Survey of the drivers of youth radicalism and violent extremism in Serbia

Completed in Cooperation with the UNDP Serbia Country Office

The opinions presented in this Report are those of its Author and do not necessarily reflect positions of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

All words/terms used in this report in the masculine gender are to be understood as including persons of both male and female gender they refer to.

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Summary

The present Research of drivers of radicalization which could lead to violent extremism implemented by CeSID and UNDP at the end of 2016 does not fundamentally differ from similar such researches conducted in the past several *years in respect to individual findings, which explain the situation in which youth in Serbia is today.* However, viewed holistically, the Research contributes to the comprehensive grasp of the potential of youth radicalization, which could lead to violent extremism in Serbia.

In May 2016 at the World Humanitarian Summit, the world leaders made the "political will" the centrepiece of the conflict prevention.[1] Conflict prevention has been identified as the biggest potential contribution of world leaders to reduce exceptionally large humanitarian needs. The leaders committed to increasing the number of staff, skills base and financing of conflict prevention work, their resolution, especially through work over the root causes.

The key to prevention of radicalization and violent extremism is understanding their root causes, i.e. issues which drive young people towards radical or even extremist behaviour.

While the Research provides reasons for moderate optimism in Serbia, it also re-affirms that the weak spots in Serbia are societal fragmentation along the ethnic lines, lack of possibilities for young people and especially the role of global and regional politics, which contributes to the conflict potential and represents one of key identified drivers of radicalization. Young Bosniaks and Albanians both perceive religious discrimination, but both minorities and the majority population see themselves as victims of injustice.

Two more findings are particularly noteworthy: this Research dispels the notion that banalization of violence in media is an important driver of radicalization and acceptability of violence. Also, young people in Serbia feel relatively safe in their local environments, which is a major prerequisite of reducing social tensions.

Across all surveyed regions, it is the youngest respondents – aged 15 to 19 – who are the most vocal and are most likely to engage in violence. Young people are, generally speaking, traditional. They are hopeful and optimistic, but their optimism decreases with age, when they became disappointed and bitter. Young people are by and large mistrustful of social actors and do not believe in equal opportunity for employment in the public sector. At the same time, they do not seek opportunities outside their own region – their "comfort zone".

For youth Muslim religious background, religious identity is stronger than any other form of identification. The percentage of religious young people is exceptionally high in South and South-West Serbia, with most accepting all the tenets of their faith.

[1] Chair's Summary by the United Nations Secretary-General Standing up for Humanity: Committing to Action] https://consultations.worldhumanitariansummit.org/bitcache/5171492e71696bcf9d4c571c93dfc6dcd7f361ee?vid=581078&disposition=inline&op=view

The Research stresses that three drivers are moderately influencing youth in major cities in Serbia towards radical views. At the same time, three different drivers are considerably influencing youth in South and three in South West Serbia.

The present Research, therefore, identifies which factors (drivers) produce radical views which could lead to violent extremism. It offers a roadmap for further detailed research into the issues which could dull the sharp edges of radicalization and pinpoints areas which should be prioritized for addressing through the concerted and cross-sectorial action by the Government of the Republic of Serbia, local authorities and international community.

Introduction

In recent years, the world's political and ideological spectrum has shifted towards the right. In addition, global events have increasingly been punctuated by new waves of violent extremism, radicalism, and terrorism. Thus, for instance, since 2010 violent attacks have taken place across Germany (in Frankfurt, Dusseldorf, Bonn, Oberursel, and Berlin), Turkey (Istanbul, Ankara, Diyarbakir, and Gaziantep), France (Paris, Nice, and Lyons), Belgium (Brussels), Norway (Oslo), Russia (Moscow and Volgograd), Mexico, Iraq, China, Egypt, Pakistan, Yemen, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Somalia, the United States, etc.

Regardless of whether these incidents are motivated by religious, ethnic, or political reasons, the fact remains that ideologies of the extremist groups that perpetrate them glorify their own existence and oppose the democratic and liberal values of tolerance, multi-culturalism, and inclusion.

Radicalism, (violent) extremism, and terrorism are related but not identical concepts. Any terrorism is at the same time extremism, but not every extremism is also terrorism. Terrorism is an exclusively political form of violence, whereas extremism may appear in other spheres of daily life, such as sports, culture, the arts, and religion. Moreover, terrorism is an affirmation of extremism in action (adherents of ISIS/ISIL[2] are terrorists, whilst, for instance, football supporters' groups, who may be extremists insofar as sports are concerned, are not at the same time terrorists). And whilst extremism is always negative, radicalism can have positive connotations (for instance, the women's suffrage movement was radical for its day). At any rate, these movements tend to challenge the pre-established norms and rules of a society.[3] Radicalism may, but does not necessarily have to, transform into (violent) extremism, which, in turn, may but does not have to lead to terrorism. Radicalisation that leads to terrorism is a dynamic process whereby an individual comes to accept terrorist violence as a possible, perhaps even legitimate, course of action. This may eventually, but not necessarily, lead this person to advocate, act in

[2] Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) or Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) is a terrorist organisation that considers itself a state but has not been recognised as such globally.

[3] Đorić, M. (2012). „Teorijsko određenje ekstremizma"['Theoretical definition of extremism'], in *Kultura polisa*, Vol.9, No.17, pp. 45-62.

support of, or engage in terrorism.[4] At the same time, all violent extremist groups hold radical beliefs, so we can certainly consider radicalism as a precondition for the appearance of extremism.

[4]OSCE (2014). Preventing Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: A Community-Policing Approach. Available online at osce.org/atu/111438?download=true.

Conceptual framework

It would be difficult to dispute that prevention is the most efficient means of combating radicalism that leads to violent extremism. Prevention should be viewed in a broader sense, not just as fear of punishment if a law is broken ('general' prevention), but also as the removal of the underlying causes that lead young people on the path towards embracing violent extremism.

At its Global Meeting held in 2016 in Oslo, Norway, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) underlined the importance of understanding paths to violent extremism in developing preventive actions that may reduce the incidence of radicalisation leading to violent extremism.[5]These paths involve a range of both external and internal factors. External issues include geopolitical developments, demographic change, economic pressures of climate change, migrations, social and mass media proliferation, etc. Internal factors may include feeling unable to resolve disputes peacefully, finding it difficult to embrace diversity (sometimes owing to a culture of violence and intolerance), having experienced – or fearing –abuse from the institutions in society holding the monopoly on physical coercion, feeling unable to express oneself or not feeling listened to or engaged, feeling humiliated, disrespected and unrecognised, feeling disillusioned with the state and its governance and responsiveness, perceiving social inequality favouring specific groups, experiencing a lack of opportunity in terms of education, livelihood, and income, and experiencing a lack of meaning, identity, belonging, and cultural acknowledgment.

The UNDP has gone on to develop a conceptual framework to prevent violent extremism that will also be applied in interpreting the findings of this research.[6] This framework recognises eight key drivers of radicalisation that may ultimately lead to violent extremism. These root causes of violent extremism are complex, multifaceted, and intertwined, and relate to the structural environment in which radicalisation and possibly violent extremism can start to take hold. Violent extremism is the product of historical, political, economic and social circumstances, including the impact of regional and global power politics.

