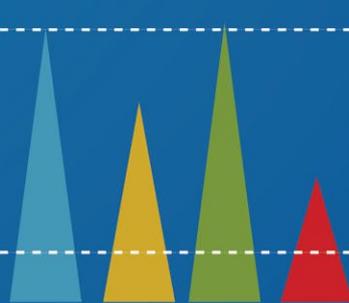




NEEDS AND CHALLENGES OF THE YOUTH AT THE MUNICIPAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS

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This Publication is funded by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES)

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Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung

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Needs and Challenges of the Youth

At the Municipal and Regional Levels

Adjara a/r, Mtskheta-Mtianeti, Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli

Tbilisi, 2021

Publishers

- » **Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung**
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Nino Ramishvili Dead End I, Bldg. 1, App. 7, 0179, Tbilisi, Georgia
<https://southcaucasus.fes.de/>
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www.treedesign.ge



Tbilisi, 2021

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Needs and Challenges of the Youth

At the Municipal and Regional Levels

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Brief Summary

Youth are a crucial part of the society that can not only play the role of ordinary participants in the process of change and development, but become an initiator of milestone processes. Thus, over the course of transformation or development, it is important to support them. This implies not just ensuring the availability of services young people need to acquire a variety of skills and knowledge, but also the protection of youth rights, the study of their needs, and the responses to them on both the local and central levels. All this combined creates a convenient environment for youth, and in turn for society's development.

Supporting youth development implies the effective implementation of a youth policy. A legal framework for youth policy development has been developed within the “The Georgian National Youth Policy Concept 2020-2030”. The document envisages the improvement of national youth policy management on the central and municipality levels, with local municipalities supporting the enforcement of the youth policy at the local level. To this end, it is important for the policy to respond to youth needs and to create an environment in which young people will participate in the process of making important decisions, as well as in the planning and implementation of activities required for those decisions.

In order to have a youth policy functioning in the municipality, it needs to be research-driven. To this end, “Youth Agency” created a municipal youth policy development program that supports the development of research-driven youth policy documents. The given study is part of a program that was undertaken with the initiative of Youth Agency and with the support of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES). The research aims to study youth needs and challenges at the regional and municipal levels. Namely, the study was conducted in the following four regions: **Adjara a/r, Mtskheta-Mtianeti, Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli**. The specific target municipalities were **Batumi, Dusheti, Adigeni, Gardabani and Tetrtskaro**.

The study was conducted with qualitative and quantitative methods and based on face-to-face (FTF) interviews, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. Within the period of March-April, a total of 1400 FTF interviews were conducted with 14-29 year-old respondents, 13 in-depth interviews with key informants, and 24 focus group discussions in the four target regions.



Main Findings

- The awareness level of youth on youth-oriented municipal programs and services is low in all regions. Six and more out of ten young respondents are not aware of such services (Adjara – 69%, Mtskheta-Mtianeti – 56%, Samtskhe-Javakheti – 61%, Kvemo Kartli – 75%);
- The accessibility of different services important for young people is limited in every region or target municipality except for Batumi. It is worth giving particular mention to Adigeni municipality, where half of all young respondents do not have access to any services (52%);
- A major portion of young citizens in every region do not participate in the process of making important decisions or different civil activities (Adjara – 79%, Mtskheta-Mtianeti – 72%, Samtskhe-Javakheti – 81%, Kvemo Kartli – 88%).
- For youth in every region, political involvement is the least valuable activity. A significant part of the youth are not interested in politics at all, especially in Samtskhe-Javakheti, where six out of ten young respondents are not interested in politics at all (Adjara – 43%, Mtskheta-Mtianeti – 37%, Samtskhe-Javakheti – 62%, Kvemo Kartli – 54%);
- Among those who are interested in politics, the majority are interested in Georgia's politics in general. In addition, approximately three and more out of ten respondents in every region are interested in EU and NATO relations. Georgia's relations with Russia is the most interesting for young respondents living in Kvemo Kartli (15%) and Gardabani municipality (20%), as well as in Mtskheta-Mtianeti (14%) and Dusheti municipality (18%);
- In every region or target municipality, there are small groups of active youngsters who participate in various activities simultaneously or initiate a variety of ideas. The majority of young citizens are outside of this process in every region;
- The participation of young citizens in volunteer activities is low. The rate is particularly low in Kvemo Kartli, where seven out of ten respondents do not have experience participating in volunteer activities over the past 1-2 years (Adjara – 65%, Mtskheta-Mtianeti – 51%, Samtskhe-Javakheti – 59%, Kvemo Kartli – 71%). As reported by young respondents, the main reasons named in every region include that they had not heard of such activities, they could not find time, or they did not have the desire to participate;
- Reasons for low civil engagement are: unawareness of the importance of civil activity, having no information on engagement mechanisms, and having no desire to participate. The latter is related to the fact that young people have no expectations of receiving support from decision-makers or their own peers. In addition, this nihilism is also related to the fact that civil engagement is perceived as a socially less favorable activity;

- ☑ Young respondents mostly have access to sports and art classes and libraries. However, there are challenges in this regard in rural - type settlements, where a significant part of the youth does not have access to even those services;
- ☑ Having no gathering space is a problem, and the accessibility of such places is low in every region and target municipality (Adjara – 5%, Mtskheta-Mtianeti – 12%, Samtskhe-Javakheti – 10%, Kvemo Kartli – 7%). The presence of such spaces together with informal education services was assessed as critically important within the qualitative research in every target municipality;
- ☑ The most serious challenge for young people living in every region and target municipality is employment. In addition to relevant education and working experience, an important factor for employment named in every region turned out to be a circle of acquaintances. At least one out of ten respondents mentioned this factor (Adjara – 19%, Mtskheta-Mtianeti – 13%, Samtskhe-Javakheti – 14%, Kvemo Kartli – 15%);
- ☑ As believed by research participants, in addition to the availability of jobs, support in acquiring and improving professional skills, the availability of internship programs, and mechanisms to learn or improve English would help young people in terms of employment in every region or municipality;
- ☑ Support in learning/improving Georgian language is crucial for employment purposes in Kvemo Kartli (30%) and Samtskhe-Javakheti (41%). It turns out to be less important for Adigeni municipality (2%), unlike Tetrtskaro (11%) and especially Gardabani municipality (28%);
- ☑ Sport/physical activity is assessed to be important in every region, but a major part of young respondents are not involved in it. The share of such respondents is highest in Kvemo Kartli (Adjara – 75%, Mtskheta-Mtianeti – 67%, Samtskhe-Javakheti – 68%, Kvemo Kartli – 81%);
- ☑ Ensuring the accessibility of sports classes, proper sports infrastructure, and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle are considered important factors for making the young population more interested in sports/physical activity;
- ☑ A variety of risk behaviors are prevalent among young residents of regions. Addiction to modern gadgets is prevalent in every region. In addition, the study revealed the use of marijuana, cigarettes or alcohol, as well as gambling activities with different frequency. One of the important mechanisms to cope with risk behaviors is considered to be the promotion of a healthy lifestyle;
- ☑ One in ten respondents in Mtskheta-Mtianeti (9%) and Kvemo Kartli (14%), as well as one-fourth of respondents in Adjara (23%) and Samtskhe-Javakheti (25%) find it difficult to name at least one right they have heard of. Regardless of this, six and more respondents out of ten in all regions believe that their rights are protected;

- ☑ The intention of both inbound and outbound migration is low in every region. At least six out of ten young respondents do not consider domestic migration over the next 2-3 years. Seven out of ten respondents in every target region have no intention to move away from the country. The main motivation of those who intend to migrate is related to better living conditions and better employment opportunities in every region in terms of domestic, as well as international migration.
- ☑ Satisfaction with one's own life at the present stage considering every factor is higher than moderate in every region. Out of the target municipalities, the satisfaction level with one's own life is the lowest in Adigeni (4.2 points) and Tetrtskaro (4.3 points), while the highest level of satisfaction is reported in Batumi municipality (5.2 points). As for the regions, the lowest level of satisfaction with one's own life is reported in Kvemo Kartli (4.8 points) and the highest in Adjara (5.4 points).
- ☑ The assessment of the socio-economic condition of the country, municipality, and person in the next 10 years is more or less positive in every region. The most positive evaluation is reported in Adjara (country – 68%, municipality – 72%), while a less optimistic vision is identified in Samtskhe-Javakheti (country – 35%, municipality – 37%). In addition, expectations for the improvement of the personal socio-economic condition are higher in every region than what respondents expect for the municipality or the country. The most optimistic expectations are reported in Adjara (81%) while the most pessimistic are reported in Samtskhe-Javakheti (49%).



Introduction

Young people are the biggest asset for the society, since they can make a substantial contribution toward the country's social and economic development. In this context, it is important for the state to create an environment that responds to youth challenges, and enables the effective implementation of a youth policy for and with young people. Youth policy needs to be based on human rights, as well as the principles of citizen and gender equality.

A legal framework for the development of youth policy was developed within “The Georgian National Youth Policy Concept 2020-2030”. The Georgian Parliament defined the priorities of the concept, and the government is tasked with policy implementation. Local municipalities are expected to support the implementation of strategic components of the youth concept and develop a youth policy at the local level. To this end, it is crucially important that policy responds to youth challenges and needs, which is impossible without the active engagement of youth at the local level. It is important for local municipalities to support young citizens in the creation of services tailored to their needs. The same applies to local municipalities' support in the active participation of young citizens in local life.

To this end, it is important to have a functioning youth policy in every municipality that is based on knowledge and research results.

To achieve this goal, Youth Agency developed a municipal youth policy development program that aims to support the creation of a research-driven youth policy document. It will be focused on the issues of rights, the development of standards for youth policy, increased opportunities, and regular monitoring. Within the scope of the planned reform of municipal youth policy development, Youth Agency plans to eventually cover Georgian municipalities, and will plan the respective activities under the Memorandum of Understanding.

The issues that are covered in the research are diverse and provide a more in-depth analysis on the availability of various services, the rate of involvement in processes, the reasons behind non- engagement, the prevalence of risk behaviors or values, as well as challenges or needs from the perspective of young people as well as important players. These players include the local self-governments and the representatives of the NGO sector.



Methodology

The **goal** of the research is to study the rights, needs, challenges, and interests of young people at the local level.

აღნიშნულის შესასწავლად განისაზღვრა კვლევის შემდეგი ამოცანები:



To identify youth needs and challenges



To identify the interests, motivation and expectations of youth



To identify challenges in terms of the realization of human rights



To identify opportunities to improve the fulfillment of obligations taken by a variety of actors

Target regions and municipalities of the research are as follows:

1

Adjara
Batumi

2

Mtskheta-Mtianeti
Dusheti

3

Samtskhe-Javakheti
Adigeni

4

Kvemo Kartli
Tetritskaro
Gardabani

Considering the project goals and objectives, we developed a research approach that envisages a (1) **quantitative** and (2) **qualitative study**.

Quantitative research applied a **structured interview method**.

The study inquired 14-29 y/o young people in Adjara, Kvemo Kartli, Samtskhe-Javakheti and Mtskheta-Mtianeti. The sample frame utilized information obtained from the National Statistics Office of Georgia.

Young respondents for the study were selected randomly, based on in advance stratification. In all four regions, 1401 young respondents were inquired.

The research sample looks as follows:

Table 1. Research sample

| Region/municipality | Number of interviews |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Adjara | 400 |
| Batumi municipality | 200 |
| The rest of the region | 200 |
| Kvemo Kartli | 401 |
| Tetritskaro municipality | 100 |
| Gardabani municipality | 101 |
| The rest of the region | 200 |
| Samtskhe-Javakheti | 300 |
| Adigeni municipality | 100 |
| The rest of the region | 200 |
| Mtskheta-Mtianeti | 300 |
| Dusheti municipality | 150 |
| The rest of the region | 150 |
| Total: 1401 | |

The research error was 5.6% in Samtskhe-Javakheti and Mtskheta-Mtianeti, 5.2% in Kvemo Kartli and 4.9% in Adjara. Data were analyzed by: *region and target municipality; gender; age; urban settlements - rural settlements*. In addition, considering the regional peculiarities of Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti, data for those regions were also analyzed by *ethniurban settlements*.

Respondents were interviewed by means of the electronic method of data collection – CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interview). Considering the COVID-19 outbreak, interviews were conducted in compliance with safety standards developed in advance.

Table 2. Quantitative research design

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Technique | FTF interview |
| Target group | 14-29 y/o young citizens |
| Sample size | 1401 interviews |
| Research area | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adjara ● Kvemo Kartli ● Samtskhe-Javakheti ● Mtskheta-Mtianeti |
| Sampling method | Random sampling based on in advance stratification |
| Duration of interview | 35-40 minutes |

Field work was controlled in accordance with the following types of procedures: (1) telephone control - 30% and (2) thorough revision of questionnaires - 100%.

As interviews were conducted applying the CAPI method (Computer Assisted Personal Interview), the mechanism for data quality control utilized was the length of the interview and the time spent on separate sections.

After the field work was completed, collected data were cleaned by means of special software (SPSS 23.0). The final stage of the database envisaged statistical weighting of data on general sampling for generalization purposes, and data were analyzed together with the results from the qualitative research.

Focus group and in-depth interviewing techniques were applied over the course of the **qualitative study**. In total, 24 focus group discussions and 13 in-depth interviews were conducted. Within the scope of the *focus groups*, 6 discussions were conducted in each region – 2 for each age group. Respondents were selected in compliance with the following criteria: age (14-17, 18-23, 24-29 age groups); gender; type of settlement (urban

settlements/rural settlements); education; working experience; and ethnurban settlements for Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli.

As for *in-depth interviews*, 3 interviews were conducted with key informants¹ in each municipality except for Batumi, where the number of interviews was 4.

Respondents were:

- Municipality representative responsible for youth-related issues
- NGO representative working on youth issues in the region
- Civil activist (active young person/opinion leader) for whom youth problems are important

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were conducted online through an online platform at a time convenient for the respondent.

Table 3. Qualitative research design

| Technique | FG | In-depth interview |
|------------------------|---|---|
| Target group | 14-29 y/o young people: 14-17 years 18-23 years 24-29 years | Person working on youth-related issues in local municipality NGO representative who works on youth issues Active young person/citizen who works on youth-related topics |
| Number of discussions | 24 (6 in each target municipality) | 13 (3-3 in Adigeni, Tetrtskaro and Dusheti municipalities, 4 interviews in Batumi) |
| Research area | ● Batumi / Adjara ● Tetrtskaro / Kvemo Kartli ● Adigeni / Samtskhe-Javakheti ● Dusheti / Mtskheta-Mtianeti | |
| Research method | Targeted | Targeted |
| Duration of discussion | 1.5 hours | 40-50 minutes |

Data collected through the qualitative and quantitative components were analyzed cumulatively. Research results will be utilized by stakeholders to plan future activities.

¹ Key informant – a person who is purposefully selected for in-depth interviews and represents the most informed group of people on research topics.

I Brief Review of Youth Policy

The given sub-chapter discusses policy documents available for implementing youth policy in Georgia and priorities set in force in the aforementioned documents.

National youth policy is mostly defined and implemented in compliance with “The Georgian National Youth Policy Document” adapted by the Georgian Government N553 on March 28 of 2014. The document² was developed with the engagement of the Interagency Coordination Council and representatives of all ministries, parliament members and the UNFPA Georgian Office. By creating this document, the Government of Georgia stressed the importance of youth in the long-term development of the country.

On July 17 of 2020, the Parliament of Georgia approved “The National Georgian Youth Policy Concept 2020-2030”³ with a decree. As the document states, by creating the youth policy document of 2014, the foundation for a state systemic approach was built. However, regardless of that progress, youth still face a variety of serious challenges. In order to respond to those challenges and support youth development, to promptly address problems and to invest the proper state resources into the human capital of 14-29 year-old teenagers and youngsters, “The Georgian National Youth Policy Concept 2020-2030” was developed and approved.⁴

The concept serves three main goals:

- To create favorable conditions for the protection of health, social-economic welfare, diverse development, and self-realization of young people
- To ensure the creation of proper conditions for the full participation of youth in social life and democratic processes
- To refine the state youth policy management system at the central and municipal levels

To achieve these goals, the concept envisages 5 strategic priorities and 22 expected outcomes. The fulfillment of these strategic priorities and expected outcomes is a responsibility of the central and local governments of Georgia. **The following priorities are defined in the concept:**

1. Active participation of youth in social life and democratic processes
2. Supporting youth development and realization of their potential
3. Health and welfare of young people
4. Economic empowerment of young people
5. Improvement of state youth policy management at the central and municipal levels

² The Georgian National Youth Policy (<http://msy.gov.ge/files/veko/2014%20weli/marti/.pdf>)

³ <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/4936402?publication=0&fbclid=IwAR0TFIUPBjjQQ6P-sBkRHcHkI7oK5tgLKLJKpxYWJY3WTK2H8Bj4SDwCdyY>

⁴ Same

As the document states, implementation of the strategic priorities defined in the concept is the responsibility of the central government of Georgia and local government as well. In order to achieve the outcomes encompassed in the document, Youth Agency ensures the development of youth policy documents (strategic, action plans). In addition, Youth Agency, within its competence, will develop the respective programs, ensure increased opportunities for stakeholders, and support the development of the youth policy at the municipal level.

LEPL Youth Agency was established in 2019 to develop, implement and coordinate the state youth policy strategy. The three-year reform of the agency envisages the implementation of reforms in the following directions,⁵ and work has already been started on **each of the components:**

- ✓ **Development of Youth Strategy 2025**
- ✓ **Establishment and support of a youth worker profession**
- ✓ **Development of the municipal youth policy**
- ✓ **Update of hobby-education system**
- ✓ **Development of volunteer culture in youth**
- ✓ **Development of standards and certification system for youth camps**
- ✓ **Establishment of participatory youth policy**
- ✓ **Empowering youth organizations**
- ✓ **Supporting the development of an entrepreneurial culture among young people**
- ✓ **Development of information and consulting system for youth**

The target group of youth is 14-29 y/o individuals. Implementation of the policy document is carried out in the direction of integrated (sectoral) youth policy and youth work. Integrated/sectoral youth policy implies all fields and policies that are important for young people (social field, healthcare, culture, tourism, and other policies). Youth work covers educational activities for young people and with the engagement of young people. It is based on an informal educational process.

A study of youth needs and challenges at the municipal and regional levels answers the questions that are important to develop municipal youth policy and to support participatory youth policy development. The results of the study and the Municipal Youth Policy Standard (currently being developed by the Youth Agency), will facilitate the implementation of policies that are largely focused on the interests of young people at the local level.

⁵ <https://youthagency.gov.ge/%e1%83%a0%e1%83%94%e1%83%a4%e1%83%9d%e1%83%a0%e1%83%9b%e1%83%90/>

II Autonomous Republic of Adjara and Batumi Municipality

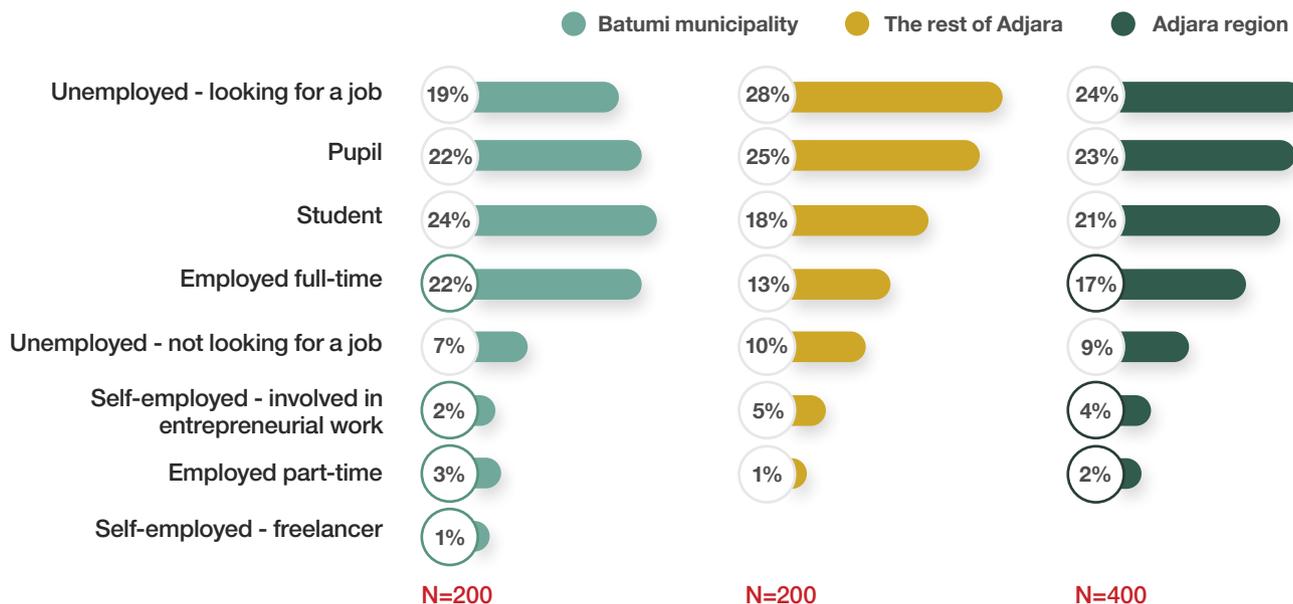
Introduction

As of 2021, the population of Autonomous Republic of Adjara is 354.9 thousand people, with 57% of the population residing in urban-type settlements. The amount of the 14-29 y/o population is 80.894 thousand, which is 22.8% of the region's population.⁶

As of the latest data of 2020 provided by GeoStat, the unemployment rate is 18.7% in the region, while the employment rate is 46.9%. Unfortunately, statistical data on the share of youth employment or unemployment are not available.

The demographic profile of research participants looks as follows: 52% of all respondents are men, and 48% are women. The largest share of respondents by age belong to the 24-29 year-old group (42%). In addition, the largest portion according to achieved level of education are respondents who have completed secondary education (31%).

Chart 1. Occupation of respondents

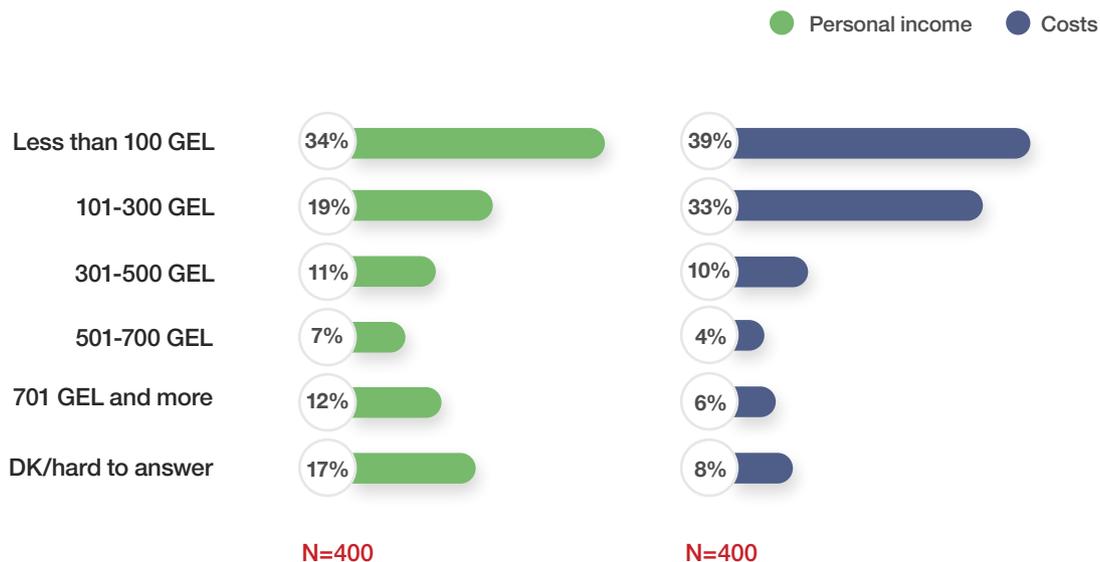


⁶ GeoStat. Regional statistics

The vast majority of inquired young respondents are Georgian (99%). The majority of respondents are not married (67%) and one-third are married (civil and/or religious registration – 27%). The majority of respondents do not have the status of a socially vulnerable person or IDP (93%).

In Adjara, 17% of young people inquired find it difficult to name their personal monthly income (e.g. money transfers, salary, present), and 8% cannot report their monthly expenses including any needs. The monthly income for the largest portion of respondents is 100 GEL (34%), and the majority spend less than 100 GEL per month (39%). The largest portion of costs fall into the category of shoes and clothing (51%). In addition, a large portion is spent on internet/mobile (37%) and transport (37%). The situation is approximately similar in Batumi municipality, where the largest portion of monthly expenses are on transport (47%). The largest portion of young respondents are dependent on their parents for financial support (Adjara – 59%, Batumi municipality - 55%).

Chart 2. Personal monthly income of respondents (including all kinds of income) and monthly expenses on various needs in Adjara



Main Findings

- ✓ Activities carried out within the youth municipal policy are diverse in Adjara, but the main portion of activities planned for young people still cover the interests of school-age youngsters and are less oriented to the needs of older young people.
- ✓ One of the serious challenges for young people is employment, and support to tackle this problem is reported to be the most important in Adjara (53%) as well as in Batumi municipality (50%).
- ✓ The majority of respondents believe that a key factor for the employment of young people in Adjara is the relevant education (55%), while 44% stressed the importance of work experience, and 40% mentioned a respective circle of acquaintances. The majority of respondents living in Batumi municipality believe that the main factor in getting a job is work experience (58%), while 54% stressed a relevant education, and 46% mentioned knowledge of foreign languages. The respective circle of acquaintances is an important factor as well, and was named by 41% of respondents.
- ✓ There are several challenges related to employment that were reported during the discussions held in Batumi municipality. Namely, respondents pointed out a lack of jobs; while employment is more or less available during the summer season, young people have no employment opportunities during other seasons of the year. Other challenges for young people include the absence of a work schedule tailored to students, and frequently inappropriate requirements set by employers for job seekers.
- ✓ Two key factors to cope with challenges related to employment named by young people are support for the improvement of professional skills (Adjara – 62%, Batumi municipality – 61%) and help learning/improving foreign languages (Adjara – 54%, Batumi municipality – 61%).
- ✓ Even though a healthy lifestyle is assessed as important, the rate of involvement in sports/physical activity is still low. A total of 75% of respondents in Adjara and 81% in Batumi municipality are involved in sports/physical activity.
- ✓ Political Participation and activism among youth is low, even though it is assessed as important. A large portion of youth has not participated in volunteer activities over the past 1-2 years (Adjara – 65%, Batumi municipality – 71%), while those who have participated mostly took part in charity or environmental activities.
- ✓ The participation rate in various civil activities is low (has not participate in any civil activity over the past 1-2 years in Adjara – 79% and in Batumi municipality – 86%). The main reasons behind this is a lack of desire (Adjara – 45%, Batumi municipality – 46%) and a lack of information about similar activities (Adjara – 31%, Batumi municipality – 32%).

- ✓ Even though, as believed by 59% of respondents in Adjara and 58% in Batumi municipality, it is important/very important for young people to be interested in politics, it turned out that a significant portion of young citizens are not interested in politics at all (Adjara region – 43%, Batumi municipality – 44%), which is quite natural considering the fact that being politically active is the least important value for young respondents.
- ✓ Among those who are interested in politics, the largest portion inquired in Adjara is interested in politics in Georgia generally (44%). Reality is similar in Batumi municipality. In addition, 34%-34% of young people are interested in EU and NATO relations in the region, as well as in Batumi municipality.
- ✓ One-fifth of young people in Adjara find it difficult to assess how young people like them affect the decision-making process at the local level (18%). One-third believe that they affect/largely affect (33%) the decision-making process, and 30% believe that they do not affect/have no affect at all (30%) on the decision-making process at the local level.
- ✓ The vast majority of inquired respondents (Adjara – 93%, Batumi municipality – 97%) reported not participating in the process of making important decisions for the youth of their municipality over the past 1-2 years.
- ✓ A hindering factor against the effective implementation of youth policy is believed to be the less serious attitude of decision-makers towards the youth field.
- ✓ For the youth policy to be effective, respondents recommend the proper recruitment of individuals working on youth-related issues and the empowerment of youth organizations.
- ✓ Together with the creation of policy documents, monitoring the effective implementation of youth policy was deemed important.
- ✓ Young people have some access to different services that are important for young people. From those services, sports classes (Adjara region – 48%, Batumi municipality – 57%) and arts/culture classes (Adjara region – 35%, Batumi municipality – 47%) are the most accessible.
- ✓ The availability of spaces for gatherings (Adjara – 5%, Batumi municipality – 6%) and youth services (Adjara – 3%, Batumi municipality – 4%) is almost non-existent.
- ✓ In Adjara, 71% of respondents believe that their rights are protected, while 24% reported that their rights are partially protected. As age increases, the number of those who believe that their rights are protected decreases, but in every age group, the majority of respondents still believe that their rights are protected (14-17 years – 83%, 18-23 years – 70%, 24-29 years – 66%).

