions" (1998), "On Trade Unions, Their Rights and Guarantees of Activities" (1999), "On Employers' Organizations" (2001), etc.

A significant step towards strengthening the

51. <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/socind/> (Accessed 14.09.17)

52. <http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/4572-17> (Accessed 14.09.17)

53. <http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/281-14> (Accessed 14.09.17)

above-mentioned legal basis was the approval by the Presidential Decree No. 68/2016 of the National Strategy for Promoting the Development of Civil Society in Ukraine for 2016-2020.⁵⁴ In particular, the Strategy states that active, influential and developed civil society is an important element of any democratic state and plays a key role in the implementation of urgent social changes and good governance, in the management of public affairs and in solving local issues, in the development and implementation of effective state policy in various spheres, in the establishment of a responsible law-governed person and in solving political, socio-economic and humanitarian problems.

In the years of independence, a network of civil society institutions has been established in Ukraine: public organizations and associations, movements, foundations, unions, charitable foundations, trade unions, political parties, employers' organizations, advocacy, notary services, religious organizations, professional and creative unions, bodies of self-organization of the population, non-state-owned mass media and other non-profit associations and institutions legalized in accordance with the law.

According to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, the number of public associations in Ukraine has a tendency to increase. Thus, in 2014, there were 60.5 thousand public associations, in 2015 - 64.2 thousand, in 2016 - 70.3 thousand public associations. Unfortunately, the statistical number of legal organizations does not correspond to the number of actually operating organizations, as evidenced by the results of the control of the bodies of justice in accordance with the current legislation. It should be noted that a significant part of the registered organizations are situational, inactive and somewhat virtual, since the purpose of their creation is often the realization of specific tasks within a short period of time.

In this respect it is important to note the importance of the youth inclusion in decision-making processes of the country, which should happen in an active manner, directly through identifying their needs, exploring solutions and planning activities within the organization or community.

The European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life draws attention to the fact that youth structures should be set up to increase the participation of young people, such as youth parliaments, councils, forums,

etc. They may have different forms depending on the needs of young people and the interest of the authorities. It is extremely important for these structures to be flexible and able to change depending on the needs and perceptions of young people involved in their activities. Representatives of young people of different backgrounds should be included in all structures. The development of a youth policy with the participation of young people at both the regional and national levels should take place on the principle of "nothing about youth should be solved without youth," and should also take into account the assessment of youth needs.

Advisory bodies and public councils on youth policy and youth and student self-government bodies are active in Ukraine and aim to attract young people to make managerial decisions on youth issues and monitor their implementation at the regional level. The cooperation of structural subdivisions of government bodies and the centers of the youth representative offices is mainly aimed at organizing and conducting joint youth events. It also takes into account the opinion of young people in the development of region-targeted programs and during the discussions of projects on the implementation of youth policy, proposals for normative and legal documents, while scrutinizing solutions to various youth problems and providing support to youth initiatives and when conducting a competition for public organizations.

In general, it may be noted, that despite the efforts of state authorities, local authorities and non-governmental organizations, the social situation of rural youth remains difficult. In recent years, Ukraine has been witnessing a tendency towards a decrease in the rural population as a result of a natural population decline and migration activity.

As mentioned earlier, typical problems faced by the rural youth, especially rural young families with children, are low incomes and high rates of unemployment. There is also a tendency to decrease the number of socio-cultural institutions in villages, which negatively affects the ability of rural children and young people to meet their cultural needs and spend meaningful leisure time in their communities.

54. The Decree of the President of Ukraine from 27.09.2013 № 532/2013 (Accessed 14.09.17)

Political participation, educational and professional potential of youth in Ukraine

A strategic resource, when forming a model of sustainable economic development in any country, is its youth and their educational, intellectual and professional/labour potential. The educational level of the population, in particular of the younger generation, is one of the most important indicators that will directly impact the direction of modernization of our society. The analysis of the distribution of youth by educational level, conducted on the basis of a population survey (households) on economic activity, shows that the appreciation of higher education among young people is decreasing. According to research conducted by the Everyone Counts project, 40% of the respondents think they need education because their parents told so, while 26% believe education matters and pursue it for professional matters.⁵⁵

Thus, 45.7% of the respondents received full higher education among the older age group (30-35 years old), but this figure was already down to 39.7% among people aged 25-29 years. Basic education increases the efficiency of each individual employee. Young people who have only primary education can master simple professions, but it is much harder for such people to adapt to complex production processes and methods. At the same time the highest level of education does not necessarily guarantee success on the path of professional self-realization in the modern labor market.