Violent extremism is not a 21st-century phenomenon, but modern violent extremism has the following (new) hallmarks: *globalisation* leads to new forms of linkages between these groups; *modern communications technology* (social media in particular) allows individuals and groups to connect with one another more easily and facilitates recruitment, also changing the *level of unpredictability* of extremist violence, in particular as the targets of terrorist attacks are often

[5] Preventing Violent Extremism through Promoting Inclusive Development, Tolerance and Respect for Diversity, Global Meeting, 14-16 March 2016, Oslo, Norway,p. 13. Available online atundp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/preventing-violent-extremism-through-promoting-inclusive-develop.html

[6] UNDP Discussion Paper (2016): Preventing Violent Extremism through Inclusive Development and the Promotion of Tolerance and Respect for Diversity A development response to addressing radicalization and violent extremism. Available online atundp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/conflict-prevention/discussion-paper---preventing-violent-extremism-through-inclusiv.html.

randomly selected. Perpetrators also often enter into suicide pacts in advance of attacks. Finally, information freely available online has made it easier to *access lethal weapons*, with individuals and groups now having at their disposal a wide array of weaponry (including weapons of mass destruction). Our starting conceptual framework recognises eight drivers that may lead to radical behaviour and result in acts of violent extremism:[7]

1) Role and influence of global politics: Violent extremism is the product of complex political, economic, and social circumstances, as well as the impact of regional and global geo-politics, that may destabilise regions and inflame social tensions. In addition, the promotion of international human rights and gender equality often interferes with traditional local customs, which may also trigger violent reactions;
2) Economic exclusion and limited opportunities for upward mobility: When associated with specific social identities, unemployment and the systematic denial of opportunities for upward mobility may lead to alienation and frustration, and, from there, radicalisation and violent extremism;
3) Political exclusion and shrinking civic space: The lack of political inclusion, limitations on freedom of expression, and shrinking civic space have become drivers of radicalisation and violence.

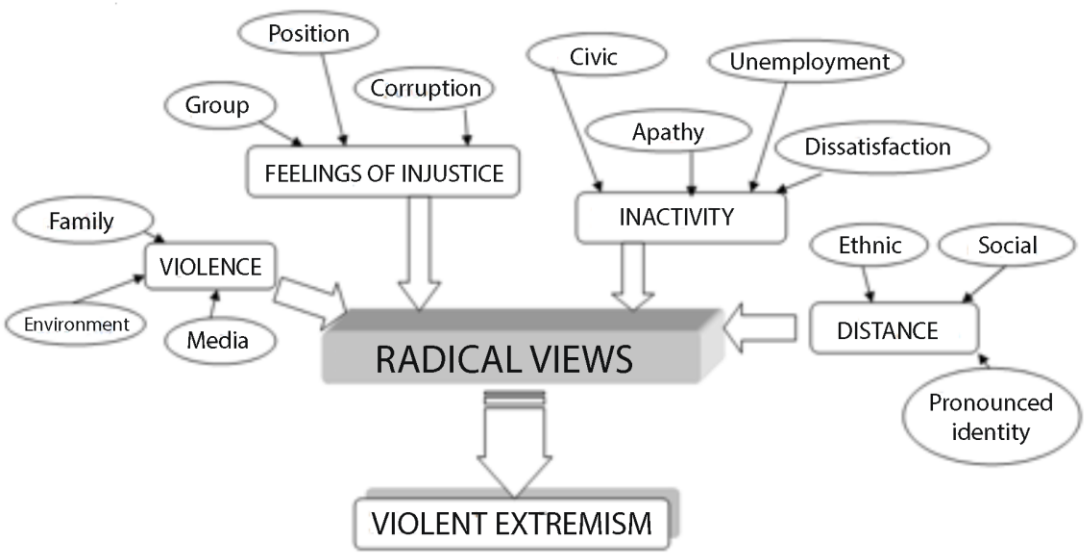
This driver can be grouped together with the preceding factor into a category entitled 'convergence of horizontal inequalities';

4) Injustice, corruption and mistreatment of certain groups: As the correlation between unemployment/poverty and willingness to join extremist groups is not explicit (see Driver 2), there appears to be a stronger link between political violence and perceptions of injustice, corruption, and systematic discrimination;
5) Dissatisfaction with and rejection of the socio-economic and political system: Most violent extremist groups offer alternatives to the dominant ideological narrative of free markets, democracy, and multi-cultural diversity;
6) Rejection of growing diversity in society: Diversity may give rise to feelings of increased fear and anger due to the removal of benefits that were previously the exclusive privilege of a group or community (and are now, with the increase in diversity, extended to other groups in society so as to prevent discrimination); here minority groups are most often seen as those infringing on the rights of the majority population;
7) Weak state capacity and failing security: A state's failure to ensure respect for basic human rights contributes to growing inequality and creates a vacuum wherein 'non-state' actors may appropriate state functions, including the monopoly on violence;
8) Changing global culture and banalisation of violence in the media and entertainment: Exposed to violence in the media (which are saturated almost 24 hours a day by brutal images), people may no longer witness real-world violence as exceptional; playing violent video games may promote aggressive thinking and behaviour.

These drivers of radicalism and violent extremism should not be viewed in isolation and separately from each other. They interact with one another in complex ways and interrelate with

[7] *Ibid*.

individual factors (alienation, search for one's own identity and dignity, revenge for previous mistreatment, adherence to virtual communities on social media); potential recruits who possess these traits are carefully followed and socialized by extremist groups, increasing their likelihood of being pulled into violent extremism.[8] We start from the following factors that may lead to a person being radicalised; this can, in turn, develop into violent extremism:



Background

Youth unemployment in Serbia is exceptionally high, and this is a pressing issue facing the country. According to official statistics, in November 2016 a total of 610,306 young people (the 15 to 30 age group) were jobless, with youth unemployment standing at about 37 percent in the second quarter of 2016.[9] Such a high unemployment rate (especially if joblessness is long-term or structural) leads to increased poverty, crime, mental illness, suicide, and divorce, directly affecting national security and public health.[10] Public opinion surveys have for some time now

[8] *Ibid*.

[9] Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (SORS), Monthly Statistical Bulletin for November 2016. Available online at nsz.gov.rs/live/digitalAssets/6/6740_bilten_nsz_11_2016_-_broj_171.pdf [in Serbian]. This figure is likely to be even higher, as it reflects only official statistics and the National Employment Service (NES) does not register all the unemployed. The NES does not use the same division into regions as our survey, but Q4 2016 data reveal the following regional unemployment figures: South and East Serbia 188,513;Šumadija and West Serbia 242,318; Vojvodina 175,429; and Belgrade106,975.

[10] "The context of an extended, lawless post-socialist transformation has created major structural obstacles to the integration of youth into Serbian society. Analyses of past studies clearly reveal that young people are insufficiently integrated into the system, as borne out by indicators in key fields. High unemployment and insecure jobs exclude young people from the labour market and economic reproduction (...) Low political and civic participation reveals a lack of integration into the political system of society'. Tomanović *et al,* 2012:281, cited in SECONS, *Mladi u Srbiji 2015. Stanja, opažanja, verovanja i nadanja*[*Young People in*

been revealing a growing trend of apathy (especially for politics), alienation, and indifference amongst young people. Serbia's youth are not interested in either national, regional, or global politics. Domestic political issues do attract slightly more attention (albeit with only 27.6 percent interested to some extent, whilst as much as one-third are completely disinterested in political events in Serbia).[11]

These factors are alone sufficient for us to conclude that young people in Serbia have the potential for embracing radical and extremist ideas and ideologies. When this is coupled with more recent trends, including views and acceptance of European integrations or the current 'migrant crisis', as well as young people's views of and social distance towards migrants/refugees, this likelihood becomes even more pronounced. The finding that nearly one-quarter of Serbia's young people would feel 'bad' or 'very bad' if a family of asylum-seekers were to move into their neighbourhood[12] shows that global population movements have been contributing to rising mistrust of other groups and have deepened existing stereotypes. This is primarily due to the social and economic situation faced by young people, where increasing contacts with other groups do not reduce social distance, as young Serbians are afraid for their (non-existent) jobs and already (relatively) low standards of living.

Issues recognised in the 2015-2025 National Youth Strategy include peer violence, violent behaviour by sports supporters' groups, violence against LGBT people, violence in intimate relationships and towards strangers, lack of respect for human and minority rights, and frequent use and abuse of weapons.[13] It is thus particularly important to determine to what extent young people in Serbia respect human rights, accept gender equality and differences, show tolerance, and embrace non-violent forms of communication.