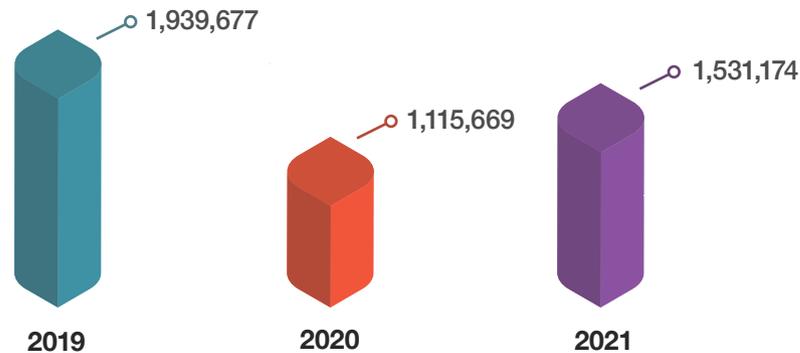
- ☑ One-third of respondents in Adjara find it difficult to name a right that is not protected/is partially protected, but the largest number of respondents name equality (17%) and labor rights (16%) among the rights that are not protected/are partially protected.
- ☑ A large portion of respondents (Adjara – 76%, Batumi municipality – 79%) have no intention/ have no intention at this point of domestic migration. It is also worth mentioning that the intention of domestic migration is the most prevalent among members of the 18-23 age group in Adjara (18-23 – 30%, 14-17 years – 19%, 24-29 years – 16%). In addition, more young people living in rural settlements plan on migrating domestically over the next 2-3 years (29%) than the young people in urban areas (16%).
- ☑ Having no intention of international migration is reported by even more young people (Adjara – 87%, Batumi municipality – 81%). The intention of both domestic and international migration is explained by two main motivations: better living conditions and better employment opportunities. The third motivation is access to better education in the case of domestic migration, and an independent way of living in the case of international migration.
- ☑ An evaluation of the country's, municipality's or one's own socio-economic condition over the next 10 years is positive in Adjara. At least seven out of ten people feel that in 10 years, the socio-economic condition of the country (68%), their municipality (72%) and especially their own socio-economic condition (81%) will be better than it is now.
- ☑ Considering all factors, at this point of life, young peoples' level of satisfaction with their own life is higher than moderate (Adjara – 5.4 points, Batumi municipality – 5.2 points, from a maximum of 7 points).

2.1. Municipal Policy

Youth issues in the Batumi municipality Mayor's Office are regulated by the Department of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth, which is comprised of 17 team members. In different units of the department (politics unit, program management unit), youth affairs are regulated by 6 individuals. In addition, it is worth mentioning that in response to the request of the LEPL Youth Agency, the Batumi municipality Mayor's Office allocated 2 employees who will be involved in the process of implementing the Municipal Youth Policy Development sub-program. Their duties cover the development, establishment and management of municipal policy and programs in the youth field.

The amount spent on a variety of activities implemented under the youth policy in Batumi municipality was more than 1.9 million GEL in 2019, and approximately 1.1 million GEL in 2020. Such a change in figures is explained by the pandemic and the inconvenient environment for organizing crowded events. As for 2021, the budget allocated for youth-related activities exceeds 1.5 million GEL.

Chart 3. Budget allocated for youth-related projects and programs in Batumi municipality from 2019-2021 (GEL)



As for the specific projects and programs for which the budget has been and is still allocated, they are diverse and cover both intellectual and sports activities, as well as professional trainings and informal education. Namely, **the activities are distributed as follows:**

Table 4. Budget allocated for youth-related projects and programs in Batumi municipality from 2019-2021 (GEL)

| Projects / programs | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Youth center | 98,529 | 7,642.51 | 286,900 |
| Support of intellectual and educational projects | 59,708 | 12,853 | 17,960 |
| Support of massive sports development | 226,163 | 75,675 | 187,900 |
| Sub-program Non-entrepreneurial (non-commercial) legal entity Chess Club “Nona” | 139,096 | 67,425 | 36,500 |
| Sub-program “Support of Sports Clubs” | 961,990 | 666,803 | 718,514 |
| Non-entrepreneurial (non-commercial) legal entity Batumi Municipality Sports Center | 303,455 | 183,600 | 173,400 |
| Support in professional development | 39,900 | 1,670.40 | |
| Luka Asatiani Scholarship for successful students | 100,000 | 100,000 | 100,000 |
| Sub-program “Support of Inclusive Education” | 10,836 | | 10,000 |
| Total: | 1,939,677 | 1,115,669 | 1,531,174 |

It is worth mentioning that the sub-program “Support of Inclusive Education”, which ensures the transportation of children with special educational needs to schools, was not implemented in 2020 due to the pandemic. The sub-program “Support of Professional Development” that envisages providing support for young people in acquiring internships abroad was also terminated due to the pandemic.

Within the scope of supporting sports clubs and teams, the following sports are supported: rugby, volleyball, basketball, water polo, and handball. Young people are able to participate for free in the activities for their age groups in the relevant municipal club teams. Within intellectual and educational projects, the intellectual game “What? Where? When?” and the intellectual media project “Etaloni” are supported. Support of the Youth Center envisages assistance in non-formal education through organizing trainings or workshops on different topics, as well as support in the development of clubs (literature club, cinema club, eco club, arts club). In addition, the Youth Center supports activities focused on integrating disabled persons, such as sign language lessons which were conducted in 2019. The center also supports free initiatives coming from young people and provides funding for projects in different fields (e.g. color festival, summer camp, street basketball, etc.).

These projects had more than 11 thousand beneficiaries in the 14-20 age group from 2019-2020. It is worth mentioning that due to the pandemic, the number of beneficiaries for youth programs and projects was significantly higher in 2019 when compared to the number of beneficiaries in 2020 (2019 – 9 233 beneficiaries, 2020 – 2 323 beneficiaries). Unfortunately, the Mayor’s office does not keep statistics for beneficiaries according

to age categories (14-17, 18-29). Respectively, it is impossible to provide figures for the share of school-age beneficiaries (14-17) and older beneficiaries (18-29). As for 2021, according to the Batumi municipality Mayor's Office, the suggested number of beneficiaries for youth-oriented activities will be 7 715 young people.

Regardless of the diversity of youth-oriented activities, *qualitative research* with key informants identified that it is recommended to make activities even more diverse, more oriented on non-formal education and, more inclusive of young people. As assessed by key informants participating in the study, one of the hindering factors for implementing the youth policy is *scarce financial resources*. According to a representative of local self-government, even though youth affairs are envisaged in the budget, they often “lose against infrastructural events”. It was also noted that *young people are rarely involved in the decision-making process directly*. Here, self-government officials participating in the study stressed that the involvement of youth is a responsibility of local self-government, and they need to plan more activities that will be focused on increasing engagement (raising awareness campaigns, trainings, etc.).

Another hindering factor against the effective implementation of the youth policy was identified as a *less serious attitude towards youth affairs*. It is important to note that this point was stressed by local self-government officials participating in the study. They claim that a serious attitude is a precondition for the development of this field.



“This field [youth affairs] is not perceived as seriously as it needs to be. I believe that this is one of the most important fields and local self-government representatives need to realize this”.

Local self-government official

“As specialists, we have close relations with young people and have a real understanding of their needs. Unfortunately, decision-makers do not see this and do not realize what we do...”

Local self-government official

The fact that there is a youth policy document is assessed as important by key informants participating in the study. Furthermore, as assessed by an NGO representative participating in the study, the policy document “is quite well written”, however, the problem is with enforcement. Even though the policy document prescribes mechanisms that enable local self-governments to support different groups, those groups do not receive support from the urban settlements. As an example, the respondent recalled a case in which one of the youth organizations applied to the Mayor's Office asking for a space to carry out youth activities, but failed to receive proper support. Thus, the NGO representative believes that *it is important not to just develop the policy document, but to monitor its implementation*. The NGO representative participating in the study stressed that among the most important mechanisms for empowering and supporting young people are allocating space for youth organizations and covering certain administrative costs. These mechanisms are believed to be important by local self-government officials as well. As it was noted during the interview, there is a space in the urban settlements where local self-government unit believes that more diverse activities can be organized and more young people can participate. During the interview, it was also noted that there is a draft document that envisages directions in which the youth center can work. It was also mentioned that there is an idea to create a web portal where every youth-related program, service or project will be uploaded and young people will have access to the information in one place.

It is worth mentioning that to empower young people, in addition to the availability of information and spaces, an NGO representative participating in the study deemed it important to organize so called *Open Doors Days* for youth organizations by the City Hall of the municipality. During these days, youth organizations will be able to discuss actual needs and problems based on their own experience, participate in discussions and have meaningful conversations. As believed by this participant, such meetings need to happen regularly. The importance of empowering youth organizations in order to strengthen young people was also stressed by key informants from both the public and civil sector. It is also worth mentioning that this topic was of particular importance to representatives of the civil sector. As assessed by the NGO representative, the NGO sector has almost no interest in youth affairs and if it does anything, it organizes trainings and workshops. A civil activist stressed this issue, too, and declared that the reason is that the sector is focused on donor interests. As stated by this respondent, the NGO sector is better able to communicate with young people and implement interesting projects, but they have to react to donors' preferences. For donors, other topics are more important than youth affairs (e.g. human rights, women's rights, EU integration, etc.). Thus, key informants believe that supporting and encouraging youth-focused organizations is critical to the development of the field, and the state should play an important role.

Key informants representing local self-governments stressed the importance of supporting local self-governments. As believed by these respondents, it is important to support individuals working on youth issues in terms of the *relevant knowledge and accumulating competence*. As noted, even though they work on youth affairs, they still have not acquired competencies required for working with young people. Respectively, one of the priorities suggested by participants was training for public servants. A representative of civil society participating in the study realizes the importance of support in terms of accumulating knowledge and competencies required for working with young people and on youth issues (*"at this point, we need training too..."*).

Acquiring knowledge and competencies is one of the issues *key informants would like to receive support on from the Youth Agency*. In addition, they recommend the development of an effective mechanism of coordination between the local self-government and the agency. As noted by respondents, since those two agencies are not competitors, it is important for them to be well-informed of each other's activities, so their plans do not overlap or repeat. One respondent mentioned *"we organized the same events and the same young people were involved"*.

As for the civil sector, when speaking about preferences regarding support from the Youth Agency, respondents stressed several topics. First of all, they recommend the agency provide support *in sharing international experience*. In this context, it was recommended for the Youth Agency to organize meetings where together with international specialists, it will share international experience of how youth organizations or separate activists work. In addition, the civil sector recommends the agency's support in *creating social capital (networking) and information sharing*. To this end, it is important for youth organizations or civil activists to be informed on organizations or individuals working in this field. It is also important to have a mechanism that will connect those actors, so that they will be able to exchange information and may even manage to plan joint projects. As believed by key informants participating in the study, to create such a network, it is important for Youth Agency to organize youth-themed conferences or forums.

Finally, when speaking about desirable forms of support from the agency, participants stressed the importance of the agency's *openness to the ideas of youth organizations or individual activists*. As noted by research participants, it is important for them to know that the agency "has the back" of youth organizations and will be able to act as a kind of mediator between state structures and youth organizations.

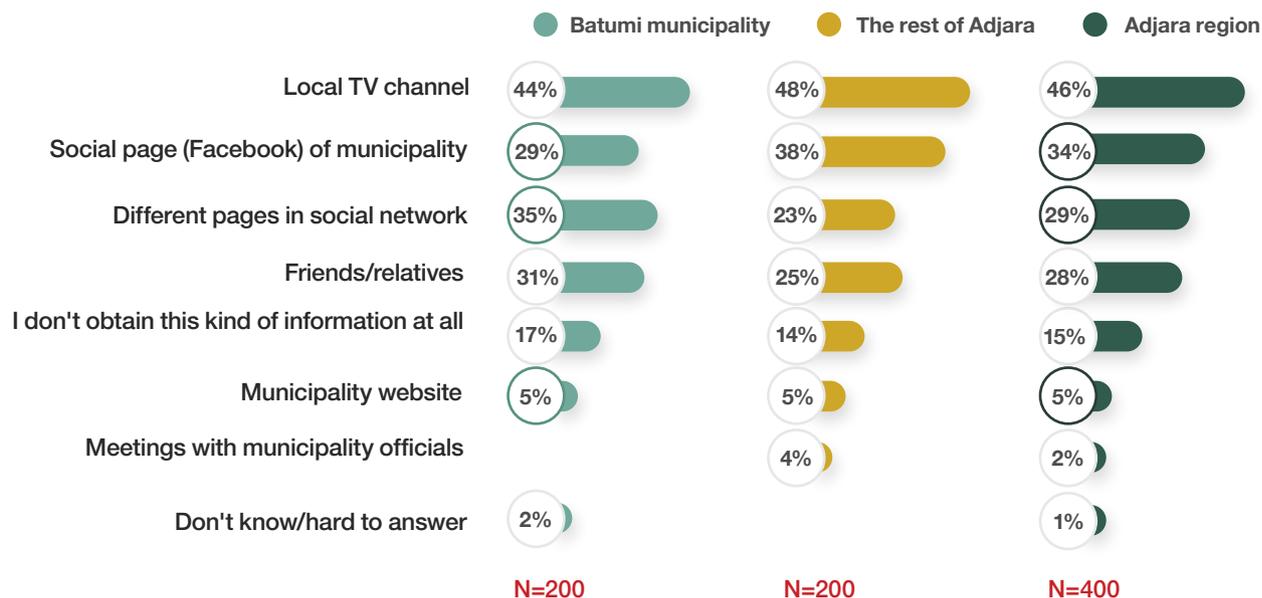
It can be said that regardless of the diversity of activities planned or implemented for youth in Batumi municipality, there still are challenges and it is important to work more actively in several directions to strengthen this field. Namely, it is necessary to equip representatives of the civil and public sector working on youth affairs with the relevant knowledge and skills. It is important to concentrate more on creating spaces and strengthening the

component of informal education. In addition, it is important that the Youth Agency share relevant information and international experience with those working on youth issues. It is also important to create a mechanism to connect these actors, which will ensure the creation of a network of organizations or separate individuals working on youth issues in the country. It is also necessary to strengthen youth organizations so that these organizations are less concentrated on donor interests and are more capable of focusing on youth issues. For all of the above to happen, it is important to have a serious attitude towards the youth field at the central and local levels.

2.2 Youth Programs and Services

Within the scope of the study, respondents expressed their opinions regarding youth programs and services. It turned out that almost half of respondents inquired in **Adjara** receive information on ongoing events (municipal programs, services, novelties) taking place in the municipality from *local television* (46%). A total of 68% of respondents receive this information through various internet resources (municipal Facebook pages and websites, different pages on social networks). In addition, the *Facebook page of the municipality* is a source of information for 34% of respondents, while 29% receive information through different pages on social networks. It is worth mentioning that 15% of respondents do not obtain this kind of information at all. The reality is almost similar in **Batumi municipality**.

Chart 4. Sources of information on ongoing events in the municipality (municipal programs, services, novelties)

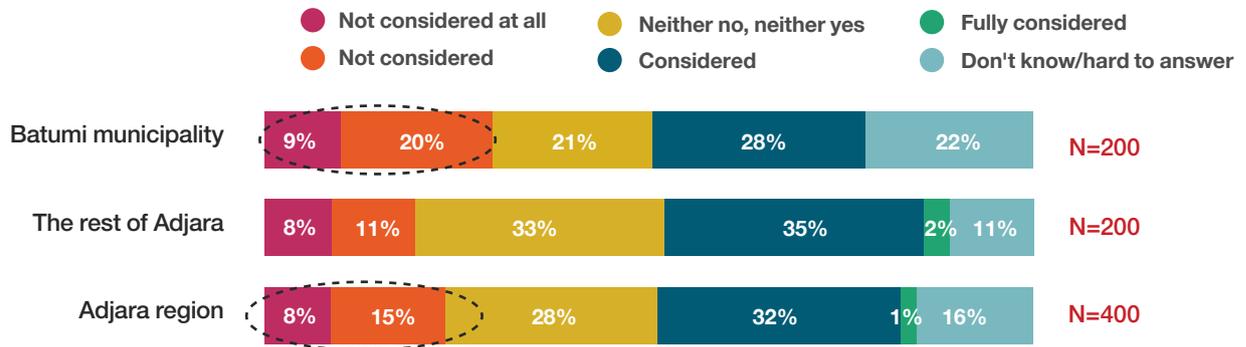


It is worth mentioning that local TV channels are a main source of information on ongoing events in the municipality in every perspective. However, the study identified certain differences with the use of internet resources as a source of information in terms of *age*. The largest number of young people in the 18-23 age group reported using internet resources as a source of information (14-17 years - 44%, 18-23 years - 81%, 24-29 years - 67%). It is also worth mentioning that the largest number in the 14-17 age group declared that they do not receive information on events that take place in the municipality at all (14-17 years - 24%, 18-23 years - 12%, 24-29 years - 13%).

A total of 16% of respondents in **Adjara** find it difficult to assess whether or not youth interests are taken into account in the work of municipality. One-third agrees with the statement that the interests of young people are *considered/fully considered* (33%) and another third *neutrally assessed* this statement (neither no nor yes- 28%). As for **Batumi municipality**, one-fifth (22%) of respondents found it difficult to answer this question, while 28% share the belief that their *interests are considered*, and 29% believe the interests of young people like them are *not considered/are not considered* at all in the work of municipality.

It is worth mentioning that as the *age group* increases, the share of those individuals who believe that the interests of young people like them are not considered in the work of the municipality also increases (14-17 years - 13%, 18-23 years - 17%, 24-29 years - 33%).

Chart 5. Assessment on whether or not the interests of young people are taken into account in the work of the municipality



When speaking about activities planned and implemented in Batumi municipality, young people participating in the *qualitative study* recalled different sporting events, concerts, greening events or charity events. In terms of municipal projects, it was recalled the project “Your Idea to Batumi”. They also noted that these activities were not only for young citizens, but for older age groups as well. When asked about activities specifically focused on young people, discussion participants mostly recalled activities that are carried out in schools or for school-aged pupils (e.g. school Olympiad, drawing or other competitions held in schools, literature class, discussions or trainings organized in schools, etc.).

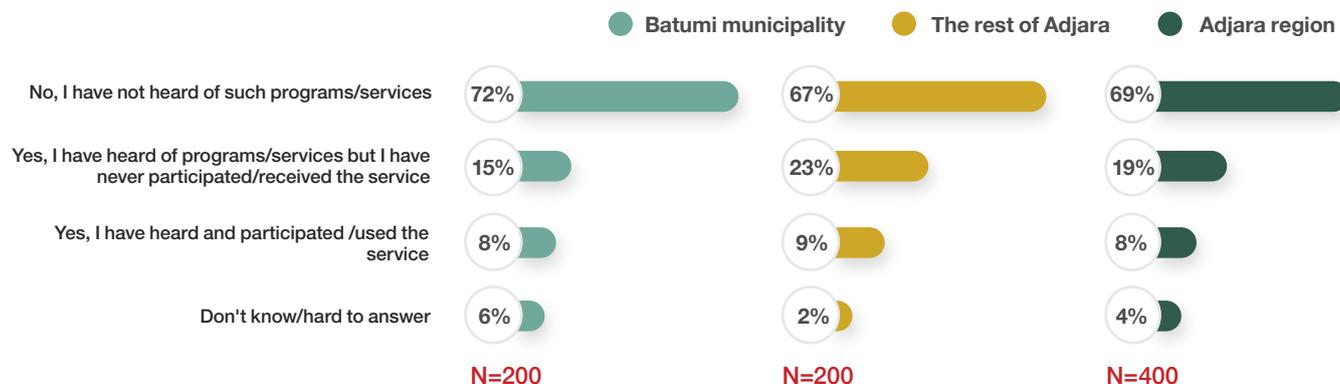
As identified by the *qualitative study*, youth oriented activities are usually planned in schools for school-aged children, while those activities that are for older youngsters (concerts, sports activities) also include people who are older than 30. The fact that the main beneficiaries of activities are school-aged children was also stressed by key informants participating in the study. It appeared particularly problematic to include the interests of 24-29

year-old youngsters and plan or implement activities tailored to their needs. One of the reasons for this is the fact that those young people are focused on other things (studying, employment). Those activities that are planned for young people in the urban settlements (e.g. intellectual games, sports events), do not correspond to the interests of older citizens. This mostly implies support in acquiring professional skills, which is perceived as one of the mechanisms of tackling the employment problem.

As for the extent to which the interests of young people are considered in the work of Batumi municipality, the assessments of discussion participants were neutral. An NGO representative provided a radical assessment, noting that youth-oriented programs have remained unchanged for years and carry out the same activities all the time, which can be hardly assessed as tailored to youth needs. The suggestion that youth interests are barely taken into account was backed by the argument that young people are left without proper support in professional development and employment. In this context, young people noted that it is important to have a career planning center, and to inform young people on the requirements of various professions or on the labor market. This activity was considered as a response to young peoples' real interests by young people participating in the study.

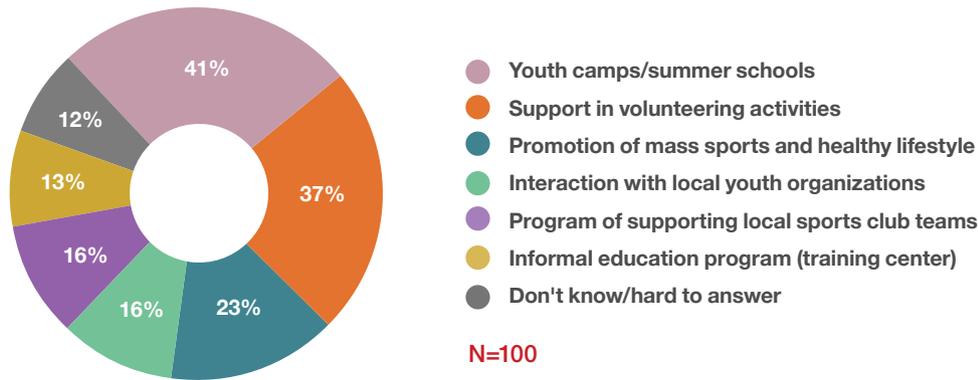
As demonstrated by the results of the quantitative study, the majority of inquired respondents in **Adjara** have not heard of youth municipal programs/services (69%), and the share of those who have heard of and participated in or received this service is only 8% in the region. The reality is quite similar in Batumi municipality.

Chart 6. Awareness of youth municipal programs/services available in the municipality



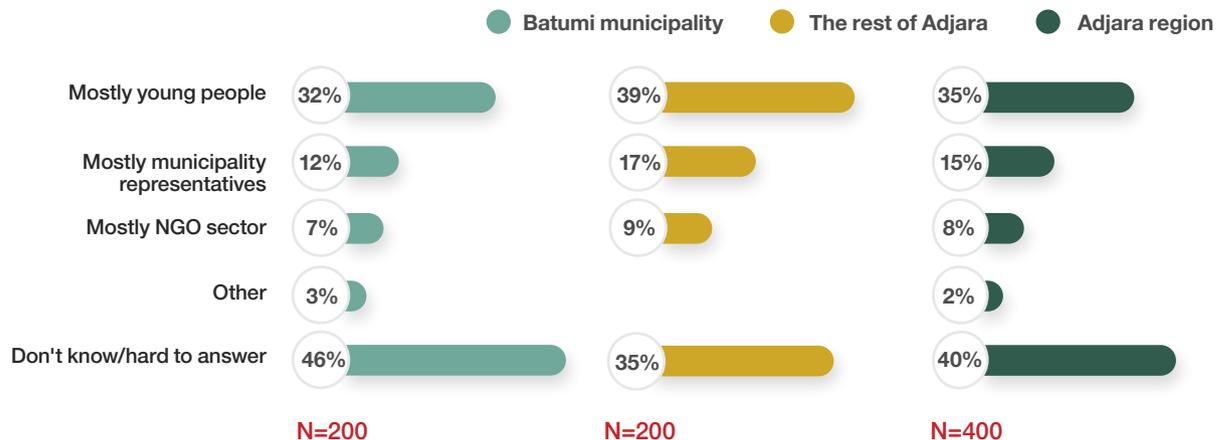
From those respondents who have heard of municipal programs/services available in the municipality, the largest share in Adjara has heard of youth camps/summer schools (41%) and programs/services supporting volunteer activities (37%).

Chart 7. Municipal programs/services young people in Adjara have heard of



A total of 40% of research respondents in **Adjara** find it difficult to assess who initiates the planning or implementation of activities for young people in their municipality, while 35% of respondents believe that *young people are the initiators*. *Municipality representatives* as the initiators of such activities were mentioned by 15% of participants. Almost every second respondent in **Batumi municipality** finds it difficult to answer this question (46%), and one-third believe that *young people* are the initiators of planned/implemented youth activities (32%). Based on the results of the qualitative research, however, this assessment is too optimistic and the activities of a small group are often attributed to other young people.

Chart 8. Initiator of activities planned/implemented for young people in the municipality

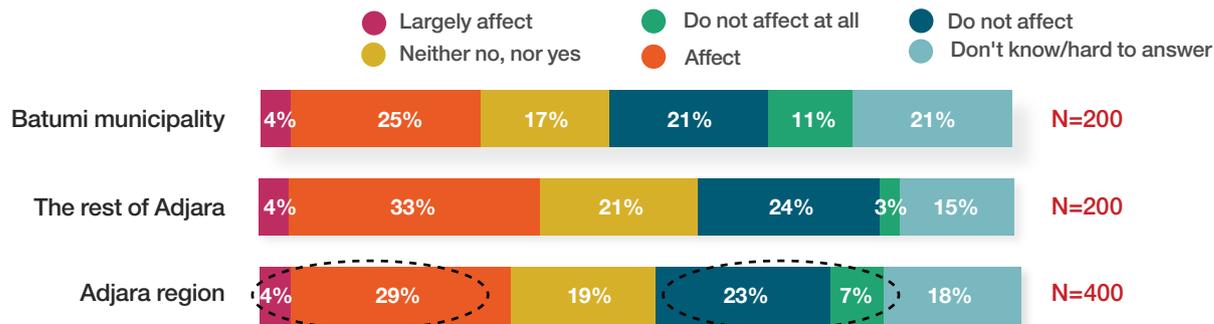


As the *qualitative study* revealed, young people are rarely the initiators of activities planned or implemented for young people. As declared by young respondents from **Batumi municipality**, initiators are mostly school administrators, NGO sector representatives and volunteer groups that are affiliated with a specific organization (“Red Cross”).

As for membership *in youth organizations/associations*, the vast majority of research participants reported not being or never being a member (Adjara – 89%, Batumi municipality – 91%). As for those respondents (10% - 44 young people in total) who are members of youth organizations/associations, the majority declared that supporting volunteer activities and the organization of trainings/workshops was the main focus of their organization/association.

Respondents were asked to assess how young people similar to them affect the decision making process at the local level. According to the study results, one-fifth of respondents in **Adjara** find it difficult to answer this question (18%), one-third believe that *young people who are similar to them affect/largely affect this process* (33%), and nearly one-third believe that *young people do not affect this process / do not affect this process at all* (30%). Assessments are quite similar in **Batumi municipality**.