According to the "Youth-2017"⁵⁶ sociological survey, 48.1% of young people in Ukraine do not work in a specialty profession or have not received a degree from a vocational or higher educational institution. The level of education they have received, according to a large number of respondents, does not allow for professional development.

Limited number of opportunities have increased the educational potential of young people giving them chances to improve their already acquired knowledge, their vocational training or retraining and allowing them to receive new skills and abilities. The accumulation of knowledge and intellectual development of a person provides a basis for increasing their competitiveness in the labour market and modernization of the state's economy.

According to the sociological survey "Youth

2017" youth age increases in direct proportion to those who work according to their specialty. Different answers on this question have a direct correlation to what type of location the participant lives in. Young people in regional centres are less likely to work on a specialty (46%) than young people in small towns with a population of less than 20,000 (73%) or villages (55%). Most often young people who have received higher education in humanitarian fields (80% of them work in the specialty indicated on their diploma) mainly work in non-manual roles, yet all of the participants answered that there is a lack of opportunities in humanitarian related jobs. Among those who have received higher or secondary technical education, 62% are working in their specialty. Even less, 52% of specialists work in the field of natural sciences and most of them are not satisfied with the remuneration for a professional job or consider it not prestigious.

According to youth today, the most attractive professions that make it possible to succeed in life are a businessman-entrepreneur, lawyer and software or computer technician (51.2%, 41.1% and 36.1% respectively). For example, studying biotechnology, which is actively studied and implemented in developed countries, is considered to be a promising career in Ukraine by only 0.7% of the polled young people.

One of the effective tools for supporting youth initiatives and promoting the professional self-realization of youth in the labour market is the organization of a state employment service for vocational training upon employers' request or for the conduct of a self-employed business, taking into account the needs of regional labour markets. Young people who apply to the employment centres are offered a selection of vocational guidance services based on the requirements of their future profession, participation in informational counselling and professional orientation events, seminars and trainings: "Youth in the labour market," "Peculiarities of youth employment," presentations of employers, courses of vocational training, educational establishments and individual guidance counseling when choosing a career path. Also, there is an opportunity for distance learning provided through the free educational portals such as Lingva Skills and "Prometheus".

The promotion of youth employment is a strategic plan of youth policy in our country. Solving

55. Social survey conducted by Society Initiatives Institute (August 2017)

56. <http://dsmsu.gov.ua/index/ua/category/362> (Accessed 16.09.17)

the problem of youth employment is very important in terms of implementing educational and professional potential and is an important condition for economic growth. Today, effective support for the implementation of youth policy in this area, in the context of decentralization, requires taking into account the real needs of young people and the existing needs and perspectives of youth employment in the united territorial communities, by analysing the regional experience of implementing youth policy at the level of the united territorial communities and studying the best practices of implementation, the educational-intellectual and professional-labour potential of young people, the organization of youth work, support of youth initiatives in different communities.

While youth is not always seen as an actively involved party in the country's political processes, it still plays an important and decisive role in social development, especially in the period of statehood building. Taking into account the peculiarities of the modern youth movement, it is necessary to highlight the following areas that will determine the political activity of the modern young generation:

- ▶ Participation of the young people in formation of national ideology, in defining the main political values and priorities of Ukrainian society;
- ▶ Political participation of the young people, which is realized with the help of various public, public-political formations. Interestingly, some youth organizations, although they do not call themselves politically involved in the political life of the country, they determine the political face of the younger generation;
- ▶ In the diversity of views and judgments of young people there are universal values that become unified and perceived by the younger generations. It is the younger generation which through culture and art, education and science should lead the society to a new level of understanding and perception of reality. Protecting their rights, while fulfilling their duties, showing political activity today, young people form their own future, the future of their country.