The following analysis will look at the findings of research into opinions of young people in Serbia in the context of the conceptual framework presented above, which will allow us to describe potential opportunities for radicalisation of various groups of young people in Serbia. Targeting potential risk factors and groups likely to be radicalised (and join extremist organisations) will allow efforts aimed at preventing these developments.

Research methodology

Survey carried out by	CeSID Opinion Polling Agency and UNDP Serbia

Serbia in 2015. States, Perceptions, Beliefs, and Aspirations] (2015). Available online at library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/belgrad/12065.pdf.

[11] Ibid.

[12] *Ibid.*

[13] National Youth Strategy 2015-2025, available online at mos.gov.rs/mladisuzakon/attachments/article/389/nacionalna_strategija_za_mladeo101_cyr.pdf [in Serbian].

Fieldwork	Between 7 and 17 November 2016
Sample type and size	Proportional stratified representative sample of 2,600 young citizens (aged 15 to 30[14]) of the Republic of Serbia (excluding Kosovo[15])
Sample frame	Polling station catchment areas as the most reliable registration units
Selection of respondents	Random sampling without replacement
Survey method	Face-to-face at home
Survey instrument	Questionnaires, with separate questionnaire used for each sub-sample

The first sample stratum comprised 1,000 respondents in four of Serbia's largest cities (Belgrade, Novi Sad, Kragujevac, and Niš); the second stratum was made up of 1,000 respondents in South-West Serbia (municipalities of Novi Pazar and Tutin in the Raška Administrative District, and Prijepolje and Sjenica in the Zlatibor Administrative District); whilst the third stratum comprised 600 respondents from South Serbia (Bujanovac and Preševo municipalities, part of the Pčinja District). Polling station areas were used as sample frames as they represent the most reliable registration units; respondents were selected by random sampling without replacement.

Separate questionnaires were selected as survey instruments and administered to each sub-sample. The questionnaire for the first sub-sample (major cities) consisted of 117 questions, the second (South-West Serbia) was made up of 121 questions, and the third (South Serbia: Bujanovac and Preševo) had 121 questions. The questionnaire used in South Serbia was also translated into Albanian. The respondents were interviewed 'face-to-face', and all interviewers were trained to ensure balanced representation of respondents by gender and age.

Key comparative findings

[14]Although an 'extended transition to adulthood' may be observed in Serbia, whereby the 15 to 34 age group could be categorised as 'youth', to ensure data were comparable at both the national and the global levels we have restricted the sample to young people aged 15 to 30.

[15] All references to Kosovo should be understood in the context of the UN Security Council Resolution 1244.

Role and influence of global and regional politics

Except from young people from major cities, whose views are somewhat less traditional, youth in South-West and South Serbia report traditional patterns of thought that reflect long-established value systems and customs (respect for traditions, patriarchal behaviour, homophobia, and 'warrior spirit').

And whilst young people living in large urban centres would rather not see Serbia join the European Union or NATO, youth from South-West and South Serbia are in favour of the country joining the EU (and NATO as well, in the case of young people from South-West Serbia).

Across all regions, it is the youngest respondents – aged 15 to 19 – who are the most vocal and most likely to engage in violence. In that regard, it seems that this group is somewhat more radical than other respondents, which may be caused by lack of information, inexperience, superficiality, and insufficient awareness of the consequences or outcomes of their actions. Lack of interest in current affairs that may affect their country indicates just how prevalent ingrained patterns of thought are, and shows that youth are unwilling to critically re-examine their opinions.

Young people see ISIS in a negative light. Nevertheless, religious identity is the most highly developed amongst youth from South-West Serbia, who are more likely to give socially desirable responses when questioned about their views of ISIS.

The issues of Kosovo and Metohija and the Preševo Valley generate somewhat more radical opinions.

With the exception of young people from major cities, who are somewhat less conventional in their outlook, youth in South-West and South Serbia hold traditional patterns of thought that reflect long-established value systems and customs (respect for traditions, patriarchal behaviour, homophobia, and 'warrior spirit').[16] There are major differences in terms of how Serbia's potential membership in the EU and NATO is perceived in major cities and in South and South-West Serbia. Whilst young people living in urban centres do not wish to see the country join either the EU or NATO, youth in South and South-West Serbia would welcome the country's accession to the EU (with young people from Southern Serbia also in favour of Serbia joining NATO). This finding is likely in large part the consequence of dissatisfaction with European integrations, in particular the perceived requirement for Serbia to recognise Kosovan independence, but also of fatigue and broader scepticism of democracy and democratic values. Young people from the other two regions view the EU as 'a way out', a chance to join an extensive single market and access jobs. The hostility shown towards NATO in major cities and South-West Serbia is understandable, with the Western alliance viewed mainly in the context of the 1999 bombing

[16] Young people from major cities can be said to predominantly hold non-traditional views, although it must be noted that about one-third of those polled express traditional opinions. Nevertheless, traditionalism is much less pronounced in this region than elsewhere in the country. This finding is primarily the consequence of the declining numbers of farmers, rural residents, and less educated individuals (unlike in socialist times, when mass migrations from rural areas to towns took place), as these categories exhibit traditional views.

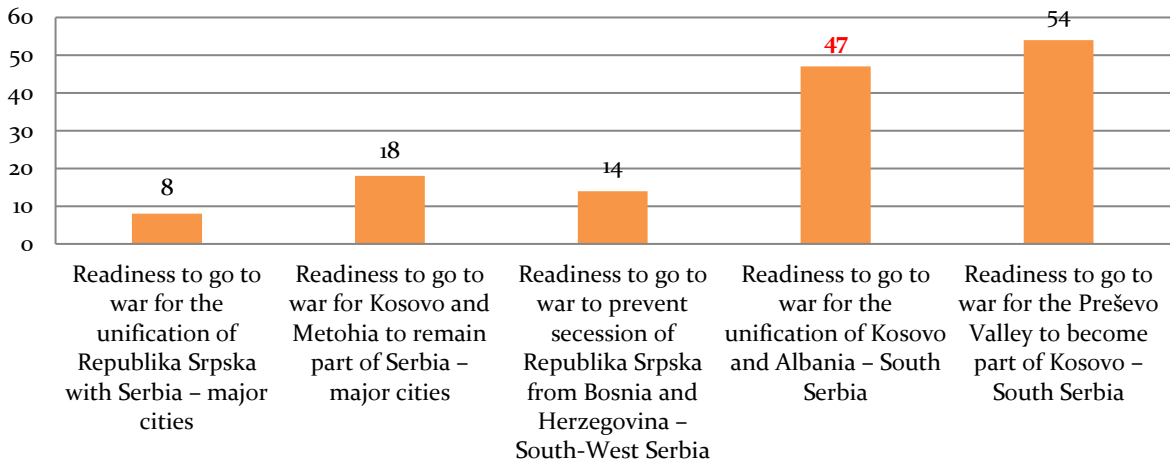
campaign and Kosovo's split from Serbia. On the other hand, ethnic Albanians from South Serbia hold opposing views, which comes as no surprise given that Albania is already a member of the North Atlantic alliance.

Although Serbs are quick to claim Kosovo as 'the heart of Serbia', young ethnic Serbs do not follow global developments that could allow them to draw parallels with similar issues faced by other nations. So, young people in Serbia have no opinions, or cannot articulate any, about the situation in Abkhazia or South Ossetia, or Russia's relations with either Ukraine or Georgia.

Another pressing global issue is ISIS/ISIL terrorism, with members of this group often taking responsibility for terrorist attacks. The majority of Muslim respondents see ISIS as a terrorist organisation, or a criminal entity with only its own interest at heart; such respondents claim not to have heard about – or at least not to personally know – anyone who advocates young people travelling to the Middle East to fight, and describe ISIS adherents as extremely religious' and 'crazy'. Nevertheless, young Bosniaks often give socially acceptable answers. The reliability of the findings is compromised by the fact that one in five (20 percent) of young ethnic Bosniaks claim not to have an opinion of ISIS, as public discourse presents the Islamic community as radical and backward when it comes to this issue. Although respondents report negative opinions of ISIS, their answers may be conditioned by what they deem is acceptable to society at large: this assumption is additionally borne out by their claimed unwillingness to act if a person close to them were to join ISIS (which is hardly likely if a close friend or family member were to be involved).