Chart 9. Assessment of whether or not young people affect the decision-making process at the local level



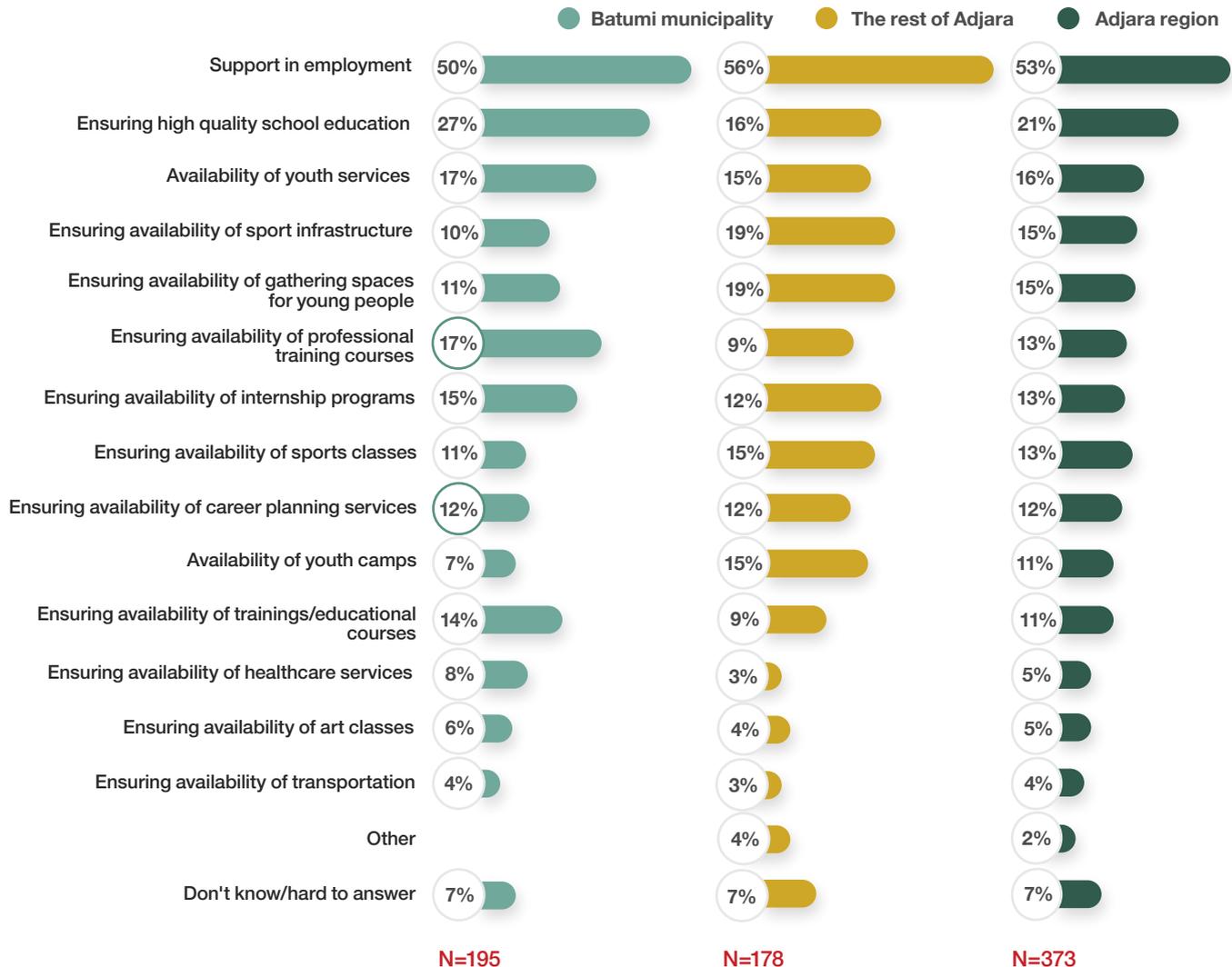
As for the engagement of research participants in the process of making important decisions for their municipality over the past 1-2 years, the vast majority of respondents reported not having such experience (Adjara – 93%, Batumi municipality – 97%). Those 27 respondents (6%) who reported having this kind of experience declared that they just attended meeting(s). Only 5 respondents reported having experience presenting their projects/initiatives to a team and they focused on funding educational or charity activities. The majority of young people participated in the study claimed they were not involved in the decision-making process because they had not heard of such opportunities (Adjara – 54%, Batumi municipality - 56%).

It is worth mentioning that not only are young people rarely involved in the decision-making process, they are also less enthusiastic to become involved in activities organized by others; even their own peers. As representatives of the youngest group in the *qualitative study* declared, even when there are initiatives, there is a high probability that they won't be carried since they are not taken seriously. It needs to be emphasized that this refers to the support of not only the local municipality or school administration, but to the support of young people for each other.

According to the study results, the main challenge for young people in **Adjara** is *support in employment* (53%). Among respondents, 21% mentioned *ensuring a quality school education* as the main challenge, and 16% stressed

the importance of the *availability of youth services*. The largest group of respondents in **Batumi municipality** spoke about the importance of supporting employment as a challenge (50%). It is also worth mentioning that respondents stressed other challenges related to *employment*, such as providing *professional training courses* (17%) and *career planning services* (12%). One-third of respondents in **Batumi municipality** deem it important to ensure a *high quality education* (27%).

Chart 10. Main challenges to address for young people in the municipality

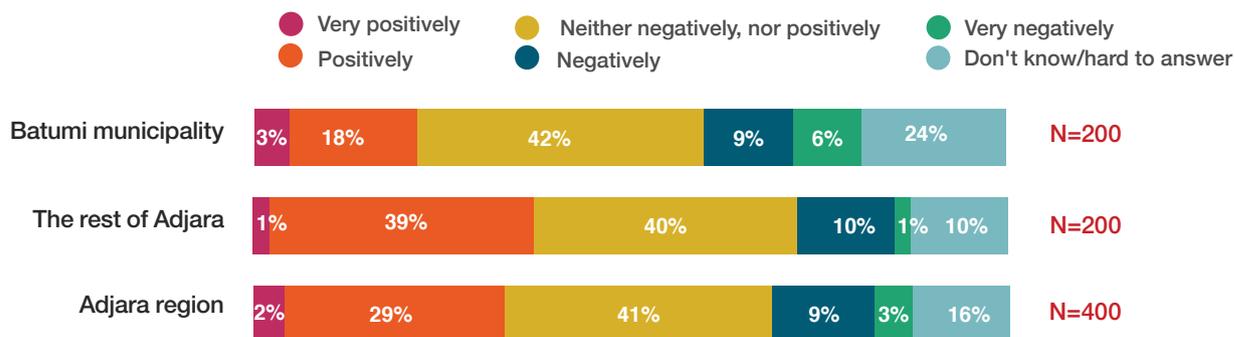


As for what is done by local government to address these issues, one-fourth (25%) of respondents in **Adjara** could not assess the situation. Almost the same number of respondents believe that local government *does nothing*, and 51% of respondents believe that the *local government implements some projects/programs, but they are insignificant*. Assessments are quite similar in **Batumi municipality**.

It is worth mentioning that the participants of the *qualitative research* found it difficult to tell what local government does to address the problems youth have to face. It was noted that local self-government implements certain projects and tries to arrange sports infrastructure. This was assessed as important by young respondents, but they added that local self-government barely does anything to address severe issues for young people, such as employment. Focus group discussion participants believe that a response to this specific problem is important for young people. As noted before, to address this problem, it is important to ensure the availability of career planning services, and to conduct proper trainings and courses that will help young people acquire or improve professional skills. Offering *career planning services* to school-age children that would inform them about different professions and the requirements of the labor market was considered as important or very important within the quantitative research as well. A total of 86% of respondents in **Adjara** and 81% of respondents in **Batumi municipality** agree with this statement.

In **Adjara**, 16% of respondents find it difficult to assess the outcomes achieved with youth-oriented programs and events at the national and local levels. The largest portion of respondents assessed the outcomes *neither positively nor negatively* (41%). 42% of respondents inquired in **Batumi municipality** stated the similar assessment, while one-fourth of respondents found it difficult to provide an assessment (24%).

Chart 11. Assessment of outcomes achieved with youth-oriented programs and events at the national and local levels



As for key informants participating in the *qualitative study*, their assessment of outcomes achieved through youth-oriented programs and events at the national and local levels differ. On one hand, it was noted that no important outcomes are noticeable in terms of increasing the involvement of young people in the decision making process, the availability of a diverse list of activities, or the effective cooperation between the government and non-government sectors. As there is no youth engagement, and their problems and needs are only now studied, youth-oriented programs and projects miss the real needs of young people. Thus, key informants can say that youth-oriented programs and events do not achieve real outcomes. On the other hand, it was noted that the creation of a new unit such as Youth Agency gives “hope” that important steps will be taken. An NGO representative ultimately implies active regime of cooperation with youth organizations and the agency. As

noted, there are many challenges in terms of cooperation with the government and non-governmental sectors. One of the reasons for this is believed to be less serious perception of the NGO sector. As stated by this respondent, such attitude should change.

In terms of youth-oriented programs or services, it is worth mentioning that young people are rarely informed of such programs or services. Furthermore, the number of those who have been involved in a program or service is very low. The study also revealed that young people are almost never engaged in the process of making important decisions, and the main reason is the absence of information on such opportunities. This can explain why programs and services that are oriented on youth barely correspond to youth needs. This can be proved by the fact that while employment is the main challenge that needs to be addressed for young people both in the region and in the municipality, the availability of services that would help address this issue (e.g. career planning, internships, professional training services), is very low. Regardless, specific activities that imply researching the real needs of young people and making data-driven decisions are assessed positively, and there are expectations that the real interests of young people will be considered in the process of creating or implementing the youth policy.

2.3. Education and Employment

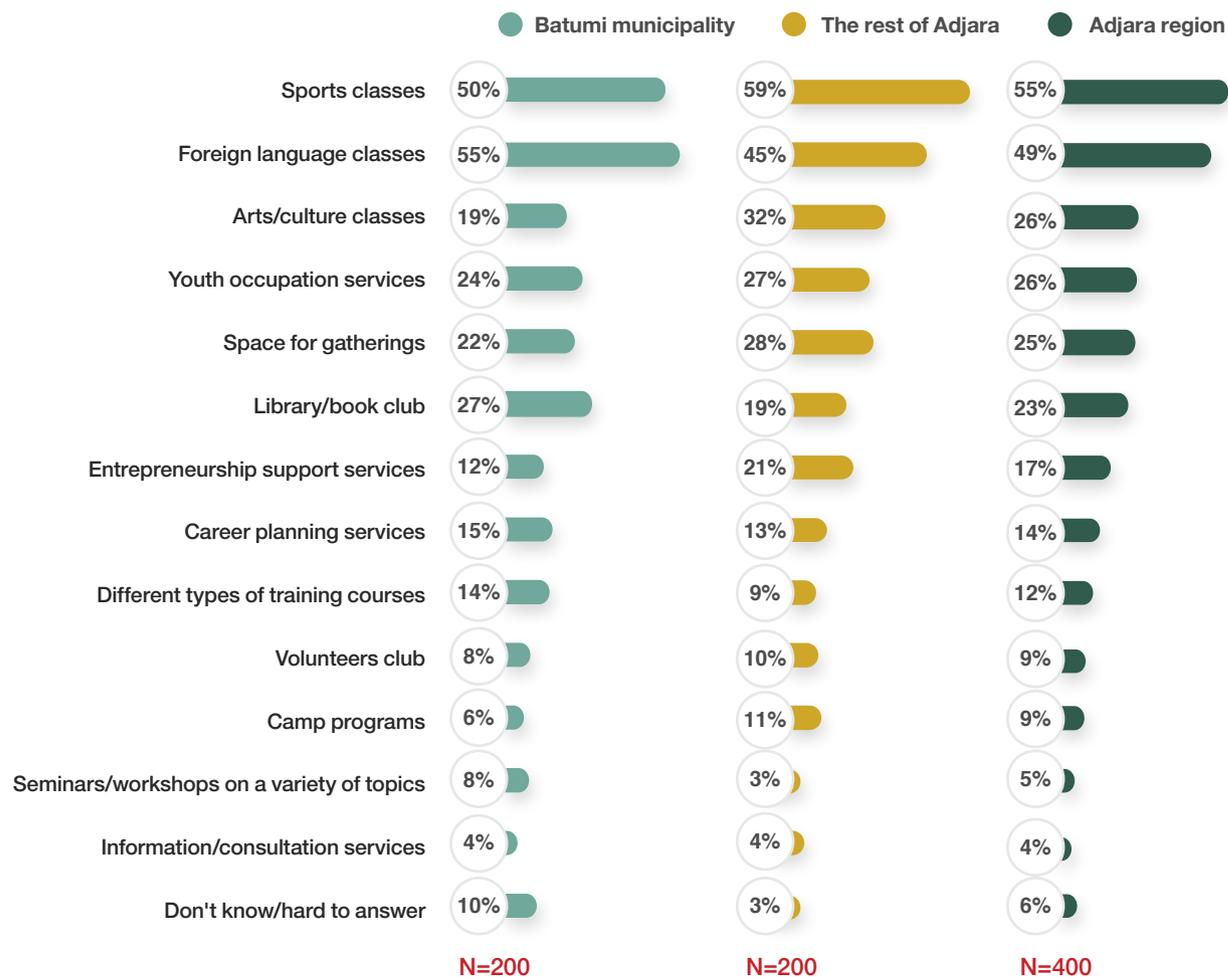
Education

In terms of education, research results clarify that according to the majority of respondents in **Adjara**, a *high quality school education is accessible/fully accessible* (67%) for young people. The assessment is quite similar in **Batumi municipality** (66%). When assessing the services that young people require in **Adjara**, the majority pointed out sports classes (55%) and *foreign language courses* (49%). The largest portion inquired in Batumi municipality stressed the importance of the availability of *foreign language courses* (55%) and *sports classes* (50%). One-third of respondents stressed the importance of the availability of a *library/book club* (27%). One-fourth of respondents in **Batumi municipality** believe that for young people living in their settlement, the availability of *youth services* (24%) is particularly important, and one-fifth pointed out the importance of gathering spaces where young people will communicate, receive informal education and organize various events (22%).

Speaking of the *age* perspective in **Adjara**, it is worth mentioning that older youngsters deem the availability of sports classes as important (24-29 years – 60%), while the majority in the 18-23 age group stressed the importance of foreign language courses (54%). As for the youngest ones, the availability of the above two services is equally important (14-17 years: foreign language courses – 57%, sports classes – 56%). As for the *gender* perspective, the majority of women in Adjara region believe that the availability of foreign language courses is of special importance in their settlement (56%). The majority of men believe that the availability of sports classes is the most important (66%).

It is worth mentioning that the study did not identify any differences in terms of *settlement type*. Respondents living both in rural and urban areas deem the availability of sports classes as most important (55% and 54% respectively).

Chart 12. Particular importance of the availability of services for young people in the settlement

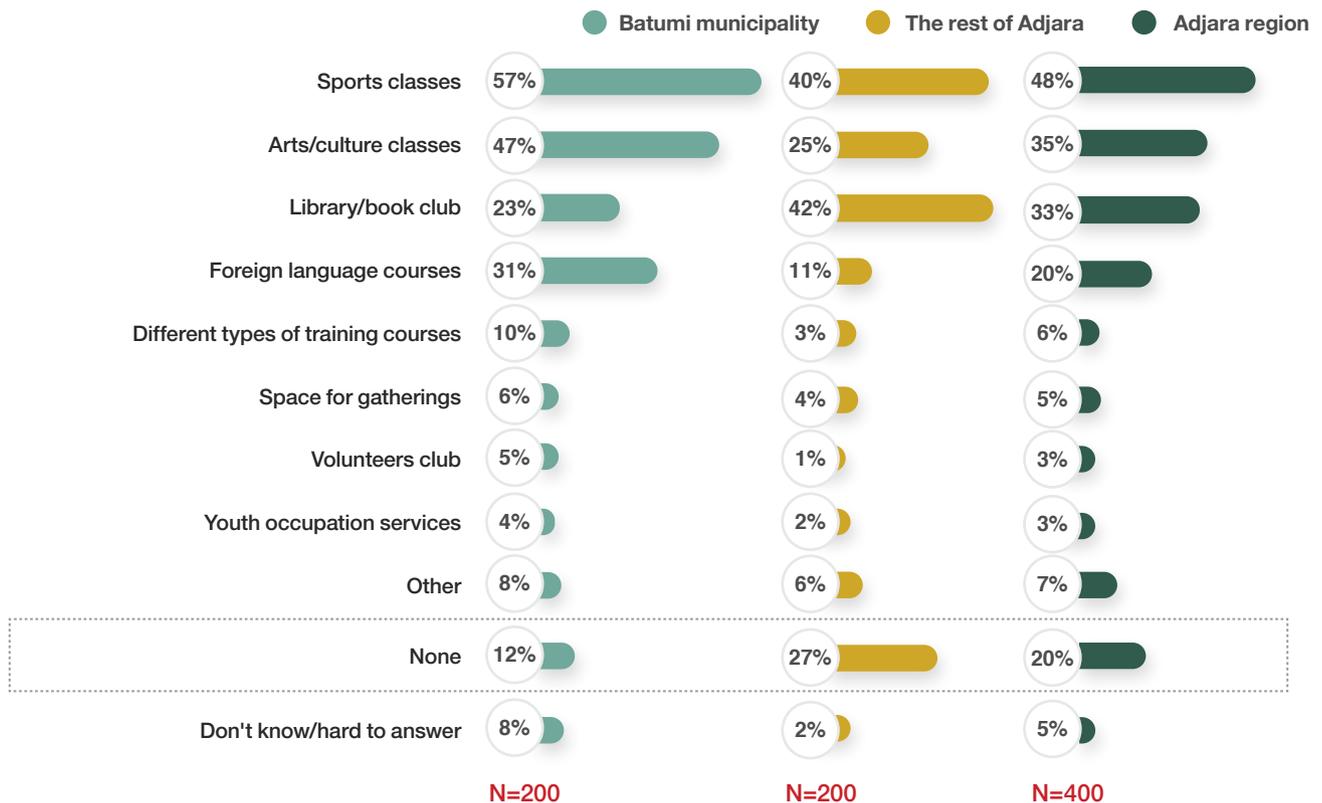


In general, the availability of spaces where young people will have an opportunity to gather, hold discussions and obtain an informal education is believed to be important by one-fourth (25%) of respondents in **Adjara**. The importance of such spaces is reported by one-fifth (22%) *in the urban settlements* and one-third (29%) *in the rural settlements*. As for an *age perspective*, it is worth mentioning that as respondents' age increases, the importance of gathering spaces also increases (14-17 years - 19%, 18-23 years - 28%, 24-29 years - 26%). This can be explained by the fact that school-aged children can at least use the school space for gatherings, while older youngsters have no place to gather and exchange opinions.

The most accessible service that is *currently accessible* for young people in the settlement is *sports classes* in **Adjara** (48%). An equal number (35%-35%) of inquired respondents declare that they have access to *arts/culture classes and a library/book club* in their municipality. As for *foreign language courses*, which were named among the most preferable services, one-fifth (20%) have access to them. It is also worth mentioning that two out of ten respondents have no access to *any of the listed services* in their settlement (20%). Services are more or less available in **Batumi municipality**. A total of 12% of respondents reported having no access to *any of the listed services*. The most accessible services for young people are *sports and arts/culture classes* (57%). It is important to note that the accessibility of *gathering places* where discussions can be held and different types of activities can be planned and organized which was deemed very important by the participants of qualitative study, is confirmed by only 5% of young people in the region and 6% in **Batumi municipality**.

It is worth mentioning that *none of the listed services* are available for three out of ten respondents inquired in the *rural settlements* (31%), while one out of ten (11%) reported the same in the *urban settlements*. The most available service in the rural settlements is a *library/book club* (39%) and *sports clubs* (62%) in cities.

Chart 13. Availability of services in the settlement



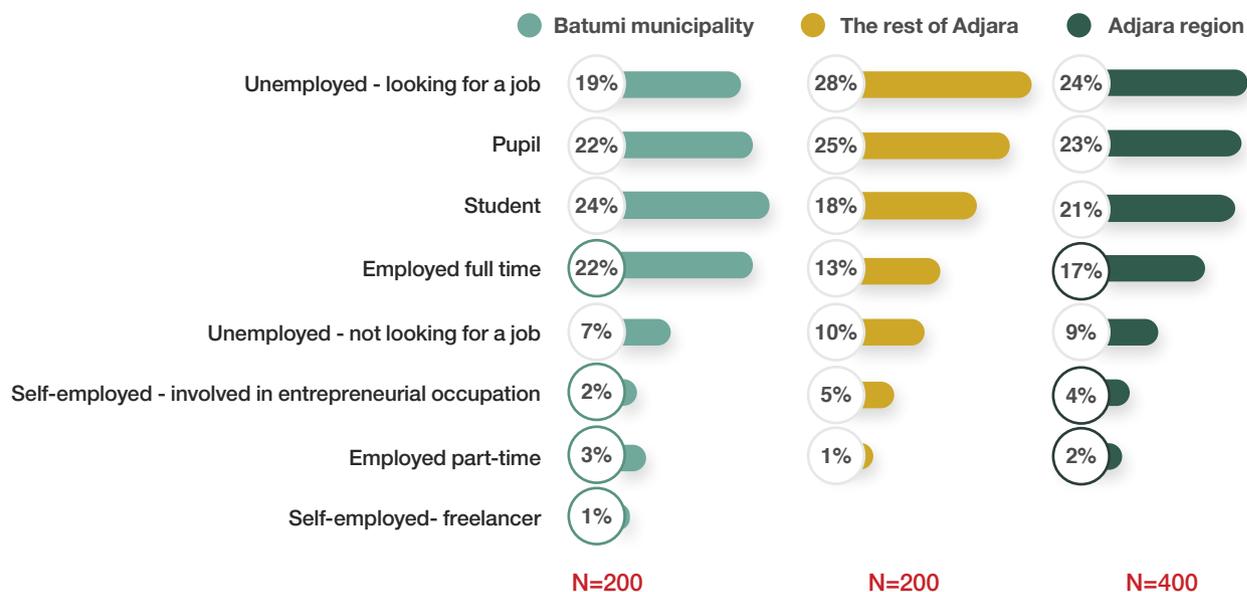
Almost half of respondents reported *not having any service or activity over the past 1-2 years* in the entire region (53%) as well as in **Batumi municipality** (47%). The largest portion of respondents attended *sports classes* both in entire **Adjara** (20%) and **Batumi municipality** (20%).

Among those respondents who have not used any of the listed services, the largest portion in Adjara declared that they had no time (34%). Inquired respondents also declared that they did not have a need (23%) or a desire (21%). A total of 18% of respondents reported having no information. Four out of ten respondents in Batumi municipality noted that they did not use any of the services because they did not have time (40%) and only 11% reported not having information.

Employment

As for employment, 23% of research participants in **Adjara** are employed, and 17% of them work full time. The share of employed respondents is 28% in **Batumi**, and 22% of them have a full-time job. In Adjara, 41% of respondents work within their profession, and 66% of respondents have a written contract signed. A total of 59% of them have a contract signed for more than 1 year. As for satisfaction with one's own occupation/job, 67% reported being satisfied/very satisfied.

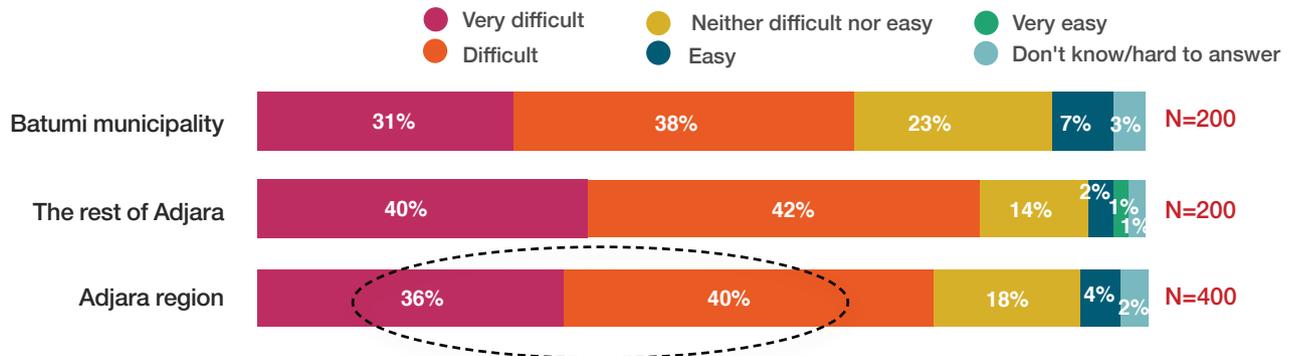
Chart 14. Occupation/employment status of respondents



The number of those who consider *starting entrepreneurial/business activity or/and self-employment* is 14%. The majority of them noted that they are thinking of starting this kind of activity *in the agricultural and retail trade sectors*.

The majority of inquired respondents in **Adjara** believe that *getting a job* is difficult/very difficult (76%). This is how 69% of respondents think in **Batumi municipality**. As the age of respondents increases, the assessment of employment opportunities as difficult/very difficult also increases. Namely, this is the opinion of 61% of respondents in the 14-17 age group, 77% of respondents in the 18-23 age group, and 83% of respondents in the 24-29 age group.

Chart 15. Assessment of employment opportunities for young people in the municipality



It is worth mentioning that within the scope of the *qualitative research*, *employment* was identified as the most severe problem faced by older age groups. In this context, several topics were highlighted. One challenge is related to a *lack of jobs in general*. As noted by focus group participants, there are some employment opportunities in the summer, but young people are eager to work during other seasons, too. In addition to a lack of jobs in general, another challenging factor for young people is the absence of a work schedule tailored to students. The third challenge identified by participants was the *often inappropriate requirement of employers set for job seekers*. Namely, these requirements are working experience and knowledge of foreign languages, which is often irrelevant as believed by young respondents of the study. In addition to the fact that getting a job is difficult, the problem is that employers often impose too many responsibilities on their employees, while the salary is so low that young people have to quit and join the group of job seekers.

It is still noteworthy that speaking of employment, research participants mostly discussed not only the problems of already employed young people, but challenges in the process of finding a job. As assessed by the respondents, supporting young people in acquiring different professional skills is important. This is why they believe that it is necessary to organize trainings or courses under the youth policy that will recruit older youngsters and help them acquire/improve their professional skills. As declared by the respondents, even though job opportunities are scarce, this is still an important precondition for young people to get a job.



“The state should conduct trainings, e.g. on how to cultivate land or work on the land. The development of this field would be the best. The more young people that are involved in this field, the better the country will be... Tourism is the most important in Batumi municipality, and it should be a focus...”

Batumi municipality, male, representative of 18-23 age category



“What I would wish is the activity that would be informative; whether these are excel courses, there are many programs that would help young people living in Batumi to grow professionally and get a job easily. Whether this is freelancing or a job on the local market”.