Political activity of young people is one of the manifestations of realization of its possibilities. It allows to manifest the aspirations to self-realization of every young person, as well as active formation of value orientations of modern Ukrainian youth.

Economic context of youth participation in Ukraine

The long demographic crisis, as well as the complex socio-economic and socio-political processes of the recent years have led to a reduction of youth in the structure of the economically active population. According to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine in 2016 6550.9 thousand people aged 15-34 were a part of the economically active population, which was 36.5% of the total economically active population of Ukraine.

In 2016, according to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, the employment rate of young people aged 15-34 was 54.1%, while among all the employed population aged 15-70 this figure was 56.3%, and the population of working age - 64.2%.⁵⁷



"Thanks to the trainings, I managed to discover new possibilities to be useful to my society, but also to improve my skills which in the future could be useful in my career. I understand the value of community work more now."

Training participant

According to age groups, the highest employment rates were observed among persons aged 25-29 and 30-34, which in 2016, respectively, made up 69.8% and 74.7%. In 2016, there was a marked reduction in the employment rate of youth aged 15-24 and 25-29 years old. In comparison with 2015, this reduction was 1.2 and 1.0 percent⁵⁸ respectively, and compared to 2010 - by 6.6 and

57. <http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/> (Accessed 17.09.17)

58. <http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/> (Accessed 18.09.17)

2.2 percent, respectively. The reason for such a reduction is, first of all, a reduction in the number of young contingents entering the labor market as a result of the impact of complex demographic problems of the 90s and the early 2000s. In addition, various dynamics of the employment rate had a significant effect on increasing the barriers of entry of young people into the labor market, especially the most vulnerable of its groups, due to the difficult socio-economic situation in the country. Such barriers include low pay for youth, insufficient level of skills, skills and experience, dissemination of informal employment, etc.

The results of the sociological research indicate that young people are most often employed in the status of hired workers, among those aged 15-29 years old this is almost equivalent to 85%, which corresponds to the entire employed population.

In the self-employed category, only 10.5% of young people are represented, of which 8.0% are employees and 2.5% employers. The most important motives for young people to engage in economic activity on self-employment were higher incomes, the inability to find another paid job and the desire for independence. It should be noted that the share of self-employed on average in Ukraine, according to the State Employment Service of Ukraine, in 2016 amounted to 15.4%, which indicates a lower level of entrepreneurial activity of young people. This may have some limited impact on the development of local communities in the context of decentralization.

The dynamics of changes in the professional qualification structure of employed young people aged 15-34 is characterized by a gradual increase in the share of professionals in the most productive age of 30-34 years. This indicates an increase in the professional potential of socially active young people able to participate in the activities of civil society organisations and to professionally represent the interests of young people in representative bodies at the level of local communities. In particular, according to the survey of economic activity of the population in 2016, the share of young professionals remained the most representative in the occupational structure of the employed youth (21.3% - at the age of 25-29, and 21.7% at the age of 30-34).⁵⁹

The considerable reserves of raising the professional potential of youth in conditions of decentralization can also be evidenced by an increase

in the number of young lawmakers, civil servants and managers, aged 25-29 (from 6.7% in 2015 to 7.2% in 2016) and the age 30-34 years (from 8.9% in 2015 to 9.1% in 2016).⁶⁰ Among the negative tendencies of the youth professional structure, it should be noted that the share of representatives of the simplest professions among all age groups should be limited. This may have a limiting effect on the involvement of young people in the decentralization processes, as the risks of further realization of the professional potential of youth are formed.