At the same time, young people from South Serbia are more than others ready to use violence to resolve political issues (see Chart 1). A total of 54 percent of those polled would be ready to fight for the Preševo Valley to become part of Kosovo; nearly one-half (47 percent) would be prepared to go to war over the unification of Kosovo and Albania. When explaining this finding one should keep in mind the fact that as many as 58 percent of young people from South Serbia claim they would be ready to fight for their people in the event of war. We have also seen a notably high percentage of traditionalist respondents in this region.

Chart 1. *Readiness to go to war*



A review of the chapter on regional politics and political developments (Republika Srpska, Kosovo and Metohia, Kosovo, Albania, and the Preševo Valley) reveals the following findings.

Table 2. Drivers of radicalism: Role and influence of global and regional politics

	Minor	Moderate	Considerable	Major
South-West Serbia				
South Serbia				
Major cities				

Notwithstanding a number of significant exceptions, young people reject violence as a means for attaining political objectives. Violence is at its most acceptable as a solution for problems caused by global and regional politics amongst South Serbian youth, whilst young people in South-Western Serbia and major cities do not feel violence can be used to resolve these issues.

Convergence of horizontal inequalities: Economic, civic, and political exclusion, and limited opportunities for upward mobility

Hope and optimism are the most commonly reported feelings amongst young people aged between 15 and 30. The younger the respondent, the more pronounced these positive emotions. Optimism decreases gradually with age, whilst feelings such as concern, fear, or even anger and rage, see a slight increase. The more educated a respondent, the less likely he or she to be optimistic, and the readier to voice fear and concern.

Youth still at school are moderately optimistic when it comes to their future job opportunities. Although young people demonstrated broad optimism about the future, they are by and large mistrustful of social actors and do not believe in equal opportunity for employment in the public sector. One in five young ethnic Albanians (21 percent) feel their ethnicity is the key reason why

they are unable to find jobs, but very few Bosniaks (five percent) believe they are unemployed due to their religious affiliation.

Young people are very poorly horizontally mobile.

Youth across all three regions tend to avoid solitude. The percentage of young people spending their leisure time alone or mostly alone does not exceed one-fifth of those polled.

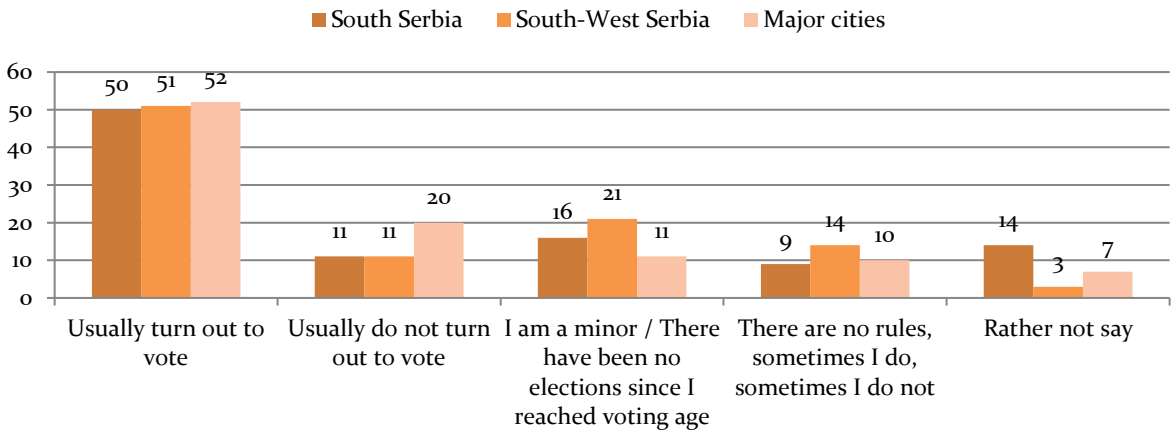
On average, young people from South Serbia remain unemployed for longest, followed by youth from South-West Serbia, with young people from major cities able to find jobs the soonest. South Serbia is also the least economically developed region. Young ethnic Albanians feel job advertisements are rigged and that they are discriminated against due to their ethnicity when applying for work.

Young people in Serbia are most often not economically independent due to major youth unemployment. Extending education period is also a strategy to prevent entry into the labour market in the belief that greater qualifications will allow better employability in an already saturated marketplace. Consequently, the majority of Serbian youth have not left their families of origin and live with their parents. Long-term, structural unemployment leads to economic exclusion, which leaves numerous psychological and social consequences. The Serbian South is widely recognised as a poor and economically underdeveloped area, and our findings bear out this belief. Unemployed persons from South Serbia do not believe they will be able to find work in the next year, and feel that job advertisements are rigged and (if Albanian) that they are discriminated against on grounds of ethnicity. This is a very significant finding: with both remaining regions not particularly highly developed (and struggling with high unemployment and large numbers of people not working in the fields they initially trained for), the very perception of ethnic discrimination may lead to competition between ethnic groups. Moreover, young ethnic Albanians' perceived discrimination is also evidenced by the fact that they avoid applying for jobs outside their region as they believe job advertisements are rigged and that they lack the necessary connections (unlike respondents from South-West Serbia, who do not seek jobs elsewhere mainly because they are unwilling to leave their home region). These issues lead young Albanians to feel more pessimistic and fearful of their future than ethnic Serbs and Bosniaks/Muslims.

On the other hand, although young people from South-West Serbia claim not to be as economically disadvantaged as their peers from other regions (although they could not be considered 'upper-class' by any stretch of the imagination) and do not feel ethnic discrimination is behind their poor employment prospects, they nonetheless feel rage, anger, and frustration, as well as the desire to change something, by force if necessary – one in four respondents from this region share this view. But even they see their current social and economic position in a negative light, young people in Serbia lack a culture of civic activism and participation. Youth engagement across all three regions mainly takes place against a backdrop of sports clubs, art societies, and hobby associations. Civil society organisations devoted to youth activism and social or political

engagement take the back seat. In addition to being reserved when asked to name organisations they feel close to, respondents are similarly reticent to cite political parties – most young people claim not to trust political parties and see none as representing their interests. And yet this does not mean young people are apolitical, as is often said. Most young people do turn out to vote (see Chart 2), and, as we shall see later, ideological and political affiliation is a key part of youth identity.

Chart 2. *Youth turnout in elections*



Young people's role models are people from their environment, parents, and athletes. Yet young people from South-West Serbia cite politicians more frequently, but also name the prophet Muhammad (at 12 percent, with an additional three percent citing religious leaders and preachers, unlike respondents in South Serbia). This finding is in line with the finding that religious identity is most important for youth from South-West Serbia (although South Serbian Albanians also see it as the crucial factor), as well as that young people from South-West Serbia most often claim they are true believers who respect everything their faith preaches, as well as that the religious community has exceptionally great influence in their area (see Charts 3 and 4).