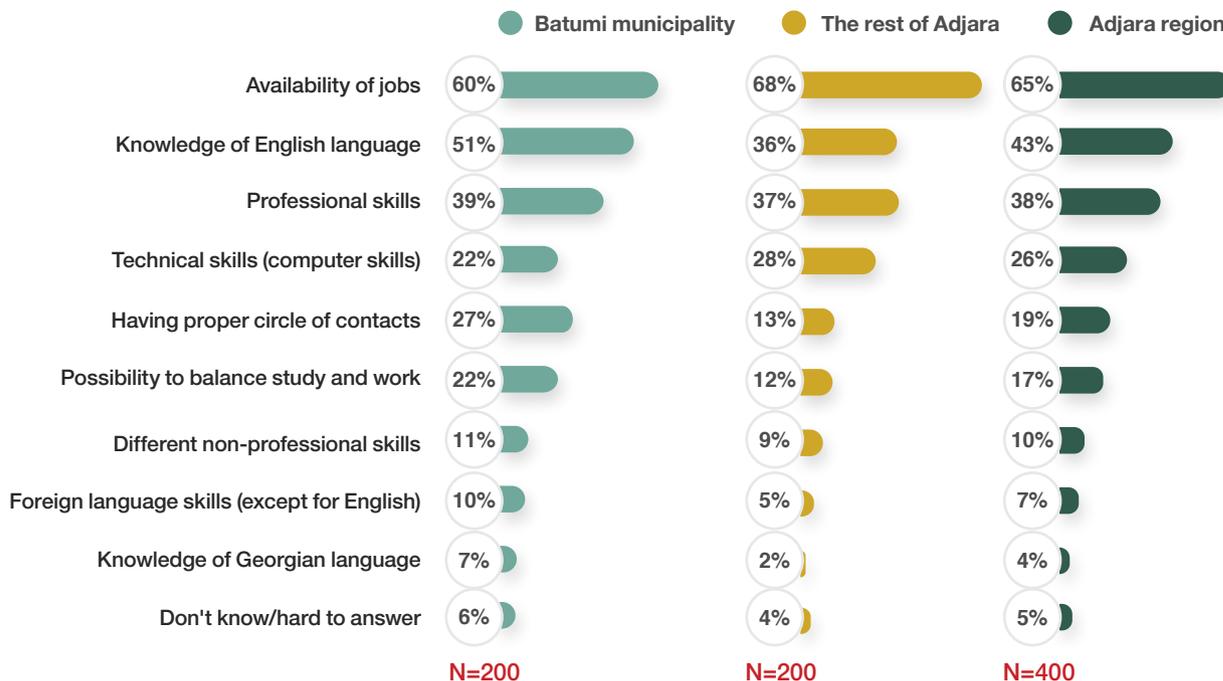
Batumi municipality, male, representative of 24-29 age category

As identified within the quantitative research, the majority of inquired respondents in **Adjara** believe that a *proper education* (55%) is the main factor for young people to get a job. A total of 44% mentioned *working experience*, and 40% stressed the importance of a factor such as the *relevant circle of acquaintances*. The main factor for young people in **Batumi municipality** is *working experience* (58%), while 54% of respondents named *proper education*, and 46% mentioned knowledge of a foreign language. Having the proper circles of acquaintances is also an important factor, and is named by 41% of young respondents.

In terms of *age*, it is worth mentioning that the youngest (14-17 years) and the oldest (24-29 years) age groups believe that the key factor for employment is proper education (57% and 55%, respectively). People in the 18-23 year-old age group assess the importance of proper education and working experience as equal (54%-54%).

The majority of respondents in **Adjara** believe that the *availability of jobs* would help young people work in their own municipalities (65%).

Chart 16. Factors assisting employment in one's own municipality



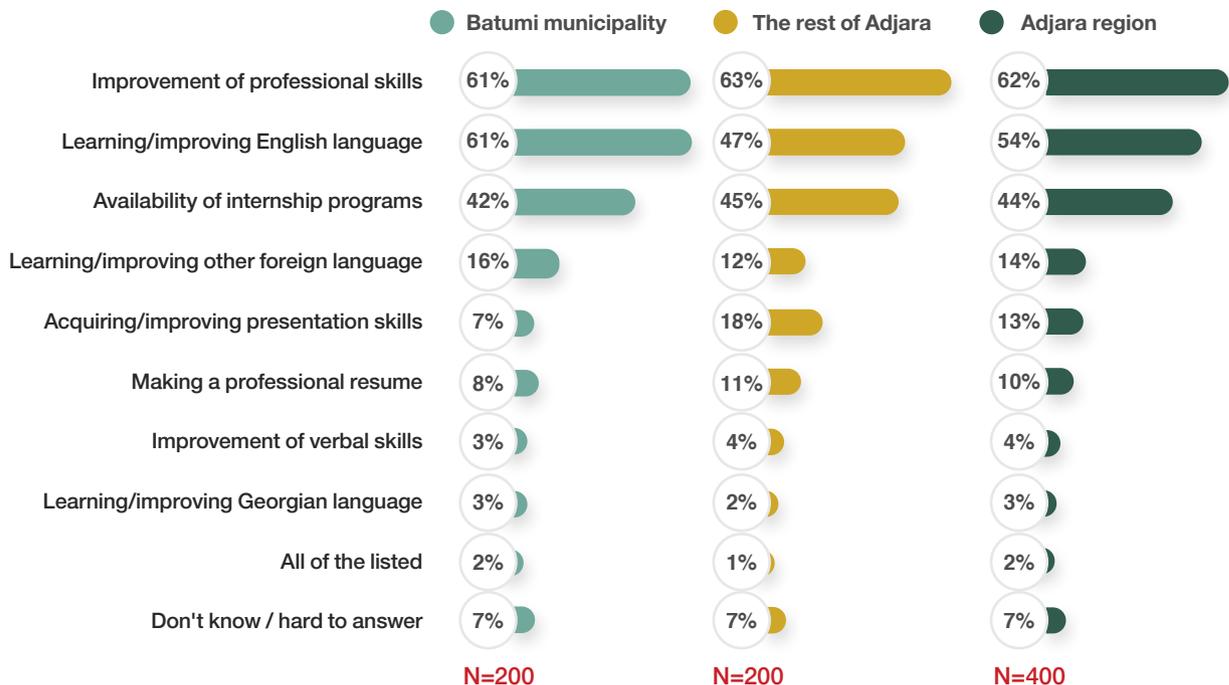
Approximately four out of ten respondents named the importance of factors such as *knowledge of the English language* (43%) and *having professional skills* (38%). Six out of ten respondents inquired in **Batumi municipality** deem the availability of jobs in their urban settlements important (60%), while every other respondent stressed the importance of English language skills (51%), and four out of ten focused on *having professional skills* (39%).

The availability of jobs for young people in their own municipality is assessed as the most important favorable factor by the majority of respondents in all age groups. It is also worth mentioning that the assessment of English language skills as the most important factor is the highest among school-aged young people. The importance of this factor decreases as the age of respondents increases (14-17 years - 52%, 18-23 years - 43%, 24-29 years - 38%).

Half of the respondents inquired in **Adjara** confirm that young people from their settlement *get a job in the region most easily* (49%). In addition, 36% of respondents pointed out their region and 13% mentioned their municipality. One-fifth of respondents spoke about getting a job most easily in the capital city (22%), while 13% mentioned another country. The largest portion inquired in **Batumi municipality** declared that young people from their urban settlements *get a job in the capital city most easily* (28%), while an equal number of respondents named employment *in the urban settlements or region* (18%-18%).

The majority of respondents (62%) inquired in **Adjara municipality** believe that support in *improvement of professional skills* would help young people in their municipality obtain employment. In addition, 54% of respondents believe that *learning/improving the English language* would also help young people get a job, while 44% named the *availability of internship of programs and the accumulation of working experience*.

Chart 17. Skills/knowledge support in the improvement of which would help young people in terms of employment



The majority of respondents in **Batumi municipality** named two equally important factors for supporting the employment of young people: *support in acquiring/improving professional skills and English language skills* (61%-61%).

When asked *how convenient the environment in Georgia is for young entrepreneurship, innovation and startups*, an equal share of respondents assessed it as convenient/completely convenient (26%) and inconvenient/completely inconvenient (26%). One-third of respondents believe that the environment is neither convenient nor inconvenient in the country (32%). Assessments are quite similar in Batumi municipality.

As it turns out, it is critically important for young people living in the region or in Batumi municipality to have access to sports classes and foreign language courses. Youth services and spaces for gathering are currently mostly unavailable, however, it turns out that these services are important for just one-fourth of the respondents. Challenges in terms of employment are assessed as particularly important in the region and in Batumi municipality as well. In addition to a lack of jobs, a working schedule that is not tailored to students is problematic. Another challenge is the irrelevant requirement of employers that involves working experience and foreign language skills. This explains the fact that the majority of research respondents, in addition to employment opportunities, deem it important to ensure support in the improvement of professional skills, improvement of foreign language skills, and accumulation of working experience.

2.4. Political Participation and Activism

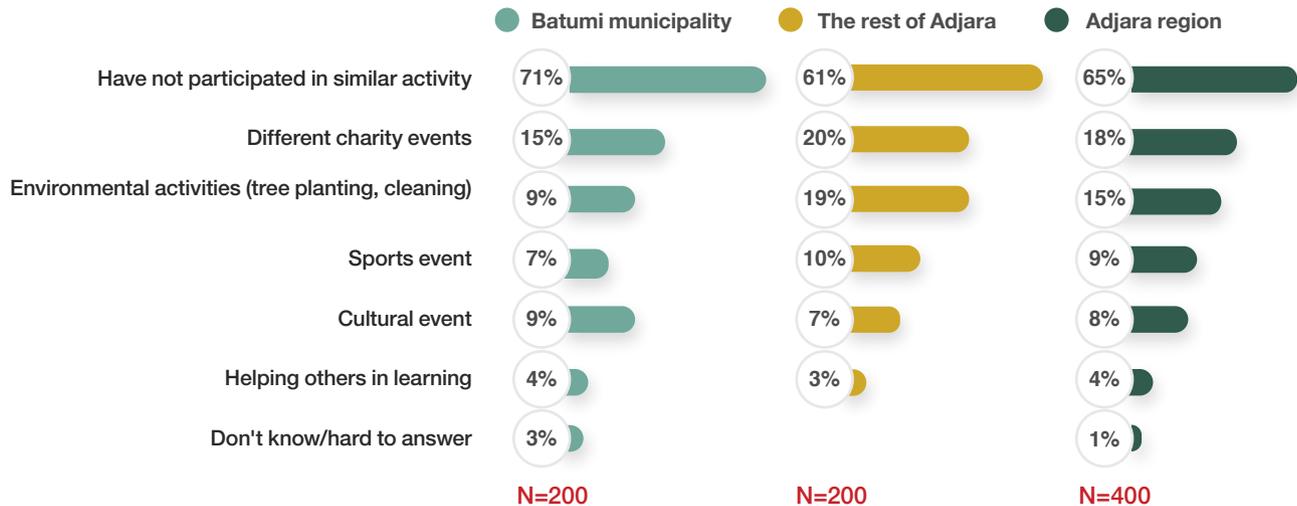
Research respondents were asked to assess the topics that are related to Political Participation and activism. It turns out that the vast majority of respondents believe that the participation of young people in a variety of *volunteer activities is important/very important*, and this vision applies to the entire region of Adjara (90%) as well as Batumi municipality (91%).

Regardless of such an assessment, the majority of young people inquired in **Adjara** and in **Batumi municipality** *have not participated in any volunteer programs* over the past 2-3 years (Adjara – 77%, Batumi municipality – 81%). A total of 22% of respondents in the region and 17% in Batumi municipality reported having experience with volunteer activities.

The majority of inquired respondents in **Adjara** *have not participated in any volunteer activities over the past 1-2 years* (65%). Different charity events and tree planting events are the activities in which the largest number of respondents have participated in the region (18% and 15%, respectively). The distribution is quite similar in **Batumi municipality**.

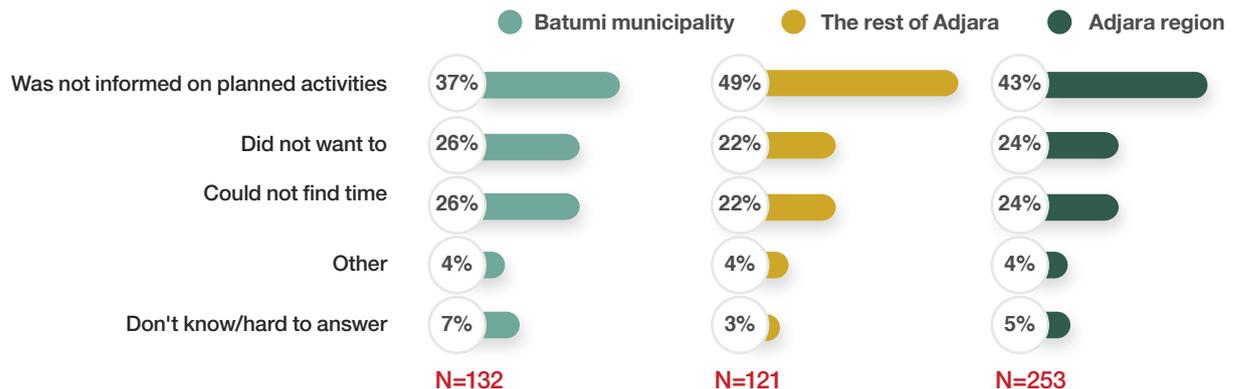
It is worth mentioning that as the age of respondents increases, the rate of participation in similar activities decreases. For example, if half of the respondents in the 14-17 age group have not participated in any volunteer activities (53%), the same is declared by 59% of respondents in the 18-23 age group, while the rate is 77% in the 24-29 age group.

Chart 18. Experience participating in volunteer activities over the past 1-2 years



When asked about the reason behind not participating in volunteer activities, 43% of respondents in **Adjara** answered that they *had not heard about planned volunteer activities*. According to one-fourth of respondents, they *did not have the desire* (24%) or *could not find time* (24%). The distribution is quite similar in **Batumi municipality**. It is worth mentioning that every second respondent in *urban areas* reported the absence of information on upcoming activities (52%). The same reason was named by 37% of respondents in *urban-type settlements*.

Chart 19. Reasons why young people did not participate in volunteer activities



The importance of volunteer activities as well as engagement in processes in general was stressed within the scope of the *qualitative research*. Here, young participants from Batumi municipality noted that a small group of young citizens are involved in volunteer activities. According to one opinion, the challenge is that *volunteer activities are associated with work that is not prestigious*. In addition, one reason for low engagement is the *absence of motivating mechanisms*. It is worth mentioning, however, that allocating monetary incentives for volunteer activities was not positively evaluated. Furthermore, part of the respondents declared that such a mechanism is inappropriate for the idea of volunteer work. Even though young respondents found it difficult to name encouraging mechanisms that would increase the engagement of their peers in volunteer work, key informants were able to provide their point of view. A representative of the NGO sector participating in the study believes that the development of motivating mechanisms for increasing the engagement of young people in voluntary work is crucial. As declared by this respondent, *as it is important for young people to be recognized, and it is recommended to assign properly trained and recruited young people with a certain status* (e.g. advisor's status). As believed by the research participant, this will positively motivate young people and maybe not substantially, but will still increase engagement of this kind.



"I believe that volunteers of the Red Cross put so much labor and effort; there should be some kind of monetary incentive from the state to encourage more activities. It would be good to allocate a certain amount as an incentive..."

Batumi municipality, female, representative of 18-23 age category

"Yes, but being a volunteer means working for free; doing something on a voluntary basis and not expecting any incentive from it".

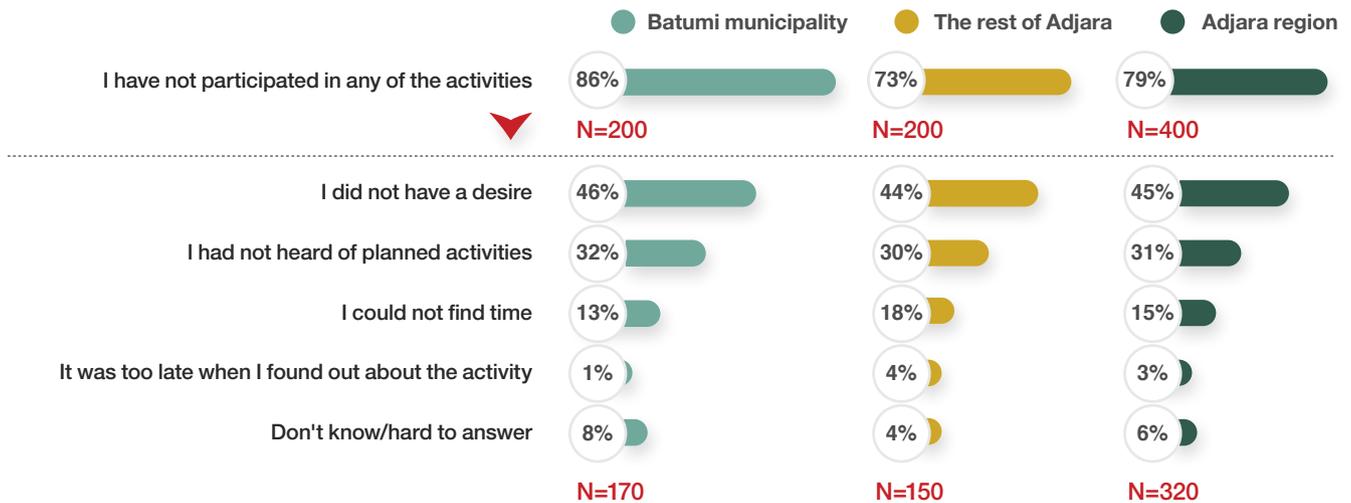
Batumi municipality, male, representative of 18-23 age category

Not only volunteering activism is assessed as important, but as believed by 89% of respondents in **Adjara**, *the participation of young people in various important processes (discussion of topics, protest rallies, signing a petition, etc.) is important/ very important*. This opinion is shared by 84% of respondents in **Batumi municipality**. It is worth mentioning that the engagement of young people in various processes is important/very important for 85% of respondents in urban areas, and for 93% of respondents in rural areas.

The importance of youth engagement in various important processes taking place in the country was also stressed within the course of the *qualitative study*. Young people of all age groups participating in focus group discussions in Batumi municipality agree that civil activism is important. According to the main argument, *activism and engagement mean development*. Activism enables young citizens to express themselves, understand the universe better, and generate ideas. Because of this, they have an opportunity to participate in their own development, as well as the development of the country.

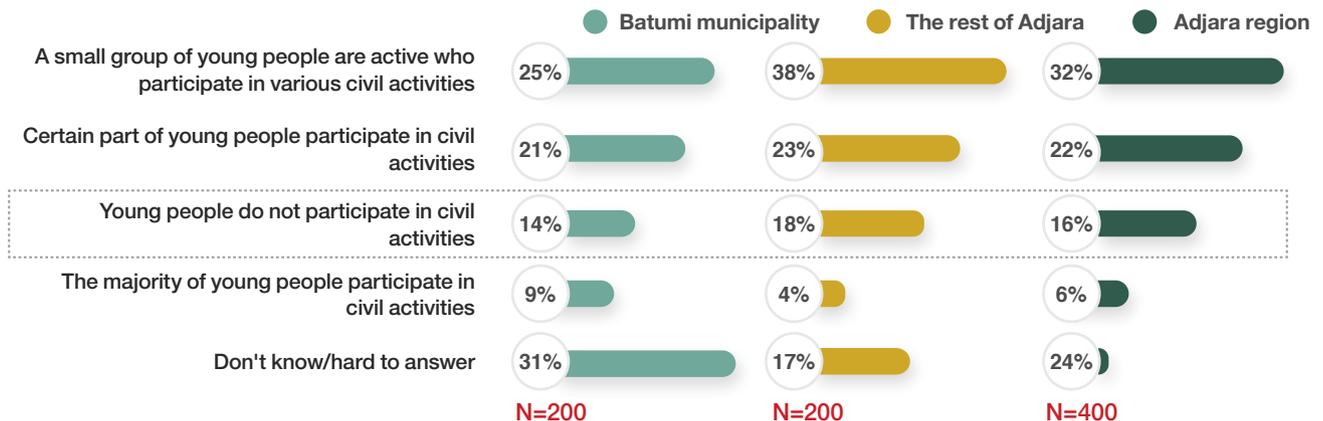
Even though civil activism and engagement were deemed important, eight out of ten respondents in **Adjara** *have not participated in any civil activities over the past 1-2 years*. The same index is 86% in **Batumi municipality**. The number of those who mentioned participating in public meetings, different demonstrations, petitions, etc. is low. The largest portion of respondents (10%) in Adjara reported having *posted online (social network) about different events (social, political, cultural) and signing a petition* (7%). This index is similar in Batumi municipality. As for the reasons why respondents did not participate in any of the civil activities, the main reason seems to be a lack of desire (45%). For one-third of respondents, the reason was that they had not heard of the planned activities (31%). The situation is quite similar in Batumi municipality.

Chart 20. Experience participating in civil activities over the past 1-2 years / reasons for not participating



Together with their own civil activism, research participants were asked to assess how active young people are in their municipality. As it turns out, one-fourth (24%) of respondents found it difficult to give an assessment, while one-third noted that *there is a small group of young people in their municipality who actively participate in various civil activities* (32%), and one-fifth declared that *a certain part of young people participate in civil activity* (22%). A total of 16% of respondents declared that *young people do not participate in civil activities*.

Chart 21. Assessment of young peoples' engagement in civil activities in their municipality



One-third of respondents found it difficult to provide their assessment in **Batumi municipality**, while one-fourth of respondents mentioned a small group of active young people (25%).

The fact that engagement is not high is stressed within the course of the *qualitative study*. Key informants participating in the study noted that rallies on different topics are often held in Batumi municipality, but it still does not necessarily mean that civil activism is high. According to one of the arguments, *activists protest against decisions that have already been made, and rarely participate in the decision-making process* (discussions, planning, etc.). The main reason for lack of participation is that *the system is not open and there are bureaucratic barriers*. A representative of local self-government paid attention to these challenges in terms of bureaucracy. As declared by this respondent, in addition to a lack of trust towards young people and the absence of the vision that they cannot present interesting ideas because of their age or lack of experience, bureaucratic barriers are problematic. The small group of young people who have initiatives and apply to local self-government for support, have to cope with various bureaucratic rules. Having to overcome those challenges does not increase their motivation. Even though as believed by key informants, local self-government cannot eliminate bureaucratic mechanisms, however it is important to note that the presence of these barriers have a more negative impact on the engagement of young people than a positive one.



“There are rallies every day. When I go home, I come across rallies all the time, but young people are not involved in the decision making process. For example, you protest against the boulevard development plan, but when the plan is being adopted you can share your opinion with the Urban settlements Council, which does not often happen. Because the system is not open, there is too much bureaucracy. You need to register, and you may not be granted permission if the topic is a bit sensitive...”

Civil activist

“We need to trust in young people, and unfortunately the deficit of trust is too big. Bureaucratic procedures add to that... if you don't trust young people to sign an agreement or make an effort, you are not doing anything to help them. This all hinders young people... as we are the state-funded organization, we cannot escape this bureaucracy. Unfortunately, this makes it even more complicated to communicate with young people”.

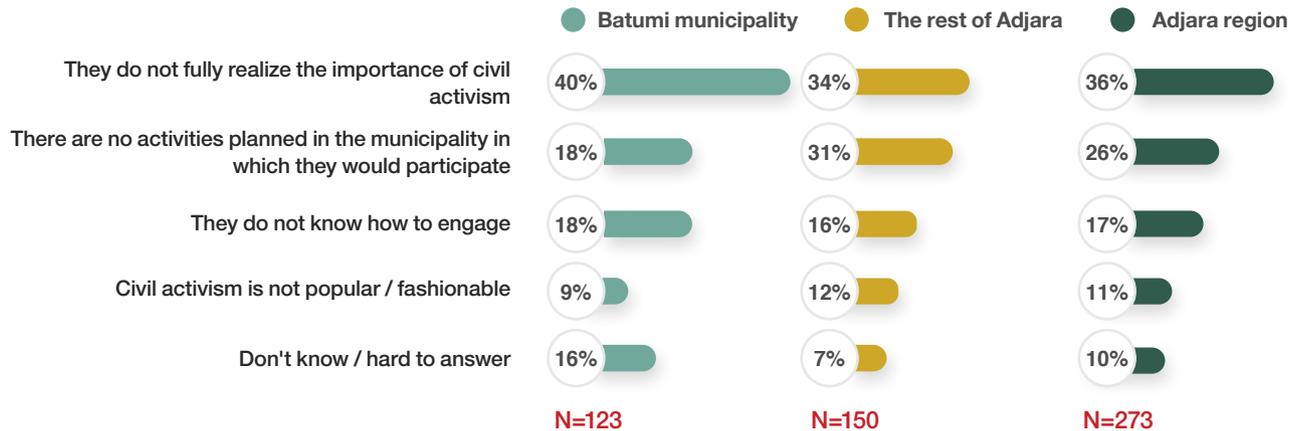
Representative of local self-government

As for the reasons why a small group/almost no one participates in civil activities, the main reason provided by respondents in **Adjara** was that *young people do not fully realize the importance of civil activism* (36%). As believed by one-fourth of the respondents, the reason is that *there are no activities in the municipality in which young people could participate* (26%). The main reason behind low civil activism in **Batumi municipality** is that *young people do not fully realize its importance* (40%). It is also worth mentioning that one-fifth of respondents reported *not having activities planned in the municipality in which young people could participate* (18%). They also reported that *young people do not know how to engage in civil activities* (18%).

One-fourth of respondents who believe that at least some young people participate in civil activities find it difficult to name the specific activities young people are involved in (26%). The largest portion of respondents reported participating in *charity events* (34%) and *environmental activities* (26%).

Several reasons for low civil activism were identified within the *qualitative study*. One reason is *low awareness of the importance* of civil activism and their own role as well. Respondents also spoke about reasons related to expression of opinion. On one hand, young people are not brave enough to express what they feel. On the other hand, a main obstacle is the lack of social acceptance of such behavior. In this context, particular attention was paid to the importance of the acquaintance factor and concern that someone's activism may be unacceptable for acquaintances.

Chart 22. Reasons behind low civil activism



The laziness factor was also mentioned by focus group discussion participants. Another important factor was not having expectations that youth-initiated ideas will be shared and supported by decision-makers. All of these factors separately or combined create a significant obstacle for civil activism and youth engagement.



“...Adjara region is small, and everyone is everyone’s relative. This is why this process is not active; they think they will somehow offend someone if they speak openly about something. Then when these young people speak up, local self-government feels offended...”

Civil activist

When asked what would increase young people’s engagement, participants of the qualitative study paid attention to several topics. As declared by young respondents, some important mechanisms to increase civil activism is *awareness raising and informing young people of the importance of activism*, as well as on the forms of activism young people can utilize. Another important mechanism to increase civil activism is believed to be the *promotion of civil activism*. The latter implies wide coverage of activities that are implemented through youth initiatives and active engagement, as well as reporting on specific outcomes. It is worth mentioning that a group of older young people expressed their point of view that in order to make young people more active and increase civil activism, it is necessary to start working at schools. Furthermore, they believe that it is difficult to change already matured young people, thus, the work needs to start when they are still school-aged children to ensure that engagement and civil activism is an integral part of young peoples’ mindset.

Key informants participating in the study stressed the particular role of the local self-government in increasing the engagement of young people. They believe that the state that is represented by self-government, needs to *make young people feel how important they are*. In addition, *it needs to plan activities that will be focused on the activation of youth*. If we take young peoples’ vision into account on how they understand their engagement, we

can conclude that particular activeness of local self-government and offering activities to young people is one of the best ways to increase youth engagement at this point. According to participants of focus group discussions, for young people, engagement rarely means initiatives, new ideas and turning those ideas into projects. They think that engagement means participation in already planned activities. In addition, local self-government is believed to be responsible for planning and implementing those activities.



"[The state] should make young people feel that they are needed, that their opinion matters and that they need to be more active".