Problems of youth employment also include these extremely important notes:

- ▶ Relatively younger workers, thus, according to sociological surveys at the time of research, the average salary of a young worker was about 70% of the average wage of employees in the country;
- ▶ A mismatch of the qualifications of employed youth. The results of the sociological research show that around 37% of young people work in jobs that do not match their qualifications, and in the vast majority of cases this qualification is essential;
- ▶ The irrational choices when picking a profession by young people, due to the lack of a comprehensive state policy of professional orientation of youth. Such a policy was limited mainly to the relevant activities of the State Employment Service and could not fully cover all categories of youth;
- ▶ A significant degree of youth distrust in the significance of institutional structures in shaping their own labor future. This creates the risk of losing motives for active participation of young people in improving the lives of local communities and the development of public and state institutions;
- ▶ The lack of accessible and effective incentives for entrepreneurial activity of young people, which significantly hinders and gradually depresses the active life position of young people.

Young people tend to be innovators as they reject conservative values; they have certain expectations associated with finding their own path and opportunities for self-realization, and the success of these processes is an indicator of the realization of the potential of society. For a large part of Ukrainian youth, the general social problems of social status, such as poverty, deterioration of health, housing,

59. <http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/> (Accessed 18.09.17)

60. <http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/> (Accessed 19.09.17)

affordable medical services, violence, etc., remain acute. In addition, current issues of lack of diverse youth leisure facilities, financial ability to participate in All-Ukrainian or International contests, festivals for creative self-realization are emerging.

Since the material sphere is basic in the lives of people, including young people, changes in their material position lead to transformation in the motivational sphere, affecting their labour and social activity.

According to research conducted in frames of "Everyone Counts" project, about 40% of respondents said their inclusion in the country's life is a major problem due to unequal access to opportunities. Another 35% of respondents are ready to travel abroad in search of the best social benefits and opportunities.⁶¹

Conclusions and recommendations

In order to further develop and improve the state youth policy, as well as local policies in the context of decentralization of its legal basis, the practical activities of state authorities and local self-government bodies should ensure the rights of young Ukrainian citizens. The participants of trainings and seminars under the project "Everyone Counts" recommend to:

- ▶ Introduce and improve the scholarship system of the President of Ukraine for students of higher education institutions of all levels of accreditation, who after graduation, begin to work in rural and other local institutions for at least five years.
- ▶ Provide in accordance with the established procedure in the draft laws of Ukraine on the State Budget of Ukraine for 2018 and for the following years funds for financing state programs for the restoration and construction of socio-cultural and sports facilities in rural areas, for financing institutions for recreation and improvement of rural children and youth, to increase the volume of financial provision of the credit system for higher education, especially in agricultural higher educational institutions, and for updating educational material - the base of educational institutions of all levels of accreditation that also train specialists for the agro-industrial complex, programs of information of rural educational institutions, and others like that.

- ▶ Develop a draft Youth Code of Ukraine or a youth development strategy on the ground;
- ▶ Develop a mechanism for more effective implementation of the Law of Ukraine "On providing young people who have received higher or vocational education, the first workplace with the provision of subsidies to the employer."
- ▶ Substantially expand the list of specialties for which such a grant may be granted, taking into account the possibilities of employment of young citizens in rural areas. To involve public officials of executive bodies, local governments, youth movements, trade unions, higher educational institutions, employers, etc. in a public discussion of such a mechanism;
- ▶ Develop a complex of state and local measures to support the development of youth farming and youth entrepreneurship in rural areas, providing a mechanism for allocation of land plots and provision of preferential loans for young people for the establishment of farms and small businesses;
- ▶ Adopt a system of preferential crediting of rural youth for the construction of housing, the purchase of durable goods;
- ▶ Develop expenditures on lending for higher education and to update the educational and material base of educational institutions of all levels of accreditation, which prepare specialists for the agro-industrial complex and the social sphere of the village;
- ▶ Provide for the restoration, reconstruction and development of a network of cultural and educational institutions in the countryside, in particular clubs, art and music clubs, sports and health clubs, sports clubs, clubs of different types;
- ▶ Strengthen informative and educational, advocacy work in the field of legal education of youth at the place of residence, training, work, introduction of youth legal counseling services;
- ▶ Involve the mass media in the coverage of the social situation and development of youth, implementation of the state youth policy in the village.