Chart 3. Which of the following statements about religion best describes you? (in %)

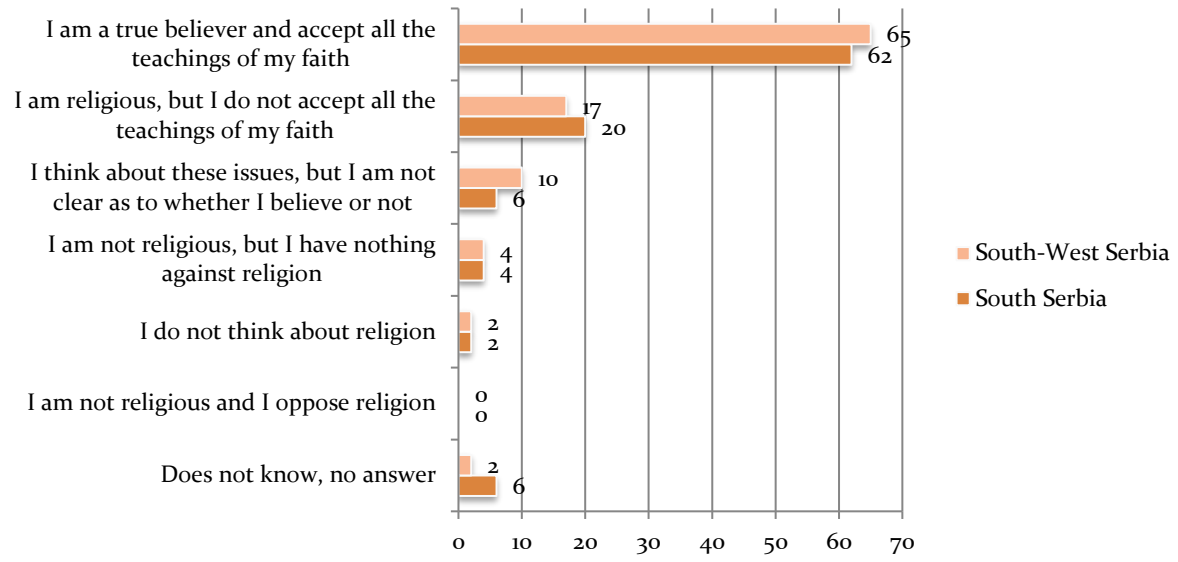


Chart 4. In your opinion, what is the influence of the religious community in your area? (in %)

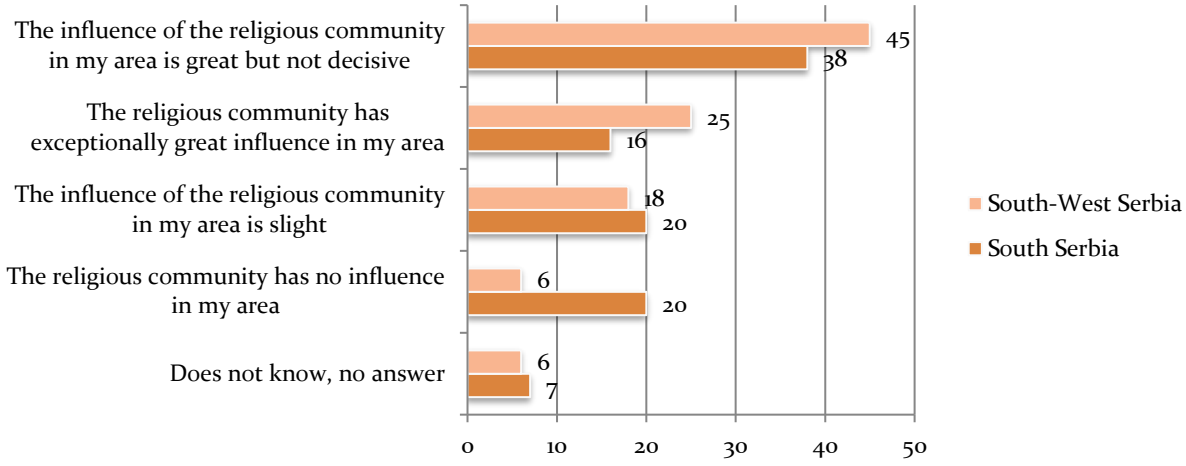


Table 3. Drivers of radicalism: Convergence of horizontal inequalities (Economic, civic, and political exclusion, and limited opportunities for upward mobility)

	Minor	Moderate	Considerable	Major
South-West Serbia			■	
South Serbia		■		
Major cities	■			

Young people most commonly report feelings of hope and optimism. Frustration, rage, and readiness to make changes – even if by force – due to economic exclusion and lack of

opportunities for upward mobility are more in evidence amongst young people from South-West Serbia than in other regions.

Horizontal mobility and civic participation are exceptionally limited amongst Serbian youth, with regular voting in elections as the only form of political engagement.

Convergence of horizontal inequalities: Injustice, corruption and mistreatment of certain groups

Young Bosniaks and Albanians most often perceive religious discrimination, with young Albanians also suffering discrimination based on ethnicity and country of origin.

Both minorities and the majority population see themselves as victims of injustice.

The most commonly seen forms of discrimination in major cities are based on economic status (six percent); in South-West Serbia, religion (13 percent); and in South Serbia, ethnicity and political affiliation (both 22 percent).

Young residents of major cities are the readiest to engage in social contact with 'different' respondents, followed by respondents from South-West Serbia (who in fact do have the most contacts with young people of other religions), whilst young people from South Serbia are somewhat less prepared to spend time with persons of different backgrounds: the only social relationship more than one-half of all respondents' report is spending time with more well-off people.

More than one-half of all young people from South-West Serbia believe children should have access to all textbooks in their native language as a means of preserving their identity (61 percent), with the same view shared by 89 percent of respondents from South Serbia. Young ethnic Albanians are much more prone to expressing dissatisfaction with injustice: 67 percent feel all key positions in their town are reserved for ethnic Serbs, and that ethnic Albanians are absent from top posts, especially in law enforcement and the judiciary (as reported by 55 percent of those polled). More than one-half of this group also agree with the statement that 'it would be best for all Albanians to live in one country' (76 percent), as well as that they would not 'feel safe' as long as armed Gendarmes patrol Preševo and Bujanovac.

For young ethnic Serbs the process of facing up to the past involves relativizing past events, whilst for young Muslims this entails rejecting any sense of guilt. Ethnic Serbs mostly view their own guilt as being equal to that of other peoples (32 percent), Bosniaks are readier to feel as victims (31 percent), and ethnic Albanians mostly reject any responsibility ('my people did nothing wrong', at 41 percent).

In addition to inter-ethnic competition for resources, discrimination on grounds of gender, economic status, religious affiliation, and ethnic background can trigger behaviour that exceeds the bounds of what is allowed or socially acceptable, especially with young people. In such situations, neither individual nor collective breaches of acceptable norms can be ruled out, and

a social group may resort to violence to 'right wrongs' or safeguard the rights it enjoys. Young people from South-West and South Serbia are again the most vocal here: they report most often feeling discrimination on grounds of religion (nearly 30 percent of all respondents claim having felt this form of discrimination 'sometimes', 'often', and 'very often'). Moreover, in South Serbia as many as 44 percent of those polled report having felt discrimination on grounds of ethnicity ('sometimes', 'often', and 'very often'), with 41 percent also claiming to have been discriminated against due to their place or country of origin. These findings additionally substantiate the conclusions drawn above about the potential for intolerance to develop in this region due to inter-ethnic competition. Also, young people from South Serbia see themselves as additionally discriminated against on grounds of political affiliation. And yet although these young people feel discrimination, they also by and large have no friends of backgrounds different from their own (of other faiths, ethnicities, economic standing, sexual orientation, etc.).

It is particularly noteworthy that both Serbia's minorities and the majority population believe they are facing injustice. Young Bosniaks and young Albanians both feel that, although these ethnic groups constitute the majority in their respective towns, all key local positions are reserved for ethnic Serbs, with minority residents almost wholly absent from law enforcement and the judiciary. Minority groups are unreservedly in favour of all textbooks being available in native languages to ensure their identity is safeguarded. On the other hand, young ethnic Serbs feel that minorities enjoy greater rights than Serbia's majority population, with opinion nearly equally split as to whether minority candidates stand greater chances of getting jobs regardless of qualifications. In other words, mutual intolerance and perceptions of injustice appear from both sides. Theory tells us that such circumstances could lead to conflict, but only if a set of preconditions is met: in addition to feelings of injustice, deprivation, and being in competition for key resources, the contest for resources must take place at the collective rather than the individual level.