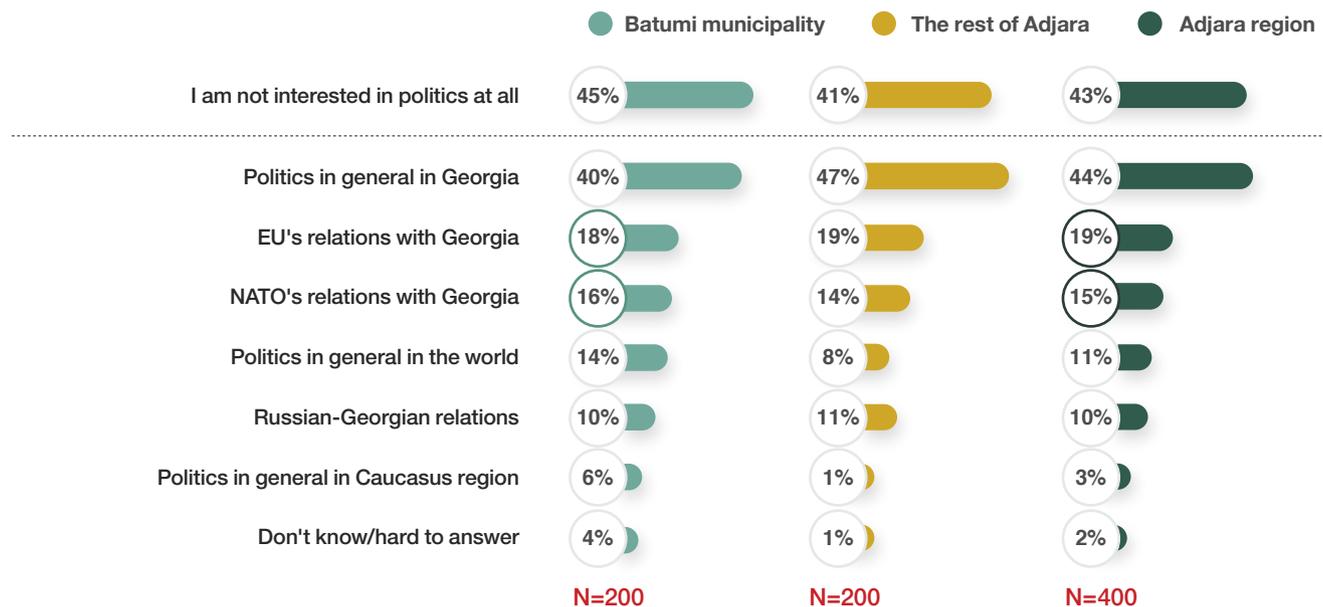
Representative of NGO sector

"You [local self-government] need to be active but they are quite passive. Only a few young people are motivated enough to think about their development. Unfortunately, the only young people coming voluntarily are already involved in everything..."

Representative of local self-government

When asked to assess the importance of young people being interested in politics, 59% of respondents in **Adjara** responded that it is *important/very important*. The assessment was quite similar in **Batumi municipality**.

Chart 23. Interest in political issues

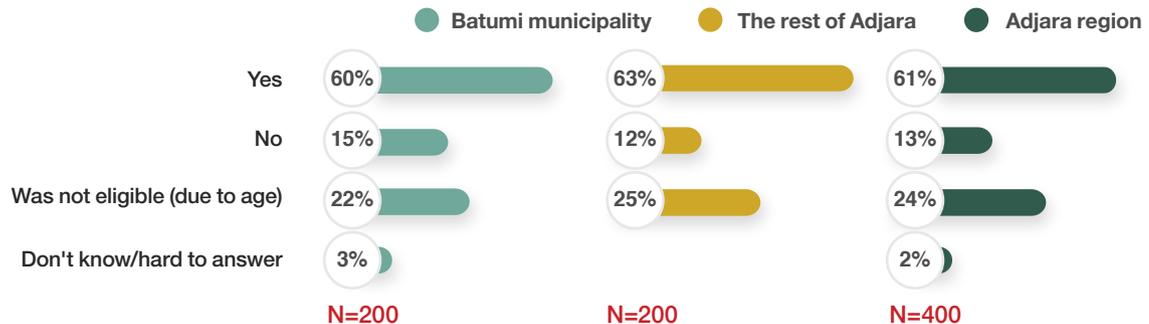


As for respondents' interest in politics, it turns out that 43% of inquired young people in **Adjara** are *not interested in politics at all*. The largest portion of respondents are *interested in politics in general in Georgia* (44%). The reality is quite similar in **Batumi municipality**. It is worth mentioning that 34%-34% of respondents in the region and in Batumi municipality are interested in Georgia's relations with EU and NATO.

A total of 48% of research participants in Adjara declare that they *discuss social, economic and political issues taking place in the country often or sometimes*. The second part of respondents never or rarely do this (52%). Every second of those respondents who discuss these issues, discuss them with their friends (49%).

Among respondents inquired in **Adjara region**, 61% participated in the most recent elections (Parliamentary Elections 2020). One-fourth of respondents (24%) did not participate because of not meeting the age requirement. Regardless of being old enough, 13% of respondents did not participate in the elections. The reality is similar in **Batumi municipality**.

Chart 24. Experience participating in the most recent elections (Parliamentary elections 2020)



A lack of interest in politics among young people and low engagement was stressed by participants of the *qualitative research*. They mentioned not only the low participation rate in the elections, but the rare participation of young people in discussions. According to focus group discussions, young people have a less serious attitude towards participating in discussions, and have the feeling that they are not capable “of changing anything”. Conversation with key informants identified that it is necessary the local self-government work more actively in this direction to increase young peoples' interest in politics and related issues.

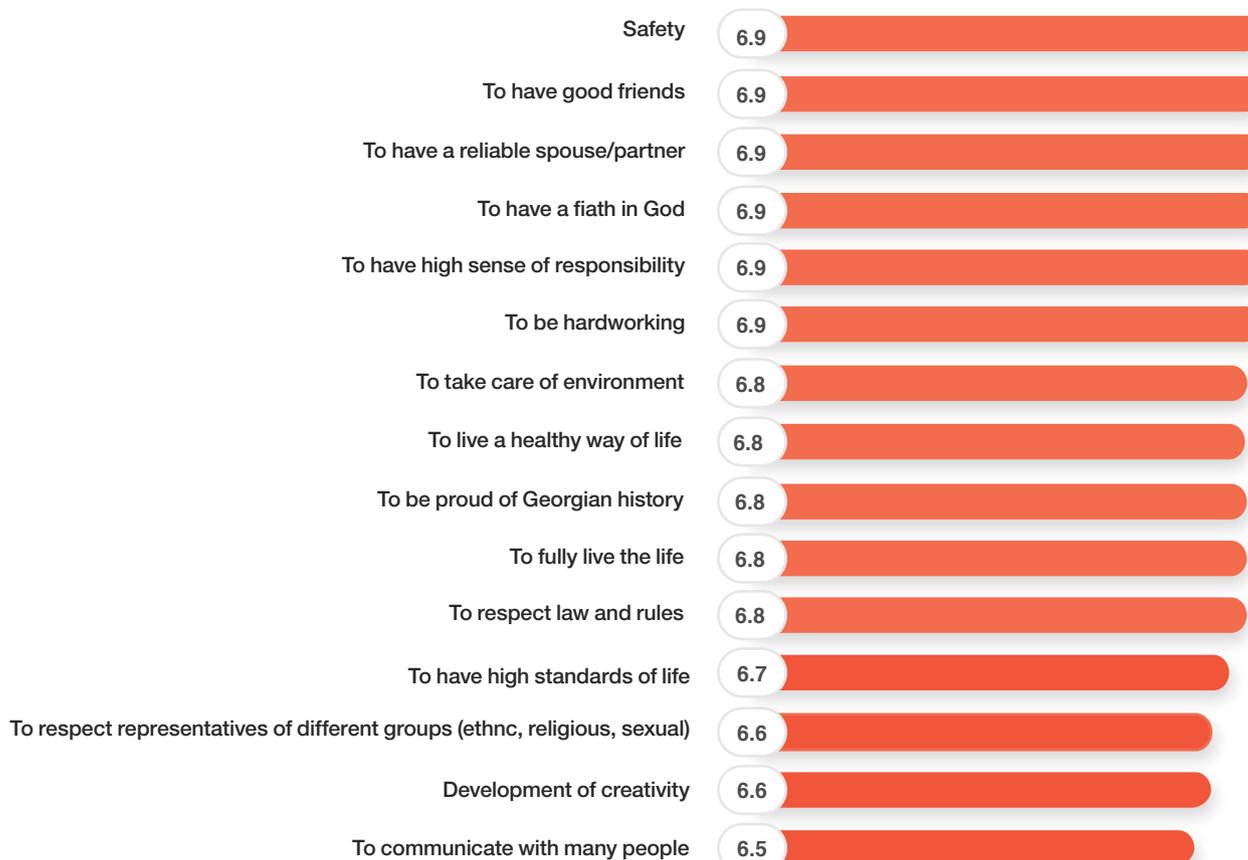
Results of both the qualitative and quantitative research clarify that the civil engagement of young people in the region as well as in Batumi municipality is low. Even though respondents assess volunteer activities as well as engagement of young people in various processes as important or very important, it is clear that young people are less involved in these processes. The reasons behind such low engagement are a lack of awareness on the importance of civil activism and a lack of information on the forms of engagement. It is also worth mentioning that factors include the perception of activism as a socially less desirable activity and the bureaucracy barriers young people have to overcome to receive the support of local self-governments. Identified mechanisms for increasing civil activism include working actively to raise the awareness of school-aged children and promoting civil activism and reporting successful cases in the media.

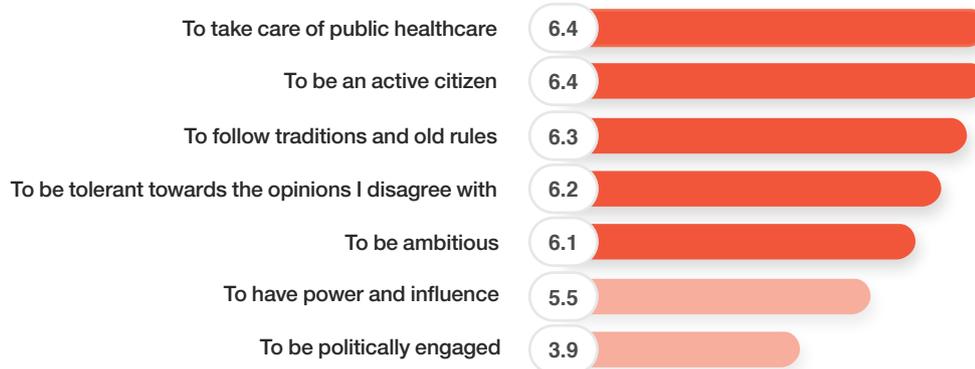
2.5. Values and Rights

Values

Research participants were asked to assess the importance of different values on a 7-point scale, where “1” means that the value is “totally unimportant” and “7” means “very important”. Almost every value was assessed as very important and the mean value of each of them exceeds 6 points. As it turns out, for young people in Adjara, the values such as *safety, having good friends, having a reliable spouse/partner, faith in God, sense of responsibility and hard work* are the most important values (the mean value of each is 6.9 points). The least important values identified in Adjara were *having power and influence* (5.5 points) and *Political Participation* (3.9 points). the 24-29 age group.

Chart 25. Assessment of the importance of values in Adjara (assessment on a 7-point scale where “1” means “totally unimportant” and “7” means – “very important”)

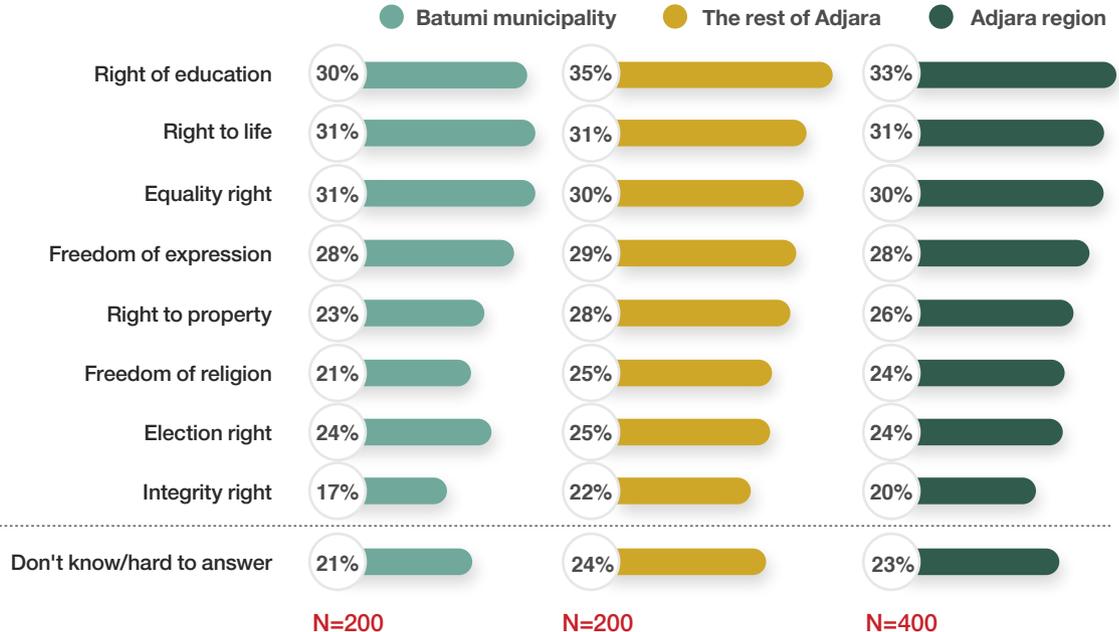




Rights

As for the rights young people have heard of, it turns out that 23% of respondents in Adjara fail to name at least one right they have heard of. The largest portion of respondents have heard of rights such as the right of education (33%), life (31%) and equality (30%), as well as the right of expression (28%).⁷

Chart 26. Human rights young people have heard of

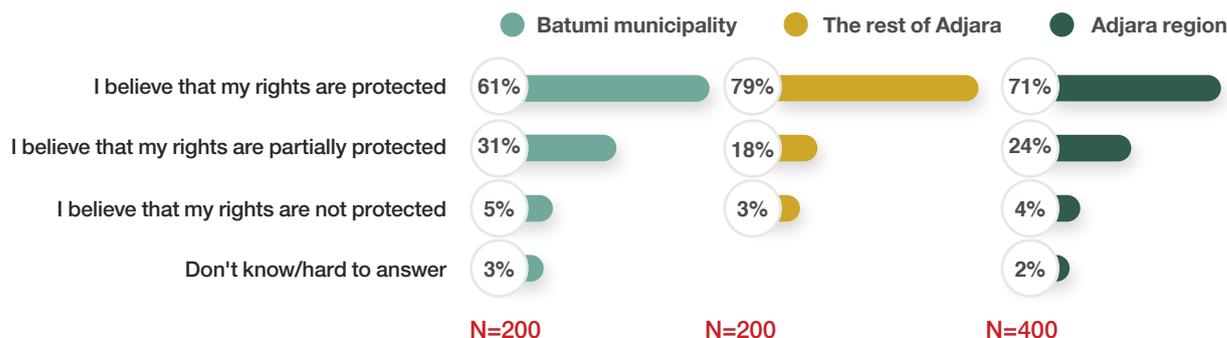


⁷ Note: the chart presents only those rights at least 2 out of ten respondents have heard of.

The reality is quite similar in Batumi municipality. It is worth mentioning that the largest portion of women in Adjara region have heard of equality (34%) rights, while the largest portion of men have heard of the right of life (31%). The majority of respondents in the 14-17 and 18-23 age groups have heard of the right of education (32% and 41%), and the largest portion of respondents in the 24-29 age group have heard of the right of life (30%). This is the right the largest portion of respondents have heard of in rural areas (34%), While the largest group inquired in urban areas have heard of the right of equality (31%).

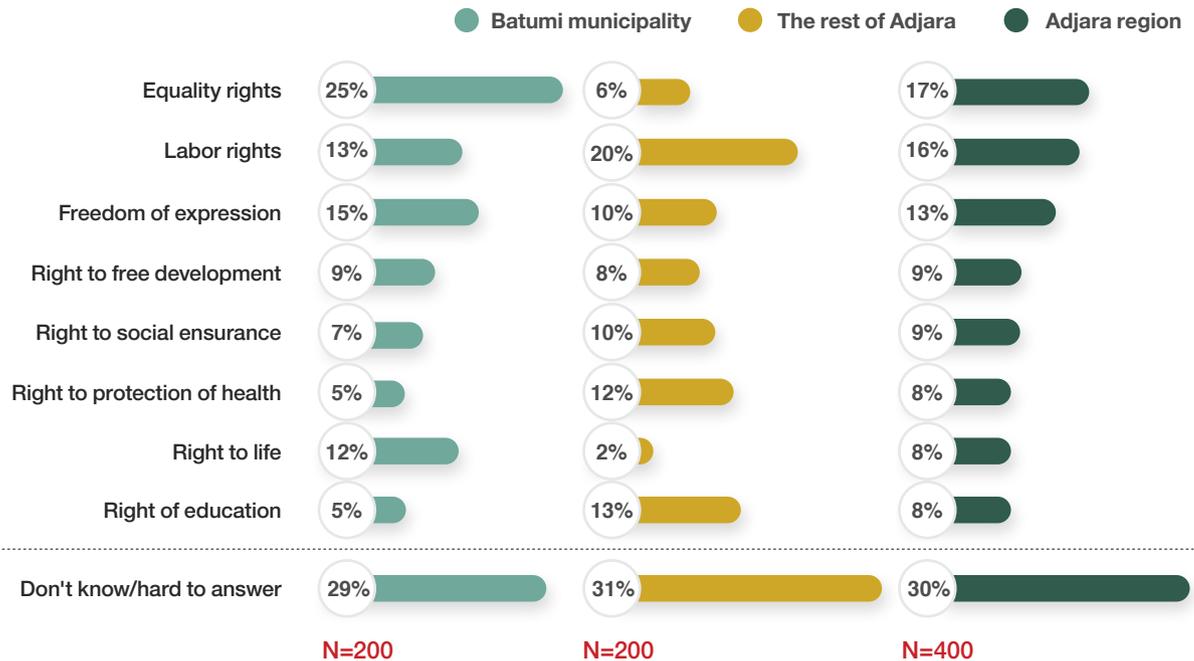
The majority of respondents in **Adjara** believe that their rights are protected (71%), while one-fourth reported on the *partial protection of rights* (24%). Six out of ten respondents inquired in **Batumi municipality** believe that *their rights are protected* (61%), and one-third of respondents believe that *their rights are partially protected* (31%). As the age of respondents increases, the number of those who believe that their rights are protected decreases, however the majority of respondents in every age category agree with the statement that their rights are protected (14-17 years - 83%, 18-23 years - 70%, 24-29 years - 66%).

Chart 27. Feelings on the protection of rights



As declared by 57% of respondents in **Adjara**, their rights are not violated. The largest share of respondents reporting a violation of their rights mentioned *equality rights* (11%). In **Batumi municipality**, 44% of young respondents declared that *their rights are not violated*, and the largest portion reported that their *equality rights* had been violated (17%). When speaking about rights that are not protected/partially protected, one-third of respondents in **Adjara region** find it difficult to answer the question (30%). The largest number of respondents believe that their rights that are unprotected/partially protected are *equality and labor rights* (17% and 16%, respectively). One-third of respondents in **Batumi municipality** find it difficult to answer this question (29%), but the largest portion – one-fourth of respondents – think that equality rights are not protected/partially protected (25%). The second most frequently named right in Batumi municipality is freedom of expression – 15% of respondents reported that this right is unprotected/partially protected.

It is worth mentioning that the largest number of *women* in Adjara believe that their freedom of expression is not protected/partially protected (26%), while the largest number of *men* found it difficult to name such a right (30%).

Chart 28. Rights that are not protected/partially protected⁸

Participants of the *qualitative research* did not speak much about rights or their violations, which can be related to a low awareness of rights. The latter was stressed by key informants participating in the study. It was noted that young people 'are informed only on those rights they can protect through shouting, violence', and they are actually unaware of their other rights and related responsibilities.

Instead of violations, young people in Batumi municipality noted that rights are rarely violated in the urban settlements, and even the important right of freedom of expression is protected and guaranteed ("we do not truly have any problem in terms of freedom of expression"). The only thing discussion participants mentioned in terms of a rights violation was labor rights. As assessed by elder age categories, labor rights are violated not only in Batumi municipality, but in entire country, and this problem is challenging for young people as well as for elder citizens. Violation of labor rights, as believed by research participants, mostly implies overtime work schedule ("one is supposed to work 40 hours a week, but we work 80 hours...") and low salary.

2.6. Challenges and Aspirations

Within the scope of the study, young people were asked to assess various problems, their intention of migration, the socio-economic condition of the country, and other issues that are more or less challenging for the country.

⁸ Note: the list provides only those rights that were named by at least 8% of respondents

Values

Research participants were asked to assess the difficulty of accessing various services in their municipality. The extent of each challenge was assessed on a 7-point scale, where “1” means that the topic is not problematic/challenging at all and “7” means that it is a serious problem/challenge.

Table 5. Assessment of various issues for young people in their municipality (assessment on a 7-point scale where “1” means it’s not problematic/challenging at all, and “7” means it’s a serious problem/challenge)

| To what extent are the following issues problematic/challenging for young people in the municipality | Batumi municipality | The rest of Adjara region | Adjara region |
|--|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Lack of jobs | 5.2 | 5.7 | 5.4 |
| Access to programs supporting entrepreneurship | 4.8 | 5.3 | 5.1 |
| Access to internship programs | 3.9 | 5 | 4.6 |
| Access to spaces for young people to gather, rest, have fun or organize various events | 4.1 | 5 | 4.6 |
| Access to education on reproductive health | 3.8 | 4.7 | 4.3 |
| Access to trainings/education courses | 3.6 | 4.8 | 4.3 |
| Access to places of recreation and entertainment | 3.4 | 5.1 | 4.3 |
| Access to sports classes | 3.3 | 4.1 | 3.8 |
| Access to sports infrastructure | 3.3 | 4.2 | 3.8 |
| Access to higher education | 3.0 | 4.2 | 3.6 |
| Access to informal education | 3.0 | 4.1 | 3.6 |
| Access to art classes | 3.2 | 3.9 | 3.6 |
| Access to vocational schools | 3.1 | 3.5 | 3.3 |
| Access to healthcare services | 3.2 | 3.2 | 3.2 |
| Access to computer | 2.4 | 3.0 | 2.8 |
| Access to internet | 2.1 | 2.8 | 2.5 |
| Access to transportation | 2.2 | 2.6 | 2.4 |
| Access to school education | 2.3 | 2.3 | 2.3 |

As it turns out, the two most important challenges for young people living in Adjara are a lack of jobs (5.4 points) and the accessibility of programs supporting entrepreneurship (5.1 points). The next two particularly problematic issues are the accessibility of internship programs and relaxation and recreation places (each received 4.6 points). Three issues that are the least problematic include access to a school education (2.3 points), transportation (2.4 points) and internet (2.2 points). The assessments are quite similar in Batumi municipality, with the only difference being that the third most problematic issue added to a lack of jobs and accessibility of programs supporting entrepreneurship was the accessibility of spaces for youth to gather, rest, have fun or organize different events (4.1 points). The least challenging issue identified in Batumi municipality seems to be access to internet (2.1 points).

As it turns out, even though the majority of respondents have access to a PC at home and/or outdoors, one-fourth of respondents in **Adjara** have no access to a computer neither at home nor outdoors (26%). The share of such respondents in **Batumi municipality** is 20%. As for internet use, nine out of ten respondents in Batumi report using the internet for several hours a day (Adjara region – 91%, Batumi municipality – 89%). Most frequently, respondents use the internet to access Facebook (77% in Adjara as well as in Batumi municipality) and to retrieve information (67% in Adjara and Batumi municipality).

When speaking about problems, it needs to be mentioned that young respondents of the *qualitative study* found it difficult to identify issues that concern them as young people and not as citizens living in a specific urban settlements or country. Key informants participating in the study mentioned the same. As assessed by a representative of the local self-government, in addition to specific problems related to youth, a serious challenge is that they are unable to identify problems, and when speaking about needs “they cannot think of anything but tuition fees and employment”.

In general, when discussing challenges, participants of focus group discussions in Batumi municipality stressed issues such as:

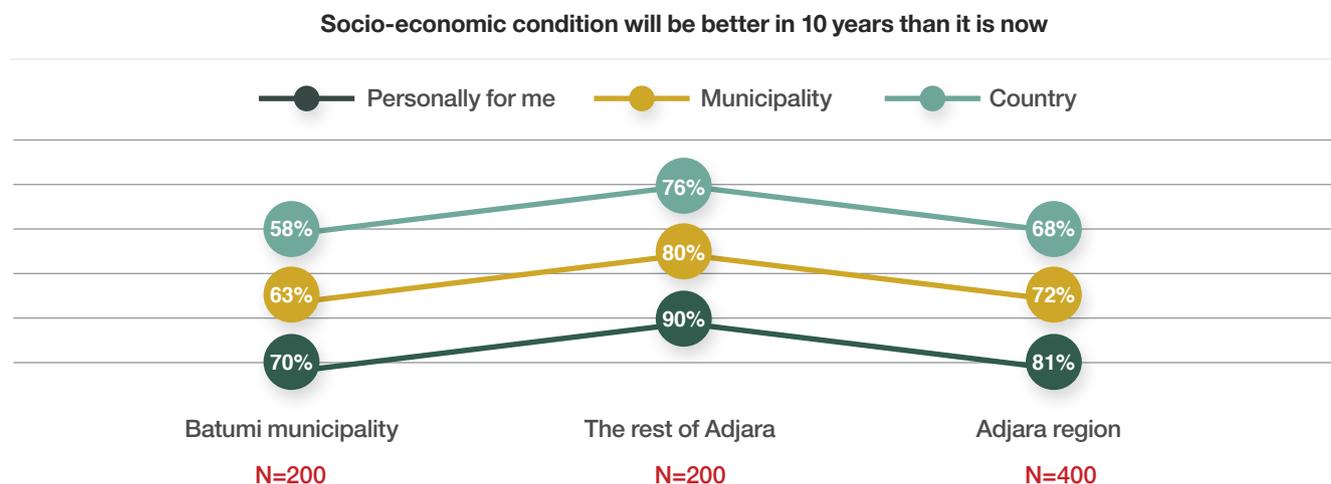
- Ecological problems (cleaning problems in the urban settlements , polluted air, dump)
- Urban settlements development (chaotic construction and lost face of the urban settlements)
- Heavy traffic, which is particularly problematic in the summer due to the increased flow of tourists
- Poor condition of road infrastructure (traffic lights out of order, insufficient number of traffic lights, dark streets)
- Improper sports infrastructure (sports grounds without proper care)
- Environment that is not adapted for disabled persons
- Homeless persons
- Stray dogs

When asked about problems facing young people specifically, particular attention was paid to challenges related to employment, which was discussed in the respective sub-chapter. In addition, problematic issues included challenges related to bullying and the use of marijuana, which will be discussed in the sub-chapter dedicated to risk behaviors and discrimination.

As for the perspective of the next 10 years when assessing the socio-economic condition of the country, municipality or personal situation, it needs to be mentioned that attitudes are positive in case of the region and Batumi municipality. At least 7 out of 10 respondents feel that the socio-economic condition *in the country as well as in the municipality and in their personal life will be better in 10 years than it is now*. It is also worth mentioning that research respondents have a more positive vision of their own socio-economic condition (81%) than in case of the country (68%) or municipality (72%). It is also noteworthy that attitudes are more positive in rural areas

than in cities. Namely, 76% of respondents in rural areas and 61% in urban areas predict positive changes in the country. The tendency is similar in terms of assessing the condition in the municipality (rural settlements – 80%, urban settlements – 66%) and their personal lives (rural settlements – 91%, rural settlements – 72%).

Chart 29. Positive prediction of the socio-economic condition in the country, municipality and respondent's life within the next 10 years



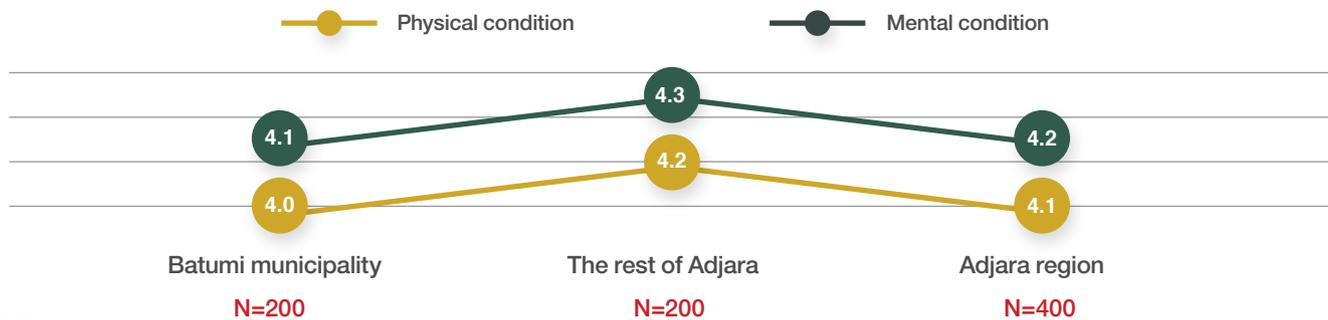
As for the respondent's satisfaction with their own life, the majority of young people claim that at this point of life, considering every factor, *they are more satisfied than average*. The satisfaction level was rated on a 7-point scale where "1" means that the respondent is completely dissatisfied with their life and "7" means that the respondent is very satisfied with their life at this point. The rating was 5.4 points in Adjara, 5.6 points in the rest of the region, the lowest point was reported in Batumi municipality – 5.2 points.