61. Social survey conducted by Society Initiatives Institute (August 2017)



Recommendations

International Youth Forum

27-30 September 2017 | Yerevan, Armenia

Context

The package of recommendations was developed by 50 young people, youth workers, community leaders and activists from Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine within the framework of an International Youth Forum taking place in Yerevan, Armenia.

The Forum was organized on the margins of “Everybody Counts: Rural Youth Empowerment in Eastern Partnership Countries” project which is being implemented by **Armenian Progressive Youth NGO** (Armenia) in collaboration with **Foundation for Advancement of Moldova** (Moldova) and **Society Initiatives Institute** (Ukraine).

As a part of the project’s efforts of mainstreaming youth participation issues, the forum brought together rural youth, the civil society actors and the government representatives to discuss and develop a package of recommendations promoting youth participation and inclusion. The recommendations were developed by the Forum participants based on the “Youth Participation” online survey findings and discussions with youth workers.

The participants of various backgrounds coming from different sectors and regions of Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine were divided into the following 4 working groups:

1. Fostering Participation of young people with fewer opportunities and youth from the rural and deprived urban communities through **Employment and Entrepreneurship**;
2. Fostering Participation of young people with fewer opportunities and youth from the rural and deprived urban communities through **Formal and Non-formal Education**;
3. Fostering Participation of young people with fewer opportunities and youth from the rural and deprived urban communities through **Political and Civic Participation**;
4. Fostering Participation of young people with fewer opportunities and youth from the rural and deprived urban communities through **International Cooperation and Mobility**.

The drafted recommendations are as follows:

In order to foster participation of young people with fewer opportunities and youth from the rural and deprived urban communities through employment and entrepreneurship

Educational Institutions should:

- ▶ Strengthen the collaboration between universities and the business sector, in particular, through creating synergies between university faculties and relevant business fields to foster sales of student capstone projects, professional internship placements and job fairs.
- ▶ Conduct a labour market needs assessment and based on the findings of the research update the university curricula in order to make the latter more relevant to the labour market needs.
- ▶ Expand the framework and the reach of career orientation projects for high-school students through visits to future potential university they are about to enter and visits to companies where they can experience their future profession.

Relevant Ministries should:

- ▶ Support the creation and expansion of career centres, which periodically organize job fairs, soft skills trainings as well as assist students in finding internships, etc.
- ▶ Incorporate high-quality “economic literacy” subjects into high school and university curricula.

National Governments should:

- ▶ Create scaffolding mechanisms, such as tax reduction, government subsidies, support in consultancy and advertisement for youth-led local businesses.

In order to foster participation of young people with fewer opportunities and youth from the rural and deprived urban communities through formal and non-formal education

Relevant Ministries should:

- ▶ Encourage broader recognition of non-formal education, particularly on civic education, inclusion, democracy, environmental issues etc. Education should adopt both theoretical and practical methods with the option of combining studies with work experience, volunteering or internships.
- ▶ Through cooperation with Higher Education Institutions and employers, non-formal education can be encouraged through career counselling and mentoring programmes in cooperation with businesses and local organisations.

National Governments should:

- ▶ Invest greater resources in modernising education and adequately training teachers at all levels.
- ▶ Strive for full and non-biased implementation of Bologna process reforms, including ensuring the academic freedom for students and faculty.

In order to foster political and civic participation of young people with fewer opportunities and youth from the rural and deprived urban communities

Relevant Ministries should:

- ▶ Encourage educational institutions to create a supportive environment for the civil and political participation of youth.
- ▶ Make the grant schemes more supportive of not only the established NGOs but also of the broader youth initiative groups.
- ▶ Implement tax regulation reforms that enable an environment where business sector allocates financial resources within their corporate social responsibility budgets towards financing projects that promote civil and political activism in rural communities.
- ▶ Encourage national NGOs to prioritize projects that aim to stimulate civic engagement.
- ▶ Stimulate creation of online platforms, where youth needs assessment surveys and polls on youth

projects and drafts to laws can take place.

National Governments should:

- ▶ Encourage local authorities to create a system where youth councils assume their full role of a consulting body of the local and national political systems.

