

1.6 Evidence-based youth policy

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Political Commitment to Evidence-Based Youth Policy

There is no uniform definition of evidence-based youth policy in Serbia. However, policy making takes into account the analysis of the wellbeing and living conditions of young people and the challenges that they experience. According to the National Youth Strategy, the Ministry of Youth and Sport is responsible for establishing a single and comprehensive monitoring system. The Ministry, the Government Working Group for the Implementation of the Strategy, and the Youth Council, are in charge of performing regular annual evaluation. The line ministries are obligated to prepare the report for the Government. As for progress reports on the implementation of the National Youth Strategy 2015-2025, the Ministry and the Youth Council are those institutionally in charge.

In addition to the research of the Ministry of Youth and Sport, research in the field of youth is carried out by other institutions as well.

- [The Ministry of the Interior](#) (Ministarstvo unutrašnjih poslova),
- [the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia](#) (Republi?ki zavod za statistiku),
- [the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit](#) (Tim za socijalno uklju?ivanje i smanjenje siromaštva),

as well as the institutes:

- [Institute for Sociological Research](#) (Institut za sociološka istraživanja) and
- [Institute for Psychology](#) of the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade (Institut za psihologiju Filozofskog fakulteta u Beogradu),
- [Institute of Public Health of Serbia “Dr. Milan Jovanovic Batut”](#) (Institut za javno zdravlje Srbije dr „Milan Jovanovi? Batut?”),
- [Center for Politicological Research and Public Opinion](#) of the Institute of Social Sciences

in Belgrade (Centar za politikološka istraživanja i javno mnjenje Instituta društvenih nauka u Beogradu),

- Institute of Economic Sciences in Belgrade (Institut ekonomskih nauka u Beogradu),
- Institute for Development and Innovation (Institut za razvoj i inovacije)
- as well as various non-governmental organisations conduct research on youth position and needs, youth employment, youth policy, etc.

Most of the available research results do not address the persons aged 15 to 30 and youth category is addressed in a general way. The position of young people and its trends can be determined on the basis of individual reports from the Ministry of Youth and Sport, national and international institutions and organizations.

Therefore, the National Youth Strategy 2015-2025 provides a specific objective to foster better understanding of the youth based on relevant data to enable good development planning and resources allocation in all areas of society and at all levels of government. To achieve this goal, it is envisaged to:

- establish a National Institute for Youth Research by 2025,
- support the formation of the National Network of Young Researchers, and
- ensure regular surveys on the needs of young people and on the topics of interest and to use the obtained results in the development of future plans.

The monitoring of the implementation of the National Youth Strategy and its Action Plans is planned to be conducted at regular intervals (monthly, quarterly and annually). The intervals depend on the type of activity and on the deadlines set for their implementation. Likewise, the evaluation should be conducted regularly, once a year. It should use different sources of information and be guided by the indicators set in the National Youth Strategy and its Action Plans.

In practice, the Ministry publishes research/studies in cooperation with different research actors using the indicators set in the Strategy. This data is taken into consideration on different levels of youth policy making. For instance, the goals and objectives of the National Youth Strategy and its Action Plans are widely based on evidence from this data and from other studies conducted by different researchers.

The development of the alternative data collection networks is also supported by the Strategy, as well as the creation of records and the locally established network of data sources.

Cooperation between policy-making and research

There are different ways in which cooperation between policy-making and research is established.

Besides the research conducted by the Ministry of Youth and Sport itself, the research

conducted by higher education institutions, relevant research institutions (e.g. National Employment Service, Statistical Office, Institute of Public Health of Serbia, etc.), organisations and experts in the field serve as the ground for the development of the legal and other official state documents. The following resources served as a basis for the preparation of the National Youth Strategy:

- [Report on the implementation of the National Youth Strategy and Action Plan 2008 – 2014](#),
- [The Youth - Our Present](#),
- Youth and Public Policy in Serbia,
- [A study on indicators of youth policy in the Republic of Serbia](#),
- [Analysis of the situation of young people in the strategies of the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the recent sociological research](#),
- [Indicators for monitoring the population of young people in Serbia](#),
- [Research on Position and Needs of Youth in Serbia](#).

The Ministry of Youth and Sport also cooperates with international organisations and institutions on external evaluation. E.g. the Ministry in 2014 in cooperation with United Nations Population Fund (UNPFA) developed the evaluation report on the implementation of the National Youth Strategy 2008-2014 and Action plan 2009 – 2014.

The Ministry, as a part of its regular activities, publishes on its website important [research reports](#) regarding the future of youth in Serbia, youth needs and situation, youth mobility, free time and non-formal education of youth, youth mental health, youth employability and entrepreneurship, etc.

National Statistics and available data sources

The most important actors collecting statistical data on youth is the Ministry of Youth and Sport, together with the [Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia](#) (Republi?ki zavod za statistiku). The Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia performs expert tasks related to adopting programs, organization and statistical surveys' conducting. So far, its tasks related to youth analyzes were a part of different surveys, such as:

- [labor force surveys](#),
- [census of population](#),
- [education](#), etc.

For these purposes, indicator NEET (young people Not in Employment, Education or Training) has been established precisely for the youth population by the Statistical Office.

The Ministry of Youth and Sport has been conducting regular annual [Survey on Position and Needs of Youth of the Republic of Serbia](#) (Pozicija i potrebe mladih u Republici Srbiji) since 2008 aiming to analyze the status, challenges, attitudes on social issues that young people share in Serbia. Specific focus is given to:

- education,
- employment,
- professional practices,
- security,
- health,
- mobility,
- culture,
- information,
- activism, etc.

It aims to externally evaluate the current situation in the areas of strategic interest for young people as defined in the National Youth Strategy. Therefore, it remains one of the basic starting points of the Ministry for the development and monitoring of the implementation of strategic documents in the field of youth policy, as well as for setting priorities in financing programs and projects of public interest in the youth sector.

The last Survey on Position and Needs of Youth in the Republic of Serbia was carried out in November 2016.

Other research reports regarding the future of youth in Serbia, on youth needs and situation, youth mobility, free time and non-formal education of youth, youth mental health, youth employability and entrepreneurship, etc. are published on the Ministry's website but are not conducted regularly.

Budgetary allocations supporting research in the youth field

The Government does not have a line of funding for research on the youth explicitly supporting evidence-based youth policy making apart from resources allocated to the Ministry of Youth and Sport for youth employability and social inclusion ([Law on Budget](#), Article 4).

Allocated budget for public procurements of the Ministry of Youth and Sport for Survey on Position and Needs of Youth for 2019 is RSD 1.1 million, and for monitoring of the implementation of the National Youth Strategy for 2019 is RSD 1.3 million.