



Montenegro
Ministry of Sports and Youth

Development of the European Youth Card (EYCA) Programme

2022-2024





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The Government of Montenegro adopted Development of the European Youth Card (EYCA) Programme for the period 2022-2024 with the Implementation Action Plan for the period 2022-2024 at the session held on December 8, 2022.

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INTRODUCTION

Development of the European Youth Card Program for the period 2022–2024 represents a strategic document aimed at further development and implementation of policies whose goal is improving the overall social and social position of youth in Montenegro. By means of its Conclusion no. 04-4379/2 of 30 September 2021, The Government of Montenegro adopted the Information on activities for the preparation of the Program for the Improvement of the European Youth Card (EYCA) for the period 2022–2024, while the Government's Work program for the second quarter of the current year also provides for the adoption of this document.

The European Youth Card (EYCA) is an internationally recognized benefit card for youth aged 13-29 years, who can use over 270 discounts in Montenegro and 70,000 discounts in Europe free of charge. The card was developed as a result of signing the Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility¹. One of the goals of this Agreement is to present the importance of internal and external youth mobility at the European level through this project. As a member of the Council of Europe, Montenegro acceded to the Partial Agreement in 2006 upon the restoration of its independence.

The European Youth Card (EYCA) project at the European level is organized and implemented by the European Youth Card Association (EYCA)², a non-profit organization with licensed representatives in the form of 39 organizations in 36 countries across Europe³, which implement the European Youth Card program (EYCA) on their respective territories and are dedicated to promoting mobility and encouraging the active social participation of young people. The European Youth Card Association (EYCA) implements its planned activities through a network of member organizations in each of the countries/regions in which it is represented (NGOs, private foundations, government and public organizations, and private companies). The organizations promote the Card and provide benefits to young people in various areas such as mobility, culture, education, tourism, services and products, and various service-related activities. During the first 30 years of its work, the Association has established a significant number of partnerships in youth and other sectors across Europe. Some of its most important institutional partners are the European Commission, Council of Europe, European Parliament, European Youth Forum, EuroDesk, ERYICA and CSR Europe.

On an annual basis, member organizations of this European network distribute more than 6 million cards and strive to achieve the vision of a Europe where all young people are equal, mobile and active. The main goal of this socially-responsible project is to motivate as many young people as possible to be socially, culturally, educationally and economically mobile by providing a large number of benefits and conveniences within the framework of the European Youth Card (EYCA) and by contributing to the development of important public policies aimed at improving the social position of youth. The European Youth Card (EYCA) provides immeasurable benefits to youth – it brings them together and organizes them, encouraging a higher level of activism and

¹ Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility, <https://rm.coe.int/pa-on-youth-mobility-through-youth-card-serbian/16809ce047>

² European Youth Card Association (EYCA), <https://europeanyouthcard.gr/en/eyca-en/#:~:text=The%20EYCA%20was%20founded%20in,accommodation%20and%20other%20travel%20services>

³ European Youth Card, <https://www.eyca.org/about>

influence on social processes of particular importance for the further personal and professional development of youth. In addition to this, its advantage is that it applies to all youth, regardless of their status (students, employed/unemployed, etc.), or any other classification. The only restriction related to the use of the card refers to the age of the card user (who must be 13-29 years old), which is prescribed by the Statute of this Association.

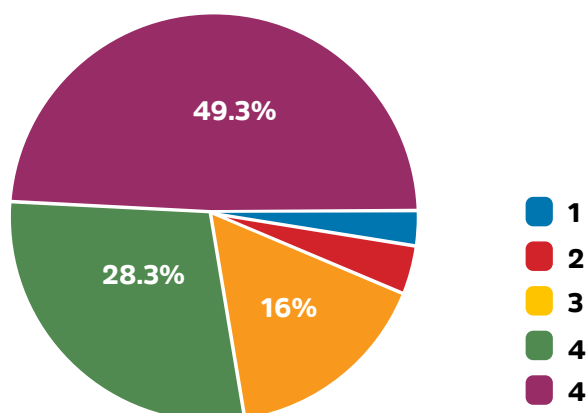
Guided by the Partial Agreement and the key principles of youth mobility, activism and networking at the local, national and international levels, the Ministry of Sports and Youth has been providing continuous support to the implementation of the European Youth Card (EYCA) project since April 2018.

The holder of the license for the implementation of the project on the territory of Montenegro and a full member of the European Youth Card Association (EYCA) is the Ministry of Sports and Youth, while the exclusive implementing partner of the project at the national level is the NGO "Centre for Youth Education" from Podgorica. Since October 2018, more than 25,000 cards have been distributed in Montenegro, across 24 Montenegrin cities, and this figure is gaining importance, considering the two years of the global pandemic caused by COVID-19. As regards the number of distributed cards, it is important to highlight that the majority of cardholders are young women:

WOMEN	MEN
14,557 EYCA cardholders	10,557 EYCA cardholders

Also, it is important to highlight the high level of cooperation achieved with seven local self-governments (Tivat, Herceg Novi, Kotor, Budva, Ulcinj, Bar and Bijelo Polje) as partners of the European Youth Card (EYCA) scheme at the local level. In the previous period, significant successes were achieved in the implementation of the project; the fact that Montenegro became a full member of the Association in September 2020 stands out among those achievements. In addition to the above, Montenegro is the winner of three international "EYCA Excellence Awards" for the best implementation of the project in the categories "Quality of Youth Benefits" and "Strengthening Sustainability" for the years 2019, 2020 and 2021. In the survey, conducted at the beginning of 2021, 219 participating cardholders rated the EYCA card with a score of 4.43 (out of a possible 5.00).

PLEASE, RATE YOUR LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH EYCA CARD IN MONTENEGRO FROM 1 TO 5
219 responses



Graph 2: Level of satisfaction with the EYCA card in Montenegro

Furthermore, the encouraging fact is that after just a few years of work on the promotion and improvement of this project in Montenegro, 21% of young people or one-fifth of the respondents heard of the European Youth Card (EYCA) as a mechanism for improving the position of youth through various benefits and discounts that the card allows, and that the highest level of awareness about the card is among pupils and students. Also, it is important to note that when it comes to all the mechanisms for improving the position of youth implemented by the relevant ministry and partner organizations, as many as **87% of respondents** have a positive experience of using this card. The European Youth Card (EYCA) project has nurtured its socially-responsible component from the very beginning; thanks to the cooperation with partners from the state, international and civil sectors, new activities which aim at the common good were created.⁴ The previous period saw a number of significant projects that were implemented or planned within the EYCA scheme, such as:

Voluntary blood donation (2019, 2020, 2022) – In cooperation with the Blood Transfusion Institute of Montenegro, blood donation actions are organized, allowing young people – EYCA cardholders – to take part. The project team's wish is to promote the importance of voluntary blood donation.

EYCA Educo camp (2021, 2022) – A gathering of youth from the Western Balkans and Montenegro, during which various educational workshops are held and mutual connections and contacts of young people are strengthened, with the aim of strengthening the regional connection of youth organizations.⁵

EYCA Film Fest – A planned gathering in the form of a three-day festival for more than 1,000 participants who would have the opportunity to watch films for the young audience made by authors from all over Europe through. This activity will be an opportunity for young film lovers to share their talent in scriptwriting, while the best ones will win attractive prizes.

EYCA Ambassadors – Establishment of a group of young people who will serve as a consultative group in the further development of the European Youth Card (EYCA). The goal is to continuously hear their voice and provide them with an opportunity to be additionally involved and able to provide their suggestions for the improvement and development of this project.

EYCA educational workshops – More than 40 workshops have been organized in the past 4 years, with more than 1,000 young people who have directly participated. Various topics have been covered so far:

Participation and active engagement of youth	The importance and nurturing of mental health
Youth policies and activism	Mobility programs in Montenegro and the world
Public performance and PR activities	ICT tools for high-quality work (Excel, Adobe, etc.)
Employment and preparation for a job interview	The importance of psycho-social support
The role of digital marketing in the Internet world	Promotion of youth entrepreneurship
Time management and organizational tools	Development of a business plan

In addition to youth mobility, the European Youth Card also supports their empowerment in other areas, such as independent performance in the labour market and the promotion of an entrepreneurial mindset. Moreover, it helps them acquire professional skills and experience and be significantly more involved in the process of developing public policies, which are important

⁴ Needs Analysis, 2019, Ministry of Sports and Youth of Montenegro

⁵ EYCA Educo camp 2021, <https://www.omladinskakartica.me/vijesti/zavrsen-i-medunarodni-eyca-kamp>

for their further individual and professional development, both at the state and local levels. EYCA member organizations⁶ work towards these goals in a variety of ways, including:

- **Internship** schemes set up in partnership with various organizations which offer EYCA card-holders the opportunity to gain their first work experience.
- **Business training programs** allowing young people to learn from experts and entrepreneurs how to develop and implement their own business ideas.
- **Expanding the network of business partners** and establishing cooperation and cross-sectoral initiatives between companies, youth organizations, and national and European institutions in encouraging youth employment, which represents one of the key segments of the vision of the development of the EYCA card.
- Supplementing young people's skills through **special educational programs** and discounts on language courses, professional training, IT jobs, etc.
- **Informing young people** based on the availability of the best services and information that will enable them to make key decisions for their future, is also one of the key development directions of this project. In this regard, providing relevant and accurate information to young people is of critical importance for their development on the one hand, but also the results of the work of youth organizations of which they are active members, on the other hand.

Also, it is necessary to respect young people and their needs at all levels, primarily by means of **encouraging a greater level of involvement and activity of young people and fostering their true contribution to the development of public policies that concern them**. Some EYCA member organizations use the communication channels of the European Youth Card (EYCA) to promote political participation, exchange information, organize debates with politicians and decision-makers and help young people express their opinions on topics that are important to them. Taking into account the above, the Development of the European Youth Card Program 2022-2024 aims to improve the position of young people in Montenegro in the following areas:

Mobility	Awareness raising
Recruitment	Cooperation with local self-governments
Entrepreneurship	Digitization

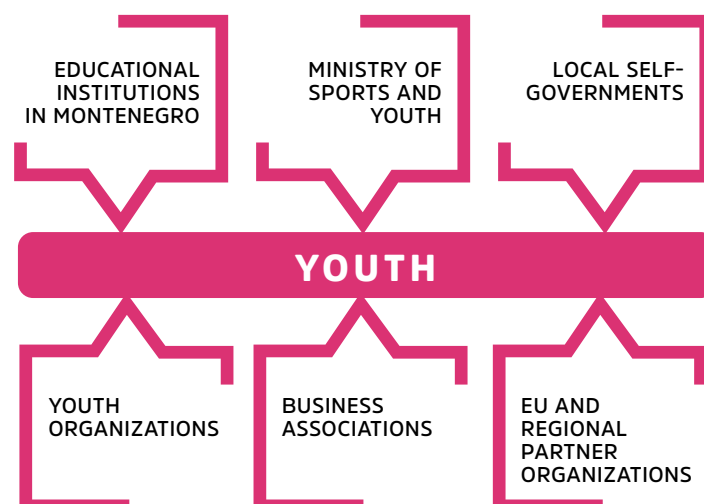
The program is fully compatible with the European Framework for Youth Policy⁷, in which, based on contemporary insights about the position of youth, there are three general and interconnected priorities that are closely related to the goals of the European Youth Card (EYCA) project, specifically:

- creating more opportunities for young people in education and employment,
- improving youth's access to decision-making processes and encouraging youth's full participation of young people in social life,
- encouraging mutual solidarity between society and youth.

Furthermore, additional emphasis is placed on strengthening the **international cooperation** of young people from Montenegro with their European peers, where special importance is given to creating conditions for mutual networking and exchanging best experiences and practices in the implementation of this project. In order to achieve said priorities, it is necessary to include all subjects able to provide a concrete contribution to the development of policies of importance for young people, with the primary emphasis on the following actors:

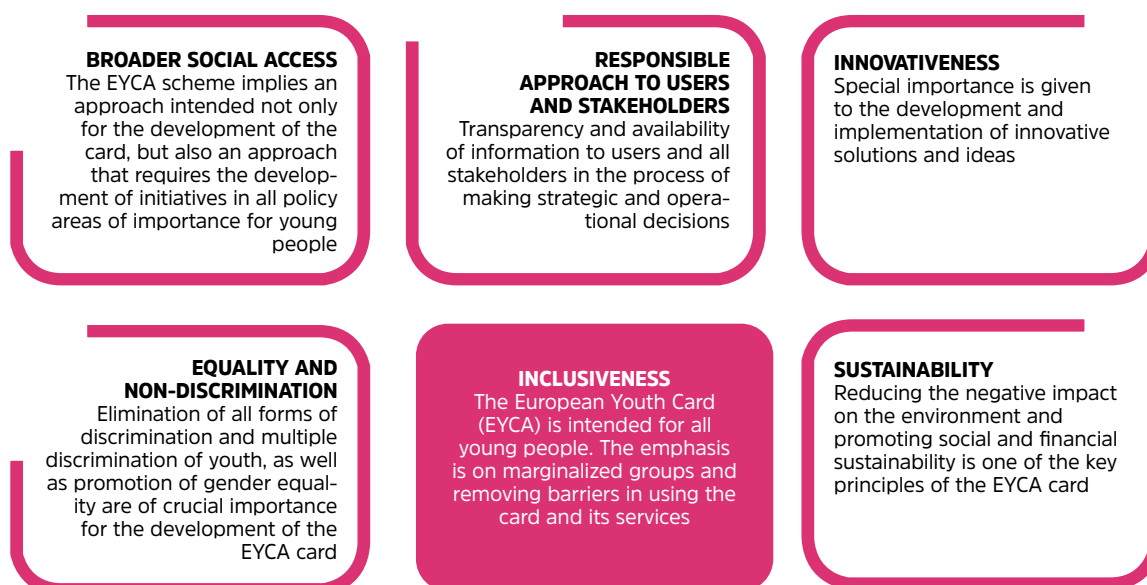
⁶ European Youth Card Associations, "Support, involve, inspire", <https://europeanyouthcard.gr/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/EYCA-brochure-20161.pdf>

⁷ European Framework for Youth Policy, <https://rm.coe.int/european-framework-for-youth-policy-eng/16809096b6>



Graph 2: **Stakeholder framework for the public policy in question**

In addition to stakeholders, the Development of the European Youth Card Program is based on the following principles:



Graph 3: **Public policy principles**

The chapter below presents the framework of the alignment of the strategic document with the relevant national umbrella and sector-based strategic documents

National strategic framework

Medium-term Government Work Programme 2022–2024⁸

The Medium-term Work Programme of the Government of Montenegro for the period 2022–2024 defines the basic development priorities and goals, which are important for the further development of youth public policies in Montenegro. With regard to the strategic document in question, it is important to highlight the following goals and indicators with which we strive to achieve full compliance in the following period of public policy implementation, namely:

Goal 2.5. Stable and sustainable employment growth which is based on equal opportunities and decent work, with further development of knowledge and skills and greater social inclusion

- Youth employment rate (15–29) increased to 34% by the end of 2024.

Goal 4.3. Improving the quality of services for youth and their participation in the creation of public policies

- Increased number of youth services so that they are available in all local self-governments on the territory of Montenegro, but also increased number of engaged youth administrators to 30 by the end of 2024.
- Increasing the number of events for youth within youth services from 65 to 270 in 2024. Through the aforementioned changes, the increase in the number of young people who actively participate in the events aimed at creating public policies is also influenced.
- Increasing the number of users of the European Youth Card, which provides benefits for young people, to 66,000 in 2024.

National strategy of sustainable development until 2030⁹

The National Strategy for Sustainable Development until 2030 (NSSD) is one of the overarching strategic documents that define the basic long-term development directions of Montenegro. Youth-related policies represent one of the most important segments of the NSSD, which is why it is important to emphasize that the program in question was developed and harmonized with the measures, activities and indicators from the NSSD, with particular reference to the following:

- Within the measure related to reducing the level of migration, there is an indicator that points to the need for constant growth in the number of young people who are educated abroad and then employed in Montenegro. This indicator is fully aligned with the basic priorities of the program defined within the framework of the need to strengthen the mobility and employment of young people in Montenegro.
- The improvement of the educational and scientific component in higher education, through harmonizing the higher education system with the needs of society and the labour market, which continuously affects the reduction of youth unemployment, is one of the fundamental NSSD measures very closely related to the development goals of the EYCA scheme.

In addition to the above, it is important to point out the achieved compliance with NSSD in the part that refers to:

⁸ Medium-term Government Work Programme 2022–2024,

⁹ National Strategy for Sustainable Development until 2030, <https://www.gov.me/dokumenta/6852d215-af43-4671-b940-cbd0525896c1>

- Increasing the participation of young people and adults in formal and informal education in accordance with the needs of the labour market. Special emphasis is placed on enabling the IT literacy of young people to reach the level of the EU average.
- Special importance is given to encouraging young people to participate in the process of adopting public policies at the state and local levels through non-governmental organizations and informal groups.
- It is also important to highlight the need to encourage entrepreneurship and self-employment, primarily through the development of new and flexible forms of youth self-employment (through the simplification of procedures and the creation of encouraging and flexible mechanisms), such as social entrepreneurship, start-ups, rural tourism, urban gardening, green jobs, creative industries and ICT services.

Youth Strategy 2017–2021¹⁰

The Youth Strategy is a key sectoral strategic document in the domain of public policies that cover policies for or oriented toward youth. It is important to point out that in 2022, the Government of Montenegro will adopt a new strategic document related to youth. However, the priorities in the existing strategic document represent the fundamental postulates of long-term youth development, which is why it is necessary to emphasize the full compliance of the program with the stated priorities. The primary emphasis is on strengthening young people's economic and social security by facilitating access to the labour market and employment. Quality education and a higher level of activity and participation of young people in decision-making processes, community development and the development and implementation of policies are the key priorities of the youth card. Also, the strategy envisages that young people have access to high-quality cultural content as creators and consumers, together with the creation of conditions for the establishment of an effective normative and institutional framework for the youth policy implementation.

National employment strategy 2021–2025¹¹

As regards improving the level of youth employment of n Montenegro, the main priority of the strategic document is reflected in the further strengthening of competitiveness and social cohesion, especially in part related to developing knowledge and skills at all educational levels in order to create more favourable opportunities for young people. In this regard, the need to gain knowledge and competencies for the digital age labour market is highlighted as a special operational objective. In this way, conditions will be created for improving the labour supply and qualifications, addressing structural weaknesses in the education and training systems, especially bearing in mind youth unemployment and long-term unemployment. It is of particular importance to highlight the compliance of the program in question with the performance indicators in the strategic document related to the decrease in the NEET population in Montenegro to 15% by the end of 2025. In addition to this, the emphasis is put on increasing the level of lending to young people in business and defining new youth employment programs, which is in line with the planned goals of the Development of the European Youth Card Programme.

¹⁰ Youth Strategy 2017–2021, <http://www.strategijazamlade.me/>

¹¹ National Employment Strategy 2021–2025, <https://www.gov.me/clanak/javni-poziv-nacrt-nacionalne-strategije-zaposljavanja-2021-2025>

Digital Transformation Strategy of Montenegro 2022–2026¹²

This strategic document aims to improve the level of employability of young people, primarily by setting up a support system for the acquisition of digital knowledge and skills. In this regard, it is important to highlight the development of activities related to implementing the one-stop-shop model for youth employability with an emphasis on improving digital skills, which is aligned with the vision of the development of the youth card in the field of digitalization.

Strategy for Lifelong Entrepreneurial Learning 2020–2024¹³

This strategy defines the following strategic goals of importance for youth policy:

- Improvement of the development of entrepreneurial competencies at all levels of formal education, implementation of entrepreneurial learning within informal education
- improved efficiency in the functioning of the entrepreneurial learning system.