In order to foster participation of young people with fewer opportunities and youth from the rural and deprived urban communities through international cooperation and mobility

The European Union should:

- ▶ Encourage intergovernmental dialogue to broaden mutual cooperation between EU and Eastern Partnership countries.
- ▶ Encourage increased cooperation between embassies and governments to simplify visa acquisition process for students that participate in youth mobility projects.

Relevant Ministries should:

- ▶ Establish consulting and coordination centres for informational assistance on youth mobility projects.

Questionnaires

Questionnaire 1 Needs analysis for the workshops

The questionnaire is anonymous to guarantee the confidentiality of the given responses. The questionnaire aims to find out which topic are more necessary and interesting for you. Your sincere response will help us form a better picture about your needs and provide more effective capacity development trainings.

Age

Sex

Region-Town/ Village

Please indicate how necessary is the inclusion of the following topics into the agenda of the trainings:

○ Information about the job market in Armenia/Moldova/Ukraine

a.It is necessary b.It is preferable c. It is not necessary d. I am uncertain

○ Skills for job interviews

a.It is necessary b.It is preferable c.It is not necessary d.I am uncertain

○ Compiling a CV

a.It is necessary b.It is preferable c.It is not necessary d.I am uncertain

○ Writing a motivation statement

a.It is necessary b.It is preferable c.It is not necessary d.I am uncertain

○ Writing a supporting email when submitting applications

a.It is necessary b.It is preferable c.It is not necessary d.I am uncertain

○ Information about educational opportunities (training, workshop, seminar) in Armenia/Moldova/Ukraine

a.It is necessary b.It is preferable c.It is not necessary d. I am uncertain

○ Information about European educational opportunities (e.g. Erasmus+)

a.It is necessary b.It is preferable c.It is not necessary d.I am uncertain

○ A good email address and writing good emails

a.It is necessary b.It is preferable c.It is not necessary d.I am uncertain

○ Writing application forms

a.It is necessary b.It is preferable c.It is not necessary d.I am uncertain

○ Motivation statement

a.It is necessary b.It is preferable c.It is not necessary d.I am uncertain

○ Interpersonal communication skills

a.It is necessary b.It is preferable c.It is not necessary d.I am uncertain

o Team working skills

- a. It is necessary b. It is preferable c. It is not necessary d. I am uncertain

o Time management skills.

- a. It is necessary b. It is preferable c. It is not necessary d. I am uncertain

o Other topic, please suggest your topic down below

Thank you for your time and your input!

Questionnaire 2

The involvement and civic participation of youth in the community life

Dear respondent,

Armenian Progressive Youth NGO carries out a research the possibilities and roadblocks of the youth participation in Armenia.

The questionnaire is anonymous and will take only 5-10 minutes to fill out. We look forward to receiving your suggestions and considerations on how to achieve positive social transformation in your communities.

Block A. Participation in the life of the community/region

Question 1. Do you participate in the life of your community/region?

1. Yes, I participate. (please refer to question 2)
2. No, I don't participate. (please refer to question 3)

Question 2. In which field of the community activities do you participate?

1. Organization of leisure activities
2. Cultural events (theater, films, etc.)
3. Social activities
4. Volunteer activities
5. Participation in political processes
6. Other (please specify) _____

Question 3. What is the reason for not participating in the activities of your community?

1. Absence of wish
2. Lack of information about the activities in the community
3. Lack of free time
4. Lack of financial resources
5. Other (please specify) _____

Question 4. What are the issues that young people in the regions have in general? (Please select 3 most important issues)

1. Roadblocks connected with the geographic locations (being far from the capital, of regional center, problems associated with public transportation)
2. Migration (internal: moving from smaller communities to bigger ones , external: moving abroad)
3. Lack of workplaces
4. Lack of opportunities to receive education
5. Unavailability of internet connection
6. Unavailability of cultural and social institutions
7. Lack of youth and other events

8. The youth from the regions does not face any issues
9. Other (please specify) _____

Question 5. Do you think the above mentioned factors are unique to your community or are present at other regional communities as well?