The region's history is weighed down by both conflict and civil warfare. Although coming to terms with the past has been a slow process, being able to do so would allow social communities to, distance themselves from past crimes, and legitimise democracy and respect for others. Unfortunately, even though respondents' views do demonstrate some readiness to face up to the past (youngest people – 33 percent – from major cities believe their people is just as much to blame for past events as other groups), this has not reached desirable levels. The more relativized the past, the greater the opportunity for abuse of historical events. Blame for crimes is assigned elsewhere to keep ethnic pride intact. Serbian youth are particularly ready to relativize the past and seek justification for it: most ethnic Serb respondents blame 'circumstances 'for any 'misdeeds' that were committed. 'It is usually inherent internal traits that are used to explain the positive behaviour of one's own group and the negative behaviour of an alien one, whilst the negative behaviour of one's own group and positive behaviour of aliens is primarily interpreted as a consequence of external events. So, in one's own group, those guilty of crime are sought in a narrow group of criminals (...) leaving us free to identify with our own group without disturbing our self-perception. By narrowing the scope of guilt and shifting it onto others we unburden both

our own group and the image of ourselves'.[17] On the other hand, young ethnic Bosniaks are less ready to accept any guilt, and mainly feel that their people have done nothing wrong. Such repression of the past only contributes to the internalisation of intolerance. No-one likes to harm the positive image of one's self: doing so jeopardises our identities, the factors that define us.

Table 4. Drivers of radicalism: Inequality, injustice, and human rights abuses

	Minor	Moderate	Considerable	Major
South-West Serbia				
South Serbia				
Major cities				

Both minority and majority populations perceive injustice. Young ethnic Albanians from South Serbia feel a great deal of discrimination and inequality.

Rejection of growing diversity in society

Although young people are sceptical of the institutions of society, mistrust political parties, and see no existing organised political force as representative of their interests, they still believe they are ideologically and politically oriented and that this orientation is a major element of their social identity.

For Muslim youth, religious identity is stronger than any other form of identification.

The percentage of religious young people is exceptionally high in South and South-West Serbia, with most accepting all the tenets of their faith. Most respondents who unreservedly accept the teachings of their religion are to be found in the youngest cohorts.

Young ethnic Bosniaks and Albanians exhibit greater ethnic distance towards one another than towards ethnic Serbs.

Young people from major cities not only differentiate between migrants and refugees, but also show greater social distance towards migrants than refugees; young people from South and South-West Serbia exhibit pronounced social distance towards these groups, but do not distinguish between them.

Social identity is determined primarily by two processes: the perception of likeness with members of one's own group, and the perception of difference from members of other groups.

[17]Kuljić, T. (2002). *Prevladavanje prošlosti: uzroci i pravci promene slike istorije krajem XX veka [Overcoming the past: Reasons for and directions of change in the image of history in the late 20th century]*. Beograd: Helsinški odbor za ljudska prava.

It is important to underline that an individual can have as many social identities as there are groups he or she identifies with. These differing identities vary in importance (or 'salience'), so an individual tends to identify to a greater degree with groups that are more prominent in his or her day-to-day life.[18] At the same time, an individual's identity is tightly bound with social structure. In that regard, everyone is determined first and foremost by his or her role in society as either professor, student, mother, brother, black or white, Albanian or Serbian. In practice, this means that, when a person answers the question of 'who am I', he or she will first cite social status or social role – 'I am a student', 'I am a dentist', 'I am a Serb', 'I am a man', etc., and only then voice an opinion of him or herself and his or her characteristics ('I am a satisfied person', 'I am a conservative person', etc.).[19]

Ideological and political identity appears as a significant and highly-ranked determinant of identity across all ranks and regions covered by this research. This form of identity is among the first three most commonly cited by respondents across all three ranks in major cities and South Serbia, and among the three most frequently cited in the second and third rank with those polled in South-West Serbia. This finding tells us that, although young people mistrust the institutions of society, and in spite of pronounced opposition to political parties, young respondents believe no existing political party is able to represent their interests. Findings relating to identity show us that youth actually believe they do have an ideological and political orientation, but that no political party in Serbia recognises it (whether mainstream or not).

In addition, whilst for young people from South and South-West Serbia religious identity trumps all other forms of identification, with local attachments also seen as important, youth from major cities do not see religious and local identity as significant at all. The predominantly religious self-identification with young people from South and South-West Serbia comes as no surprise, since Islam is the primary – or at least a major – factor in the political identities of all populations of the former Yugoslavia formed within the Islamic cultural circle. In addition, faith has throughout history been a key distinguishing trait and rallying point of nations. Local identity is much less pronounced in major cities than in the other two regions, but generational and professional identity are more evident in major urban centres.

The extent to which a society rejects diversity is made apparent at the practical level indiscrimination against particular groups, and can also be measured through social and ethnic distance shown by its members. Young residents of major cities exhibit the greatest distance towards ethnic Albanians, followed by the Roma, Bosniaks/Muslims, Croats, and Hungarians. Youth of South-West and South Serbia manifest the greatest distance towards the Roma. After

[18]Huić, A. (2004). Nacionalni i Europski identitet građana Zagreba i Novog Sada [National and European identity of the residents of Zagreb and Novi Sad]. Undergraduate thesis, Filozofskifakultet u Zagrebu

[19]Sekulić, D. (2010). „Pojam identiteta" ['Concept of identity'], in: (ur.) Budak N, Katunarić V, *Hrvatski nacionalni identitet u globalizirajućem svijetu [Croatian national identity in a globalising world]*. Zagreb: Pravni fakultet: Centar za demokraciju i pravo "Miko Tripalo". Available online attripalo.hr/knjige/NacIdent/sekulic.pdf [in Croatian].

the Roma, the greatest gulf exists between respondents living in South-West Serbia and ethnic Albanians, with ethnic Serbs coming only third. Whilst also the most distant from the Roma, young people from South Serbia exhibit the same degree of ethnic distance towards both ethnic Bosniaks/Muslims and ethnic Serbs. Ethnic Serbs tend to be distant from groups they were once in conflict with (excepting the Roma, towards whom distance has traditionally been great), with the dividing line also based on religion (ethnic Albanians and Bosniaks are Muslim, whilst ethnic Croats and Hungarians are Catholic).[20] Interestingly, however, although they share the same religion, young Albanians and Bosniaks show more pronounced ethnic distance towards one another than towards ethnic Serbs (see table below). This is evidently the consequence of prejudices and stereotypes that originate in the mutual ignorance of these two peoples, which may sometimes count for more than open hostility in war. Opinion polls have long revealed a substantial gulf towards the Roma, and, unlike other peoples, Serbia has never gone to war with this ethnic group. Theory tells us that more frequent and intense contacts often lead to less distance, but this is not so with the Roma. The issue here is that the relationship with the Roma has traditionally been burdened by cultural barriers and norms, prejudices, and stereotypes that have proven difficult to eradicate.