The above goals will be realized through numerous measures within various sectors, which will ensure the implementation of policies and the development of entrepreneurial learning as a predominant trend in the entire society, which represents one of the key segments of the European Youth Card.

International framework

Partial agreement on youth mobility through the European Youth Card (EYCA)¹⁴

Partial Agreement is an important segment of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe and therefore follows the priorities and goals of both the youth sector and the Council of Europe as a whole. The main goals of the agreement are:

- Implementation of the European Youth Card scheme
- Improvement of existing and development of new youth policies in member states of the Council of Europe

The work program of the Partial Agreement is implemented in cooperation with the European Youth Card Association (EYCA). The aim of this document is the development of the European Youth Card (EYCA) scheme, particularly at the European level, in the best interests of young people under the age of 26 and with a view to facilitating their mobility as well as their access to the various goods and services necessary for their personal and cultural development. The agreement puts particular emphasis on the advantages to be granted to young people under the Youth Card scheme with the public and private, national and international organisations and bodies, particularly in the fields of transport, housing, insurance, sporting, cultural, and recreational events, etc.

It is important to point out that the agreement highlights the need to promote and provide information on the subject of the EYCA card for young people interested in the opportunities offered by mobility, as well as providing information for political and economic decision-makers that are important for young people.

¹² Digital Transformation Strategy of Montenegro 2022–2026, <https://www.gov.me/dokumen-ta/117a0bb6-7328-4f7c-8675-4df9e40369c3>

¹³ Strategy for Lifelong Entrepreneurial Learning 2020–2024,

¹⁴ Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility, <https://rm.coe.int/partial-agreement-on-youth-mobility-through-the-youth-card-leaflet-mon/1680a3c7c2>

The strategic document in question is fully aligned with the goals and priorities that are to be achieved through the implementation of the agreement itself, primarily through the further development and improvement of youth cards and the benefits they bring to young people in Montenegro.

European Youth Card Development Strategy for the Period 2021–2025¹⁵

This strategic document presents ways to approach the development of the youth card at the European level, with a special emphasis on digitization, the adaptation of services to cardholders, maximizing the use of technology, encouraging innovation, influencing public policies and commitment to sustainability.

The strategy's main goal is to create a Europe where all young people are mobile, active and connected, i.e. a Europe where young people are supported to travel, study, work, volunteer, participate meaningfully and contribute to their communities.

EYCA strategic goals:

- 20 million cardholders across Europe
- Young people using the European Youth Card to access information, travel, study and work
- Young people across Europe engaging in public policy development through the European Youth Card

Four basic pillars on which the contribution of the EYCA card to the development of policies in the countries where this project is implemented is based:

MOBILITY

When it comes to the field of mobility, special importance is placed on defining the European Platform for Mobility, which, together with the Partial Agreement on Mobility through the European Youth Card (EYCA) and the Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes, aims to strengthen the level of youth mobility and the use of the youth card.

VOLUNTEERING

The European Youth Card (EYCA) will contribute to the development of youth volunteerism through the programs such as Erasmus+ Volunteers, European Solidarity Corp Participants and Erasmus+ volunteer awards.

EYC PARTNERSHIP FOR REGIONAL MOBILITY IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

Special emphasis is put on strengthening partnerships with youth organizations in the Western Balkans by promoting the use of the European Youth Card (EYCA) and creating conditions for a higher level of regional mobility of youth.

CITIZENSHIP PARTICIPATION

In the coming period, it is necessary to FURTHER strengthen the participation and contribution of young people in the development of policies at the level of the whole of Europe, with the Conference on the Future of Europe as the most important. Also, the emphasis is placed on the development of anti-discrimination campaigns, enhancing the participation of young people in decision-making processes, as well as ensuring the necessary representation of young people at the local, regional and national levels.

¹⁵ EYCA Program Development Strategy, <https://www.eyca.org/news/eyca-adopts-its-four-year-strategic-plan>

European Union Youth Strategy 2019–2027¹⁶

This EU strategic document indicated the need to make the most of youth's potential in Europe, by encouraging the participation of young people in democratic life, in line with Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU. It, also, supports the social and civic engagement of young people and aims to ensure that all young people have the necessary resources to take part in society. The EU Youth Strategy has a number of general goals that represent the obligations that Montenegro undertakes in the process of negotiations with the EU, with a special emphasis on:

- Providing young people with the basis for developing a quality future, supporting their personal development and growth to sustainable autonomy, building their resilience and equipping them with life skills to cope with a changing world.
- Encouraging young people and providing them with the necessary resources to become active citizens, agents of solidarity and positive change inspired by EU values and European identity.
- Improving the development of public policies in terms of their impact on young people in all sectors, notably in employment, education, health and social inclusion.

Conclusions of the EU Council and Ministers on the European Youth Card (EYCA)¹⁷

The conclusions of the EU Council and Ministers clearly point out that the states implementing the EYCA program agree on the benefits of implementing innovations in order to increase the mobility of youth in Europe. It is particularly emphasized that the cards encourage the development of national initiatives that enable young people to benefit from privileges, in particular in culture, sports, travel and accommodation, and encourage the development of existing national systems, as well as the need to coordinate the implementation of innovations in arrangements in the manner determined by each Member State under its national powers.

Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States on implementing the common objectives for youth information¹⁸

In terms of this strategic document, the importance of the Resolution is reflected in strengthening the level of information and availability of information to young people, where special emphasis is placed on:

- youth outreach is important for every member state and common goals cannot be implemented if the principle of subsidiarity is not respected.
- improvement of information services that take into account the special needs of young people is crucial for enabling access to information for youth
- youth form a heterogeneous group whose needs vary depending on their age, gender, socio-economic circumstances and the geographical area in which they live.
- by its very nature, youth outreach is a very diverse field that affects many young people in different circumstances.

¹⁶ European Union Youth Strategy 2019–2027, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14080-2018-INIT/en/pdf>

¹⁷ Conclusions of the Council and the Ministers Meeting within the Council of 6 October 1989 on the Youth Card in Europe (Official Journal C 277, 31/10/1989 P.0007 - 0007)

¹⁸ Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States of 24 May 2005 meeting within the Council on implementing the common objectives for youth information (2005/C 141/03), <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A42005X0610%2803%29&qid=1642417413811>

- youth participation in creating and disseminating information remains key to providing information to meet their needs.
- the implementation of the common outreach goal resulted in a portal¹⁹ launched by the Commission in cooperation with the Eurodesk, ERYICA (European Youth Information and Counselling Agency) and EYCA (European Youth Card Association) networks.

2021 European Commission Report for Montenegro²⁰

The EC report, in chapter 19: Social policy and employment, states the need for Montenegro to continue the implementation of the labour legislation and develop quality employment measures aimed at young people and women, people with disabilities, minorities and vulnerable persons impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. In parallel, it is necessary to take steps to establish and implement the Youth Guarantee by developing a Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan in line with the EU model and guidelines.

The report specifically indicates that the share of young people (aged 15-29) not in education, employment or training (NEET) has increased between 2019 and 2020, from 21.3% to 26.6%. Also, Montenegro has endorsed the Western Balkans Declaration on ensuring the sustainable labour market integration of young people²¹ (8 July 2021) and committed to taking concrete steps in the implementation of the Youth Guarantee scheme, while the first steps have already been taken, which are expected to will result in a concrete scheme implementation plan.

The Declaration further points to the need to develop an evidence-based monitoring and data collection system, which will clearly indicate the needs of the labour market in terms of skills and experience. Also, the emphasis is placed on the development of effective youth-related policies, primarily through the development of partnerships with all interested parties, such as employers, educational institutions, social partners, health institutions, youth organizations and civil society organizations. It is particularly important to highlight the need to use all available tools, with the aim of clearly mapping target groups and services aimed at them, as well as to develop tools aimed at preventing early school dropout, with special emphasis on young people from vulnerable groups.

During the year 2021, consultations were held in partnership with the Directorate for Sports and Youth and UNDP with interested actors to define new strategic priorities for youth. In this sense, the report highlighted the importance of defining a more inclusive approach targeting youth with disabilities, minority groups and those living in rural areas.

The report clearly indicated that in the coming period, it is necessary to take a more inclusive approach aimed at young people with disabilities, to define and regularly adopt action plans for young people in all local governments, in order to strengthen the development of public policies related to young people.

Chapter 26 “Education and Culture”

Chapter 26 “Education and Culture”, covers the field of education and training, youth and sports, culture, access to education, programs and other EU instruments. The chapter in question is temporarily closed and does not contain benchmarks that need to be met. However, the impor-

¹⁹ European Youth Portal, https://europa.eu/youth/home_en

²⁰ 2021 EC Report for Montenegro, <http://www.euic.me/me/montenegro-report/>

²¹ Western Balkans Declaration of the on ensuring sustainable labor market integration of young people, https://slovenian-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/media/rpxozjjj/declaration_wb_labour_market_integration_young_people_final_agreed.pdf

tance of creating equal opportunities for youth education and participation in the labour market in Montenegro, as well as encouraging them to become active citizens of society, is one of the key priorities that need to be achieved in the coming period. In this regard, it is necessary to achieve the highest possible level of cooperation with EU member states within the framework of youth policy, primarily through structured dialogue, mobility, youth work and the need to promote the proactive participation of young people in all structures of European society.

United Nations Youth Strategy 2030²²

The strategy aims to enable greater impact and expanded action at the global, regional and national levels, in order to respond to the needs and advance the rights of young people in all their diversity. This strategic document contains basic priorities that represent an integral part of the vision of the EYCA scheme itself, namely:

- Engagement, participation and advocacy – Amplify youth voices for the promotion of a peaceful, just and sustainable world
- Informed and healthy foundations – Support young people's greater access to quality education and health services
- Economic empowerment through decent work – Support young people's greater access to decent work and productive employment
- Youth and human rights – Protect and promote the rights of young people and support their civic and political engagement

UN Sustainable Development Goals²³

The UN Sustainable Development Goals advocate methods and approaches that reflect the diversity of young people to ensure that all young people can achieve their full engagement, empowerment and development. The UN recognizes youth as rights bearers and promotes and facilitates transparency, accountability and responsiveness of governments, international organizations and other actors towards youth. In this regard, the following structure of the UN Sustainable Development Goals is important for the policy in question:

GOAL 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

- 4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship
- 4.7 By 2030 ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

GOAL 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

- 5.b Enhance the use of enabling technology, particularly information and communications technology, to promote women's empowerment.
- 5.c Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

²² United Nations Youth Strategy 2030, https://www.unyouth2030.com/_files/ugd/b1d674_9f63445fc59a41b6bb50cbd4f800922b.pdf

²³ UN Sustainable Development Goals, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

GOAL 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

- 8.5 By 2030 achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value
- 8.6 By 2020 substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training
- 8.b By 2020 develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the ILO Global Jobs Pact

GOAL 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries

- 10.1 By 2030 progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40% of the population at a rate higher than the national average
- 10.2 By 2030 empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status

GOAL 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

- 13.3 Improve education, awareness raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction, and early warning

GOAL 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

- 16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

Legal framework

Youth Law²⁴

The Youth Law regulates the manner of determining and implementing youth policy, as well as the measures and activities undertaken to improve the social position of young people and create conditions for realizing the needs of young people in all areas of interest to young people. Legal provisions related to the need to create and improve effective youth policies, and encouraging the proactive participation of young people in the development and implementation of youth policies at the state and local levels are of particular significance. Also, public interest in the field of youth policy places additional emphasis on:

- establishing an institutional framework for the implementation of youth policy
- creation and improvement of conditions for the work of youth services
- educating youth about the mechanisms of their inclusion in active employment measures
- encouraging the involvement of youth in the creation of cultural content;
- encouraging youth mobility;
- encouraging the inclusion of youth in informal education
- promoting healthy lifestyles and volunteerism among youth
- encouraging other areas of importance for youth development.

²⁴ Youth Law, <https://www.katalogpropisa.me/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Zakon-o-mladima.pdf>

ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION

Of the total population of Montenegro in 2019 (622,028), 19.07% were young people. According to the MONSTAT estimate from 1 January 2021,²⁵ 117,250 young people aged 15 to 29 live in Montenegro, making up 19% of the total population. The share of this age group in Montenegro is higher than that in the European Union, where youth make up 17.4% of the population. Of the total youth population, 52.11% are male and 47.89% are female. In demographic terms, 66.1% of young people live in urban areas, while half of that number (33.9%) live in rural areas. However, this structure remains fluid due to the high level of internal mobility due to education and employment opportunities, making the real concentration of young people in urban settlements more likely higher than reported²⁶. According to the Western Balkans Youth Laboratory (WBYL) report²⁷, there are almost 14,500 fewer young people in Montenegro, which represents a decrease of 10.73% compared to the period 2010-2019, which is accompanied by a decrease of almost 2.5% in the share of young people in the total population in the last 10 years. According to numerous researches on the causes of this trend, some of the most common challenges young people in Montenegro face are: unemployment, hate speech, patriarchal values, low trust in institutions and lack of participation.

A study by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation²⁸ indicates five key common characteristics of young people from six Western Balkans countries:

- they are confronted with very adverse conditions on the labour market
- informal work engagements are perceived to be extremely widespread and increasingly tolerated
- the emigration potential of young people continues to be very high, significantly higher in comparison to the SEE EU countries
- a large majority of young people from the Western Balkans support solidarity-based Europeanization
- the level of interest in politics is very low and has decreased in recent years.

A 2019 IPSOS research showed that the most significant problems youth in Montenegro confront are the issue of unemployment, various forms of addiction, economic status, a high level of corruption and crime in society that has a negative impact on young people, as well as the inadequacy of the educational system.²⁹ The research findings indicate that young people believe that employment and investment in education are key areas that deserve particular attention. One-third of the youth population in Montenegro states that opening new jobs is something they would deal with in the future, followed by investing in education 12%, and investing in sports fields and activities 6%.

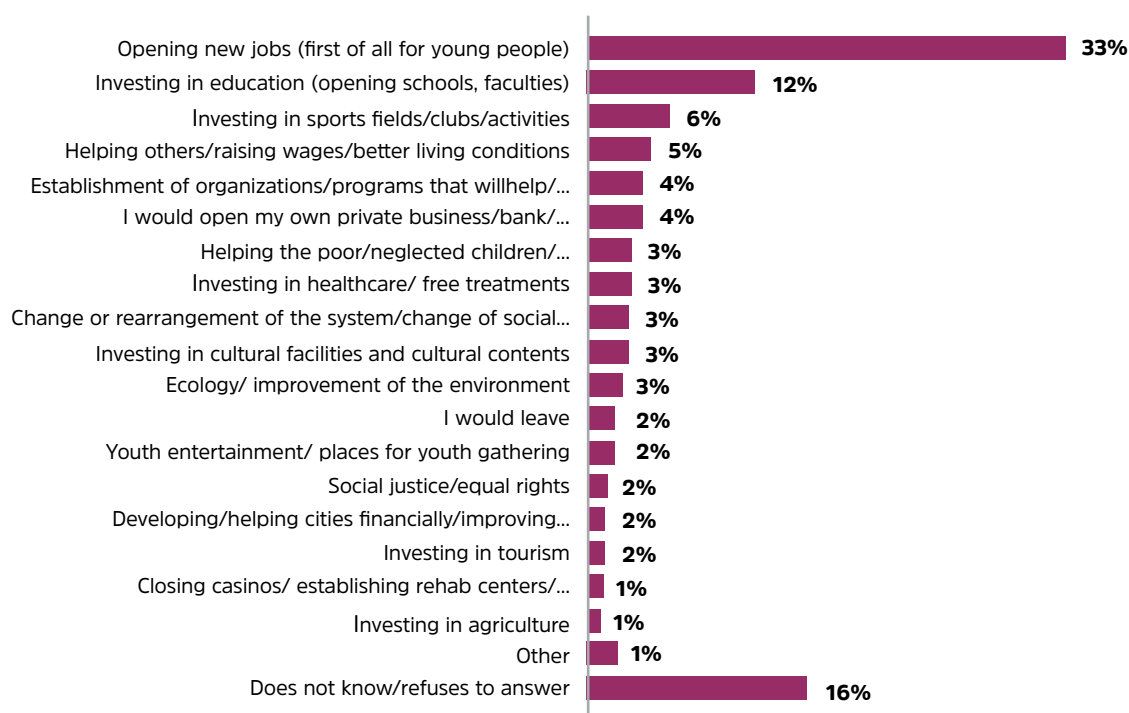
²⁵ MONSTAT estimates for 1 January 2021, <https://www.monstat.org/cg/page.php?id=273&pageid=48>

²⁶ Data from the Census conducted in 2011, <https://www.monstat.org/cg/page.php?id=48&pageid=48>

²⁷ Western Balkans Youth Lab, Mapping of Youth Policies and Identification of Existing Support and Gaps in Financing of Youth Actions in the Western Balkans, 2021, https://www.rcc.int/priority_areas/48/western-balkans-youth-lab-project

²⁸ In search of solidarity-based Europeanization, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Dialogue Southeast Europe, <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/sarajevo/15462-20191030.pdf>

²⁹ Ipsos Strategic Marketing, Research on the situation of young people in Montenegro, 2019, <https://wapi.gov.me/download-preview/1aed3958-fbfa-4310-86e0-a7d56855a1c8?version=1.0>



Graph 4: **The desired situation in Montenegro from the point of view of young people**

Recently held consultations with actors in the field of youth policy³⁰ showed that it was necessary to work on programs related to career counselling and youth employment, especially bearing in mind particularly vulnerable groups of young people, as well as contemporary trends in the labour market and skills that are needed. In this sense, the quality of formal and informal education was assessed as extremely important. As for non-formal education, it was emphasized that it was necessary to provide young people with quality programs for the development of their skills and attitudes outside the formal school system. In this regard, youth work and youth services – the quality and coverage of which needs to be improved – were also recognized. Intersectoral cooperation, not only in the planning and monitoring of youth policy, but also in its implementation, was highlighted as very important. Consultations with youth held within the Dialogue for the Future project³¹ also indicate that the main preoccupation of young people is the quality of education and access to the labour market, while the importance of support in terms of career orientation and creating opportunities for acquiring skills and knowledge through practice has been particularly highlighted.