1. Yes, those issues are present only in our community(region)
2. No, these are common for several regions
3. Those are typical to other regions with similar geographic location
4. I am not certain
5. Other (please specify) _____

Question 6. Have you taken any measures to solve the issues you have noticed?

1. No, I have not taken any measures. (Please refer to question 7)
2. Yes, I have taken measures. (Please refer to question 8)

Question 7. What is the reason for not taking any measures for solving the issues you have mentioned?

1. Absence of wish
2. Lack of information about the activities in the community
3. Lack of free time
4. Lack of financial resources
5. Lack of necessary skills and competencies
6. I don't know how I to take any measures
7. Other (please specify) _____

Question 8. What measures have you taken?

1. I have developed recommendations and presented those to relevant bodies
2. I have held meetings and discussions with the youth in my community (region)
3. I have tried to involve my friends in the community activities
4. I have applied to international organizations which deal with that issue
5. I organize non-formal events(meet-ups, discussions, etc) in my community
6. Other (please specify) _____

Question 9. Do you see any differences in young men and women in terms of their participation in the community activities?

1. Yes, young women are more involved.
2. Yes, young men are more involved.
3. The young people of both genders are equally involved in the community activities.

Question 10. Do you think that the equal involvement of young men and women in community activities is necessary?

1. Yes.
2. No.

Question 11. Please elaborate your response to the previous question.

Block B. Social and Political Participation

Question 12. Have you ever had an opportunity to participate in the community decision-making process?

1. Yes, I had.
2. No, I did not have. (Please refer to question 14)

Question 13. Please give a more detailed description of the opportunities you have had.

Question 14. In your opinion, what are the main obstacles in youth participation to the community/ regional decision-making process?

1. The lack of motivation and indifference among the youth
2. Inaccessibility of decision-making positions
3. The absence of youth equipped with relevant knowledge and skills
4. The youth is not aware of their rights to participate in decision-making processes and the ways of realizing those rights
5. Distrust and low levels of awareness
6. The insufficient work of regional and local self-government bodies
7. The corruption
8. Other _____

Question 15. In your opinion, how important is the youth participation in the social life of a community/ region?

1. Very important as the youth is the driving force of the community development
2. Important as the youth also lives in the community
3. Not important as nothing will be changed anyway
4. Not important at all

Question 16. How can youth participation in the social activities of a region/community be fostered?

1. Providing information about the corresponding programs and activities
2. Establishing new international social organizations in a region/community
3. Raising the interest and the motivation among the youth to participate in the activities of their community
4. Insuring transparency in organizing and governing the community life
5. Promoting/financing youth initiatives
6. Other _____

Question 17. Which were the last elections you participated in?

1. Elections of the local self-government bodies
2. The Parliamentary elections
3. Elections of the constitutional reform
4. Other _____
5. I have never participated in elections
6. I do not have a right to vote yet

Question 18. In your opinion, how important is the youth participation in the political life of a community/ region?

1. Very important as the youth is the driving force of the community development
2. Important as the youth also lives in the community
3. Not important as nothing will be changed anyway
4. Not important at all

Question 19. Do you see any perspectives of solving to the above-mentioned issues (community decision-making, in political and social participation) in the future?

1. By capitalizing on the youth potential
2. With the assistance of local self-government bodies
3. With the assistance of the state
4. With the help of international organizations
5. With the help of non-government organizations

6. I do not see any solution

7. Other _____

Question 20. What suggestions do you have to promote the youth participation and involvement in your community?

Question 21. What will be your input in the work you mentioned above?

Question 22. Which are the three fundamental skills/knowledge you would like to gain or develop?

1. Computer/internet knowledge and skill
2. Learning languages
3. Leadership skills
4. Skills to become a trainer
5. Knowledge and skills to submit grant proposals
6. Communications skills
7. Cultural/entertainment events organizing skills
8. Skills to launch initiatives to solve community issues
9. Entrepreneurial skills
10. Other

Block C. The socio-demographic profile of the respondent

1. Gender

- Male
- Female

2. Age

- 14-20
- 21-25
- 26-30
- 31+

3. Education

- Higher
- Vocational
- Secondary

4. Community type

- City
- Village

5. Region _____

6. Community name _____

Thank you!