Table 5. *Ethnic distance shown by young people*

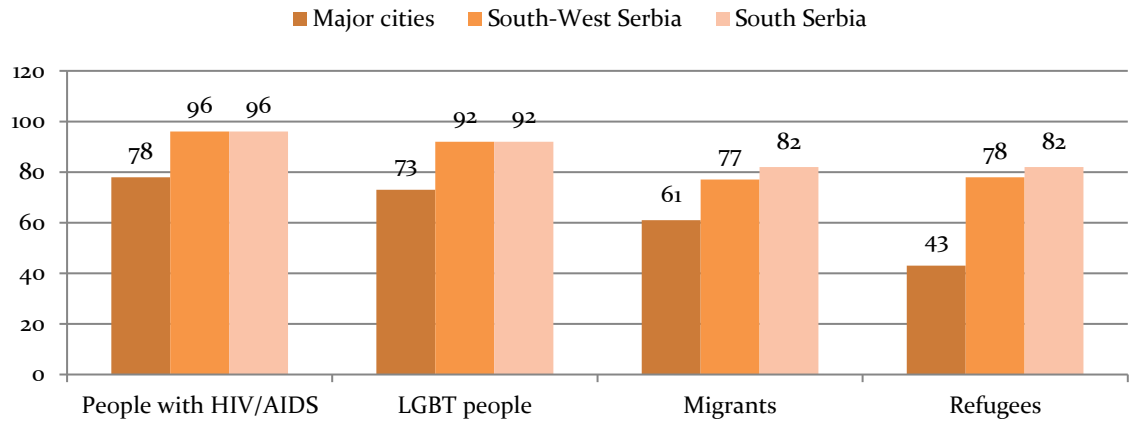
Greatest ethnic distance	**Major cities**	**South-West Serbia**	**South Serbia**
First place	Albanians	Roma	Roma
Second place	Roma	Albanians	Bosniaks/Muslims
Third place	Bosniaks/Muslims	Serbs	Serbs

Social distance can be understood as holding views that predispose one to discriminate against a marginal group. Youth from major cities show the most social distance towards the following three groups: people with HIV/AIDS (78 percent); LGBT people (73 percent); and migrants(61 percent), whilst young people from South and South-West Serbia exhibit the greatest social distance towards people with HIV/AIDS (96 percent);the LGBT population(92 percent);and refugees and migrants (with respondents not differentiating between the two; the distance shown towards both of these groups by young people from South-West Serbia is 77 percent, whilst for those polled in South Serbia the figure is 82 percent); see Chart 5. Young people from major cities show the least social distance towards people with disabilities (38 percent); although the percentages are still considerable, young people from South and South-West Serbia exhibit the least social distance towards people with physical disability (young people from South Serbia more so, at 59 percent), and adherents of minority religious communities (young people from

[20] The dominant form of nationalism in the Balkans is the so-called 'ethnic' type, meaning that peoples most often in conflict have usually been adherents of differing faiths, with religion being a primary constituent factor of nationhood.

South-West Serbia more so, at 69 percent). No statistically significant differences become apparent when responses are disaggregated by socio-demographic characteristics, meaning that young people in Serbia are generally burdened by preconceptions and stereotypical views of these social groups, which indicates Serbian youth are insufficiently knowledgeable about HIV/AIDS and have deep-seated prejudices towards LGBT people and migrants/refugees.

Chart 5. *Social distance shown by young people (in %, closest social contact)*



Public discourse sees refugees as people fleeing armed conflict or persecution, whilst migrants are generally viewed as economic immigrants: they leave their home countries not because they are exposed to direct threats of persecution or death, but, rather, mainly to improve their prospects in life by finding work, or, in some cases, to get an education, join their family, or for other reasons. Our findings show that young people from major cities are the best able to distinguish between migrants and refugees, whilst the number of young people from South and South-West Serbia able to make this distinction is within the margin of error. Young respondents from major cities not only differentiate between migrants and refugees, but also show greater social distance towards migrants than towards refugees (61 vs 43 percent).

Table 6. Drivers of radicalism: Rejection of growing diversity in society

	Minor	Moderate	Considerable	Major
South-West Serbia				
South Serbia				
Major cities				

Young people from Serbian (traditionally) poorly accept diversity in society, but do not see it as a major threat either.

Dissatisfaction with and rejection of the socio-economic and political system

Young people mistrust institutions: the media and political institutions (President of the Republic, Parliament, and Government) enjoy the lowest confidence. Religious institutions are trusted the most. Urban youth are the least trusting of any Serbian institution.

Mistrust of political parties and lack of identification with their manifestos is at its most pronounced in major cities.

Young people from South Serbia are the readiest to accept democratic values. Youth from large urban centres, conversely, tend either to be undecided or not have an opinion, or reject democracy to a greater or lesser extent than their Southern peers.

According to the findings of the survey, young people in Serbia trust institutions even less than the general population do. Youth from major cities are the most mistrustful of all Serbian institutions when compared with their peers from the other two regions observed, and have the least confidence in the media and political institutions. Young people from South-West Serbia are the least homogeneous group when compared with their peers from large urban centres and South Serbia: except for some institutions (the media and political bodies, which they have no confidence in), their opinions are divided, with about one-third each mistrusting institutions, trusting them, and undecided. Young people tend to have the greatest confidence in religious organisations: nearly one-half of those polled report this view.

Young people from South Serbia have the least confidence in the Gendarmerie, the Serbian President, Parliament, and the media. Young ethnic Serbs in this region trust the Gendarmerie and police, whereas young ethnic Albanians are, conversely, mistrustful primarily of the Gendarmerie and, to a lesser extent, the police. The reason for this view lies in the fact that no ethnic Albanians serve in the Gendarmerie at all, whilst only some are members of the police force. Yet, notably, young people in this region are in general much more trusting of the police, political parties, and local authorities than their peers elsewhere. Nevertheless, respondents from South Serbia trust religious institutions the most.

The majority of violent extremist groups offer alternatives to the dominant ideological narrative of free markets, democracy, and multi-cultural diversity. Young people living in major urban centres and South-West Serbia are more likely to be either undecided or not have an opinion, or to reject democracy to a greater or lesser extent than their peers from Southern Serbia. The most radical view – that there is no difference between a democratic and a non-democratic regime –is espoused by on average 15 percent of young people in all three regions observed. These are for the most part young men aged between 15 and 25, poorly educated, and unemployed. On the other hand, young people from South Serbia are the readiest to embrace democratic values. This position can be interpreted with reference to their reported trust in institutions, or lack thereof. Although young people in general do not trust the institutions of society, respondents from South Serbia have more confidence in the establishment than their peers in the other two regions, especially to political parties and local authorities.

The views described, the lack of civic engagement by young people, and the lack of legitimacy that social and state institutions face among youth groups can all be explained by the fact that the Serbian population is yet to embrace what is termed 'participative political culture'. One can still view that the 'subject-type of political culture' remaining predominant. This type of political relationship is characterised by citizens who are aware of the system as a whole and hold political expectations of the central authority, but are essentially politically passive, unprepared for active political participation or any greater engagement in standing up to existing state structures, forms of government, or established political authorities.[21] In other words, the democratic order has not yet become fully consolidated in Serbia, as democracy, evidently, is not 'the only game in town'.[22]

Table 7. Drivers of radicalism: Dissatisfaction with and rejection of the socio-economic and political system

	Minor	Moderate	Considerable	Major
South-West Serbia				
South Serbia				
Major cities				

There is moderate rejection of the existing socio-economic system, which, together with the perceived lack of institutional legitimacy, constitutes an expression of dissatisfaction with the socio-economic position of young people in Serbia. This observation is also related to Serbia's political culture, which is yet to undergo transition to a 'participatory' model.

Weak state capacity and failing security

Young Serbians believe that personal relationships will guarantee their safety more effectively than the state and its institutions.

The greatest proportion of young people who feel unsafe can be found in South Serbia, with the percentages somewhat lower but still significant in both other regions, South-West Serbia and major cities. However, encouragingly, feelings of security are still more widespread.

The Roma contribute the most to feelings of insecurity in major urban centres, with 31 percent reporting this view. Insecurity grows as one moves from one's closest surroundings (one's neighbourhood) towards the national level, as respondents mistrust institutions, especially the judiciary that purports to guarantee the rule of law.

[21]Vujčić, V. (1998) „Tipologija političke kulture" ['Typology of political culture']. *Polit. misao*, Vol. XXXV, No. 4.
[22]Orlović, S. (2008) „Klasična i savremena shvatanja demokratije" ['Classical and modern notions of democracy']. *Godišnjak*, Fakultet političkih nauka.

The youngest respondents (the 15 to 19 age group) from South Serbia mistrust everyone to an above-average extent.