Chart 30. Satisfaction with life at the current stage (assessment on a 7-point scale where "1" means - "I am not satisfied at all" and "7" means "I am very satisfied")



When asked to assess their physical and mental condition, young people gave positive evaluations in Adjara as well as in Batumi and the rest of the region. The assessment of both conditions is rated with 4.0 and higher points out of 5.

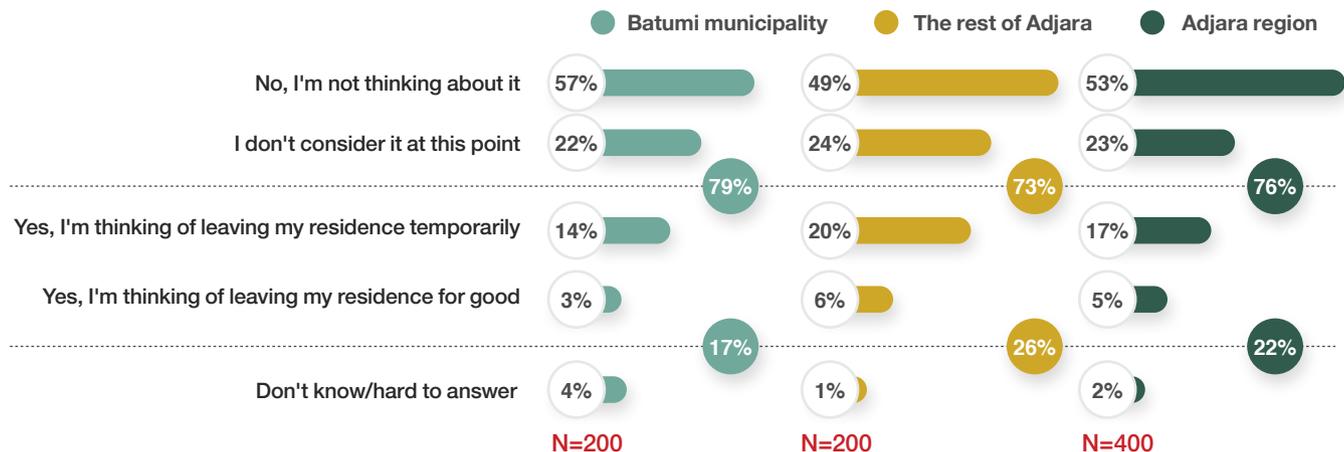
Chart 31. Assessment of current physical and mental condition (“1” – very negative” and “5” – very positive)



Migration

Young people were asked to assess their intention to migrate both domestically and internationally over the next 2-3 years. It turns out that a large portion of respondents do not have/currently have no intention to move within the country. A total of 53% of respondents in **Adjara** reported having no such intention, and 23% of respondents do not consider it at this point. Just 17% of respondents reported having the intention to move. Eight out of ten respondents inquired in **Batumi municipality** have no intention to move within the country over the next 2-3 years (79%), and it is worth mentioning that 22% of respondents do not think about it at all.

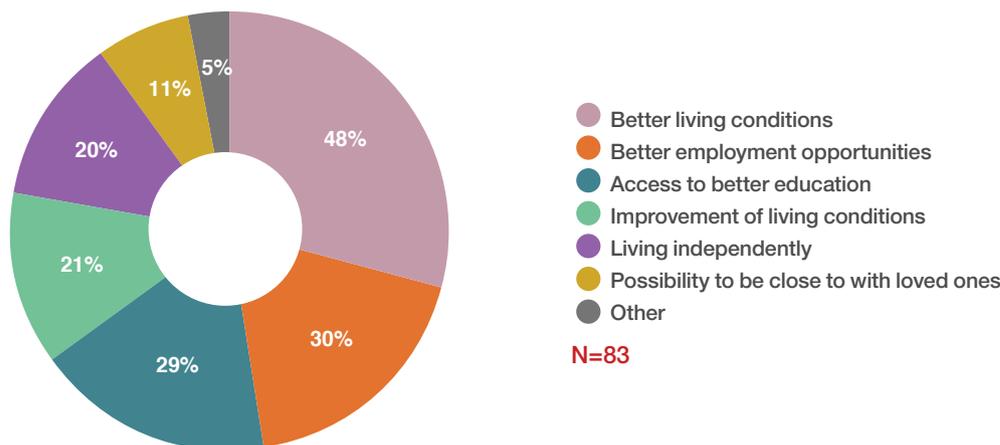
Chart 32. Intention to migrate domestically over the next 2-3 years



It is worth mentioning that the intention of domestic migration in Adjara is the most prevalent in the 18-23 age group (30%; 14-17 years - 19%, 24-29 years - 16%). According to type of *settlement*, more residents of rural areas have intentions of moving within the country over the next 2-3 years (29%) than young people living in the urban settlements (16%).

As for the reasons for domestic migration, those who reported having such intentions named three main reasons. Namely, these reasons are *better living conditions* (48%), *better employment opportunities* (30%) and access to *better education* (29%).

Chart 33. Reasons for domestic migration in Adjara



It is worth mentioning that a large portion of respondents do not think of international migration in Adjara (87%), Batumi (81%), or the rest of the region (92%). Only 10% of respondents reported having an intention to move out of the country (39 young people). The main reasons for this intention include better living conditions and living independently.

Experience with discrimination

Within the scope of the study, young people were asked about their experience with discrimination on the following grounds: *education* (elementary education, secondary education, etc.), *economic condition* (rich/poor), *religious belonging*, *ethniurban settlements*, *gender* (male/female), *age* (younger-elder; big-small), *place of residence* (suburb-center, rural settlements-town), and *political views*. According to the study results, the vast majority of respondents (at least nine out of ten respondents) in the entire region as well as in target municipalities claim that they did not have such experience.

It is worth mentioning that participants of the qualitative research in Batumi municipality did not speak much about discrimination, however they still mentioned discrimination – not their own, but from others' experience. From this point of view, respondents stressed gender-based discrimination. In one case, it was noted that when recruiting, employers discriminate people by specifying gender in the job posting. One example of gender-based discrimination involves society's perceptions of women: that women need to always be in shape, and for this they need special self-care items that require the relevant finances, but because of not having financial resources,

they may not be able to afford such items and face challenges. Even though research participants mentioned this example to prove gender-based discrimination, it is actually a sign of economic (rich-poor) discrimination. Another example of gender-based discrimination that was mentioned is the requirement for young men to be acquainted with so-called “black mentality” rules. It was also mentioned that law-enforcers exercise specific activities (raids) against men only. Both of these cases were stressed by young male participants of the study. In terms of “raids”, it was noted that similar acts have been quite frequent recently in Batumi municipality.



“It [discrimination] is more frequent against girls. Girls need self-care items and similar things more frequently... if a girl cannot afford those items, she gets insecure”...

Batumi municipality, male, representative of 18-23 age category

“As we all know, raids have been carried out in Batumi municipality; very strong and very large-scale raids. I have never seen a police officer telling a girl in the street to stop and show him what’s inside her pockets...”

Batumi municipality, male, representative of 18-23 age category

“I’ve seen vacancies looking for a female sales consultant, or a female candidate for other positions and that’s why so many male friends of mine cannot find a job...”

Batumi municipality, female, representative of 18-23 age category

“There are [frequent] cases of street fights, bullying on the Boulevard, I’ve seen my peers and even younger people doing similar things, you know they show off and threaten others”.

Batumi municipality, male, representative of 14-17 age category

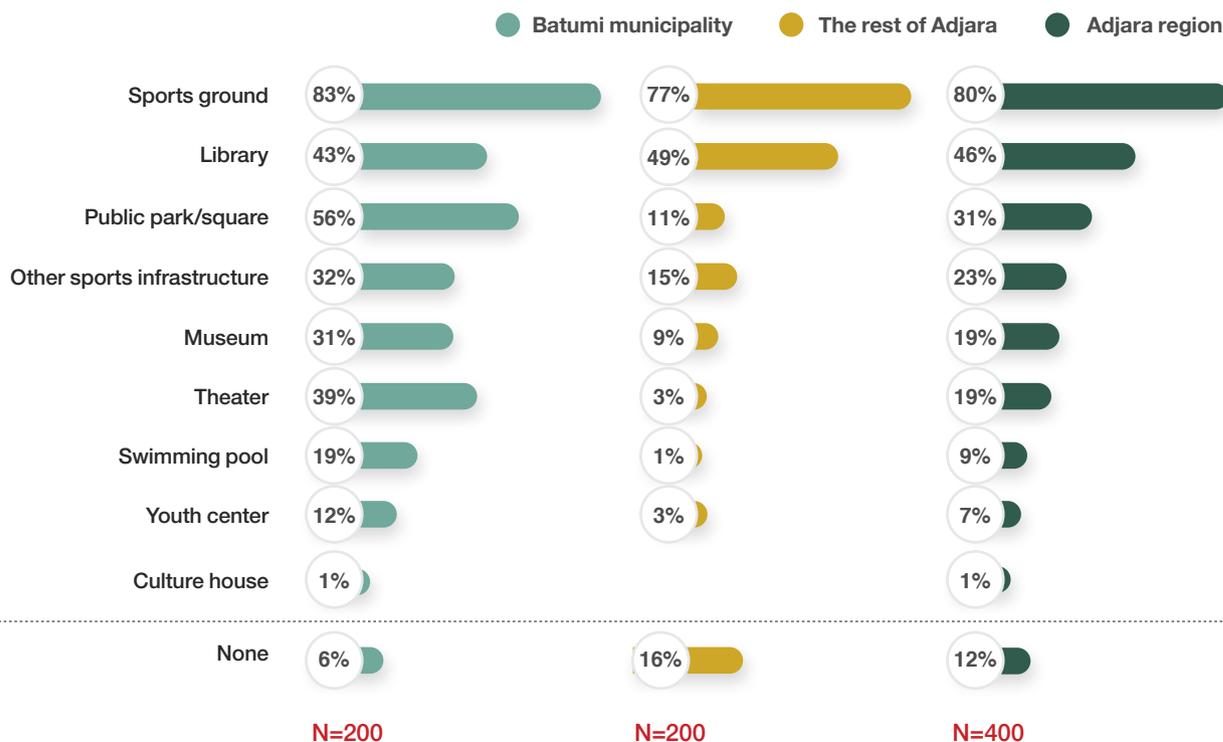
As verified by the study results, a lack of jobs and challenges related to employment are particularly important for young people in Adjara as a whole, as well as in Batumi municipality. Even though the intention of domestic or international migration is not highly prevalent, one of the motivations for migration is better employment opportunities. It is also worth mentioning that even though research participants do not confirm personal experience with discrimination, there is discrimination based on different grounds. It is important to note that young respondents in Batumi municipality reported behaviors that are connected to so-called “black mentality”.

2.7. Leisure and Lifestyle

Entertainment, leisure opportunities and sports activities

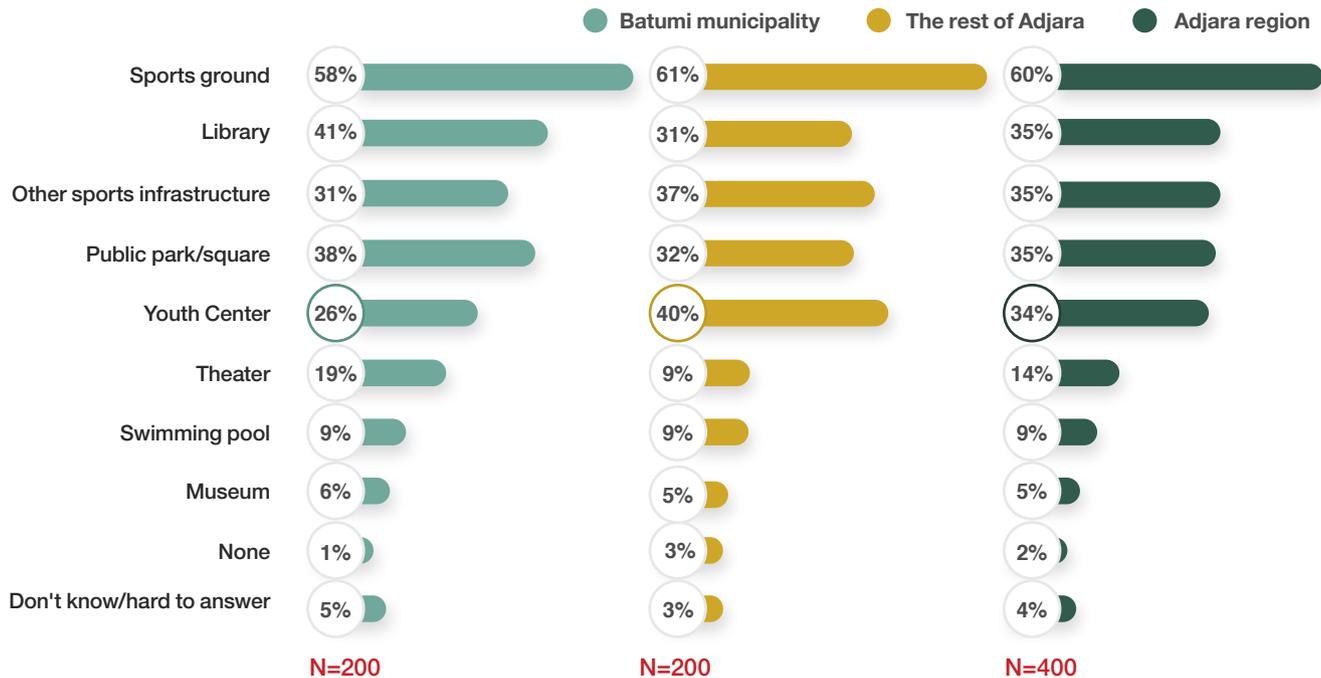
Research respondents were asked to assess various issues related to leisure and entertainment. It turns out that what young people in Adjara did for entertainment and leisure over the past 1-2 years was mostly *listening to music* (77%) and *watching movies* (59%). Entertainment/leisure places are more or less available in Adjara region in general and in Batumi municipality, and the most highly accessible place is a *sports ground*. Just 12% of respondents in the region reported not having access to any functional entertainment/leisure places in their settlement. This was reported by 17% of respondents in rural areas and 7% of respondents in the urban settlements. The majority of respondents in the region in general, as well as in Batumi municipality mostly believe that funleisure/entertainment places available in their settlement are in good or moderate condition.

Chart 34. Functioning entertainment/leisure places in the settlement

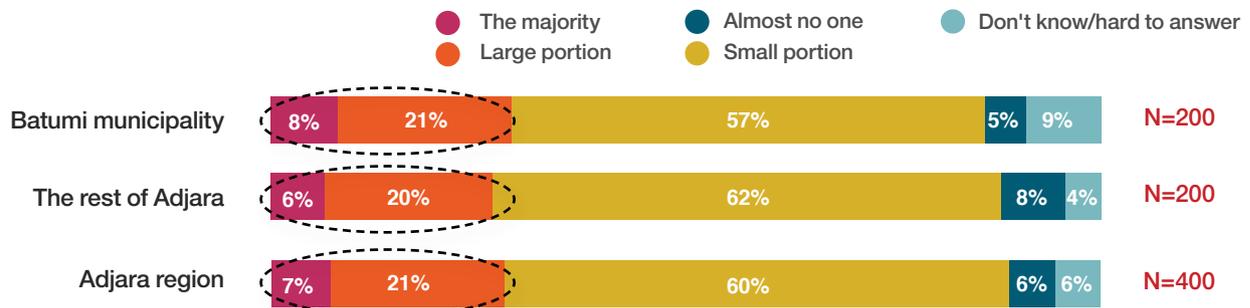


As for the places young people need to function properly, it turns out that the proper functioning of *sports grounds* is a top priority in **Adjara** (60%). More than one-third of respondents mentioned the importance of a properly-functioning library, public park or other sports infrastructure. It is also worth mentioning that the availability of a youth center was named as a top priority by 34% of respondents. Young respondents inquired in **Batumi municipality** reported on the importance of functioning *sports grounds* (58%).

In terms of age, it turns out that the majority of respondents in all age groups find the proper functioning of sports grounds to be important. It is worth mentioning that a larger portion of elder age respondents name the proper functioning of a youth center as a priority than school-aged respondents (14-17 years - 25%, 18-23 years - 38%, 24-29 years - 35%). Sports grounds are a priority regardless of *settlement type*, and the second most frequently named fun/leisure place in the *urban settlements* is a library (41%) and in *rural areas* is a youth center (43%).

Chart 35. Entertainment/leisure places that young people need to function properly


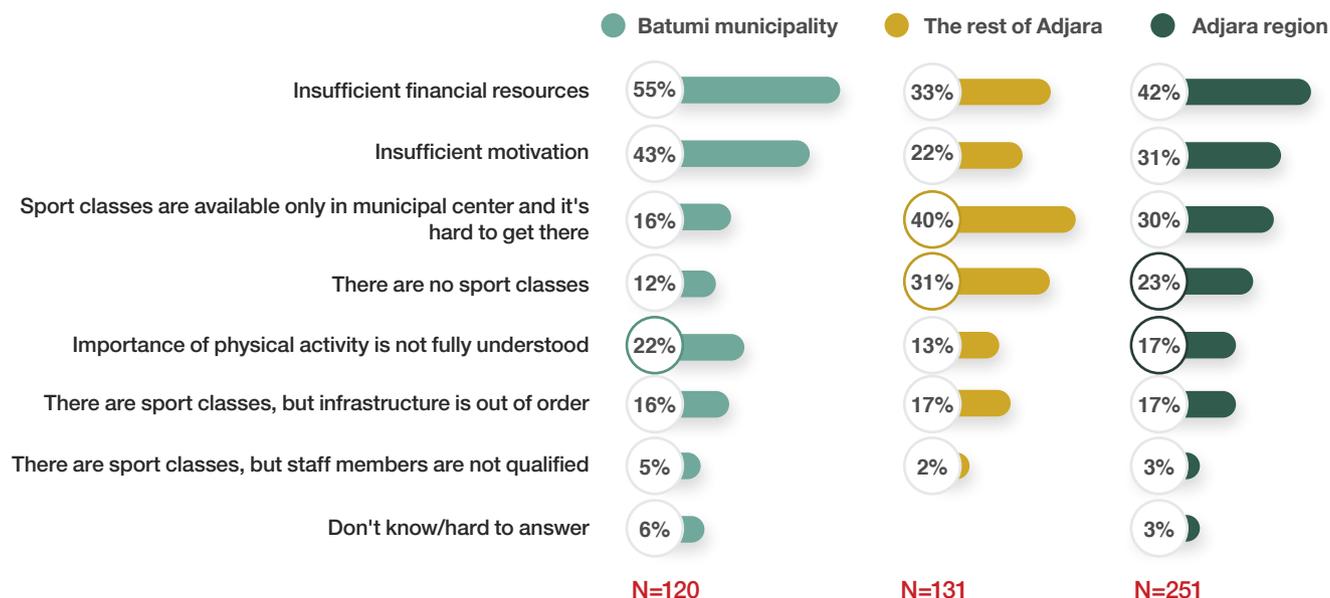
As for sporting activities, as demonstrated by the research results, a small portion of respondents in Adjara practice *sports/physical activity* (Adjara region - 60%, Batumi municipality - 57%). One-third of respondents reported that the majority or a large portion of young people in their municipality practice sports/physical activity (Adjara region - 28%, Batumi municipality - 29%).

Chart 36. Assessment of young peoples' engagement in sports/physical activity in their municipality


From those respondents who reported that the majority or a large portion of young people in their municipality are involved in sports/physical activity, most named football (Adjara – 90%, Batumi municipality – 96%). Young people also practice basketball, wrestling, rugby, and other types of sports.

As for those who reported only a small portion or no one in their municipality being involved in sports/physical activity, identified the main reason behind this.

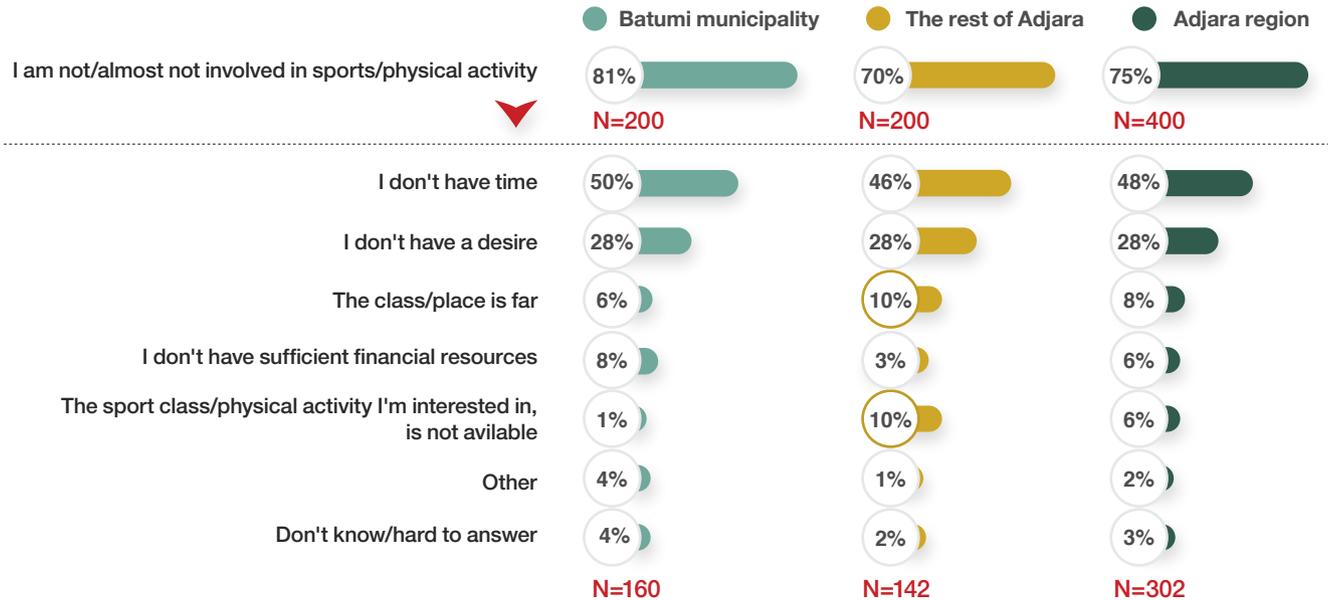
Chart 37. Reasons why young people are not involved in sports/physical activity



In **Adjara**, the reason seems to be a *lack of financial resources* (42%). In addition, one-third of respondents named a *lack of motivation* (31%) and the *availability of sports classes only in municipal centers* (30%). It is worth mentioning that this reason was most frequently named in *rural*-type settlements (46%). It is noteworthy that 23% of respondents inquired in Adjara explain the low engagement of young people in sports/physical activity with the *unavailability of sports classes*, while 17% of them reported that young people *are not aware of the importance of physical activity*. The largest portion of respondents in **Batumi municipality** declared that *insufficient financial resources* is main reason behind passive engagement in sports/physical activity (55%); while 43% reported *insufficient motivation*. It is also worth mentioning that one-fifth (22%) of young people inquired in Batumi municipality claim that the reason behind low engagement is the fact that *young people are unaware of the importance of physical activity*.

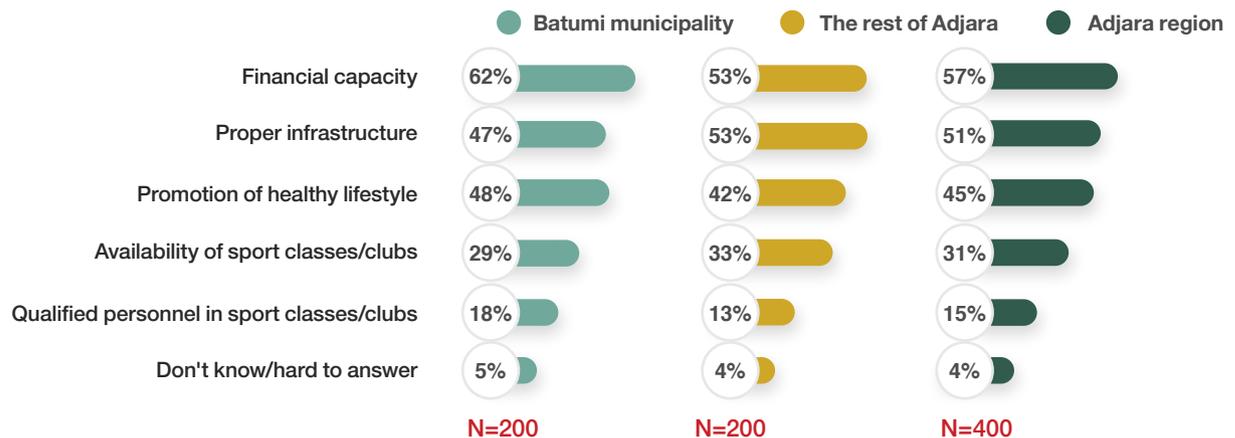
As for respondents' involvement in sports/physical activity, the study demonstrated that the majority of young people in Adjara region *are not involved in sports/physical activity* (75%) and the main reason they provide is a *lack of time* (48%). As declared by one-third of respondents, the main reason is a *lack of desire* (28%). The reality is similar in Batumi municipality.

Chart 38. Reasons why young people are not themselves involved in sports/physical activity



When asked what can be done to make more young people interested in sports/physical activity, the study revealed that six out of ten respondents in Adjara believe that *financial capacity* (57%) is important, and every second respondent named *proper infrastructure* (51%). A total of 45% of respondents believe it is important to *promote a healthy lifestyle*. This indicator is almost similar in Batumi municipality.

Chart 39. Mechanisms to increase the interest of young people in sports/physical activity



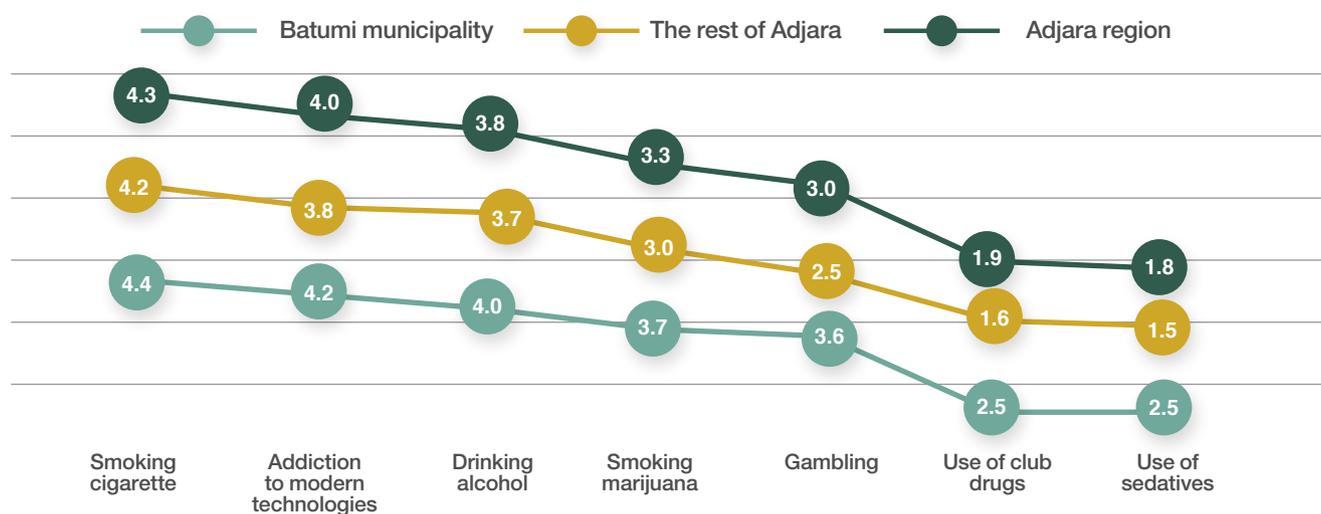
The importance of promoting sports and a healthy lifestyle was also stressed within the scope of the *qualitative study*. As young people inquired in Batumi municipality noted, it is necessary to arrange proper sports infrastructure in the entire urban settlements, and not just in the central part (“*Outskirts of the urban settlements gets less attention; there is no proper equipment or infrastructure*”).