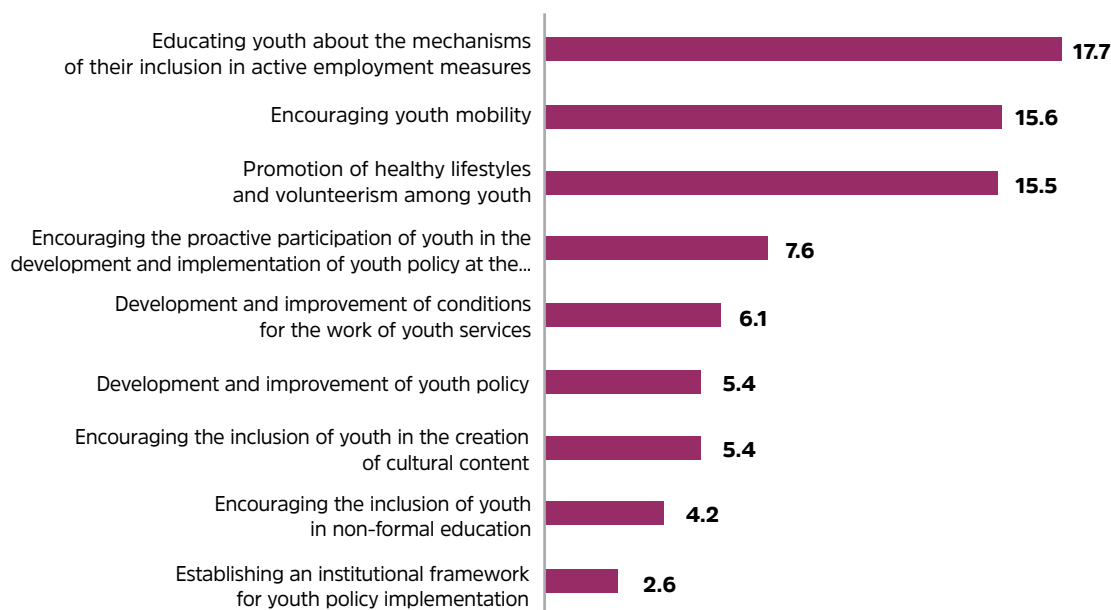
It is especially important to point out that the participation of youth in decision-making and their influence on the development of national-level public policies in Montenegro are not at the required level. However, certain improvements can be observed in the previous period. Montenegro has no national youth council, and there are only several local youth councils. CEDEM's research "Political and civic participation of young people in Montenegro"³² shows that young people's inaction is caused by many factors. The most common factor for their non-participation is a lack

³⁰ Consultations with actors in the field of youth policy, UNDP and the Directorate for Sport and Youth, 2021

³¹ Consultations held in December 2020, with 77 young people, as part of the preparation of the Situation Analysis, which is the starting point for the new framework of cooperation between the UN and the Government.

³² CEDEM, "Political and civic participation of young people in Montenegro", 2019, <http://www.cedem.me/component/jdownloads/send/29-politicko-javno-mnjenje/1962-politicka-i-gradanska-participacija-mladih-in-Montenegro>

of information and awareness of the influence they carry as young people. This research indicates that a very small number of young people participate in the decision-making process, which is an especially pronounced problem on the local level, regardless of whether we talk about formal or informal participation. The conclusion is that there is the need for greater involvement of young people in society, i.e. the decision-making process and the creation of policies intended for youth, with the aim of greater democratization of society and encouraging dialogue with representatives of institutions, especially in order to improve the position of young people and increase the quality of their life. In this regard, using available funds, including the European Youth Card (EYCA), Montenegro wants to support the work of all structures to ensure participation, and direct connections with all actors of importance in the field of social, and political and economic development of young people. It is important to state that the youth and the non-governmental (civilian) sector were actively involved in the development and implementation of the youth policy and legal framework, especially in the consultation process during the development of the current strategic framework pertaining to youth and the revision of the Draft Youth Law that took place earlier. Although research on knowledge, attitude and practices related to participation in the development of policy and youth employment in Montenegro (the Westminster Foundation's research on the perception and attitudes of young people towards politics³³), showed that a significant majority of young people (71.5%) never or almost never follow current political events in Montenegro. Also, the research findings indicate that the large majority of young people are not politically active in virtually any way, which additionally points to the need to strengthen and involve young people in the processes of making political decisions at all levels. Research by the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports³⁴ has shown that the following areas are seen as the most important public policy areas for young people:



Graph 5: The most important areas of public policy for young people

³³ Westminster Foundation Research on Youth Perceptions and Attitudes towards Politics, <https://www.wfd.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Youth-perceptions-and-attitudes-towards-politics-in-MNE-1.pdf>

³⁴ "Analysis of youth needs: Position, assessments, attitudes and perspectives", 2020, Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports, <https://www.gov.me/en/documents/13dc5dee-d689-400a-a793-0cb0c-53c80c2>

Despite the fact that the Constitution, national legislation and internal regulations guarantee women all social, economic and political rights, the position of women in Montenegrin society remains a significant issue and progress towards gender equality is slow. The reason for this is found in traditional gender stereotypes, which lead to weak implementation of policies and a lack of financial support to responsible institutions. The research conducted by the UNDP in 2021³⁵ shows that around 60% of citizens believe that for the children's well-being it is preferable for a man to work and for a woman to devote herself to the family. The 2019 Gender Equality Index³⁶ shows that women in Montenegro are the least equal when it comes to the dimension of power, followed by dimensions of time, knowledge, money and work. When observing, for example, the individual indicators that make up the domain of power and its subdomains (political, economic and social power subdomains), we can notice that gender inequality persists in Montenegro, which greatly affects young people as well.

When it comes to the influence of young people on the development of public policies, the role of the European Youth Card (EYCA) is reflected in supporting cardholders/young people to develop mechanisms for connecting with national and local authorities. Furthermore, the goal is to turn young people into a reliable source of information, expertise and advice for public institutions at any level (local or national). Through examples of good practice and co-operation between young people and authorities, it is necessary to enable young people to engage and influence the development of public policies to a greater extent. In this regard, it is necessary to develop concrete cooperation programs with local and national institutions in the coming period, to include youth in the development of policies that concern them as well as in decision-making, using the youth card as a tool for involving them.

When it comes to the level of familiarity of young people with the advantages of the European Youth Card (EYCA), research by the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports³⁷ has shown that this project is among the best-rated initiatives aimed at youth.



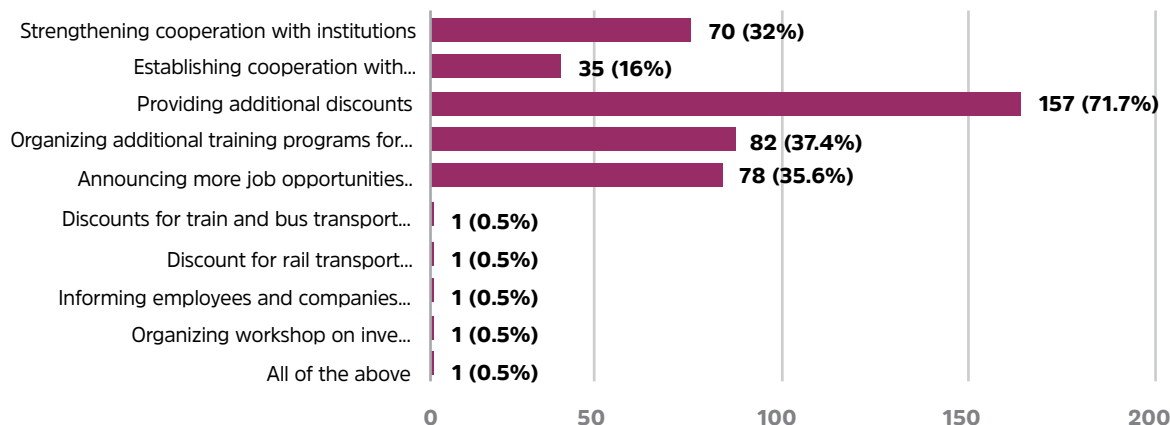
Graph 6: **Evaluation of youth initiatives - % of "very" and "somewhat" good work responses**

³⁵ Gender mainstreaming: attitudes and perceptions of public administration employees and evaluation of the application of the gender equality principle of in institutions of public authority, https://www.me.undp.org/content/montenegro/sr/home/presscenter/pressreleases/polovina-gra_ana-vjeruje-da-je-rod-nu-ravnopravnost-nemogue-posti.html

³⁶ Gender Equality Index, <https://www.me.undp.org/content/dam/montenegro/docs/publications/si/Gender/Index%20rodne%20ravnopravnosti%202019%20for%20web.pdf>

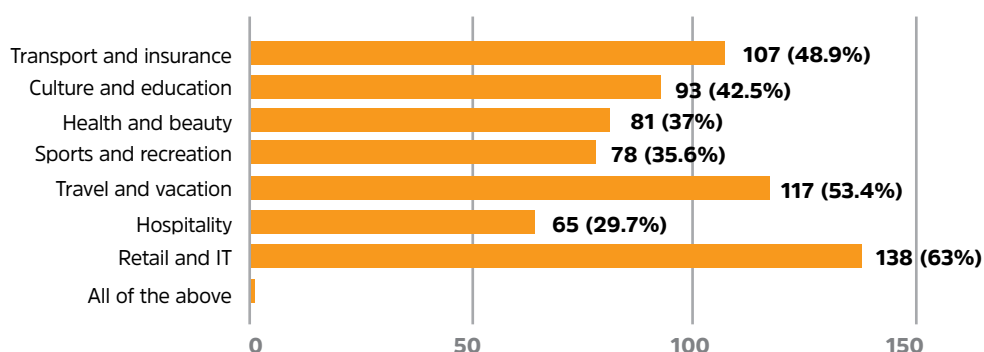
³⁷ "Analysis of youth needs: Position, assessments, attitudes and perspectives", 2020, Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports, <https://www.gov.me/en/documents/13dc5dee-d689-400a-a793-0cb0c53c80c2>

It is particularly important to point out that the 2021 research conducted by the NGO Centre for Youth Education shows that young people's interest in the European Youth Card (EYCA) is primarily reflected in a higher level of discounts, announcing employment and training opportunities, as well as strengthening cooperation with institutions.



Graph 7: **EYCA card and interests of young people**

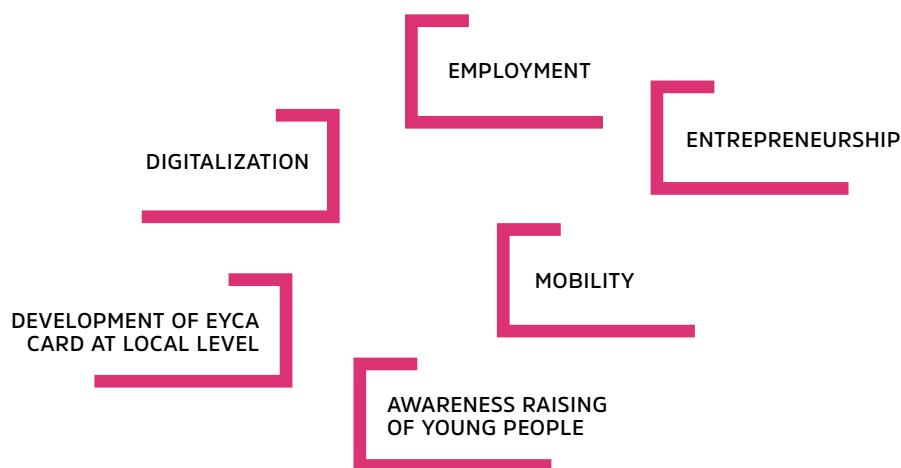
When it comes to the types of discounts young people are interested in, the primary emphasis is on the following ones:



Graph 8: **Categories of discounts that young people are interested in**

Taking into account the above and the opinions received from the surveyed users of the European Youth Card (EYCA) in Montenegro, the goal of this strategic document is to improve the position of young people in Montenegro through a greater level of use of the card, primarily through informing young people about opportunities for employment, volunteering and internships, all with the aim of reducing the level of unemployment among young people in Montenegro. Also, the emphasis is put on encouraging young people to develop innovative and entrepreneurial ideas and projects, as well as on providing available opportunities for youth mobility in national and international frameworks. The development of the project must be accompanied by adequate solutions in the area of digitization, where special importance is placed on the use of benefits offered by the available mobile appli-

cation, website and social networks that promote the EYCA card and inform young people about all the benefits that the card provides. However, the stated priorities cannot be achieved without young people's involvement in making public policies at the national and local levels, which primarily implies greater cooperation between young people and policy decision-makers. In this regard, the relevant strategic document in the following chapters addresses in detail all areas that are important for the successful development of the European Youth Card in Montenegro, namely:

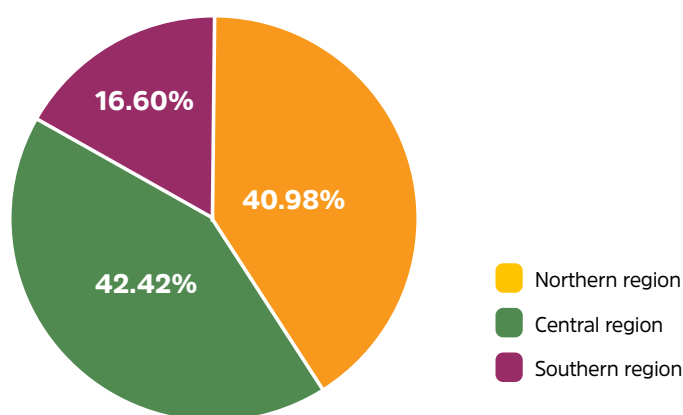


Employment

Young people represent a risk group in the labour market, bearing in mind that they face specific problems, regardless of their qualifications. One of the main obstacles to finding a job is the lack of work experience. In addition to the above problem, numerous other factors make the challenge of finding a job more acute among young people. Constraints on youth employment may arise as a result of market or state failures, or be a symptom of a weak or unsupportive macroeconomic environment. The financial crisis and the global recession caused by the Covid-19 pandemic are among the leading causes that directly affect the high level of youth unemployment. In addition to this, many young people are employed in areas with the character of temporary jobs, that is, jobs whose contracts offer less protection and where the rights of young people are not sufficiently protected. Young people who get employed are more likely to take up jobs that are poorly paid and offer limited job security, adequate working conditions, and opportunities for training and career advancement. In terms of supporting young people to find employment, the Government of Montenegro, social partners and employers jointly define solutions with the aim of enabling young people to have a higher level of access to the labour market. The Government of Montenegro, as part of the Program of support for youth employment for 2022, has defined a set of measures that aim to contribute to the creation of preconditions for mitigating the negative consequences caused by the prolonged search for a job among young people, and are aimed at providing support to young people through inter-institutional cooperation, creating a financially stimulating environment for the employment of young people, contribution to the

digitization of society, employment of young people with disabilities and the combat against the grey economy.³⁸ The European Youth Card (EYCA) is one of the tools used by the state, which in cooperation with partners, strives to provide better conditions and opportunities for young people to gain work experience and employment.

Regarding youth employment in Montenegro, there are currently a total of 13,602 people aged 18 to 30 years registered as unemployed persons at the Montenegrin Employment Agency (MEA). According to the MEA data, there are 5,574 unemployed persons aged 18 to 30 years in the northern region, which is 22.25 per cent of the total number of unemployed in that region (25,050).³⁹ There are 2,258 unemployed young persons aged 18 to 30 years in the southern region, which is 26.45 per cent of the total number of unemployed persons in that region (8,536). If we focus on the central region, there are 5,770 unemployed young persons aged 18 to 30 years, which is 27.33 per cent of the total number of unemployed persons in that region (21,114). Finally, of the total number of unemployed young people aged 18 to 30 years (13,602), 40.98 per cent of them are in the northern region, 42.42 in the central and 16.6 per cent in the southern region.⁴⁰



Graph 9: **Percentage of youth unemployment by region**

When it comes to young people who are beneficiaries of financial support, the percentage of job seekers is slightly lower and amounts to 70.8%. It is particularly important to point out that one in five respondents (20.2%) would start working on the condition that the job is in the city where they live, 46.1% are willing to take up a job in any case, while one-third (33.7%) did not express their readiness to do so.

The results show that among unemployed young people who would refuse a job, 75.5% of them cite childcare as a key obstacle. The same reason is cited by young people who are beneficiaries of financial support allowance. Bearing in mind the above, it is not surprising that among the respondents who cited childcare as an obstacle, women are the dominant group (97.4%). 9.5% of respondents report that they are prevented from taking up a job due to obligations related to schooling.⁴¹

³⁸ Information on measures for youth: Program of support for youth employment in 2022, <https://www.gov.me/dokumenta/8def027b-cd7b-441f-81c5-7ac720c4bfd8>

³⁹ Montenegrin Employment Agency, <https://www.zzzcg.me/statistika/>

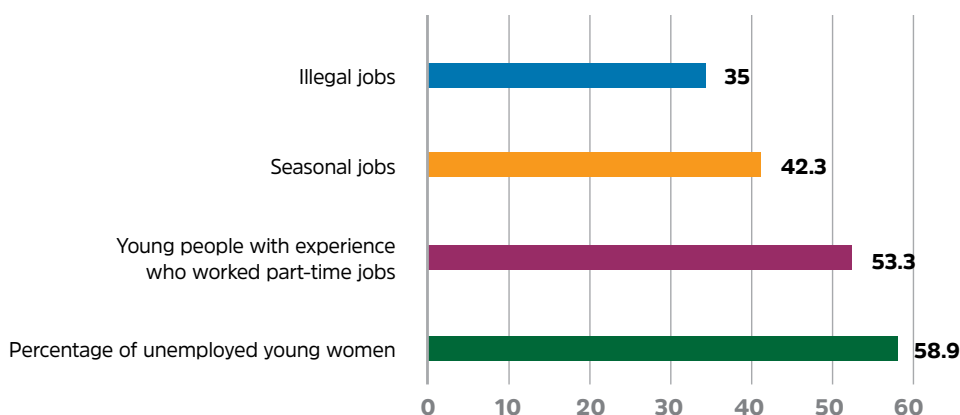
⁴⁰ Montenegrin Employment Agency, <https://www.zzzcg.me/statistika/>

⁴¹ Ibid.

COVID-19 and its impact on youth employment

Just like the rest of Europe and the world, Montenegro has been severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Young people have been particularly affected by the closure of schools and universities, the reduction of working hours and the discontinuation of on-the-job training programmes. Job retention schemes have been established in all economic sectors to varying degrees. However, the Regional Cooperation Council research indicated that the mentioned schemes and programs could not completely prevent the negative impact of the pandemic on those with fixed-term employment contracts or in the informal economy, nor did they prevent layoffs or reduction of working hours. Wage subsidies have been used as a key measure to limit the potential decline in employment. Mitigation measures had some effect on the labour market in terms of reversing the initial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the third quarter of 2020. Youth employment in Montenegro, which was hit hard by the weak tourist season, dropped dramatically from 23.6% in the first quarter to 15.3% in the fourth quarter.⁴²

The problems young people faced continued in 2021 as well. Specifically, on 31 May 2021, the number of employed young people was lower by as much as 41.8% compared to 31 December 2020. Bearing in mind that youth employment is a key mechanism for their successful integration into social flows, it is obvious that a break in gaining work experience could have long-term consequences both on the chances of youth being employed and on their probability of having higher incomes. Women dominate the group of unemployed persons. The share of 58.4% of surveyed women reflects the position of young women in the entire labour market in Montenegro – according to the latest available data (May 2021), their participation in total youth unemployment was 58.9%.⁴³



Graph 10: Youth employment

According to the data of the Statistical Office of Montenegro (Monstat), the unemployment rate among youth aged 15 to 24 years was 25.2% in 2019; in 2020 it rose to 36%, only to reach 47.1% in the first quarter of 2021. Also, in 2021, the youth unemployment rate (15-29 years) stood at 32.5%. The share of youth aged 15-29 years who are not in education, employment, or training, according to 2021 Monstat statistics is 26.5%, which indicates an increase compared to 2019 when that percentage was 21.3%. In addition, data from the Montenegrin

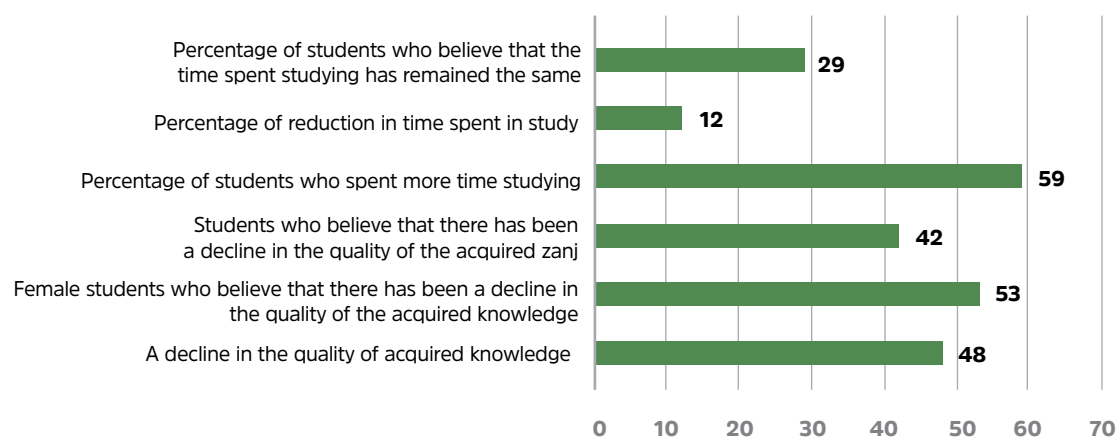
⁴² Regional Council for Cooperation, Study on youth employment in the Western Balkans, <https://www.rcc.int/docs/573/study-on-youth-employment-in-the-western-balkans>

⁴³ Labor market and youth (un)employment in Montenegro, 2021, UNDP Montenegro

Employment Agency (MEA) from December 2020 indicate that persons with higher education had the largest share in the total number of unemployed youth up to 35 years of age (41.1%). They are followed by persons with secondary education (40.5%), while unqualified or semi-qualified persons make up 18.4% of unemployed youth, which indicates that a higher level of education does not necessarily result in greater employment opportunities.