There are well-developed political institutions in Serbia that are able to function notwithstanding all objections directed at their legitimacy and efficiency. this is confirmed through the fact that young people believe they can develop their potentials in Serbia, whereas reported mistrust of institutions remains a form of protest against corruption and nepotism in society, and in particular against widespread insecurity and lack of economic welfare. This still does not mean that the state's institutions are wholly functional, as evidenced by young people's greater reliance on family and friends for security rather than on institutions. Nevertheless, two important trends emerge: safety outweighs insecurity across all regions; and insecurity increases as one moves from one's closest surroundings (one's neighbourhood) towards the most general level (the country); see table below.

Table 8. *Feelings of safety (in %)*

To what extent do you feel safe...	**Unsafe**			**Neither safe nor unsafe**			**Safe**		
	Major cities	***South-West Serbia***	***South Serbia***	***Major cities***	***South-West Serbia***	***South Serbia***	***Major cities***	***South-West Serbia***	***South Serbia***
...in your neighbourhood?	14	13	29	15	13	6	69	73	61
...in your area/town/city?	15	13	26	19	19	6	65	67	65
...in Serbia?	21	22	27	26	33	34	52	42	36

Young people from South Serbia aged between 15 and 19 are more likely to report not trusting anyone to protect themselves and their families. This finding is all the more significant as the preceding battery of questions reveals young people from these region trust institutions to a significantly above-average degree than their peers from the other two regions. This means that the group either defines and assess security through the performance of the Gendarmerie to date (which they mistrust), or that they have given socially-acceptable answers to the preceding set of questions.

When respondents are asked to single out an institution they would approach in the event of running into 'trouble with the law', most cite lawyers, the police, and prominent individuals in their hometown. In other words, the relatively weak capacity of the state is directly evidenced by two factors: respondents have limited confidence in institutions, particularly in the judiciary, the guarantor of the rule of law; and, more prominently, young people feel less safe at the national level than in their neighbourhood or city/town (which indicates distance towards, and mistrust of, one of the state's key functions).

Table 9. Drivers of radicalism: Weak state capacity and failing security

	Minor	Moderate	Considerable	Major
South-West Serbia				
South Serbia				
Major cities				

Youth in Serbia do not believe the judiciary can guarantee respect for human rights. Law enforcement bodies and informal contacts affect feelings of safety, observance of human rights, and social equality.

Changing global culture and banalisation of violence in the media and entertainment

Violence in the media has become the norm, with young people regarding it as commonplace. Youth are somewhat more likely to respond that 'there is no more violence now than before, but the media often exaggerate it for the sake of ratings'.

Although young people for the most part do not watch reality television, in two regions there is broad agreement that the state should ban such programming: 70 percent of those polled in South-West Serbia and major cities agree that the state should intervene to take these broadcasts off the air.

Violence is increasingly present in the media, and young people spend a major proportion of their time watching or reading media content.

Youth are major Internet users, both for social media and communication with friends and family.

In the late 20th century, mass media begun to complement traditional channels of cultural communication, and are now, into the 21st century, increasingly supplanting them to become primary creators of social reality. Telecommunications technology has been the key technical driver of globalisation, linking the most remote parts of the planet and promoting free flow of information and the creation of a global media market. Violence is omnipresent in modern society and has become embedded in many aspects of today's life, such as art, culture, sports, and media content. Media outlets, and in particular the tabloid press and commercial broadcasters (always on the lookout for higher audience shares and greater profits), as well as video games, provide an abundance of violent material. Given how much time we spend consuming media content (television in particular, with Serbians watching more than five hours of TV every day), violent content is becoming an integral part of our daily lives, we are slowly becoming accustomed to it, and it – as conveyed by the media – is increasingly turning into a 'normal' part of our lives.

As is only to be expected given shifting media consumption habits, television viewing figures obtained from our young respondents are lower than the Serbian average. Young people who watch television every day do so the most in South-West Serbia (four hours per day), followed

by the four major cities (three hours), and, finally, South Serbia (two hours). Regardless of the growing importance of the Internet, we can conclude that young people who watch TV on a daily basis still spend a large proportion of their leisure time in front of their TV sets, which potentially exposes them to the violent images that all media promote. Cable channels are becoming increasingly popular, allowing access to a wealth of content, not only in real time but also through delayed viewing, with audiences able to access the same broadcasts on multiple digital platforms.

Young people are somewhat more likely to state that 'there is no more violence now than before, but the media often exaggerate it for the sake of ratings', showing that violence has become the norm and is seen as commonplace by our respondents. Thus, more than one-half of all young people across all the three regions share the perception that violence is not on the increase, but that media outlets are promoting it in their desire for audience shares and ratings. Young people claim not to watch reality television (which abounds in scenes of violence), and that they would prefer to see it banned, in all likelihood due to the (often) uncritical stance towards reality broadcasts assumed by parts of society (which can in some instances even take the form of all-out witch hunts).

The key conclusion here is that young people use the Internet more than they watch television. Thus, young people from South West Serbian use the Internet for on average seven hours every day, with youth the other two regions coming in at five hours each. Young people use the Internet primarily to access social media and communicate with friends and family.

Table 10. Drivers of radicalism: Changing global culture and banalisation of violence in the media and entertainment

	Minor	Moderate	Considerable	Major
South-West Serbia				
South Serbia				
Major cities				

Although violence in the media has become commonplace, young people are aware of its existence and do not approve of it.

Conclusion

A key factor in preventing violent extremism is to define what leads to radicalisation of beliefs, and to determine which stages young people drawn into violent extremism go through. Although no firm cause-and-effect link has been proven, research carried out to date has shown that these phases include a young person's initial alienation from institutions and social groups, which leads to him or her seeking a new identity; this is then followed by the radicalisation process, most often through ideologies that help channel the accumulated frustration and anger;

with, finally, the young person transitioning from radical beliefs to violent behaviour.[23] But, obviously, it is impossible to claim that all alienated individuals will necessarily embrace radical views, or that all radically oriented persons will have to cross the border into violent behaviour.

Findings of the Research show that there is no evidence to suggest the existence of a societal process which drives young people into radical or extremist behaviour in a major way. However, findings also identify moderate or considerable impact of several drivers in each of the surveyed regions.

The table below breaks down drivers of radicalism/violent extremism by region. In **South Serbia**, the drivers that should be addressed and made the focus of preventive measures particularly include the role of global and regional politics; injustice, corruption and mistreatment of certain groups; and rejection of growing diversity in society. In **South-West Serbia**, in addition to rejection of diversity, convergence of horizontal inequalities should also be taken into consideration (with many respondents in this region voicing anger, rage, frustration, and readiness for change even if by force). These issues are less apparent in **major cities**, where dissatisfaction with the socio-economic and political system is somewhat more pronounced, but nevertheless not more than moderately so.

Driver of radicalism/violent extremism	Region	
	Moderate	Considerable
Role and influence of global and regional politics	—	South Serbia
Convergence of horizontal inequalities (Economic, civic, and political exclusion, and limited opportunities for upward mobility)	—	South-West Serbia
Injustice, corruption and mistreatment of certain groups	Major cities	South Serbia
Rejection of growing diversity in society	Major cities	South Serbia South-West Serbia
Dissatisfaction with and rejection of the socio-economic and political system	Major cities	—
Weak state capacity and failing security	—	—
Changing global culture and banalisation of violence in the media and entertainment	—	—

Rejection of diversity is an issue that prevention should especially focus on across all three regions. In general, social and ethnic distance are very prominent, whilst intolerance exists both between minorities and between them and the majority population (in both directions).

In sum, our survey of youth in Serbia has endeavoured to provide a general overview of the opinions of young people and draw attention to any weak points, pressures, and triggers that could lead to radicalisation.

[23] UNDP Discussion Paper (2016): Preventing Violent Extremism through Inclusive Development and the Promotion of Tolerance and Respect for Diversity A development response to addressing radicalization and violent extremism. Available online at undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/conflict-prevention/discussion-paper---preventing-violent-extremism-through-inclusiv.html.