“The project benefits from the support through the EaP CSF Re-granting Scheme. Within its Re-granting Scheme, the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (EaP CSF) supports projects of the EaP CSF members with a regional dimension that contribute to achieving the mission and objectives of the Forum. The donors of the Re-granting Scheme are the European Union and National Endowment for Democracy. The overall amount for the 2017 call for proposals is 290.000 EUR. Grants are available for CSOs from the Eastern Partnership and EU countries. Key areas of support are democracy and human rights, economic integration, environment and energy, contacts between people, social and labour policies.”

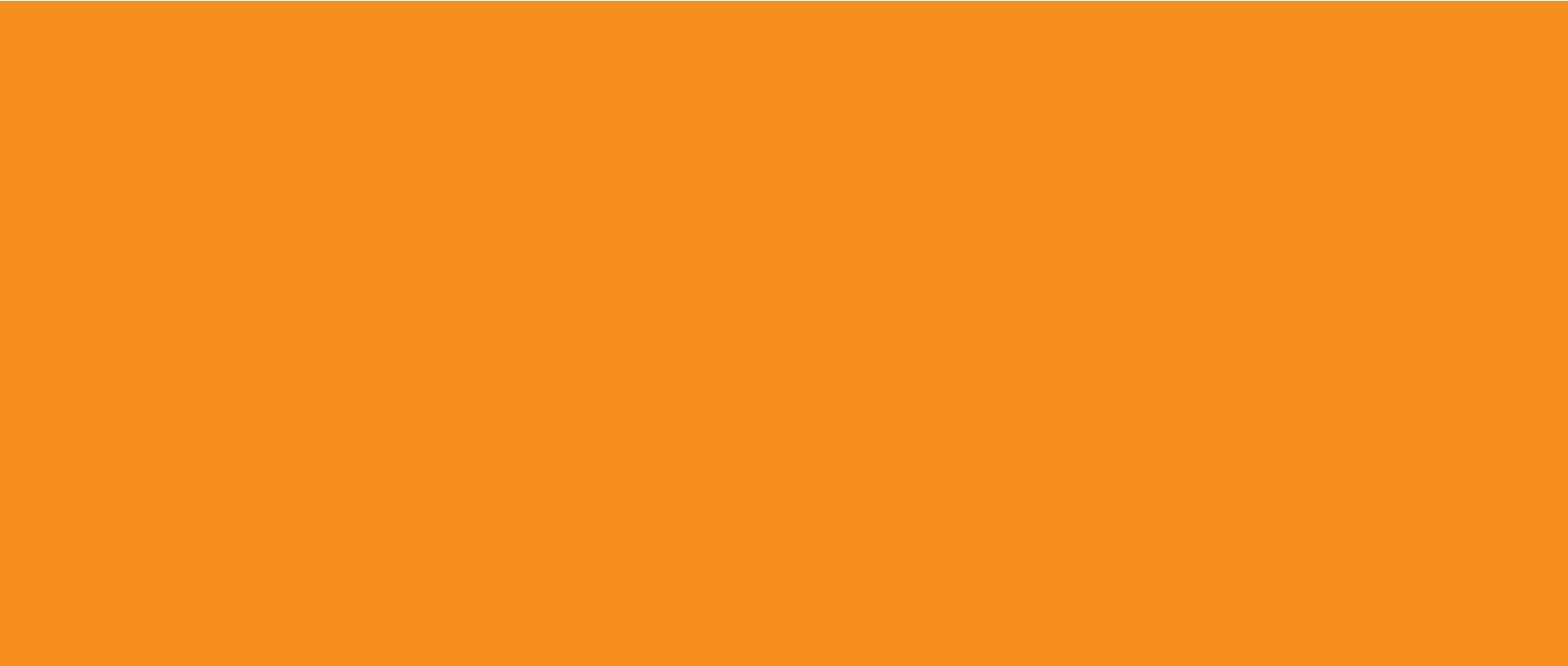


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