Research by the British Council showed that, as a result of the pandemic, over 50% of young people in Montenegro faced either a drop in income or the inability to afford at least one basic necessity and service, or both of these economic difficulties. One in three young people (33%) reported a drop in income during COVID-19, while income increased for only 4% of them. On the other hand, 58% said their income remained the same as before the pandemic. In addition to the above, 37% of young people stated that they had a hard time making ends meet, which can be seen from their inability to pay for at least one basic necessity and service. Decreases in income and economic hardship are more likely to affect unemployed young people, those with lower levels of education and those living in urban areas. Young Roma are a particularly vulnerable category, where almost two-thirds of Roma have problems paying for one or more basic needs (66 per cent).⁴⁴

Despite spending more time studying during the pandemic, students reported a decline in the quality of their knowledge, with women reporting this more often than men. Almost one-half of the students in Montenegro (48%) are of the opinion that they learned less than they would have under regular circumstances. This opinion was expressed more by female students than male students (53% compared to 47%). Students reported a loss of knowledge, even though they spent more time studying: almost two-thirds of them (59%) think they spent much more or slightly more time studying compared to the time before the pandemic. The time spent studying decreased for 12% of students, while it remained the same for the rest (29%).



Graph 11: **Education during the COVID-19 pandemic**

⁴⁴ British Council, Screenagers. Socially distant, digitally close. Study of the impact of Covid-19 on youth in the Western Balkans. Study report: Montenegro, 2021

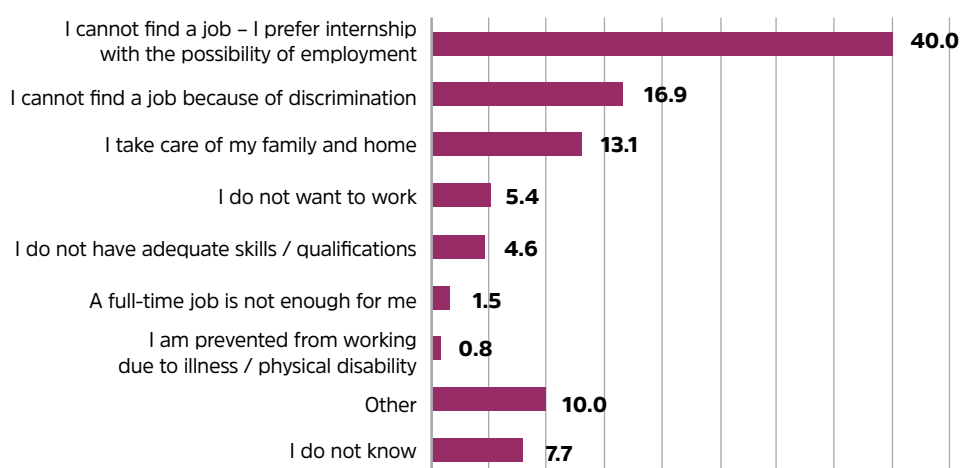
NEET population

According to 2020 MONSTAT⁴⁵ data, the share of young people in Montenegro who belong to the NEET population is very pronounced – almost one-quarter of young people belong to the mentioned group.

SHARE OF YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, OR TRAINING			
	Total	Men	Women
15–24	21.1	21.5	20.6
15–29	26.6	26.2	26.9

Graph 12: NEET population in Montenegro

The DeFacto Agency research⁴⁶ regarding the employability and needs of the NEET population⁴⁷ in Montenegro showed that the majority of respondents believe that the main reasons for their unemployment are the fact that they cannot find a suitable job or that they would rather do an internship with the possibility of employment. A significant share of youth, 16.9%, answered that they cannot find a job because of discrimination. In addition, 13.1% of interviewees state that they do not work because they have to care about their family. Only 5.4% said that they did not want to work, which implies that the problem of youth unemployment is not in their lack of willingness to work, but rather in something else. Moreover, only 4.6% of respondents believe that their unemployment is due to lack the appropriate skills or qualifications. Therefore, it can be concluded that young people perceive their unemployment as a result of certain objective factors, e.g. systemic shortcomings of the labour market, rather than as a result of their own shortcomings in terms of motivation, experiences and qualifications.⁴⁸



Graph 13: Reasons for unemployment of the NEET population

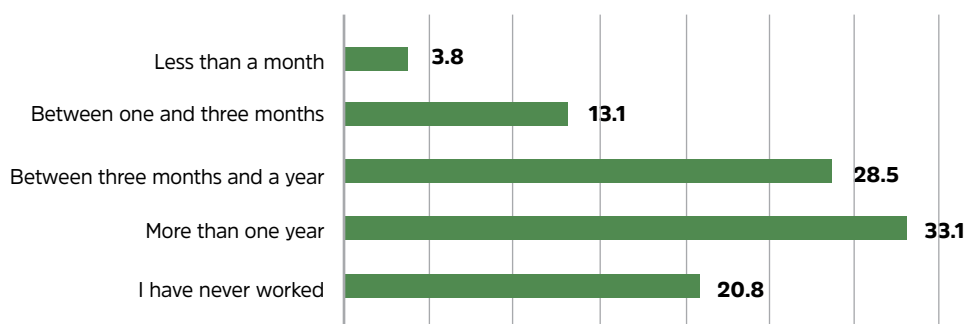
⁴⁵ MONSTAT, 2020, <https://www.monstat.org/cg/page.php?id=22&pageid=22saopstenja>

⁴⁶ National Report, "Moja karijera na putu do heroja" ("My Career on the Path to Becoming a Hero"), <https://www.forum-mne.com/en/mdocs-posts/moja-karijera-na-putu-do-heroja/>

⁴⁷ Young people who are not in Education, employment or training

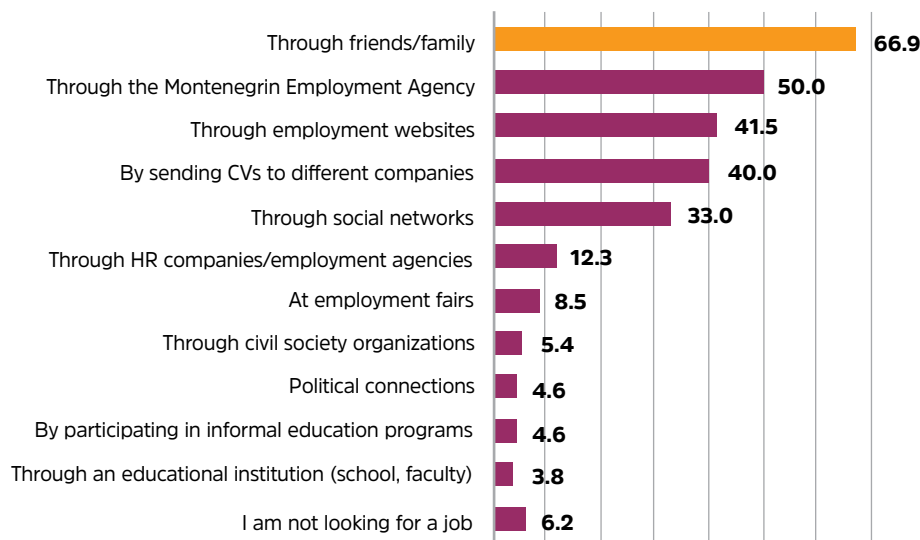
⁴⁸ National Report, "Moja karijera na putu do heroja" ("My Career – on the Path to Becoming a Hero"), <https://www.forum-mne.com/en/mdocs-posts/moja-karijera-na-putu-do-heroja/>

The long-term unemployment status of NEET persons is certainly one of the factors that can affect their future employment. Specifically – the longer one is unemployed, the less likely they are to find a job in the future. Over 50% of young people have been unemployed for more than one year or have never worked, which indicates a potential risk of remaining in a state of permanent unemployment. Furthermore, 28.5% of respondents have been unemployed for between three months and one year, and only 3.8% have been unemployed for less than one month. It is interesting to observe that the girls from the research sample, on average, spend more time looking for employment. However, the differences are not statistically relevant.



Graph 14: **Period of waiting for employment**

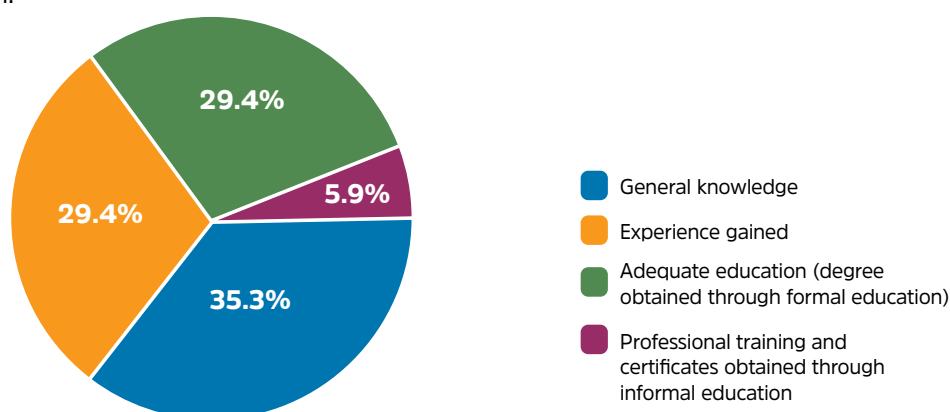
In terms of how young people apply for jobs, the DeFacto survey reveals that family and friendship ties are the dominant ways of looking for employment.



Graph 15: **Ways of looking for employment**

Employers

When it comes to the attitude of employers/companies regarding the employment of young people, the research by the NGO Centre for Youth Education, “Essential Skills: From Non-formal Education to the Workplace”⁴⁹, showed that the largest number of surveyed companies (35.3%) believed that knowledge is the most important a condition for selecting job candidates. Also, an equal number of companies consider that previous experience and a formal education degree are important requirements for getting a job. The surveyed companies emphasized professional training and certificates acquired through informal education as a necessary condition.



Graph 16: **Factors that influence the selection of candidates during the employment process**

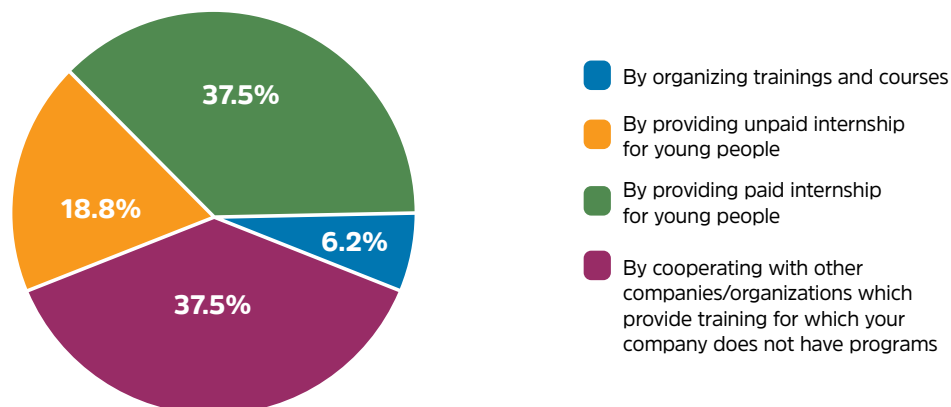
The research showed that employers/companies put emphasis on certain skills when selecting job candidates, where **responsibility, dedication, professionalism, flexibility**, etc., appear as dominant and essential skills. In terms of acquiring the lacking skills, employers believe that young people can acquire and improve skills through:

Work experience and practice, and learning from more experienced colleagues
Professional development and training
Informal education, additional education, trainings outside the company
Participation in practical projects during formal education, and volunteering

The willingness of most companies (94.1%) to participate in programs that would contribute to improving the experience and skills of young people is of particular importance for the development of the European Youth Card (EYCA). Employers primarily express their willingness to get involved through the provision of unpaid internships for young people (37.5%) and co-

⁴⁹ Center for youth education “Essential skills: From non-formal education to the workplace”, <https://bit.ly/3F2LU9j>

operation with other companies/organizations that provide training for which their company does not have programs (37.5%). In addition to this, three companies from both categories expressed their willingness to provide paid internships for young people, while one company, from the category of small and medium enterprises, expressed readiness to organize trainings/courses for young people.



Graph 17: **Level of readiness of employers to contribute to the improvement of knowledge and skills of young people**

Internship and volunteering

When it comes to the current internship/volunteering opportunities for young people in Montenegro, it is important to point out that there are no official statistics on the number of young people who volunteer at the local or national levels in Montenegro. The NGO Centre for Civic Education research titled “The Youth Study 2018-2019” indicates that volunteering and participation in socially engaged activities are rarely part of the free time activities of young people. Over 64.2% of young people have never engaged in volunteer work, while 57.4% are not active in youth centres. It is important to point out the fact that only 19.7% of young people volunteered in the previous year, while 80.3% did not participate in any volunteering activities. Volunteering is a more desirable form of social engagement for young people with a higher degree of education ($\chi^2 = 13.98$), but also for young people from rural areas compared to those from urban ones (51.4% and 42.6%, respectively).⁵⁰

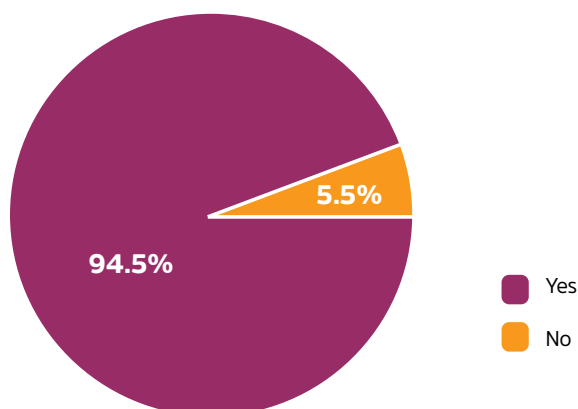
When it comes to internship programs, it is important to point out that since 2013, the Government of Montenegro has been implementing the Professional Training Program for persons who have acquired higher education. The program allows persons with acquired higher education, without work experience, who are registered with the Employment Agency, to acquire knowledge, skills and competencies for independent performance of work and pass the professional exam during a nine-month professional training at the chosen employer. In addition to the fact that the Program allows university graduates to gain appropriate work experience, it gives employers in the public and private sectors the chance to recognize the need for a specific staff, which corresponds to their specific activity and hire them after the completion of professional training. After nine years of implementation of the Program, a total of 42,524

⁵⁰ In search of solidarity/based Europeanization, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Dialogue Southeast Europe, <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/sarajevo/15462-20191030.pdf>

beneficiaries have had the opportunity to receive professional training. Employers showed extremely high interest in participating in the 2020/2021 iteration of the Program which resulted in posting 11,330 vacancies for professional training posts, while the total number of persons with acquired higher education who applied for participation in the Program was 3,460.⁵¹

Montenegrin legislation does not endorse corporate volunteering.⁵² However, there are many cases of positive practices of companies and small and medium-sized enterprises that organize corporate volunteering as part of their corporate social responsibility programs. Usually, they organize it in cooperation with civil society organizations or in cooperation with a state institution. In the current Youth Strategy, it is recognized that volunteerism is not so developed among young people, that young people participate in volunteering mainly through the activities of non-governmental organizations, and that mechanisms for youth volunteering should be improved within the formal education system and other environments. It is necessary to promote the value system of volunteerism and how volunteering can be beneficial both for individuals and the state.

Research conducted by the NGO Centre for Youth Education showed that a significant majority of respondents endorse the possibility of organizing internship programs for secondary school and university students:



Graph 18: Level of support for the organization of the youth internship program

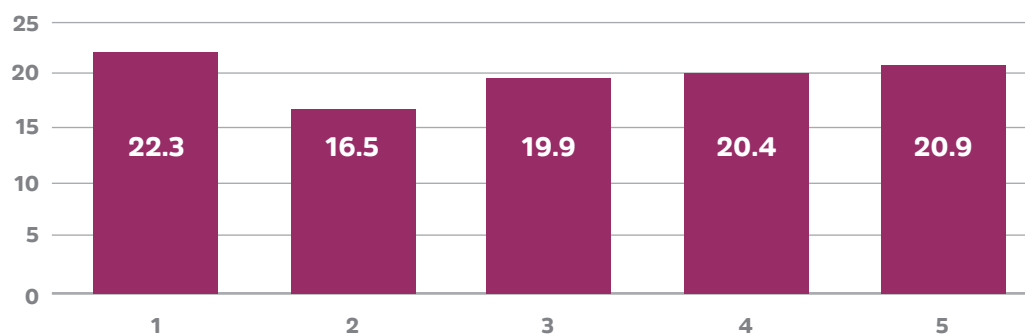
Taking into account the previously mentioned data that indicate the level of unemployment and the problems faced by young people in that area, it is important to highlight that the European Youth Card (EYCA) cooperates with companies that offer discounts to young people and allows promotion of vacancies intended for youth on the official national website of the EYCA card in Montenegro, in a way that it regularly publishes information about all available opportunities for employment, internships and volunteering for youth. Through the implementation of activities, the program will establish a database of employers participating in the EYCA scheme, which will contain contact information about employers, employment opportunities, and a presentation of currently available opportunities for volunteering and internships. The European Youth Card (EYCA) scheme includes more than 25,000 young people who are EYCA

⁵¹ Report on the implementation of the Professional training program for persons with acquired higher education for 2020/2021, <https://www.gov.me/dokumenta/c2fb180f-5f9a-4f9c-9fbf-72836603fb2a>

⁵² The Law on Volunteering states that: "The organizer of volunteering may be: a state authority, public administration, local government, institution in the field of social and child welfare, health care, culture, sports, religious communities, local and international non-governmental organization registered in Montenegro, as well as other domestic and foreign legal entities whose main goal is not to gain or distribute profit".