Risky behaviors

Results of the quantitative research clarify that there are different risk behaviors prevalent in the region. Respondents were asked to assess the prevalence of risk behaviors where “1” meant that the behavior is not spread in their settlement at all and “5” meant that the behavior is widely spread in the settlement. It turns out that the most prevalent risk behaviors in **Adjara** are behaviors such as: *smoking cigarettes* (4.3 points) and *addiction to modern technologies such as social networks and the internet* (4.0 points). The use of *alcohol* (3.8 points), *gambling* (3.3 points) and *smoking marijuana* (3.0 points) are also quite widespread behaviors. As for *drug addiction* and the use of *sedatives*, respondents believe that this kind of behavior is quite rare in their settlement. The reality is quite similar in **Batumi municipality**, however, it is worth mentioning that smoking marijuana (3.7 points) and gambling (3.6 points) are more than moderately prevalent here. In addition, even though these are the last on the list, taking *club drugs* (2.5 points) and *sedatives* (2.5 points) are not rare behaviors.

It is worth mentioning that young respondents of the *qualitative research* discussed different widespread risk behaviors. Research participants in Batumi municipality noted that *smoking marijuana* is a quite widespread behavior. This was particularly stressed by school-aged youngsters. Another prevalent risk behavior is reported to be *gambling*. Even though school-aged children stressed that this behavior is more widely exercised in the elder group of young people, it was noted that neither gambling nor smoking marijuana is unfamiliar for their peers. Speaking of marijuana, it was stressed that young people would smoke marijuana in the past too, but this behavior used to be “more hidden” than it is now. Respectively, since smoking marijuana is a more demonstrated behavior, there is an impression that the consumption rate has increased.

Chart 40. Spread of Risky behaviors in the settlement (where “1” is “not spread at all” and “5” is “very prevalent”)



2.8. Discussion and Recommendations

Based on the study results, it can be concluded that activities planned and implemented by the local self-government for young people under the youth policy are quite diverse. They cover sporting events, art and intellectual activities, support of professional development, and activities focused on informal education. However, the number of young people involved in these activities is not that high. In addition, support in professional development implies sending only a handful of students to an internship abroad instead of activities such as providing professional training for young people at the local level. In addition, there are no statistical data on the share of the elder age group (18-29 years) that is included in youth-oriented activities. However, based on the results of the qualitative study conducted with young people in Batumi municipality, we can assume that a large portion of youth-focused activities are oriented on school-aged children and rarely on elder age groups.

Even though one-third of respondents inquired in Adjara and Batumi municipality believe that the initiators of activities planned and implemented for youth are young people themselves (35% and 32%), we can assume that this assessment is optimistic. As demonstrated by the qualitative study, young people in Batumi are rarely the initiators of activities. Furthermore, engagement implies participation in activities organized by others and not necessarily the initiatives or generation of ideas. We can conclude that similar to Batumi, there are small groups of young people in the entire region who are involved in many different activities simultaneously, while a large portion of the rest of the young people do not participate in activities at all – this is confirmed by one-fourth (25%) of young people in Batumi and one-third (32%) in Adjara. In addition, the study results also demonstrate that youth-oriented activities are mostly initiated by the local self-government, the NGO sector and most frequently, schools. This also makes us think that activities are mostly focused on school-aged children.

Only one-third of respondents inquired in Batumi municipality declare that the interests of young people like them are envisaged in the work of municipality (28%), and one-third share the completely contradictory point of view (are not envisaged/are not envisaged at all – 29%). It is also worth mentioning that the practice of taking part in the process of making important decisions for young people in the municipality is almost non-existent in Batumi municipality. A total of 97% of inquired respondents reported having no such experience over the past 1-2 years. It is noteworthy that a large portion of such respondents explain that the reason behind this is that they had not heard of such opportunities (56%), which means that more intense work needs to be done in this direction. The reality is similar in the entire region.

As for the interests and needs of young people that are important to respond to within the youth policy, they are related to several main challenges. The main problem is *employment*, which is also connected to the availability of *programs supporting entrepreneurship and internship programs*. In addition, it is important for young people to have access to spaces *necessary for gathering, leisure or organizing different events*. It is also worth mentioning that internship or gathering spaces are more problematic in Batumi municipality than in the rest of Adjara. This can be assessed as particularly important considering the fact that youth engagement in processes and civil activism is a serious problem in Batumi municipality, similar to the entire region. To cope with this, awareness-raising is believed to be one of the most important mechanisms that can be achieved through informal education. In addition to awareness-raising, it is important to increase popularity of one of the forms of civil activism, such as volunteering. In addition, it is critical to develop a stimulating mechanism that would increase young peoples' motivation to engage in volunteer work. Working in this direction is important, according to one of the four strategic directions set in the youth policy document – participation.

The most acute problem for young people is employment, and it is connected to education and linked to one of the four strategic directions. In order to cope with challenges related to employment, it is crucial to take some of the steps associated with education. In addition, it is necessary to support young people in acquiring/improving professional skills and English language literacy. Working in this direction is also envisaged in one of the four strategic directions prescribed in the youth policy document. It is also noteworthy that support in acquiring and

improving English language skills is more important for Batumi municipality (51%) than for the rest of Adjara (36%).

In terms of a healthy lifestyle, the majority of young people are not involved in sports/physical activity, and this rate is higher in Batumi municipality than in the rest of Adjara (81% and 70%, respectively). It is also noteworthy that the reason behind this is said to be a lack of time. However, if we rely on the assessments of respondents in Batumi municipality provided with regard to their peers, we can assume that a lack of time is not the key problem. Namely, as believed by a large portion of respondents, the fact that only a small portion of young people are involved in sports/physical activity in the urban settlements can be explained by insufficient financial resources (55%) and insufficient motivation (43%). In addition, 22% of respondents explained it by a lack of awareness on the importance of physical activity.

As for the rest of Adjara, the important factor is a lack of availability of sports classes in the settlement (31%) and their concentration in municipal centers (40%), which is linked to challenges with transportation. The latter is more problematic for the rest of Adjara than for Batumi municipality (2.6 and 2.2. points, respectively).

Sports infrastructure is less problematic for Batumi municipality, as the majority confirmed that there are many sports grounds functioning in the settlement (83%). In addition, other sports infrastructure (32%) and swimming pools (19%) are also available in the settlement. Regardless of this, together with the promotion of a healthy lifestyle, it is important to ensure the proper functioning of sports grounds and other sports infrastructure in the urban settlements. It is also worth mentioning that awareness-raising and campaigns on the importance on physical activity are crucial. This can be critically important including for challenges such as smoking marijuana, which is a quite prevalent risk behavior. This is challenging for the rest of Adjara too, but here it is also important to ensure the availability of sports classes and infrastructure.

Research results identify the tendency that awareness-raising is important in terms of promoting a healthy lifestyle, as well as increasing the engagement of young people in processes. In this context, it is important to consider that young people in Batumi municipality obtain information on ongoing events and news not only from various internet sources (69%), but from local television as well (44%). Respectively, in addition to making gathering spaces available for young people, offering informal education opportunities, planning trainings, workshops or other activities for school-aged and elder young people, it is important to plan the dissemination of relevant information through diversified media channels. It is also noteworthy that the availability of informal education, trainings and educational courses or spaces for gathering, arranging discussions or events, is a much more serious problem for the rest of Adjara region than for Batumi municipality.

Research results also demonstrated that the role of local self-government within the NGO sector is particularly important in the aforementioned process. For each target segment, it is important to properly train people who work on youth issues. Expectations are particularly high towards Youth Agency in terms of sharing international experience, acquiring new knowledge and skills, as well as creating a professional network. Youth Agency is the institution that is supposed to support local self-governments and youth organizations in terms of sharing knowledge and experience and creating a professional network. The latter is supposed to ensure the connection of people working on youth issues, the exchange of information relevant to the youth policy, and the organization of themed discussions.

When conducting themed discussions, in addition to the abovementioned issues, it is also important to take into consideration that even though one-third of young people in Adjara find it difficult to name which of their rights is not protected/partially protected (30%), at the same time, part of the respondents believe that equality (17%) and labor (16%) rights are not protected/are partially protected. In addition, the majority of respondents inquired in the region believe that their rights are protected (71%), while one-fourth believe that their rights are partially protected (24%). In addition, as the age of respondents increases, the number of those who believe that their rights are protected decreases (14-17 year - 83%, 18-23 year - 70%, 24-29 year - 66%). It is worth mentioning that the qualitative study in Batumi municipality as well as in the entire region revealed the absence

of experience in terms of discrimination. However, discussion participants in Batumi municipality pointed out acts of gender-based discrimination.

It is worth mentioning that the majority of young people in Adjara do not have the intention of domestic (75%) or international (90%) migration over the next 2-3 years. It is also noteworthy that the intention of domestic migration is most expressed by young people in the 18-23 age category (30%). It is important to note that this intention is higher in the rural settlements (29%) than in the urban settlements (16%). It is worth mentioning that their motivations of those who intend to migrate whether domestically or internationally are related to better living conditions and better employment opportunities. Another motivation is access to better education in the case of domestic migration, and independent life in the case of international migration.

Based on these and other results of the study, we can conclude that the following is of particular importance:

- For the effective planning or implementation of youth policy, it is important to equip individuals who work on youth issues with the respective knowledge and skills. To this end, it is recommended to ensure training for local self-government officials and representatives of youth organizations.
- It is important to engage young people in the decision-making process. To achieve this, the first thing to do is to inform them on the availability of such opportunities. It is also necessary to raise awareness on the importance of civil activism. To this end, it is recommended to plan awareness-raising campaigns together with trainings and workshops. It is also optional to plan activities with schools that will not be focused solely on environmental or charity activities, but will inform young people on the mechanisms of engagement, such as participation in the discussion of policy documents, writing or signing a petition, etc.
- It is important to plan activities for positioning volunteering as a prestigious activity. It is recommended to develop a motivational mechanism for young volunteers that will be focused on the recognition of volunteering (e.g. this can be awarding a status of volunteer, issuing certificates, etc.)
- It is recommended to promote a healthy lifestyle. To this end, it is important to ensure the proper functioning of sports infrastructure in every district of the urban settlements together with organizing various sports activities that will allow for the engagement of any young person and not just those who are professionally playing sports. Considering the urban settlements' experience, it is optional to organize activities similar to street basketball or different types of sports.
- It is recommended to allocate more spaces for gathering, organizing discussions, or various activities where young people would be able to obtain informal education. In addition, it is optional to plan and implement certain activities in an online format and thus, create virtual spaces for gatherings.
- It is recommended to develop programs for the elder category of young people that would ensure the availability of professional training and foreign language courses. Switching to remote formats of working and studying due to the pandemic exposed new opportunities that can be effectively incorporated in a post-pandemic reality. Respectively, it is optional to organize online learning courses that would minimize costs and cover a wider group of young people. Furthermore, foreign language (first of all, English language) courses can be guided by young people themselves. In this context, it would be interesting to develop a cooperation format with universities. For example, successful students of the relevant specialization can be assigned to prepare and lead foreign language courses, which would be part of their internship program and would enable them to accumulate work experience, while those who are eager to learn a foreign language would be given the chance to study.

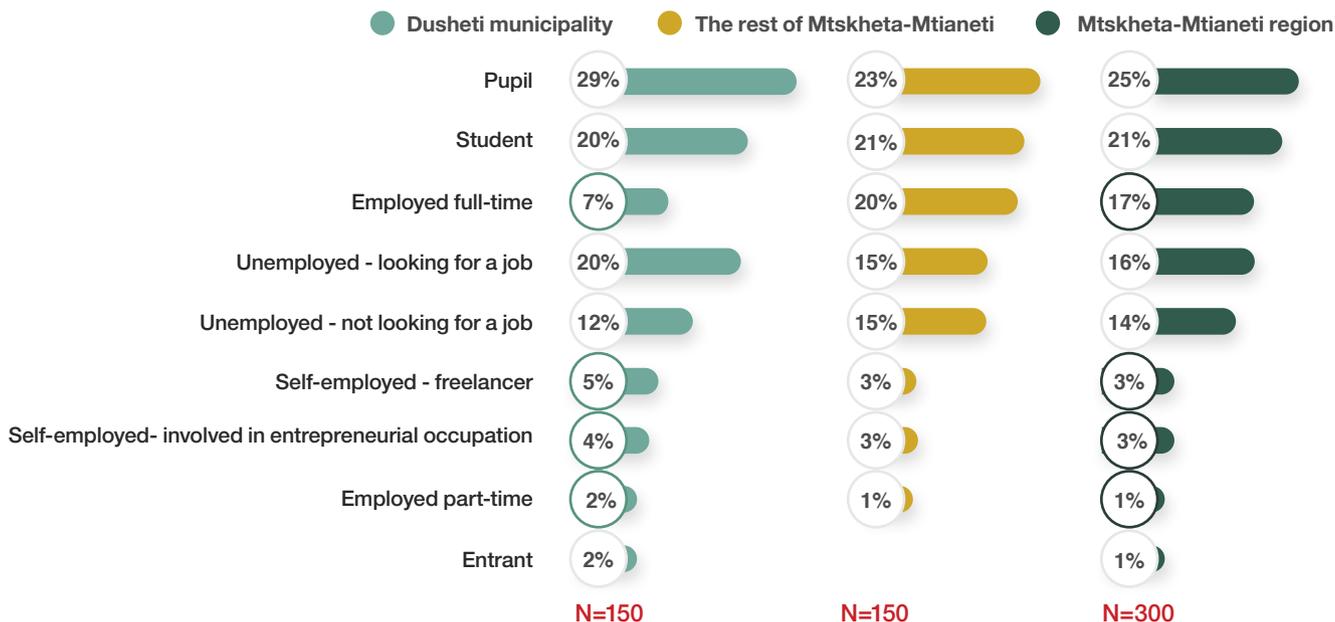
III Mtskheta-Mtianeti and Dusheti Municipality

Introduction

As of 2021, the population of Mtskheta-Mtianeti region is 93.4 thousand people, 76% of which live in rural areas. The number of 14-29 year-old citizens is 19.9 thousand, which is 21.3% of the region's population. According to the latest data of the Georgian National Statistics Office in 2020, the unemployment rate is 18.3% in the region, and the employment rate is 39.5%. Statistical data on the share of young people in employment or the unemployment rate are not available.

As for the study participants specifically, 46% of them are women and 54% are men. The largest share belongs to the 24-29 age group (42%). Secondary education is the highest level of education for the largest share and is equal to one-third of respondents (31%). One-fourth of research participants are pupils (25%), one-fifth are students (21%), and 30% are unemployed. An almost equal share of respondents are looking for (16%) and not looking for (14%) a job. As for employment, 24% of respondents inquired in the region are employed, with 17% of them working full time and only 1% working part-time. Among the respondents, 3% are freelancers and 3% reported being involved in entrepreneurial work.

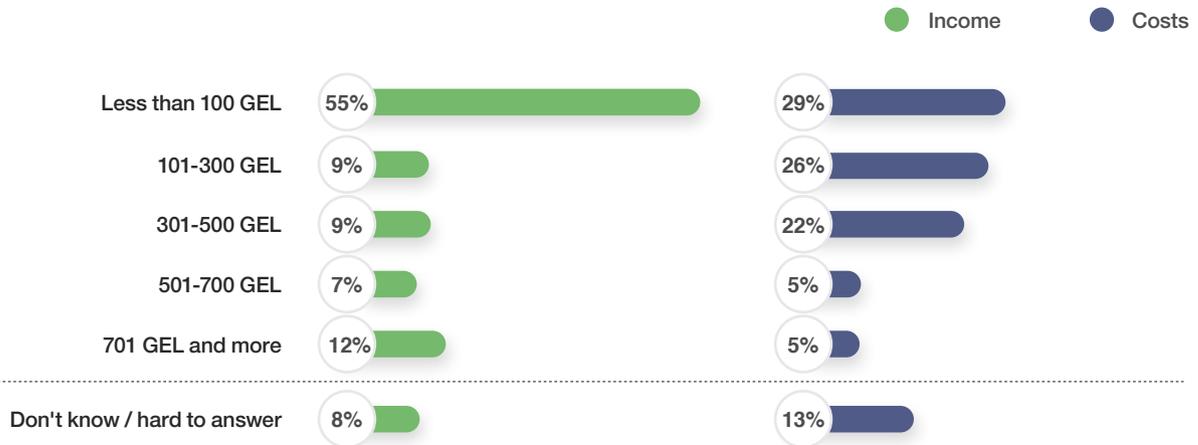
Chart 41. Occupation of respondents



A total of 99% of inquired young people are ethnically Georgian and 1% are Armenian. The majority of respondents are not married (75%) and one-fifth are married (state and/or religious registration – 20%). The majority of respondents do not have socially vulnerable or IDP status (80%), while one out of ten respondents are either socially vulnerable or an IDP (10% and 9%, respectively).

Income for more than half of respondents is less than 100 GEL per month (55%), and similarly, expenses made by three out of ten respondents on different needs is also less than 100 GEL (29%). The largest share of expenses are focused on mobile/internet (51%), and shoes and clothing (42%). The largest portion of young people receive financial support from their parents (62%).

Chart 42. Personal monthly income of respondents (including all kinds of income) and monthly expenses on various needs in Mtskheta-Mtianeti



N=300



Main findings

- ✓ Activities planned and implemented for young people are rare, and the number of beneficiaries is small. Those rare activities are mostly planned in municipal centers, while wider groups of young people are not informed on the activities, especially in rural settlements -type settlements.
- ✓ The largest portion of young people in the region are financially dependent on their parents (62%).
- ✓ Young people more or less have access to services such as a library/book club, sports classes and art/culture classes. The availability of those activities is reported by five and more respondents in the region. A total of 23% of respondents inquired in Mtskheta-Mtianeti have access to foreign language courses, while this rate is 28% in Dusheti municipality.
- ✓ Only one out of ten respondents in the region (12%) and Dusheti municipality (15%) have access to spaces for gatherings. The accessibility of other services is low or almost non-existent in Dusheti municipality as well as in the entire region.
- ✓ The availability of the following services in the settlement is the most important for the majority of respondents inquired in Dusheti municipality as well as in entire Mtskheta-Mtianeti: foreign language courses (44% and 40%, respectively); sports classes (44% and 38%, respectively); and access to gathering spaces (38% and 35%, respectively). More young people in Dusheti municipality (41%) stress the importance of youth services than in the entire region of Mtskheta-Mtianeti (31%).
- ✓ Limited/non-existent access to entertainment and leisure places (cinema, theater, etc.) turns out to be a serious challenge for young people in Dusheti municipality (6.4 points) as well as in the rest of Mtskheta-Mtianeti (6.2 points) and the entire region (6.2 points).
- ✓ Employment is one of the most serious challenges (Dusheti municipality – 52%, the rest of the region – 41%, Mtskheta-Mtianeti – 44%). In addition, 58% of respondents in Mtskheta-Mtianeti believe that it is difficult for young people to find a job in their own municipality. This statement is shared by 65% of respondents in Dusheti municipality.
- ✓ Two main factors assisting employment identified in Mtskheta-Mtianeti are a proper education (50%) and motivation (50%). The proper circle of acquaintances is an important factor for 41% of respondents. The most important factor identified in Dusheti municipality is a proper education (49%). Four out of ten respondents stressed the importance of motivation (40%) and the relevant circle of acquaintances (36%).
- ✓ As for coping with challenges related to employment, the most important mechanism is believed to be the availability of jobs and having professional skills, as believed by the majority of respondents.

- ✓ In addition to support in improving professional skills, one important factor is believed to be the availability of internship programs/work experience, which was stressed by 48% of respondents in Dusheti municipality and 64% in the rest of Mtskheta-Mtianeti.
- ✓ Even though a healthy lifestyle is assessed as important, the frequency of involvement in sports/physical activity is not high, as seven out of ten respondents are not engaged in sports/physical activity in Dusheti municipality (67%) or the entire region (67%).
- ✓ A total of 40% of young people in Mtskheta-Mtianeti believe that young people like them affect/significantly affect the decision-making process at the local level, while 27% of respondents had a contradictory opinion (cannot affect/cannot affect at all). An almost equal share of respondents in Dusheti municipality report that young people affect the decision-making process at the local level (31%), or that young people cannot have any affect (28%).
- ✓ In Mtskheta-Mtianeti, 41% of respondents declare that the initiators of youth-oriented activities are mostly municipality representatives, while 26% reported that such activities are mostly initiated by young people themselves. An almost identical number of respondents inquired in Dusheti municipality pointed out municipality representatives (33%) and young people (30%) as initiators.
- ✓ Even though the majority of respondents in the entire region of Mtskheta-Mtianeti (77%), as well as in Dusheti municipality (80%) believe that the active engagement of young people in various processes is important/very important, direct engagement in processes is rare in the region. Namely, the majority of respondents inquired in Mtskheta-Mtianeti have not participated in any of the civil activities over the past 1-2 years (72%). The share of such respondents is 82% in Dusheti municipality.
- ✓ Political Participation and civil activism of young people is also low. A total of 72% of respondents in the entire region have not participated in different civil activities over the past 1-2 years. It is worth mentioning that the absence of such experience is confirmed by 82% of respondents in Dusheti municipality and 69% in the rest of Mtskheta-Mtianeti. The main reason named by the majority of young people is the absence of desire to participate.
- ✓ If we look at the results of the qualitative research conducted in Dusheti municipality, the reason for the low level of civil activism is nihilism. Namely, the attitude that nothing will change and decision-makers will not consider the interests of young people anyway. In addition, low engagement in civil activities is related to the suggestion that demanding something is not socially desirable behavior. Respectively, the absence of a desire to participate in civil activities can be explained by these reasons.
- ✓ The participation rate in volunteer activities is higher, as every second respondent in Dusheti municipality (54%) and the rest of Mtskheta-Mtianeti (50%) reported having such an experience over the past 1-2 years. The most frequent volunteer activity everywhere is related to participation in tree-planting.
- ✓ A large portion of young people in Mtskheta-Mtianeti is interested in politics (63%), with most being interested in the politics of Georgia in general (43%). The share of those who are not interested in politics is 48% in Dusheti municipality and 34% in the rest of the region.

- ✓ 55% of respondents in Mtskheta-Mtianeti participated in the most recent elections (Parliamentary elections 2020), while one-fifth did not participate despite being eligible (19%). A total of 50% of respondents in Dusheti municipality participated in the most recent elections, and one-fifth did not participate regardless of having reached the age of eligibility (21%).
- ✓ Six out of ten young people in Dusheti municipality (62%), as well as in the entire region (56%) are not informed that there are municipal youth programs and services. Nine out of ten respondents inquired in the region have no experience participating in the process of making important decisions for young people.
- ✓ The majority of respondents in Mtskheta-Mtianeti believe that their rights are protected (68%), and one-third of respondents think that their rights are partially protected (28%). Assessments are almost similar in Dusheti municipality (rights are protected – 65%, partially protected – 31%). As for rights that are not protected/is partially protected, one-fourth of respondents in Mtskheta-Mtianeti find it difficult to name any specific right (24%), and 27% stressed the freedom of expression.
- ✓ The majority of young people in Mtskheta-Mtianeti declare that they have not experienced discrimination based on different grounds. The largest portion of respondents reported at least one case of discrimination on the following grounds: economic (13%), education (10%), political beliefs (10%), and place of residence (8%).
- ✓ A large portion of respondents do not have (41%) / do not currently have (24%) the intention to migrate domestically – 65% in Mtskheta-Mtianeti and 67% in Dusheti municipality. The number of those with no intention to migrate internationally is even higher in the region in general (81%), as well as in Dusheti municipality (74%).
- ✓ At this point of life, considering everything, young people are more than moderately satisfied with their lives (Mtskheta-Mtianeti – average 5 points, Dusheti municipality – 4.9 points out of a possible 7).
- ✓ The assessment of the socio-economic condition of the country, municipality and respondent's own life over a 10-year perspective is positive in the region and in Dusheti municipality. At least four and more people out of ten feel that the socio-economic condition of the country, of the municipality and of their own life will be better in 10 years than it is now. The positive assessment of the respondent's personal socio-economic condition prevails.

3.1. Municipal Policy

Youth issues in Dusheti municipality are regulated by the Department of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth, which is comprised of 5 team members. One employee is assigned directly to youth affairs.

Activities carried out in Dusheti municipality within the Youth Policy in 2019 covered only three activities. These are:

- Summer adventure camp “Youth Days” – students participated in sports, intellectual and educational events held in the adventure center located in the Aragvi ravine
- Meeting with successful, creative people
- Photo exhibition of cultural heritage preserved in private collections

In total, 4 500 GEL was allocated for these activities, and the number of beneficiaries was 150 young people. According to information from the Dusheti municipality Mayor’s Office, youth-oriented activities were limited or cancelled due to the pandemic in 2020. Respectively, information on any type of activities that were held for young people is not available. As for 2021, as stated by the Mayor’s Office, the budget allocated for different youth-oriented activities is 10 000 GEL.

Qualitative research confirmed that almost no activities are planned for young people in Dusheti municipality. Participants of focus group discussions found it difficult to recall activities that are organized for them in the municipality except for rare exceptions that will be discussed in the respective sub-chapters.

The main barrier to implementing youth policy identified by local self-government officials is a *lack of financial resources*. In addition, respondents mention that *young people in the municipality are not informed in general on the youth policy*. It was noted that municipality works in this direction to inform people about the youth policy, which is proven by meetings that have been held with tens of young citizens. It was also declared that ideas for several projects were formed (e.g. project Reporter), which the municipality plans on implementing.

Speaking of the implementation of youth policy, respondents positively assessed signing a memorandum of cooperation with Youth Agency. As believed by key informants of the study, there is the expectation that interesting projects can be implemented under the said memorandum. Participants stressed the importance of young worker’s profession and perspective of offering informal education services to young people. The main support the local self-government would like to receive from Youth Agency is related to informal education – to this end, the establishment of a youth center was considered important. Additionally support of the agency in training youth workers was deemed important. Respondents also stressed the importance of support in organizing different trainings. Particular attention was paid to the necessity of training in project writing, which in a long-term perspective will assist youth organizations and individuals to generate their ideas and turn them into projects.