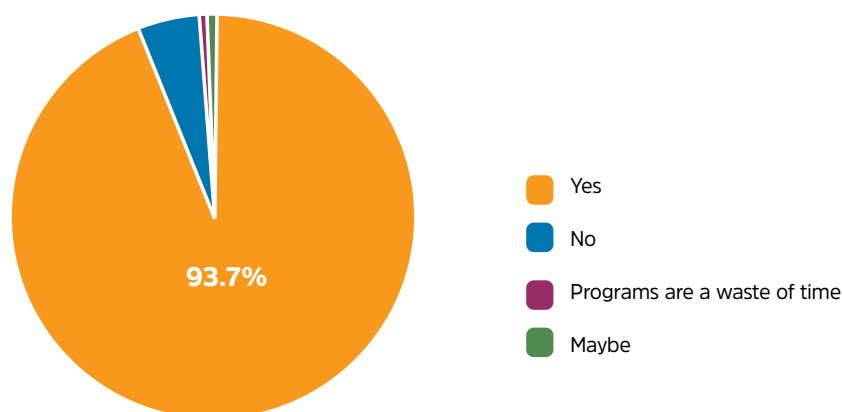
cardholders in Montenegro and more than 270 partners in the network, and makes up fertile ground for using the card to encourage youth employment.

An online survey among users of the EYCA card, conducted by the NGO Centre for Youth Education in March 2022, showed that the majority of young people (41%) believed that the card significantly or to a greater extent enabled a greater level of information among young people about opportunities for improving skills, employment, volunteering, internship.



Graph 19: **Level of awareness among young people about opportunities for different forms of employment based on the EYCA card**

It is particularly important to emphasize that the vast majority of young people (93.7%) consider it necessary to develop programs and activities in the coming period allowing the EYCA cardholders to acquire a higher level of work skills and experience.



Graph 20: **The level of EYCA cardholders who consider it useful to develop new programs and activities for acquiring work skills and experience**

In this regard, in the coming period, it is necessary to put primary emphasis on seasonal employment, i.e. the development of an employment program accompanied by a CSR campaign and a high level of public visibility. In this part, it is necessary to establish cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce of Montenegro and the Union of Employers of Montenegro, in order for the Scheme to gain even more credibility and reference, which will result in the development

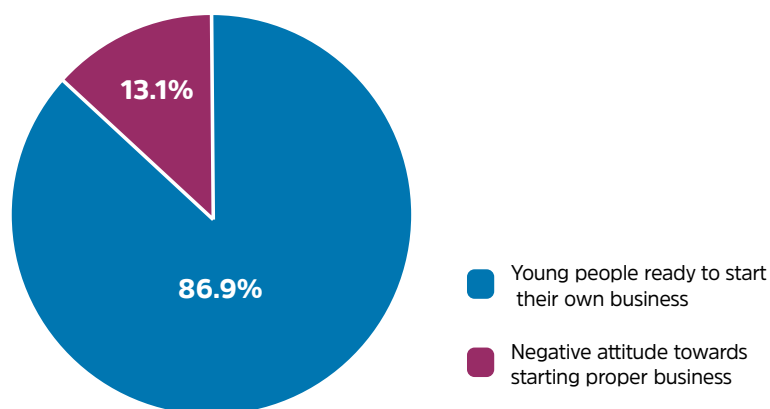
of new projects and ideas intended for the employment of young people. Additionally, since its inception, the EYCA website has featured a “News” tab category with current vacancies, published in cooperation with the Zaposli.me company.

The main goal of the card in the field of youth employment is to increase the number of young people with skills and qualifications and to help them gain positive work experience in Montenegro. Special emphasis should be placed on developing activities for more vulnerable groups, especially young women and youth from minority groups and youth affected by poverty, including beneficiaries of social protection rights. Identification of incentives for youth employment leads to raised awareness of youth internships and encouragement of the development of additional support institutions that facilitate youth employment. In addition to the above, the card provides opportunities to organize info sessions for young people on how to write a CV and prepare for job interviews in different sectors. One of the directions for the further development of the card is to focus on green jobs through the definition of a publication on green job opportunities for young people in new sectors of the green economy.

Entrepreneurship

One of the potential ways to integrate young people in the labour market is to increase the youth entrepreneurship. Becoming an entrepreneur potentially offers advantages to a young person through deepening their human capital attributes (self-confidence, skill development) and increasing their level of economic independence and contribution to the society. Also, entrepreneurship offers a number of social benefits, starting with job creation, increased innovation, strengthening competitiveness and responding to changes in economic opportunities and trends. Entrepreneurship also offers other positive externalities. A young person opening a new business can be a kind of ‘champion’ and a role model for other young people.

Survey among young people, on the topic of availability of information for starting their own business⁵³, conducted by the NGO ‘Centre for Youth Education’, showed that the vast majority of young people (86.9%) are ready to start their own business, and only 13.1% of them have the opposite attitude.



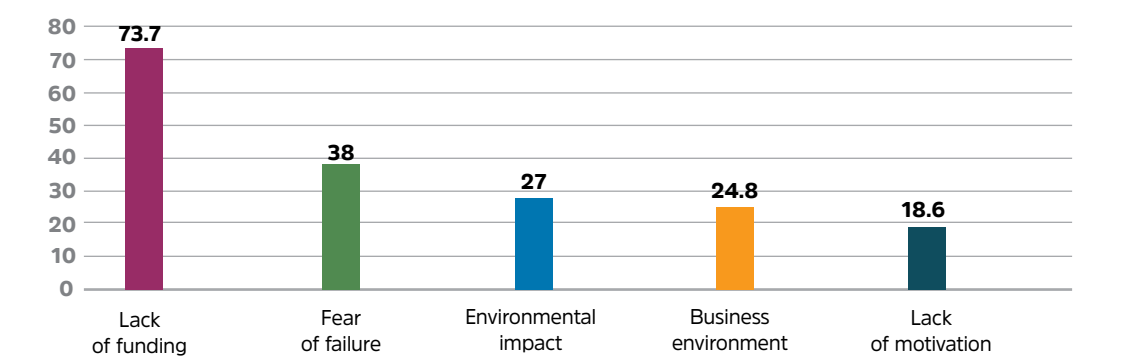
Graph 21: Young people attitude toward starting their own business

⁵³ NGO Centre for Youth Education, Youth Survey on the topic of availability of information for starting their own business, <https://bit.ly/2S5RHYm>

Key reasons for starting proper business are:

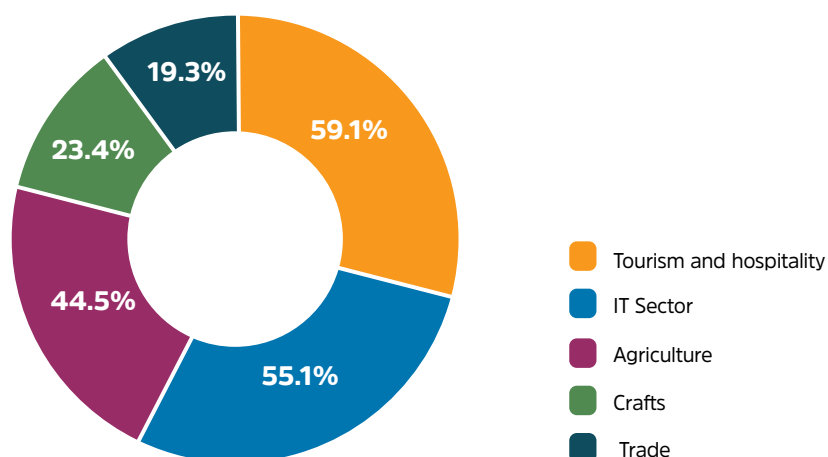
- Independence (decision-making freedom) was a key reason for 77.7% of young people,
- Higher profit margins 51.8%,
- Flexible working hours 44.3%.

However, the aforementioned survey showed that 73.7% of young people consider lack of funding to be a key obstacle to starting a business. Among obstacles, we also noted fear of failure (38%); 27% of young people pointed toward the environmental impact as a barrier; while 24.8% blamed the business environment, and 18.6% consider lack of motivation as the biggest obstacle.



Graph 22: **Reasons for not starting a proper business**

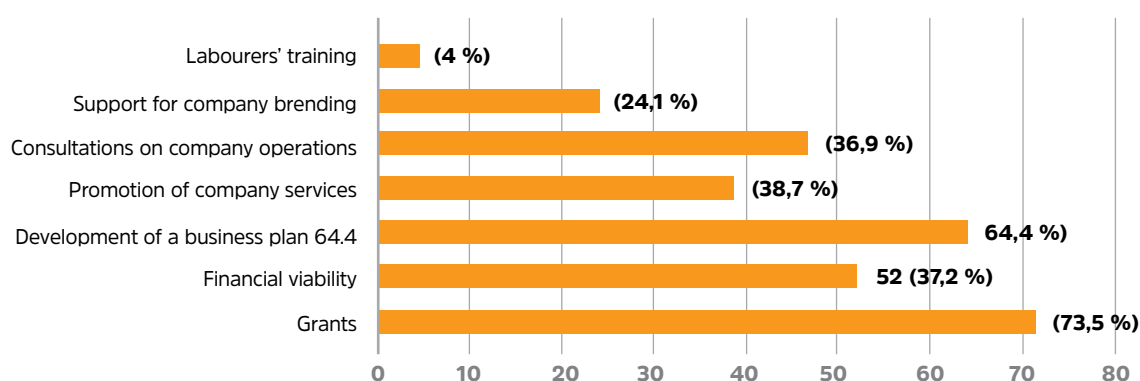
According to the survey data, the economic sector with the biggest potential for business development in Montenegro is tourism and hospitality (59.1%). Also, young people preferred the IT sector (55.1%), followed by agriculture (44.5%). Part of the young people (23.4%) sees a perspective for business development in handicrafts, while the smallest number of them (19.3%) would enter into commerce.



Graph 23: **Economy sectors with the biggest business development potential**

Regarding the key characteristics for a successful entrepreneur, the majority of young people (79.6%) stated persistence as a key feature. In addition to persistence, what young people consider to be one of the key characteristics for a successful entrepreneur is creativity (67.5%), as well as sheer will (63.1%). The majority of young people (59.1%) also chose patience as one of the main qualities. It is important to point out that the largest number of young people (59.1%) think that they can only achieve partial success in their own business, followed by 30.7% who think that young people have a great chance of success in the private sector, while 10.2% think that young people have no chance of succeeding at all.

In terms of the support that would be most useful to young people when starting their own business, the largest number of them (71.5%) opted for grants, followed by support for developing a business plan (64.4%). Also, young people emphasized the need to develop businesses that are financially viable within the current economic reality of Montenegro.

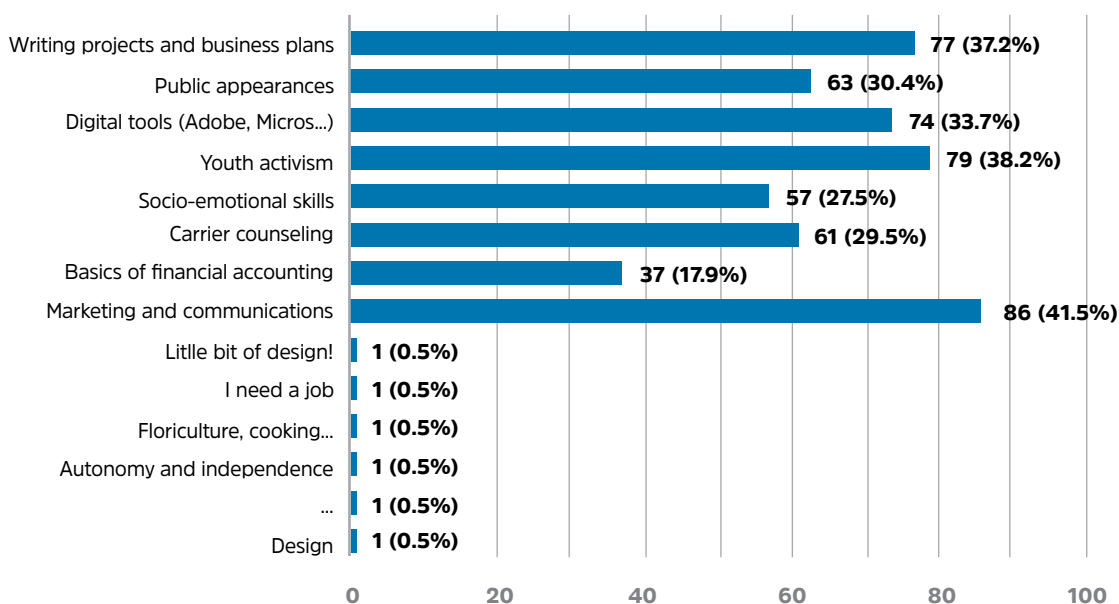


Graph 24: **Forms of support for starting a business**

Furthermore, young people have emphasized the need for promotion of company services (38.7%) and consultations on the company operations (36.9%). 24.1% of young people opted for company branding support, as well as training of labourers.

The European Youth Card supports youth entrepreneurship, with special emphasis on the organization and implementation of youth training, aiming to encourage the entrepreneurial skills of young people in order to help them create employment opportunities for themselves.

The survey from March 2022 indicated that young people, through the use of the European Youth Card (EYCA), recognize that there is a need to put special emphasis on the organization of trainings related to the development of skills in the field of marketing and communications, youth activism and skills for project writing and business plan development.



Graph 25: **Type of trainings, for acquiring different skills, which young people deem useful**

Furthermore, guidance and training of students and graduates regarding the best way to use acquired skills is an important segment of the EYCA program. In this regard, it is important to point out the established partnerships with the University of Montenegro, the University of Donja Gorica and the Mediterranean University, in order to make the EYCA card more accessible to students. These partnerships have made it possible, for the first time in Montenegro, for freshmen from all the three universities to receive co-branded EYCA cards at the beginning of the academic year, so that they can use all the EYCA card benefits both in Montenegro and throughout Europe. The specificity of EYCA programme is that the cards have a validity of 4 years. In addition, due attention will also be given to strengthening cooperation with interested business entities and the development of cross-sectorial initiatives between companies, youth organizations and institutions in the fight against youth unemployment. It is also necessary to continue with the organization of a large number of workshops and together with stakeholders to organize the first EYCA Start Up competition, which would provide a prizes fund and opportunities for serious mentoring, with the aim of finding and developing creative green and CSR ideas.

OPERATIONAL GOAL 1:	IMPROVEMENT OF YOUTH INFORMATION AND INCREASED ACCESS OF YOUTH CARD USERS TO EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES, INTERNSHIPS AND VOLUNTEERING		
	2022	2023	2024
Performance indicators 1: Increasing the percentage of EYCA card users who are satisfied with the available information about employment opportunities (18-29 years)	41.1% of youth satisfied with available information on employment opportunities, internship and volunteering	55% of youth satisfied with available information	65% of youth satisfied with available information

Mobility

By the youth mobility, we mean opportunities in terms of travel both within the country and abroad, and in addition to tourism and cultural purposes, also for the purposes of education, employability, entrepreneurship, etc. Mobility, in most cases, represents any stay abroad with the aim of acquiring new knowledge, abilities and skills, work experience and, finally, experiencing different cultures. Short-term or long-term experience abroad is considered as one of the ways to increase the realisation of future careers in the Montenegrin labour market. Youth mobility has positive effects on personal development, employability, building a sense of citizenship and tolerance for differences. Mobility greatly contributes to broadening the personal horizons of young people, stimulates creativity and develops the necessary competencies for interaction in a multicultural society. Quality mobility is good for individuals, societies and businesses. When we talk about internal mobility, the primary emphasis is on the youth mobility in the fields of education and employment. When it comes to the area of education, the largest number of young people, throughout Montenegro, is concentrated in the capital city of Podgorica, as the university centre of Montenegro. In the area of employability it is evident a higher level of mobility of young people from the northern region, who, in search of better economic prospects and employment opportunities move to the central and southern regions. In addition to the aforementioned forms of mobility, the youth card aims to enable all users to obtain discounts, on the territory of Montenegro, when visiting national museums, theatres, cinemas, cultural monuments and landmarks, as well as all other benefits that the card provides in the field of mobility.

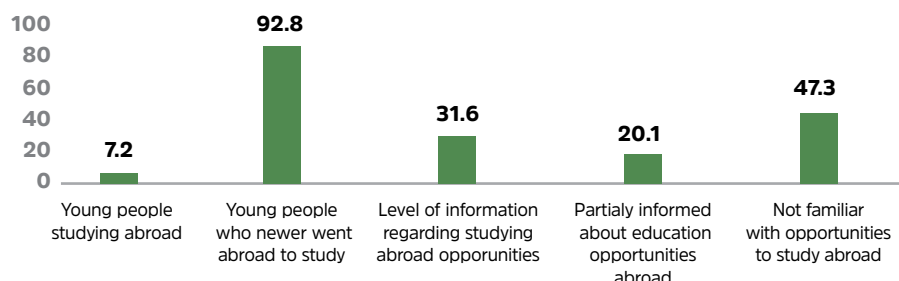
Mobility is of key importance for ensuring a higher level of employability and the development of youth entrepreneurship. Young people must have access to tools, skills and opportunities to move not only geographically, but also through the acquisition of different skills that will enable them to have a better position on the labour market. Innovative approaches and support for young people are needed now more than ever, primarily through:

- Development of new talents and skills, that must be encouraged at the earliest age
- Mobility is the way of thinking – acquiring new experiences, being open for life-long learning, working in different organizations, sectors, regions, countries
- Employers are interested in young people's technical skills and competencies, but growing emphasis is placed on personal attitudes and social skills
- Common creation of social value in partnership with young people is of utmost importance for success of future companies.

Also, mobility enables the creation of opportunities for young people and develops their motivation to engage in solving challenges at the global, national and local level through youth activism. In this regard, the European Youth Card (EYCA) enables a higher level of youth mobility at the regional and European level, i.e., the basic goal of the card is that mobility should become the norm, not the exception, in order to improve the life prospects of every young person, especially those from areas that do not have a high level of mobility outside the borders of Montenegro. Basically, the card allows young people to enjoy discounts on travel, transportation and accommodation, as tangible forms of support that make mobility more accessible and that will help young people make the most of their experience. Access to the right information at the right time supports a more equal distribution of mobility opportunities.

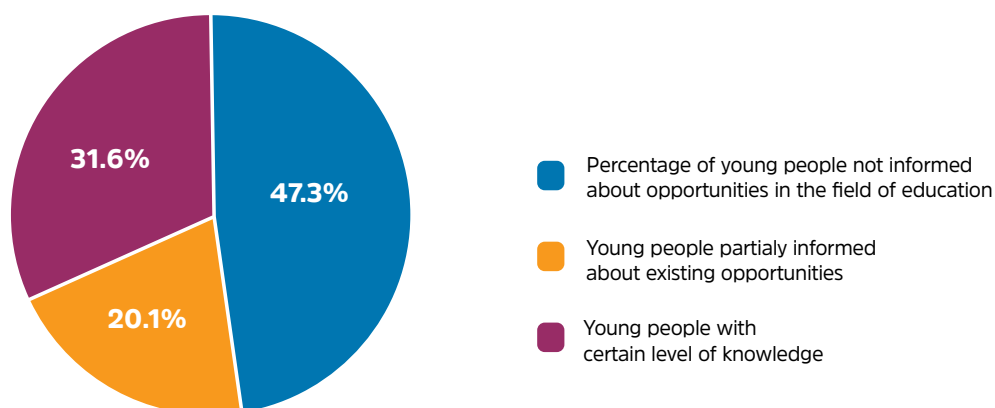
When we talk about data related to the mobility of young people, the NGO Centre for Civic Education survey – “Youth Study 2018–2019” showed that the largest percentage of young people in Montenegro did not spend more than half a year abroad, whether it was for school-

ing or work. Young people who have lived abroad to study are also rare (only 7.2% compared to 92.8% of those who answered that they had never lived abroad in order to study). The situation is similar with general, higher, and vocational education and training, where over 90% of young people state that they have never lived outside the country in connection with any of these types of education.



Graph 26: **Level of mobility of young people in Montenegro**

Young people are poorly informed about the mobility opportunities. For example, almost half of them (47.3 %) are not familiar with the opportunities in the field of education, one-fifth (20.1 %) are somewhat familiar, and only a third (31.6 %) claim to have a certain level or good knowledge about these prospects.⁵⁴



Graph 27: **How much are young people informed about opportunities to study abroad**

Physical mobility and the international experience of learning/studying in another country or city contributes to the personal development of young people, language learning and the development of intercultural competences and skills, i.e. ability to live in a different social and cultural context. The purpose of mobility should be to improve the quality of education and skills of young people, to build intercultural understanding, independence and transversal skills in young people. The Erasmus impact study confirms the positive impact of the Erasmus+ Programme in improving students' quality of life and career prospects, as well as building a sense of European identity and social cohesion.⁵⁵

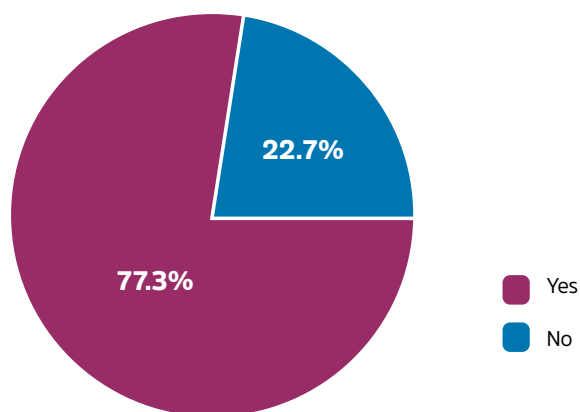
⁵⁴ Youth Study 2018-2019, <https://media.cgo-cce.org/2019/04/STUDIJA-mladi.pdf>

⁵⁵ Erasmus+ impact study on higher education, file:///C:/Users/38269/Downloads/NC0219323ENN.en.pdf

Generally, young people benefit from mobility in different ways, such as:

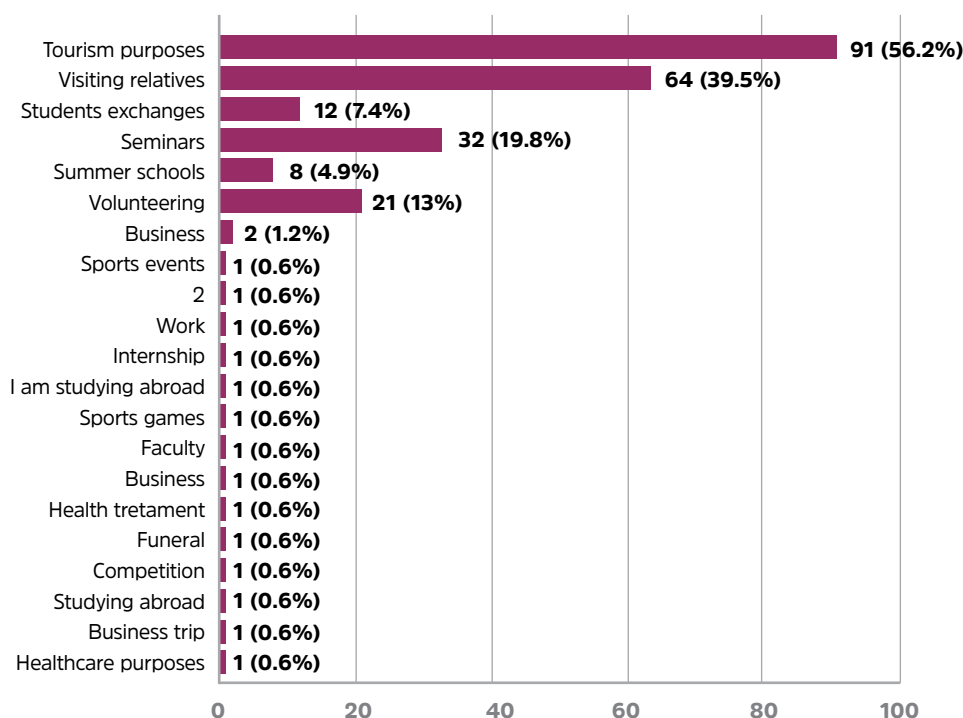
- They become more independent and responsible as individuals and citizens, making the coming of age easier,
- They are developing competencies for interactions, work, and life in multi-cultural environment,
- Their employment opportunities are higher if they have experienced life, work or studying abroad,
- They have higher probability of being social engaged and supportive of social inclusion of vulnerable people or persons coming from different and diverse cultures.

The March 2022 survey has shown that vast majority of EYCA card users had an opportunity, in the surveyed period, to travel either within or outside of Montenegro.



Graph 28: **Percentage of young people that have travelled, in the surveyed period, within or outside of Montenegro**

When we talk about the dominant reasons for travel, the respondents primarily highlighted tourist trips, visits to relatives, participation in seminars, while it is important to point out that a very small percentage of respondents had the opportunity to travel on the grounds of student exchanges, opportunities for volunteering or other reasons that contribute strengthening the education and work experience of young people.



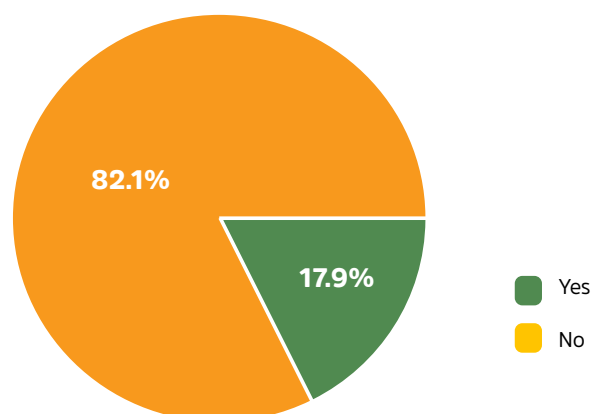
Graph 29: Reasons for travel within or outside of Montenegro

The European Youth Card (EYCA) enables the creation of conditions for young people to receive accurate and reliable information about opportunities for mobility, i.e. information that is adapted to young people and their needs. The advantages provided by the Card itself are reflected in examples such as⁵⁶:

- Discounts in public transport, in numerous European cities
- Discounts on air and rail tickets
- Possible use of the Card as an electronic ticket for entering libraries, as well as discounts for museums, Zoos, theatres, art galleries, sport events, and many other opportunities.

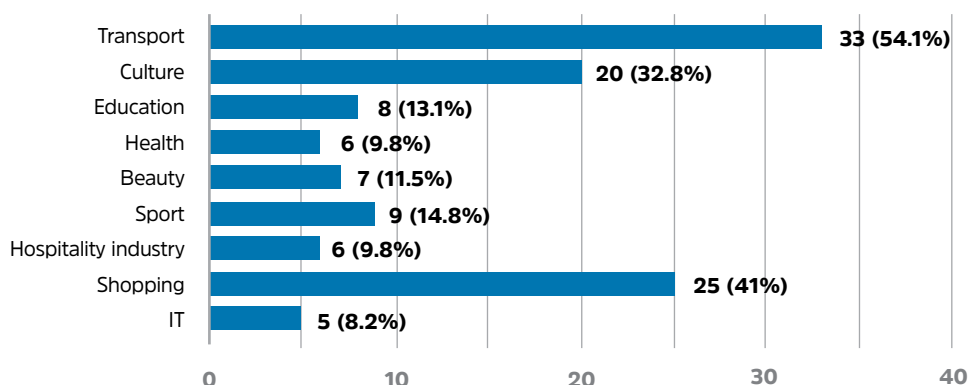
Said opportunities provided by the Card are especially important taking into account the data (survey from March 2022) that most of the Card users haven't been using some of the available benefits during their stay abroad.

⁵⁶ European Youth Card Association, "Opportunities for youth mobility", https://www.eyca.org/www_write/media/pages/gps/eyca-gps-4.pdf



Graph 30: **Percentage of Card users who have used Card benefits when staying abroad**

The survey showed that users were using the EYCA card mainly to get discounts in transportation, purchase of goods, visiting cultural events or institutions, and sports events.



Graph 31: **Areas where EYCA card benefits are used the most when abroad**

Thanks to the Card and cooperation with partners from 40 countries, Montenegro has the opportunity to pilot various mobility and exchange programs, which will involve young people (13-29 years) and youth workers. In the long term, this can enhance the sharing of knowledge and experience between all stakeholders, but it also, undoubtedly, represents a huge tourism promotion of Montenegro on the markets of EYCA member countries. In this respect, the first steps were already taken, and cooperation agreed upon with partner organizations from Andorra and Spain, and very soon we are expecting the signing of the Memorandum on Cooperation with other international partners on these and similar topics.

Taking into account the abovesaid, and trying to do everything possible in order to create a sustainable grounds for the mobility of young people, in the upcoming period, in terms of implementation of public policies related to young people, it is necessary to be focused on:

- Development of youth mobility projects in the fields of education and work, and especially their impact on target groups, using developed methodology for measuring the quality and impact of global education in both formal and informal settings.

- Development of young people's key competencies (critical thinking, realizing the connection between one's own actions and global impact, working with information, changing attitudes, critical media reflection, participation, civic engagement, etc.), by encouraging the mobility of young people at the national and international level.
- Encouraging and recognizing the contribution to the mobility of young people and youth workers and development of international cooperation with the aim of supporting the know-how transfer from other countries, increasing the quality of youth work and increasing awareness of the connection between local actions and their global impacts.
- Promoting mobility as part of the education process both in formal and informal settings.
- Supporting sustainability and providing grant schemes in the area of youth mobility.
- Creating conditions so that institutions would be able to effectively exploit youth mobility
- Developing mobility as a tool for stimulating openness, tolerance, and active citizenship (awareness raising, education, peer activities...).

OPERATIONAL GOAL 2:		IMPROVING THE LEVEL OF YOUTH MOBILITY THROUGH EUROPEAN YOUTH CARD ASSOCIATION (EYCA) IN ALL AREAS OF YOUNG PEOPLE'S INTEREST		
		2022	2023	2024
Performance indicator 1: Increasing the percentage of EYCA card users who have used benefits/ discounts during their stay abroad		17.9% of EYCA card users, who have used some of the available benefits, during their stay abroad	25% users, who have used some of the available benefits, during their stay abroad	30% users, who have used some of the available benefits, during their stay abroad
Performance indicator 2: Increasing the number of available benefits for transport of young people within Montenegro		10 available benefits/discounts for transport of young people within Montenegro	5 additional transport discounts	5 additional transport discounts

Awareness raising of young people

Under the term awareness raising we refer to various types of services and activities (information, counselling, support, teaching and training, networking, peer activities, peer support/ learning, etc.) that cover all topics of importance to young people. These services and activities can be provided by youth information clubs/centres and cross-sectorial youth services, through peers, face-to-face and/or through a digital environment using a wide range of methods and tools. In most European countries, awareness raising among young people is recognized as part of youth work and is provided by government institutions, local councils and various organizations. Awareness raising of young people supports young people's growth, independence and well-being.

Providing equal support and information to all young people, especially young people who are financially worse off, i.e. young people with fewer opportunities, is one of the priorities when it comes to awareness raising of this target group. The information obtained should serve as a support to young people to gain access to education and employment through mobility and entrepreneurship (programs, actions, funding). Awareness raising must aim to support the growth, self-confidence and taking control of proper lives of youth, as well as to prevent all forms of social exclusion and marginalization of young people.

Awareness raising of young people must take into account the needs of individuals, where the methods used to inform young people must be flexible, and adaptable to the needs of different types of young people. One of the tasks of awareness raising is to inform young people about all the services that are adapted to them, with the aim to strengthen young people's knowledge about those services so that they can fully understand all the opportunities available to them. The key problem that young people face is the lack of personal competence to manage the overload of information that is not always reliable, accurate and does not meet the needs of the individual.⁵⁷ Therefore, it is essential to offer, to young people, accurate, reliable information, adjusted to them, and directly pointed to at them.⁵⁸

In the digital era, a critical approach to information has become even more important because a significant part of young people's lives takes place in the digital world. Young people are not only users of information, they also play a key role in creating and disseminating them. Therefore, there is an urgent need to improve their ability to challenge the information they have access to and to provide them with the necessary skills to produce and disseminate information based on accurate and verified facts.

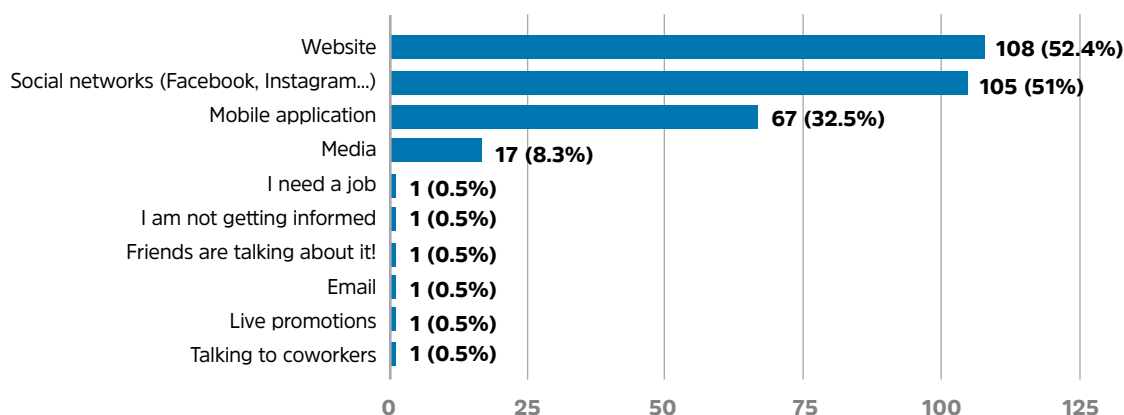
The area of youth awareness raising represents the segment where the European Youth Card (EYCA) project has achieved the best results in the previous period. With an extensive network of partners, the youth card is visible and recognized on each and every prominent internet platform and public promotions through which young people are informed.

EYCA Website (Montenegro)	600.000+ views annually
Monthly newsletter	25.000+ addresses
Monthly SMSs	25.000+ numbers
Social networks	Facebook (3.000+ followers); Instagram (4.500+ followers)
Mobile application	3.500+ downloads (in 4 months of operation)
Possibility to print flyers	EYCA distributive points – Universities, Local councils, Youth services
Physical presence	Promotional events in Montenegro and Europe

⁵⁷ Guidelines for the 5th Structural Dialogue, EU Youth Conference organized by the Dutch Presidency of the Council of the EU in Amsterdam, March 2016, [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32017G0615\(01\)&from=EN](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32017G0615(01)&from=EN)

⁵⁸ "Engage, Inform, Strengthen", Recommendations of European Networks regarding Awareness and Youth Mobility with respect to the new European Youth Strategy, https://www.youthworkireland.ie/images/uploads/general/Eurodesk-EYCA-ERYICA_position_paper_Youth-Strategy.pdf

Besides the aforesaid, 2022 survey has shown that the key information source, on EYCA card benefits is the website, social networks, mobile application, and media.



Graph 32: Information sources on EYCA card benefits

Taking into account the level of interest young people express regarding the opportunities offered by entrepreneurship and mobility, the main goal of the European Youth Card (EYCA) is to create conditions for the availability of all necessary information (guidelines and advice) to young people on various issues and situations in the transition stage of young people into adulthood. The Card itself represents the basis for obtaining the necessary information and providing support to young people, and in the coming period it is necessary to focus on the following:

- It is important to ensure the necessary level of quality of the information obtained, where special importance is placed on the sources of information and the way they are assessed. The emphasis is on providing reliable, accurate and understandable information, i.e. enabling access to various information sources and channels.
- Young people must be familiar with information about mobility opportunities. In this regard, it is necessary to ensure the skills and competencies of young people's information providers, in relation to mobility issues, as well as to find out what are the information needs of young people who are considering different types of mobility.
- Information on training entrepreneurial skills and about the sources of funding, on the basis of which young people can apply for funds needed for their entrepreneurial projects.
- Assistance to young people to overcome information overload they are facing today.
- Ensuring that young people are aware of all the rights and services available to them and to know how to access them.
- To help young people make their own decisions and find the best options available to them.
- Provide different channels of communication and dialogue in order to directly support young people in their search for information and knowledge,
- Contribute to the media and IT literacy of young people by supporting them in the development of critical thinking.

- Implement surveys and studies at the national and European level that aim to gain a deeper understanding of the information needs of young people, the way they access information and communicate, the sources they trust, how they create and disseminate information, and the roles of professionals and volunteers in the process of informing young people.

OPERATIONAL GOAL 3: INCREASING VISIBILITY OF THE EUROPEAN YOUTH CARD AS A CONTEMPORARY PLATFORM FOR INFORMING YOUNG PEOPLE			
Performance indicators 1:	2022	2023	2024
Increase the number of views on EYCA national website	600.000 views	650.000 views	700.000 views

Development of EYCA Programme at local level

The effective participation of young people in the life of local communities implies the creation of opportunities for young people to influence and get involved in planning and contribute to local policies and the development of services and programmes. This can be achieved through the development of a number of formal and informal mechanisms for the participation of young people. One of these mechanisms, whose goal is to strengthen the level of engagement of young people in the lives of local communities is the European Youth Card (EYCA).

Since the start of the implementation of the youth card in Montenegro, cooperation has been established with 7 municipalities (Tivat, Herceg Novi, Budva, Kotor, Bar, Ulcinj, Bijelo Polje) in order to increase the visibility and availability of the EYCA card. Namely, through various forms of communication with users, the conclusion was reached that not all young people in Montenegro are able to visit Podgorica or one of the bigger cities close by and take the card, and this is one of the reasons why it is necessary to invest time and resources in creating sustainable partnerships with local authorities on the territory of the whole of Montenegro.

Through this type of collaboration, it has been made possible for young people to get co-branded EYCA cards at local level (collected in municipalities or youth services) with which they can enjoy all the benefits within Montenegro and throughout Europe. Furthermore, in addition to the distribution of cards, in cooperation with local councils, a minimum of 6 activities per year, per city, were organized (workshops, trainings, mentoring, film screenings, etc.).

In order to improve work with young people at the local level, based on the Youth Act, 11 youth services (youth clubs and youth centres) were established in 11 municipalities, namely: Mojkovac, Plav, Petnjica, Danilovgrad, Niksic, Savnik, Podgorica, Cetinje, Bar, Kotor and Pljevlja, while there is a previously established Youth Centre in Podgorica. The competent ministry has provided the space and technical conditions as well as the staff for the operation of these services. In 2022, the Ministry of Sports and Youth plans to support the establishment of new services for young people, as well as the adaptation of existing ones, in order to make them accessible for people with disabilities. However, the practice on the field has shown that there was a discontinuity in the availability of staff, as well as the issue of programme implementation within the services, because the issues of funding or quality assurance, coverage and efficiency, haven't been regulated yet. That is why it is necessary to develop capacities and

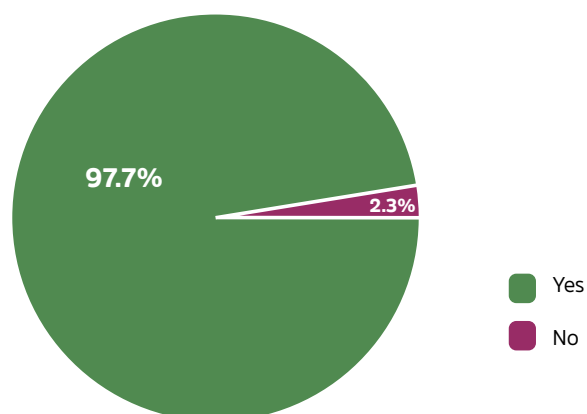
coverage of local youth services, in order to improve the implementation of programmes that are of importance for youth development at the local level.

Cooperation with municipalities allows local youth offices/secretariats to sense the needs of young people in a very simple way and carry out surveys on various topics (e.g. how to better recognize the needs of young people and include them in the process of developing local action plans). It is particularly important to point out that all local councils have access to an electronic database with contact details, precisely for the purpose of communication and promotion of youth events, because the European Youth Card (EYCA) project is aiming to be the driving force and support for all other initiatives. Positive cooperation from previous period with municipalities has resulted in the EYCA project becoming an indispensable segment of local youth strategies, but also in the fact that partnership contracts are being renewed on an annual/biennial basis and new programs are being implemented.

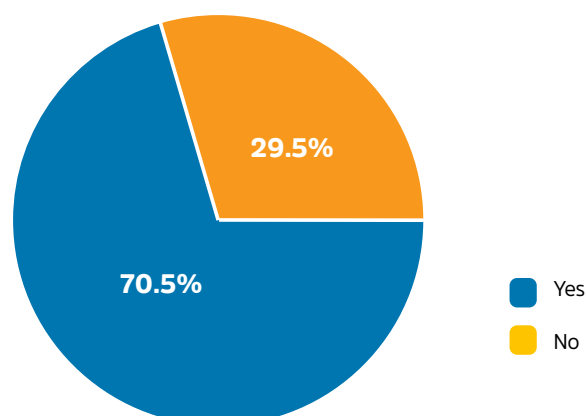
In this regard, it is important to point out to the survey conducted by the NGO Centre for Youth Education, which is telling us that majority of respondents believe that local authorities must take a greater part in the process of providing discounts at the local level, which indirectly implies a greater level of cooperation with youth organizations that represent interests of young people.

Also, the task of each local administration is to support young people through youth organizations, but also supporting the initiatives of young people who even do not have a registered association. In addition, local authorities must support the social empowerment of young people in accordance with the Law on Youth, Youth Plans and other instruments of youth policy.

When we talk about the level of EYCA card users' engagement in activities of importance for the development of the local communities, where these young people live, the survey from March 2022 showed that the majority of card users in some form, had the opportunity to participate in the development of policies at the local level.

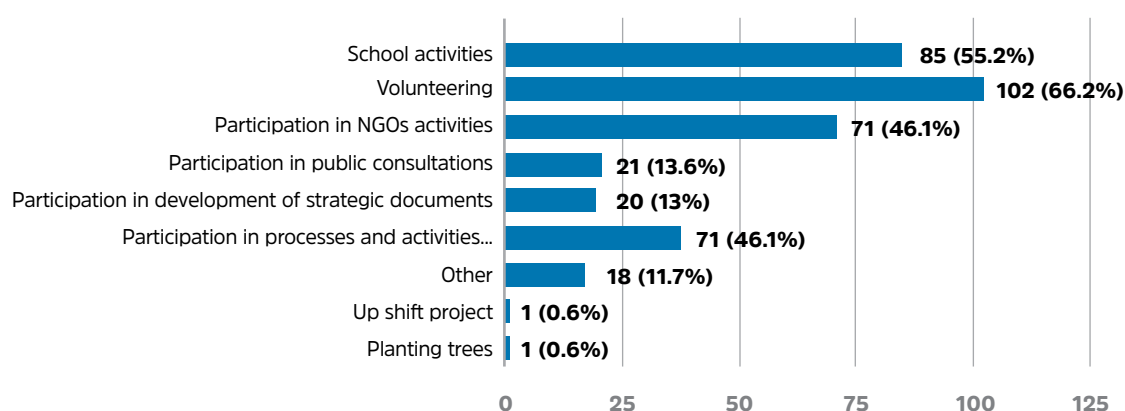


Graph 33: **The need for greater involvement of local authorities in providing discounts to young people**



Graph 34: **Percentage of Card users that participated in development of programmes/activities at local level**

Dominant activities, at the local level, in which survey participants have been engaged are volunteering, school activities, participation in NGOs activities, etc.



Graph 35: **Activities, at local level, in which Card users were engaged**

Besides the aforesaid, local administrations have to:

- Ensure that young people have the right to equal opportunities and participation in all areas of social life in line with their own choice and abilities.
- Encourage and support the awareness raising on the importance of young people and the social role that young people have, through the implementation of youth policy, creating enabling environment and providing active support in the implementation of youth activities. The emphasis is on taking initiatives and on meaningful inclusion of young people in the processes of decision-making and decision-implementation, which contributes to their personal and social development.
- Be open to young people and create conditions for young people to have the right to an objective, youth centred, and easily accessible information, in order for young people to develop and make informed based decisions. This includes the transparency of information with respect to those segments of the municipal budget that relate to youth, easy

accessibility to official policies that directly relate to young people, the announcement of consultations on regulations that directly concern young people, etc.

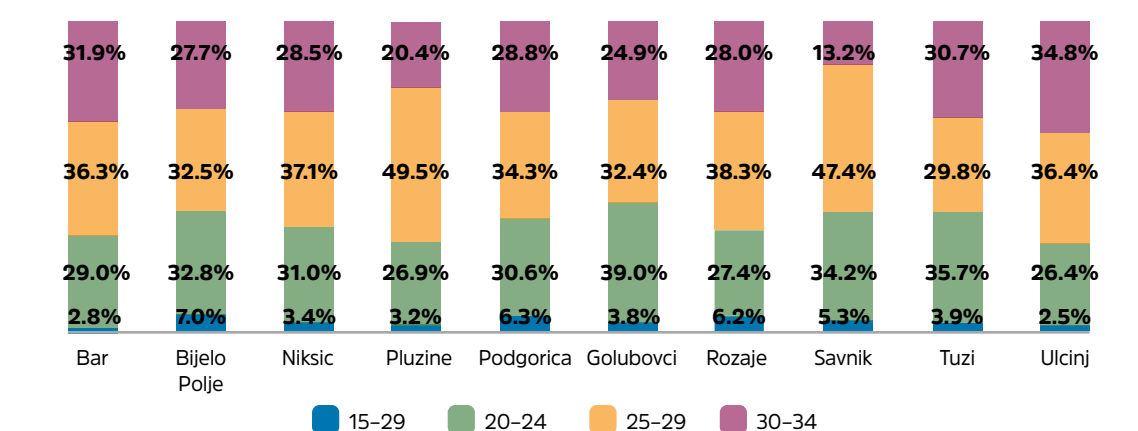
- Encourage and develop capacities and sense of accountability of persons working with young people, as well as sense of responsibility of young people with respect to their social obligations.

Special importance should be given to the creation of opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship of young people at the local level. Existing data indicate that there are different levels of youth employment in Montenegro, especially depending on the region where these young people live.⁵⁹

The number of employed young people per age

	Bar	Bijelo Polje	Niksic	Pluzine	Podgorica	Rozaje	Savnik	Tuzi	Ulcinj
15-19	15	34	20	3	154	15	0	5	13
20-24	98	171	126	9	641	75	4	26	57
25-29	156	265	235	16	1 042	155	2	28	125
Total	273	470	381	28	1837	245	15	59	195

Besides the data on youth employment rates per regions, it is important to underline the data showing huge unemployment rate of young people, especially in the northern region of Montenegro.⁶⁰



Graph 36: The structure of unemployed young people per age

At the European level, in the previous period, a very high level of cooperation has been achieved between national EYCA members (organizations) and local authorities, where one of the positive examples of cooperation is the use of the youth card infrastructure for communicating with young people, including the following:

- Communicating and updating safety information to young people during the public health crisis – the Covid-19 pandemic.

⁵⁹ Labour market and youth (un)employment in Montenegro, 2021, UNDP Montenegro

⁶⁰ Labour market and youth (un)employment in Montenegro, 2021, UNDP Montenegro

- The municipalities also used the opportunity to stimulate local economies and encourage online ordering from local producers, as well as offering young people various opportunities for local youth work.
- Using the EYCA card is suitable for local authorities when they want to directly engage young citizens in the participatory development of local budgets or the joint creation of local services.
- Bearing in mind that EYCA card Project Team has been building a participatory and trusting relationship with the users of this card for years, it is much simpler and more reliable for local authorities to disseminate all relevant information from the domain of youth policy through existing communication channels, such as the European Youth Card (EYCA). This is precisely the essential difference between having a list of contacts and a strategic approach and communication towards young people, which is already established and recognized as such.

The European Youth Card (EYCA) is a tool for public policies, and one of its the key goals is to give a concrete contribution to the development of policies and programmes that directly and immediately affect the lives of young people at the local level. By connecting card users with local decision makers, the Card is empowering young people as active citizens who have a voice in their respective communities. The goal of the European Youth Card (EYCA) is to become part of the local economic and social ecosystem in every municipality, because that is where young people spend the most of their time, i.e. it is the space where most of their lives are unfolding.

The priority of this project is to encourage the mobility of young people, i.e. that young people who travel can benefit from resources, access to services, using the EYCA card and also to be able to discover specific characteristics of different municipalities around Europe. EYCA card is based on the principle of reciprocity, which means that anyone with an EYCA card can use the same services as local cardholders in the municipality they are travelling to. This is just another way, for local authorities to promote their tourism potential to young tourists from all over Europe.

Most EYCA member organizations partner with municipalities to organize local consultations or co-design sessions on various local youth services, implement participatory budgeting activities, hold elections for local youth representative structures (e.g. local youth councils, local parliaments, etc.) with the goal to engage young people and give them a leading role in international competitions such as 'European Youth Capital' or 'European Capital of Culture'.

OPERATIONAL GOAL 4: DEVELOPMENT OF ADDITIONAL BENEFITS FOR EYCA CARD USERS AND STRENGTHENING THEIR PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC POLICY DEVELOPMENT AT LOCAL LEVEL			
	2022	2023	2024
Performance indicators 1: Increase the number of new benefits/ discounts for EYCA card users at local level	5 new discounts/ benefits available to EYCA card users	10 new benefits/ discounts	In total 15 new benefits/discounts
Performance indicators 2: Increase the percentage of EYCA card users in development of public policies at local level	70.5% card users, surveyed in 2022, have participated in some form of public policies development activities at local level (10% of card users was surveyed)	75% card users	80% card users

Digitalization

Digitalization and its various forms represent a fairly recent topic for a society as a whole, and especially for the youth sector. It primarily refers to the use of digital tools and opportunities, but also to the social phenomenon of increasing importance of digital technology, mass communication and online spaces and communities. All EU digital strategies in the past decade, 'Digital Agenda for Europe',⁶¹ 'Digital Single market',⁶² and 'Europe Fit for the Digital Age',⁶³ are aiming to provide equal access to every EU citizen when it comes to digitalization opportunities. However, the rapid growth of internet access, connectivity and reliance on technology has not only determined the rapid development of the digital world, but also defined a new landscape for inequality, caused by different access to digital tools and instruments and the level of engagement in the digital realm. In the contemporary context, digital tools for social inclusion can therefore be understood as another form of 'safety nets'. Montenegro is taking active steps in this area, which is clearly visible through the development of public policies aimed at strengthening the level of digitalization, such as the 'Digital Transformation Strategy of Montenegro' 2022–2026, the 'Cyber Security Strategy of Montenegro' 2022–2026 and the 'Program for Attracting Digital Nomads to Montenegro by 2025'. In addition to the above, it is important to underline the 'Youth Employment Program' for 2022, which foresees the training of 500 young people to acquire digital skills.

Technological changes require young people to quickly build the skills and competencies needed for the digital era. However, being digitally competent is more than being able to use the latest smartphone or IT software – it's about being able to use such digital technologies in a critical, collaborative and creative way.

When we talk about accessibility of digital technologies in Montenegro, according to 2019 MONSTAT survey⁶⁴, in Montenegro 74.3% of surveyed households stated that they have access to the Internet, which clearly indicates the existence of a digital gap, where almost one-quarter (25.7%) of households do not have access to the Internet. Within households, access to the Internet is realized through several devices, such as personal computers (PC) 42.1% and portable computers (laptop, netbook, tablet) 65.9%. When we talk about age and gender in terms of Internet use, young people at the age range of 16–24 and 25–34 represent the two groups that use the Internet the most, while the percentage of women (88.5%) who use the Internet is higher compared to men (87.4%).

Internet usage	AGE						GENDER		Total
	16–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55–64	65–74	Male	Female	
Every day or almost every day	99.6	96.3	88.6	79.6	77.9	72.8	87.4	88.5	87.9
At least once a week	0.4	3.7	10.3	17.3	21.0	20.1	11.7	9.3	10.7
Less than once a week	0.0	0.0	1.1	3.1	1.1	7.1	0.9	2.2	1.4

Graph 37: Age and gender

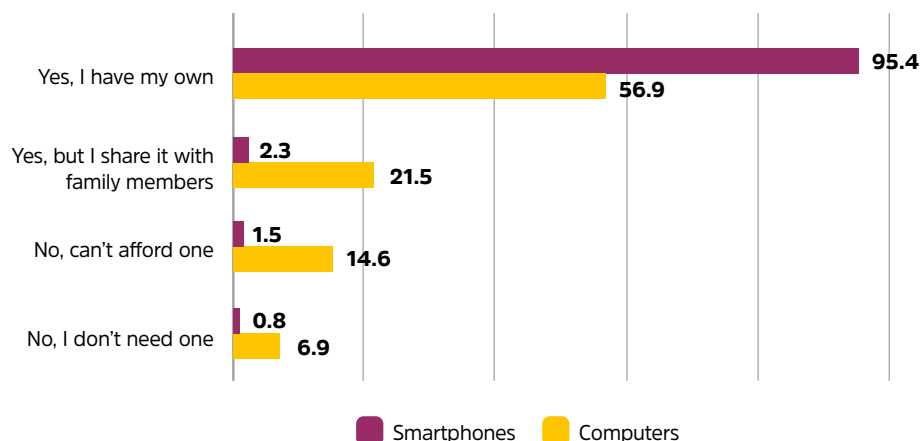
⁶¹ Digital Agenda for Europe, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0245:FIN:EN:PDF>

⁶² Digital Single market, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A52015DC0192>

⁶³ Europe Fit for the Digital Age, https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/europe-fit-digital-age_en

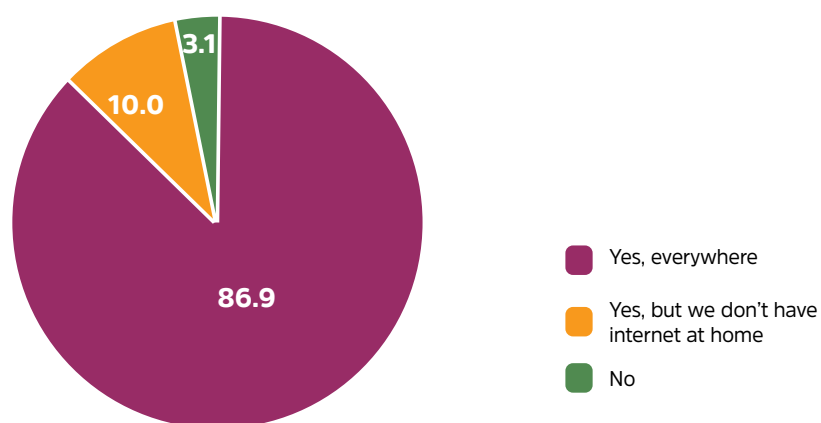
⁶⁴ MONSTAT, The use of ICT in Montenegro in 2019, http://www.monstat.org/userfiles/file/ICT/2019/Upotreba%20IKT%20u%20domacinstvima%202019_Final.pdf

Regarding the level of accessibility of digital technologies to young people in Montenegro, the survey conducted by the DeFacto⁶⁵ Agency showed that, when we talk about the NEET population, almost every young person claims to have their own smartphone, while when it comes to computers, the same claim is made by more than half of the surveyed participants. Almost a fifth of the participants share their computer with other family members. The fact that every fifth person cannot afford a computer or even considers that he/she does not need one is a cause for concern.



Graph 38: **Level of accessibility of smartphones and computers**

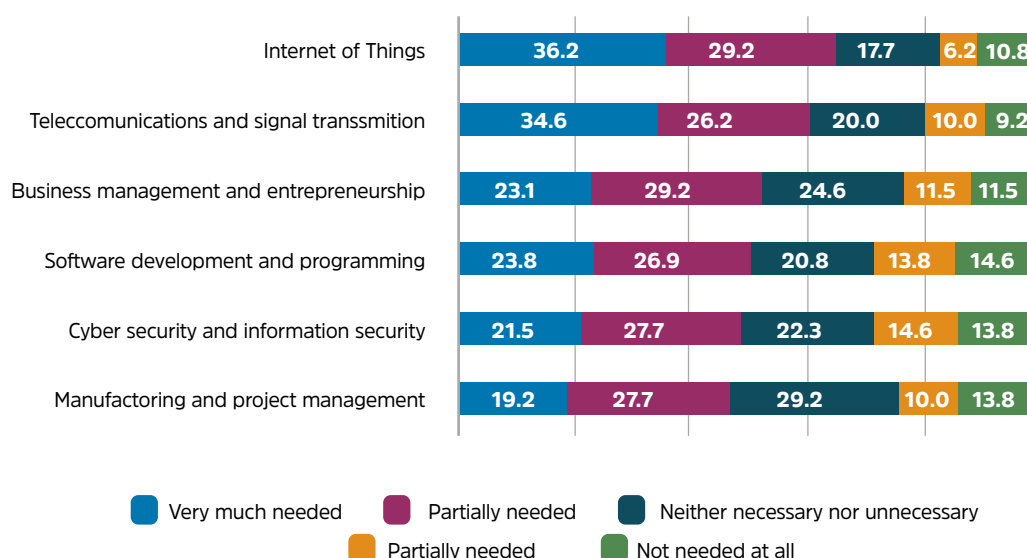
Regarding the level of Internet use, the survey showed that 86.9% of them claim that they use the Internet on all occasions, one in ten claims that they use it but do not have an independent Internet connection at home, while 3.1% of young people from the NEET population do not use the Internet. 96.2% of those surveyed claim that they have their own e-mail address.



Graph 39: **Percentage of NEET population internet usage**

⁶⁵ "Moja karijera na putu do heroja" ("My Career on the Path to Becoming a Hero"), <https://www.forum-mne.com/en/mdocs-posts/moja-karijera-na-putu-do-heroja/>

NEET people believe that training related to the use of the Internet is very much needed in order to get a job in the future – 65.4% of respondents cumulatively agree with this statement (36.2% believe that knowledge on this topic will be very much needed, and an additional 29.2% that it will be somewhat needed). Furthermore, young people emphasize training related to telecommunications and signal transmission (60.8%) and business management and entrepreneurship (52.3%).



Graph 40: **Most necessary training areas for the NEET population**

In the previous period, which was marked by the impact of COVID-19 and the public health crisis, the European Youth Card (EYCA) offered different and timely answers to young people facing different challenges. The digitized card infrastructure at the European level has proven to be very effective, enabling and supporting cardholders with free legal advice in case of a job loss, applying online/digital to youth work services and mental health support for young people. The emphasis was also on offering discounts to young people in various cultural and entertainment areas. In this way, the partnership with local authorities was strengthened, as many of them approached the organizations participating in the European Youth Card (EYCA) project, in order to provide relevant and updated information to all interested young citizens. In addition, one of the main goals of this project is the establishment of an EYCA digital platform where users of the youth card, in each country, will be able to access the benefits provided by the Card.⁶⁶ This is primarily reflected through enabling young people to access online discounts in every country in Europe, building a common card database and improving the mobile application in order to provide better and more quality services to youth card users. The program must be kept up-to-date, modern and aligned with the dominant trends and needs of young people.

Also, recently, with the financial support of the **OSCE Mission to Montenegro**, for the needs of this project a new and modern website was created, which was designed in accordance with modern technologies, but the website must be regularly updated in accordance with the additional needs of users. Furthermore, OSCE has provided support in terms of annual technical

⁶⁶ Strategic EYCA Card Development Plan 2021–2025, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gUsg85AGPTRB-np-x7bumdZotKeDvw4L/view>

maintenance of the website, as well as the printing of EYCA cards, assisting the organization of annual promotional digital campaigns (website, social networks, newsletters, etc.), as well as providing a donation of a specialized card printer.

It is important to underline the financial support of the **doMEn** company, which supported the creation of a mobile application (iOS & Android), which enables the use of a digital card that has the same rights and options as a physical card. One of the important priorities, in the time ahead of us, in terms of the operations of the European Youth Card (EYCA) project in Montenegro, will be active promotion of opportunities for learning and improving digital skills with the aim of general capacity-building of young people and particularly with the aim of improving employability.

OPERATIONAL GOAL 5: INCREASE THE NUMBER OF DIGITAL YOUTH CARD USERS, THAT WILL ENABLE ONLINE BENEFITS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGHOUT EUROPE			
Performance indicators 1:	2022	2023	2024
Increasing the number of active users of EYCA application	3250 active users of EYCA application	4,500 active users	5,500 active users

FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK

In the table below, there is a breakdown of funding for the entire Strategic Document for the next three years, and the key funding sources are identified as:

- Budget of Montenegro
- Donors' support
- EU funds

Year	Budget funds	Donors' support	Contribution for Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility Through the Youth Card	Contribution for membership on European Youth Card Association – EYCA	Total
2022	25.158,00 EUR	23.700,00 EUR	1.876,67 EUR	3.500,00 EUR	48.858,00 EUR
2023	60.623,33 EUR	19.700,00 EUR	1.876,67 EUR	3.500,00 EUR	85.700,00 EUR
2024	58.623,33 EUR	14.700,00 EUR	1.876,67 EUR	3.500,00 EUR	78.700,00 EUR
TOTAL	139.027,99 EUR	58.100,00 EUR	5.630,01 EUR	10.500,00 EUR	213.258,00 EUR

MONITORING, REPORTING AND EVALUATION

The mechanism for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the European Youth Card Development Program 2022-2024 is based primarily on the work of the Working Group for the preparation of the Strategic Document, which has been transformed into a body responsible for monitoring the implementation and reporting on the Strategic Document.

The Ministry of Sports and Youth is the institution responsible for developing programs, coordinating the process of implementation of activities and reporting on the implementation of the Strategic Document. The Strategic Document in question will have a related Action Plan that will be covering a period of three years and which shall be an integral part of the Strategic Document.

The European Youth Card Development Program 2022-2024 is a Strategic Document, the implementation of which requires the involvement of all the stakeholders, such as government administration bodies, partner NGOs, local authorities, employers' associations, academic community, as well as regional and international organizations that have a significant impact on development of youth policies. Accordingly, the relevant institutions will be obliged to submit information on the activities they implement within the framework of the Action Plan, for the purpose of timely and adequate data collection for the preparation of annual and final reports, as well as measuring the performance indicators, but also identifying challenges that may arise during the implementation of planned activities.

Basic duties of the Operational Body is reflected in drafting of two types of reports, and these are:

Annual Report on the Implementation of the Action Plan

Final Report on the Implementation of the Strategic Document

The Operational Body will meet at least four times a year, i.e. it will hold at least one meeting quarterly, bearing in mind the importance, scope and complexity of the area, which requires more frequent meetings of the Operational Body. This will enable timely and constant monitoring of the implementation process, as well as possible obstacles and challenges that institutions may face when implementing activities. The data necessary for the report will be collected throughout the year and will be submitted quarterly to the Ministry of Sports and Youth, as the body in charge of coordinating the work of the Operational Body. At the last annual meeting, submitted data will be reviewed and possibly supplemented in order to ensure the necessary quality of the report.

The Ministry of Sports and Youth will be in charge of collecting and unifying data relevant for the drafting of reports, as well as for the coordination and work of the Operational Team. Furthermore, all potential problems and obstacles that may arise during the implementation of the Strategic Document will be addressed by the competent authority at regular quarterly meetings.

Reporting process will be filtered through several instances, such as:

- Members of the Operational Body, at the end of the each quarter, will submit reports to the Ministry of Sports and Youth, and the Ministry shall merge them and compile a report, before the last meeting of the Operational Team in a given year.
- After reaching an agreement on the report, with other members of the OB, the report (annual or final) shall be forwarded to the General Secretariat of the Government for opinion, and after the positive opinion of the Secretariat, the report shall be forwarded to the Montenegrin Government for adoption.

In order to ensure the transparency of the Strategy implementation process, the report shall be published on the web-page of the Ministry of Sports and Youth.

EVALUATION

The evaluation of the Strategic document will be carried out ex-post and by external experts due to its complexity and scope, but also to ensure a greater degree of objectivity. Funds for the implementation of the evaluation, will be provided by the budget of the Ministry of Sports and Youth in the last year (2024) of the implementation of the Strategic document. It is planned that this process will start in the first half of 2024 and be completed by October of the same year, in order to timely provide the evaluation findings, which will be presented in the final report, but also with the aim of providing adequate grounds for creating a potentially new strategic document. The findings of the evaluation will give a clear and precise presentation of the success of this policy through a unified strategic document.

ACTION PLAN 2022–2024

Employment

OPERATIONAL GOAL 1	IMPROVING AWARENESS OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND INCREASING ACCESS OF YOUTH CARD USERS TO EMPLOYMENT, INTERNSHIP, AND VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES					
Performance indicator 1: Increasing the number of EYCA card users who are satisfied with available information and employment opportunities (18-29 years)	2022 41.1% of young people satisfied with available information on employment, internship, and volunteering opportunities	2023 55% of young people satisfied with available information	2024 65% of young people satisfied with available information			
Activity impacting the implementation of the Operational goal 1	Performance indicator	Responsible institutions	Starting Date	Planned End Date	Funds Planned for implementation of activities	Source of Funding
1.1. Setting up a database of employers who are participating in EYCA Programme	Database will contain the following: – Employers' contact data – Job vacancies – Opportunities for volunteering and internship	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth	I quarter of 2023	IV quarter of 2024	1.500,00 EUR	Budget of the Ministry of Sports and Youth; Donors' support
1.2. Improving the national website of the European Youth Card (EYCA) through the creation of a category that will contain information on employment, volunteering and internship opportunities for EYCA card users	National website of the European Youth Card (EYCA) will have a category that will contain information on employment, volunteering and internship opportunities	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth	I quarter of 2023	IV quarter of 2024	1.500,00 EUR	Budget of the Ministry of Sports and Youth; Donors' support
1.3. Setting up a database of available trainings for employment skills development, for Card users	Database will contain information on type of available trainings, that will be presented on the national web site of the European Youth Card (EYCA)	Employment Agency of Montenegro; Central Registry of the Commercial Court; Ministry of Economic Development and Tourism; Youth services; NGOs; International organizations	I quarter of 2023	IV quarter of 2024	1.500,00 EUR	Budget of the Ministry of Sports and Youth; Donors' support

1.4. Promotion of employment programmes through opportunities provided by EYCA card	Organizing, at least two, promotional activities annually, to encourage greater involvement of business community and young people in employment programmes	NGO Centre for Youth Education	I quarter of 2023	IV quarter of 2024	1.000,00 EUR	Donors' support
1.5. Organizing study visits to partner EYCA members, in order to share good practices in area of youth employment	Organizing at least one study visit to EYCA members annually	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth	III quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	4.500,00 EUR	Donors' support
1.6. Organizing start-up competitions for EYCA card users	Development of innovative business ideas and securing funding for their implementation (through EYCA or partner programme)	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth; Ministry of Economic Development and Tourism; Local authorities; Chamber of Economy of Montenegro; Academic community	III quarter of 2023	IV quarter of 2024	7.500,00 EUR	Budget of the Ministry of Sports and Youth; Donors' support
1.7. Informing young people (up to 29 years of age) who are unemployed and registered with Montenegrin Employment Agency, on opportunities provided by the EYCA card	Montenegrin Employment Agency will inform young unemployed people on opportunities provided by the EYCA card	Employment Agency of Montenegro	III quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	1.500,00 EUR	Donors' support

Mobility

OPERATIONAL GOAL 2		INCREASING THE MOBILITY OF YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH EUROPEAN YOUTH CARD, IN ALL AREAS OF INTEREST TO THEM				
Performance indicator 1: Increasing percentage of EYCA card users who have used benefits/discounts when staying abroad	2022 17.9% of EYCA card users have used some of the available benefits when staying abroad	2023 25% of EYCA card users have used some of the available benefits when staying abroad		2024 30% of EYCA card users have used some of the available benefits when staying abroad		
Performance indicator 2: Increasing the number of available benefits for transport of young people within Montenegro	10 available benefits/ discounts for transport of young people within Montenegro	5 additional transport discounts		5 additional transport discounts		
Activity impacting the implementation of the Operational goal 1	Performance indicator	Responsible institutions	Starting Date	Planned End Date	Funds Planned for Implementation of activities	Source of Funding
2.1. Organizing study visits to partner EYCA members, in order to share good practices in area of youth mobility	At least one study visit implemented annually	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth	III quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	4.500,00 EUR	Donors' support
2.2. Organizing educational event/seminar/camp intended to promotion of informal education in area of mobility for young people	At least one EYCA event/seminar/camp organized annually. At least 30 participants annually	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth	III quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	15.000,00 EUR	Donors' support
2.3. Concluding contracts on getting discounts for transportation for EYCA card users within Montenegro	10 new contracts on transportation discounts for young people concluded by the end of 2024	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth; Ministry for Capital Investments; Montenegrin Union of Employers; Chamber of Economy of Montenegro	III quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	0,00 EUR	/
2.4. Appointing EYCA ambassadors to promote youth mobility opportunities	10 EYCA ambassadors appointed	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth	IV quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	0,00 EUR	/

2.5. Organizing volunteering activities in order to improve youth mobility within Montenegro	Minimum 4 volunteering activities annually	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth	III quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	3.000,00 EUR	Donors' support
2.6. Encouraging young athletes, artists, scientists, entrepreneurs, students, to be users and promoters of EYCA card	50 successful young people becoming EYCA card users	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth; Montenegrin Olympic Committee; Montenegrin Para-Olympic Committee, NGO sector, International organizations	III quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	0,00 EUR	/
2.7. Encouraging successful young people from vulnerable population categories to be users and promoters of EYCA card (RE population, persons with disabilities, LGBTIQ)	20 successful young people ready to promote the Card	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth; NGO sector, International organizations	III quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	0,00 EUR	/
2.8. Encouraging young successful women to be EYCA card users	20 successful young women ready to promote EYCA card	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth; NGO sector, International organizations	III quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	0,00 EUR	/
2.9. Organizing trainings for EYCA card users on importance of gender equality	One training organized annually	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth; NGO sector, International organizations	III quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	2.500,00 EUR	Budget of the Ministry of Sports and Youth; Donors' support
2.10. Provide benefits for EYCA card users, in order to increase cultural mobility, both at national and European level	At least two additional benefits/ discounts in area of cultural mobility provided for EYCA card users	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth; Ministry of Culture and Media	III quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	0,00 EUR	/
2.11. Promote educational mobility for EYCA card users	Participation in events/fairs promoting educational mobility outside of Montenegro (formal and informal educational mobility)	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth; National and EU mobility programmes	I quarter of 2023	IV quarter of 2024	2.000,00 EUR	Budget of the Ministry of Sports and Youth; Donors' support
2.12. Linking EYCA Programme with international initiatives promoting youth mobility	Cooperation established with, at least two partner organizations at international level, with aim to strengthen youth mobility	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth	III quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	0,00 EUR	/

Awareness raising of young people

OPERATIONAL GOAL 3	INCREASING VISIBILITY OF THE EUROPEAN YOUTH CARD (EYCA) AS A MODERN PLATFORM FOR INFORMING YOUNG PEOPLE					
Performance indicator 1: Increase the number of viewed pages on the national EYCA website	2022 600.000 website views	2023 650.000 website views		2024 700.000 website views		
Activity impacting the implementation of the Operational goal 1	Performance indicator	Responsible institutions	Starting Date	Planned End Date	FFunds Planned for Implementation of activities	Source of Funding
3.1. Promotion of European Youth Card Projects (EYCA) by creating and publishing large number of articles on the national website and social networks (3 publications on the website and 10 publications on social networks monthly)	The number of publications on the national website increased 15% per year. Increased number of publications, on social networks that promote EYCA benefits and opportunities, for at least 25%.	NGO Centre for Youth Education	III quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	0,00 EUR	/
3.2. Creating, at least one, newsletter and SMS campaign a month	Minimum 12 newsletters and SMS campaigns per year	NGO Centre for Youth Education	III quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	0,00 EUR	/
3.3. Printing EYCA cards and promotional materials in order to present benefits that EYCA card offers to its users	Printing, at least, 12.000 EYCA cards per year. At least 12.000 flyers per year. Cards printed and delivered to each and every first-year high-school student in Montenegro.	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth; Ministry of Education	III quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	43.000,00 EUR	Budget of the Ministry of Sports and Youth; Donors' support
3.4. Developing a Marketing Plan that contains Communication Strategy for Promotion of the EYCA card within	Marketing Plan developed for the entire duration of the Strategic Document. Consultants engaged to produce the Marketing Plan.	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth	I quarter of 2023	IV quarter of 2024	1.600,00 EUR	Budget of the Ministry of Sports and Youth; Donors' support
3.5. Enhancing visibility of EYCA card promotional activities on social networks	At least 60 publications on social networks per year, and their visibility is enhanced through targeted and paid promotion (boost)	NGO Centre for Youth Education	III quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	3.600,00 EUR	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Donors' support

3.6. Participation at national and regional events promoting EYCA card	Participation at, minimum 4 national and regional events	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth	I quarter of 2023	IV quarter of 2024	2.000,00 EUR	Budget of the Ministry of Sports and Youth; NGO Centre for Youth Education; Donors' support
3.7. Capacity development of the National Project Team for implementing EYCA Programme	Engagement of four experts for the implementation of the three-year EYCA Programme	Ministry of Sports and Youth	I quarter of 2023	IV quarter of 2024	56.000,00 EUR	Budget of the Ministry of Sports and Youth; Donors' support
3.8. Organizing trainings for EYCA Team members, so that they can learn skills for better informing young people	Two trainings in total, organized by 2024	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth	I quarter of 2023	IV quarter of 2024	2.000,00 EUR	Donors' support
3.9. Organizing trainings for EYCA Team members on the topic of Effective Project Management	Two trainings in total, organized by 2024	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth	I quarter of 2023	IV quarter of 2024	2.000,00 EUR	Budget of the Ministry of Sports and Youth

Development of EYCA programme at local level

OPERATIONAL GOAL 4	DEVELOPMENT OF ADDITIONAL BENEFITS FOR EYCA CARD USERS AND STRENGTHENING THEIR PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC POLICIES AT LOCAL LEVEL					
Performance indicator 1: Increase the number of new benefits/discounts available to EYCA card users at local level	2022 5 new benefits/ discounts available to EYCA card users	2023 10 new benefits/ discounts available to EYCA card users			2024 In total, 15 new benefits /discounts available to EYCA card users	
Performance indicator 2: Increase percentage of EYCA card users participation in creation and development of public policies at local level	2022 70,5% of surveyed Card users have participated in some form of public policy development at local level in 2022 (10% of Card users participated in the survey)	2023 75% of Card users			2024 80% of Card users	
Activity impacting the implementation of the Operational goal 1	Performance indicator	Responsible institutions	Starting Date	Planned End Date	Funds Planned for Implementation of activities	Source of Funding
4.1. Strengthening equal availability of EYCA card in all regions of Montenegro, with special focus on the Northern region	Signing additional Cooperation Agreements with at least local authorities	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth, Youth services, Local NGOs	III quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	0,00 EUR	/
4.2. Organizing consultations, at local level, with young people on topics that are of interest to them	Conducting surveys, Organizing Open Platform Days for young people, Organizing Info-days, Conducting surveys on the needs of young people at local level	Local authorities; NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth, Youth services, Local NGOs	III quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	0,00 EUR	/
4.3. Organizing consultations with local authorities, aiming to strengthen coordination between all the stakeholders taking part in the EYCA Programme implementation	Organization of, at least one, round table per year in those local authorities that are implementing EYCA Programme	Local authorities; NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth, Youth services, Local NGOs	I quarter of 2023	IV quarter of 2024	0,00 EUR	/

4.4. Enhancing cooperation with Youth Services of the Ministry of Sports and Youth in order to increase Card distribution at local level	In local authorities that haven't signed Cooperation Agreements, enable Youth Services to distribute EYCA cards	Ministry of Sports and Youth; NGO Centre for Youth Education; Youth services; Local NGOs	II quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	0,00 EUR	/
4.5. Card distribution and engaging young disadvantaged people in EYCA Programme activities	Cooperation established with Social Centres and Montenegrin Employment Agency. Minimum 200 new users/cards, for those receiving child and social benefits and young people who are not engaged in education, employment or training (NEET).	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Montenegrin Employment Agency; Social Centres; Ministry of Sports and Youth; Youth services; Local NGOs	III quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	0,00 EUR	/

Digitalization

OPERATIONAL GOAL 5		INCREASE THE NUMBER OF DIGITAL EYCA CARD USERS, WHICH WILL ENABLE BENEFITS TO YOUNG PEOPLE IN MONTENEGRO AND THROUGHOUT EUROPE				
Performance indicator 1: Increased number of active EYCA application users	2022	2023			2024	
	3,250 active EYCA application users	4,500 active users			5,500 active users	
Activity impacting the implementation of the Operational goal 1	Performance indicator	Responsible institutions	Starting Date	Planned End Date	Funds Planned for Implementation of activities	Source of Funding
5.1. Organizing trainings aimed at increasing digital literacy of EYCA card users	Minimum one training organized per year	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth	III quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	3.000,00 EUR	Budget of the Ministry of Sports and Youth; Donors' support
5.2. Technical maintenance of the national website of the European Youth Card (EYCA)	National website of the European Youth Card (EYCA) is regularly maintained, monthly and annually	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth	III quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	7.222,00 EUR	Budget of the Ministry of Sports and Youth
5.3. Upgrading EYCA mobile application (Android, IOS)	Adding new modules/ functionalities (push notifications) in order to facilitate the use of digital EYCA card	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth	III quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	4.356,00 EUR	Budget of the Ministry of Sports and Youth; Donors' support
5.4. Promotion of mobile EYCA application	Organization of: – Round tables – Info-days – Printing promotional materials	NGO Centre for Youth Education; Ministry of Sports and Youth	III quarter of 2022	IV quarter of 2024	3.000,00 EUR	Budget of the Ministry of Sports and Youth; Donors' support
5.5. Procurement of specialized equipment intended for personalization of the EYCA card	One specialized printer procured, as well as related software for printing personal data of the Card users	Ministry of Sports and Youth	I quarter of 2023	IV quarter of 2024	2.200,00 EUR	Budget of the Ministry of Sports and Youth
5.6. Procurement of additional equipment necessary for the operations of the specialized printer	Printer's cleaners and tonners procured	Ministry of Sports and Youth	I quarter of 2023	IV quarter of 2024	1.000,00 EUR	Budget of the Ministry of Sports and Youth; Donors' support