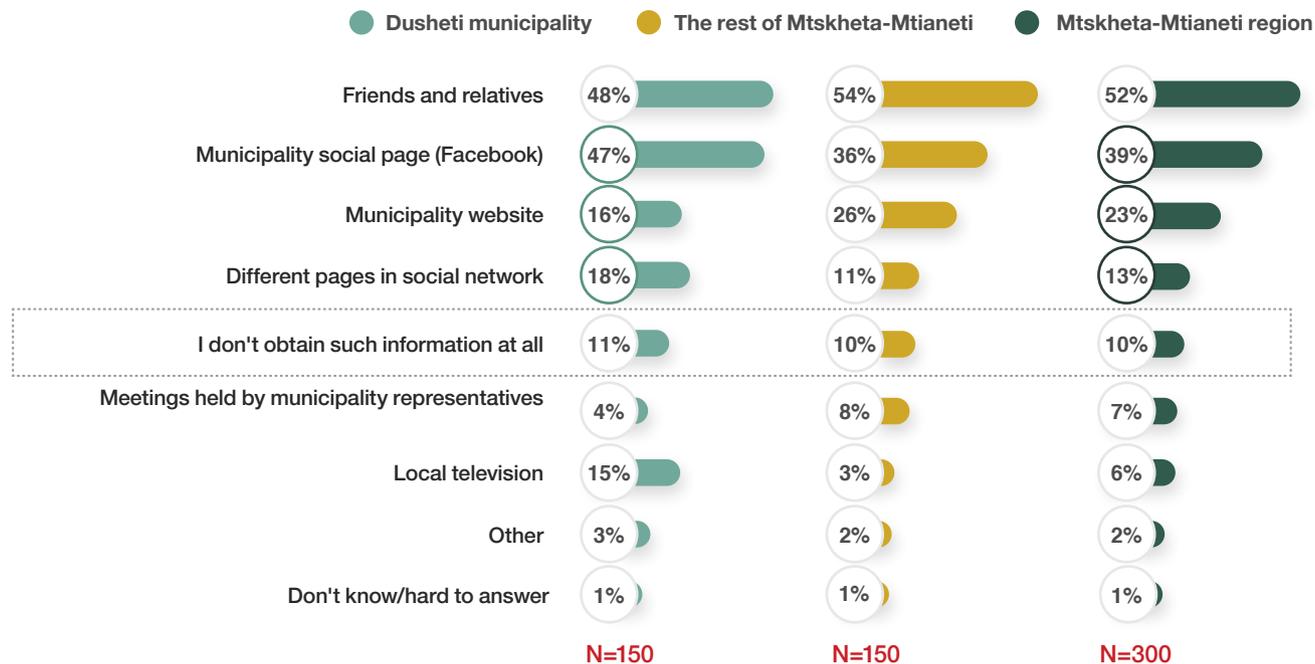
The importance of the engagement of not only the local self-government, but the third sector as well in implementation of youth policy was stressed by key informants of the same sector. As assessed by the respondents, the civil sector in Dusheti municipality, similar to that of the country, is “very weak”. Apart from separate organizations that work on important projects, the wider spectrum of the civil sector is rarely involved

in processes, which is crucial for the development of the youth field. In this direction, attention was paid to the necessity of providing youth-oriented organizations with support in two areas. Namely, support with financial resources and assistance with the knowledge and skills necessary for attracting and acquiring financial resources. This was where the representative of the NGO sector recommended the support of the youth agency.

3.2. Youth Programs and Services

Respondents expressed their opinions on different aspects of youth programs and services. It turned out that almost half of respondents inquired in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** receive information on ongoing events (municipal programs, services, novelties) taking place in the municipality from friends and relatives (52%). A total of 75% of respondents receive this information through various internet resources. Namely, 39% named the municipality's Facebook page, 23% named the municipality website, and 13% named different pages on social networks. The main source of information on municipal programs, services or novelties in **Dusheti municipality** is internet resources for the majority of respondents (81%). Among them, the largest portion of respondents named the municipality's Facebook page (47%). It is worth mentioning that one out of ten respondents do not obtain information on events taking place in the municipality (Mtskheta-Mtianeti – 10%, Dusheti municipality – 11%).

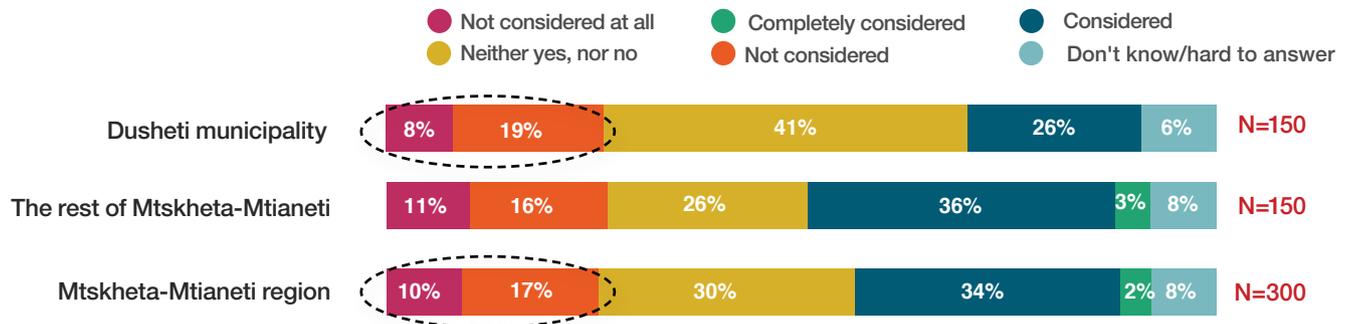
Chart 43. Sources of information on ongoing events in the municipality (municipal programs, services, novelties)



Main source of information on ongoing events in the municipality is friends and relatives in every case. However, certain differences were identified in terms of internet resources as a source of information *in terms of age*. For example, the largest number of young people in the 18-23 age group reported that their main source of information is the municipal Facebook page (14-17 years - 28%, 18-23 years - 55%, 24-29 years - 30%). In addition, the same source of information is used by more people in *the urban settlements* (45%), when compared to rural areas (37%).

As believed by 30% of respondents in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti**, the *interests of young people are considered and not considered at the same time*. In addition, 36% of respondents declare that the *interests of young people are considered/fully considered*, while 27% believe that *interests are not considered/are not considered at all*. The share of those respondents in **Dusheti municipality** who think that the interests of young people like them are not considered/are totally neglected (27%) and who think that the interests of young people are considered/fully considered (26%) is almost identical.

Chart 44. Assessment on how often the interests of young people are taken into account in the work of the municipality



When speaking about activities planned and implemented in Dusheti municipality, participants of the *qualitative research* could recall sports and cultural events that are mostly related to specific holidays (e.g. New Year, Children's Day, Dusheti Day). It was stressed that activities *are mostly oriented on junior/school-aged children, while the location is the municipal center*, which is assessed as problematic. As noted by discussion participants, by concentrating activities in the municipal center, rural settlements - type settlements are left out. In addition, there are *challenges in terms of awareness*. It was noted that even for the rarely organized activities held in the municipal center, the majority of young people are not informed. Moreover, the further the settlement is from the center, the lower the probability of information reaching the residents. In this context, it was stated that the problem here is the insignificant effort of activity initiators (mostly local self-government) to inform young people. However, problems such as access to internet need to be taken into consideration, which turned out to be important for rural settlements -type settlements.

When asked whether or not the interests of young people are considered in the work of the municipality, views were less positive. As assessed by participants of focus groups, in addition to the fact that *activities are rarely held, they are also quite similar*. According to one of the main arguments, sports activities that are interesting for young people with the probability of high engagement are not planned or are planned too rarely and are limited to one specific kind of sport. Instead of planning diverse events, intellectual and educational activities are planned for young people, which mostly implies school-aged children. However, as there are no other options, young people still participate, which does not mean that planned activities respond to their needs. In addition,

it was also stressed that oftentimes, planning activities is just a formality, and the local self-government “just does it for the sake of duty”. Respectively, activities are not tailored to the real interests of young people, and respectively, engagement is low.



“Sports activities are rarely planned in our settlement, it’s just a skiing competition and that’s only in winter, my friends have to engage in educational competitions because there is no other option and no other chance. You need to engage somewhere to become socially active and communicate with people, right?...”

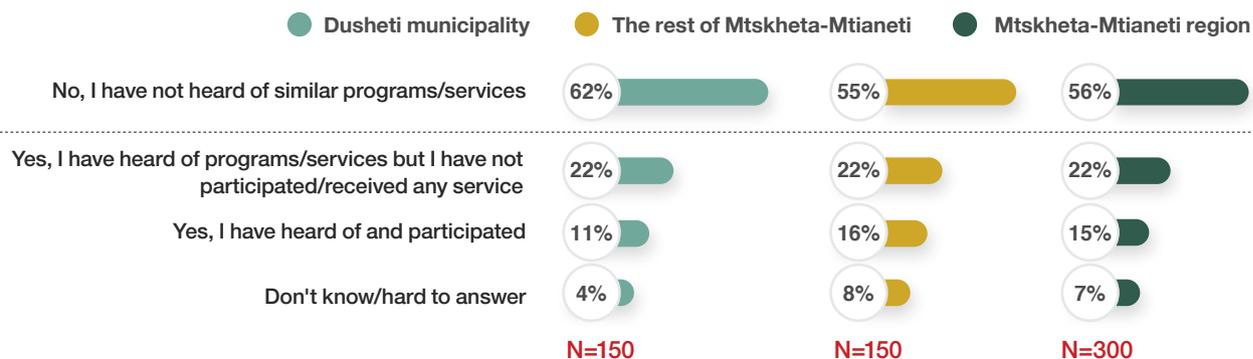
Dusheti municipality, rural area, female, representative of 14-17 age group

“[activities] are just formal. They need to show that money is allocated and some kind of activity is planned, nothing else, I have such an impression...”

Dusheti municipality, rural area, male, representative of 18-23 age group

The majority of respondents in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** have not heard of youth municipal programs/services (56%). The distribution is quite similar in the target municipality as well as in the rest of the region. The share of those who have heard about and also participated in or used the service in the region is 15%.

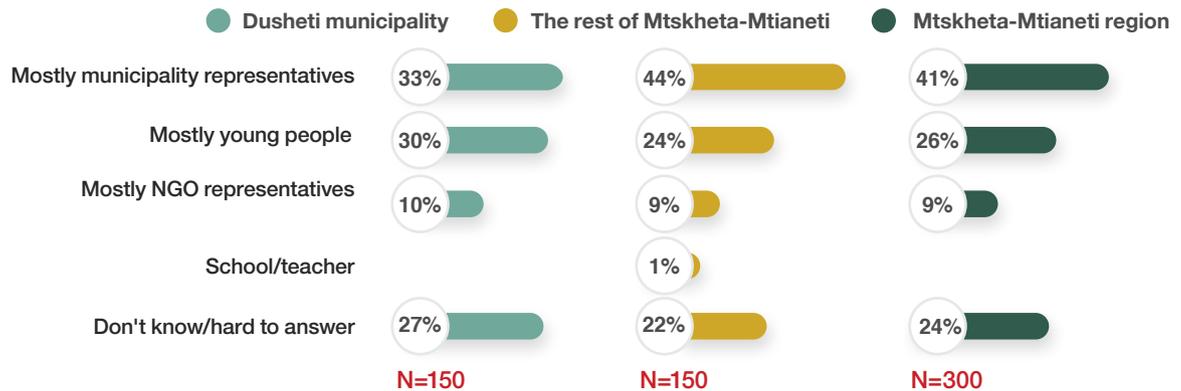
Chart 45. Awareness of youth municipal programs/services available in the municipality



From those respondents who have heard of youth municipal programs/services available in the municipality, the largest share has heard of youth camps and summer schools. Respondents also named volunteer activities, the promotion of mass sports and a healthy lifestyle, and programs supporting sports club teams.

Four out of ten respondents in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** declared that the initiators of planned and implemented projects for young people in their municipality are mostly *municipality representatives* (41%), while one-fourth believe that mostly *young people* are initiators (26%). Three out of ten respondents in **Dusheti municipality** identified *municipality representatives* (33%) and *young people* (30%) as initiators.

Chart 46. Initiators of activities planned/implemented for young people in the municipality



As demonstrated by the *qualitative research*, young people are rarely the initiators of activities planned or implemented for young people. As identified by discussion participant young respondents and key informants, activities are mostly initiated by local self-government and schools. One of the explanations of how similar all activities are, is that in case of the local self-government, the initiator is the same department, accordingly the same people. Respectively, the same individuals plan events based on their vision and do not make any changes to this list. The same applies to schools, where activities are also very monochromatic (e.g. environmental activities – tree-planting activities).

The fact that young people are rarely the initiators of activities was explained by *young people not having support from elders*. One of the groups of these elders are parents. This was stressed by school-aged young people. As assessed by them, parents may not be supportive towards young people in case of one specific activity, but such precedent results in the loss of desire to continue activism and express initiatives. It is also worth mentioning that administration and teachers make decisions on events organized by the school. Initiatives of young people are not supported, and as a result their activism is not noticeable. As assessed by the representative of local self-government, there is a group of young people in the municipality who had interesting ideas and applied to the self-government office, but the municipality was unable to help because of insufficient financial resources. Here, the key informant stressed the presence of bureaucratic procedures as a factor that hinders young people and makes them feel unmotivated to voice their initiatives or present projects.



“They do as they wish [school organizes activities]; who asks us?!”

Dusheti municipality, urban area, female, representative of 14-17 age group

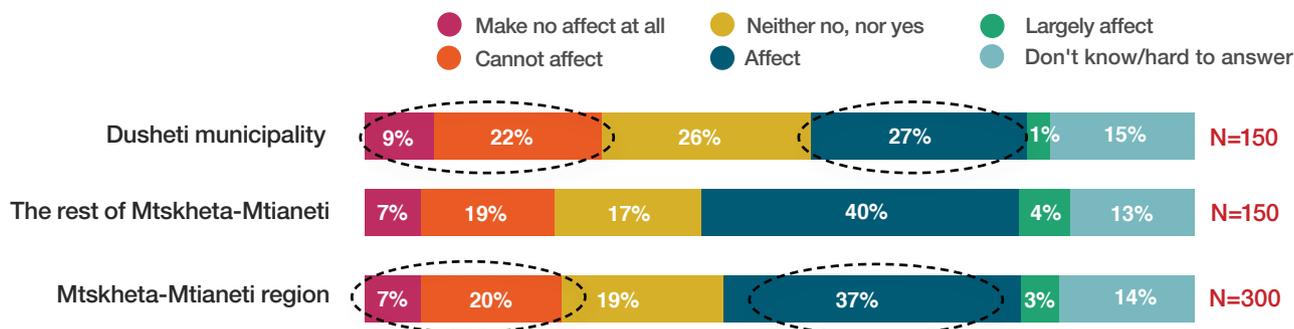
“They have a desire. There is a group that wants to implement their program in our municipality, but unfortunately, in often cases it is even awkward to say, but we were not able to help because of insufficient finances in our budget. We are supposed to present this budget to the Urban settlements Council in November and those events are not taken into account. Then we have to make changes and so on...”

Representative of local self-government

As for membership in *youth organization/associations*, the vast majority of research participants reported not being and never being a member in the Mtskheta-Mtianeti region (94%) as well as in Dusheti municipality (94%). As for those respondents (6% - 19 young people in total), who are or were members of youth organizations/associations, the majority declared that organizing charity events and youth camps is/was the main occupation of their organization/association. Respondents also reported having organized trainings/workshops and supporting volunteer work.

A total of 40% of respondents inquired in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** believe that young people like them *affect/largely affect* the decision-making process at the local level, while 27% believe that young people like them *do not affect/have no affect at all* on the decision-making process at the local level. In **Dusheti municipality**, 31% of respondents reported the latter, while three out of ten respondents declared that young people like them *affect/largely affect* the decision-making process at the local level (28%).

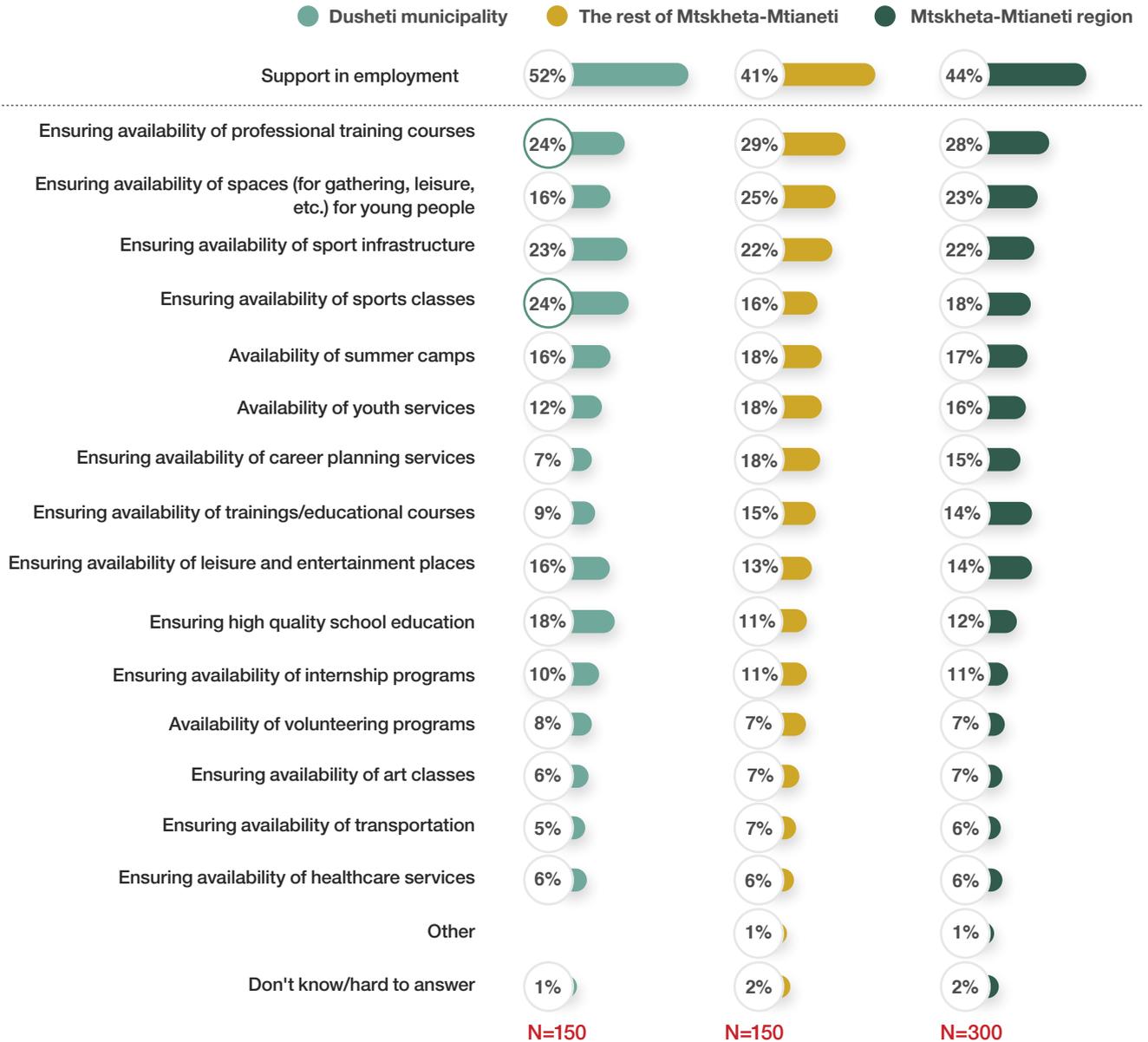
Chart 47. Assessment on how much young people affect the decision-making process at the local level



When speaking about their own experience, it turns out that the vast majority of respondents inquired in Mtskheta-Mtianeti (89%) and Dusheti municipality (86%) have not participated in the process of *making important decisions for young people* over the past 1-2 years. As for those respondents (12% - 37 young people) who reported participating in this process, 14 participated in a discussion of topic/topics, while 11 just attended meeting(s). From those respondents who have not participated in the process of discussing/making important decisions for young people, half answered that *they had not heard of such an opportunity* (54%). A similar answer was provided by 51% of respondents in Dusheti municipality.

As believed by the majority of respondents inquired in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti**, the main problem/challenge that is very important to resolve for young people in the municipality is *supporting employment* (44%). Three out of ten respondents stressed the importance of making *professional training courses* available (28%), while two out of ten mentioned *spaces for gathering, having fun or organizing various events* (23%), *sports infrastructure* (22%) and *sports classes* (18%). As for **Dusheti municipality**, every second respondent thinks that the main challenge for young people that needs to be addressed is support for employment (52%). Two other main challenges included the availability of *professional training courses* (24%) and *sports classes* (24%).

Chart 48. Main challenges/problems that are important to be addressed in the municipality for young people



In order to address the said problems, more than half of respondents in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** believe that *local government implements some projects/programs, but that they are insignificant* (55%). One-fourth of respondents believe that *local government does nothing* to tackle those problems (23%). As believed by 61% of respondents in **Dusheti municipality**, *there are certain projects or programs implemented, but they are insignificant*; while 27% of respondents believe that the local government *does nothing to tackle their problems*.

Chart 49. Assessment of the work of local government in terms of addressing problems

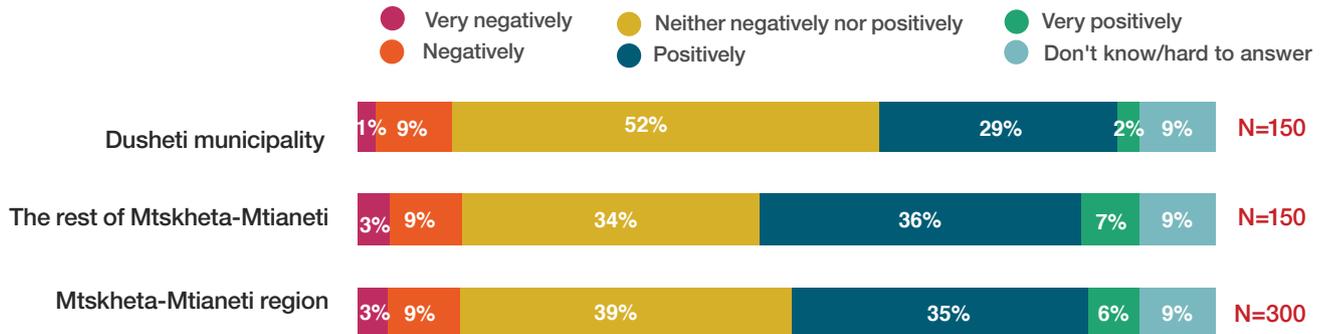


When asked to assess the role and responsibility of the local self-government, participants of the *qualitative study* reported that the government is less interested in the needs of young people. As already noted above, the Mayor's Office is guided by its own agenda, which includes a list of activities (e.g. poetry evening, Dusheti Day, etc.) that undergo minor changes from year to year, and only the said activities are planned just for the sake of duty. The same was stressed by a key informant from the NGO sector, who also pointed out the "formal character" of planning and implementing activities that does not actually respond to the interests of young people.

In addition, it was stressed by participants of the qualitative research that the lack of the availability of mechanisms to study youth needs and planning and implementing monochromatic activities is a serious problem. Another challenge is that local self-government does not do much work to inform a larger group of young people. As noted before, this problem is particularly severe for the residents of rural areas. This is why, as believed by one of the respondents, it is important for initiatives to come from local self-governments to involve young people from rural settlements -type settlements (*"when there are events planned in Dusheti municipality [by local self-government], there should be a requirement to include rural settlements that are in Dusheti municipality*). According to the point of this respondent, this would increase the engagement of young people in activities. It is worth noting that engagement here implies just participation, attendance, and not the generation of initiatives or new ideas.

Four out ten respondents inquired in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** declared that their assessment of the youth-oriented programs and events implemented at the national and local levels is neither *negative nor positive* (39%), and 41% gave positive/very positive assessment. Half of respondents inquired in **Dusheti municipality** provided a *neutral assessment* (52%). The said parameter is positively evaluated by a representative of local self-government acting as a key informant of the study.

Chart 50. Assessment of outcomes achieved with youth-oriented programs and events at the national and local levels



Regardless of the neutral and positive assessments of the outcomes achieved through youth-oriented programs or events, it is worth mentioning that the majority of young people in the region as well as in the target municipality are not informed about youth programs and services. Similarly, a large portion of young people do not participate in the decision-making process, and furthermore, a significant part of them have not even heard of such an opportunity. The needs of young people are not being studied, with the biggest challenges being employment and the availability of professional training courses and sports classes.

3.3. Education and Employment

Education

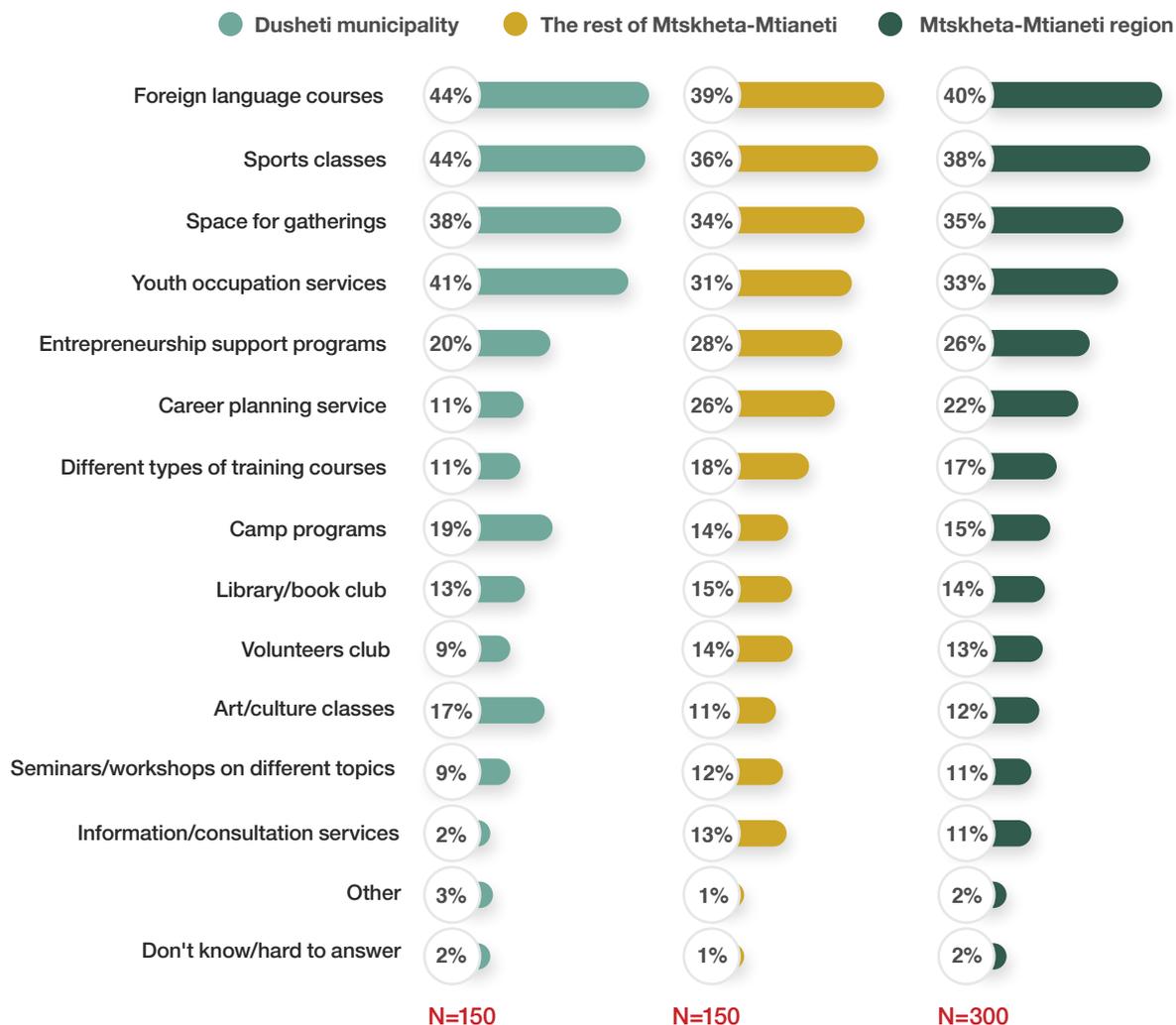
The majority of respondents in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** believe that a *high-quality school education is accessible/fully accessible* (72%) for young people. Seven out of ten respondents inquired in **Dusheti municipality** and the rest of Mtskheta-Mtianeti provided similar assessments (70% and 73%, respectively).

When assessing services young people deem important to have access to in their settlement, the majority inquired in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** named *foreign language courses* (40%) and *sports classes* (38%). Young people also think that it is important for them to have access to *spaces necessary for gathering* (35%) and *youth services* (33%). The three most frequently named services in **Dusheti municipality** that are deemed important to have available are *foreign language courses* (44%), *sports classes* (44%) and *youth services* (41%).

It is worth mentioning that the majority of women inquired in Mtskheta-Mtianeti believe that the availability of foreign language courses (49%) is of particular importance for young people, while the majority of men identified the availability of sports classes as most important for young people (49%). The largest portion of respondents in urban areas believe that *space for gatherings* (46%) and *youth services* (43%) are the most important for young people. As for *rural areas*, the majority of respondents identified the availability of *sports classes* (42%) and *foreign language courses* (41%) as the most important for young people.

As for *age*, the availability of sports classes was identified as most important for the 14-17 and 18-23 age groups (52% and 42%, respectively). While young people in the 24-29 age category believe that it is most important to have access to *sports classes* (36%) and *entrepreneurship support services* (35%).

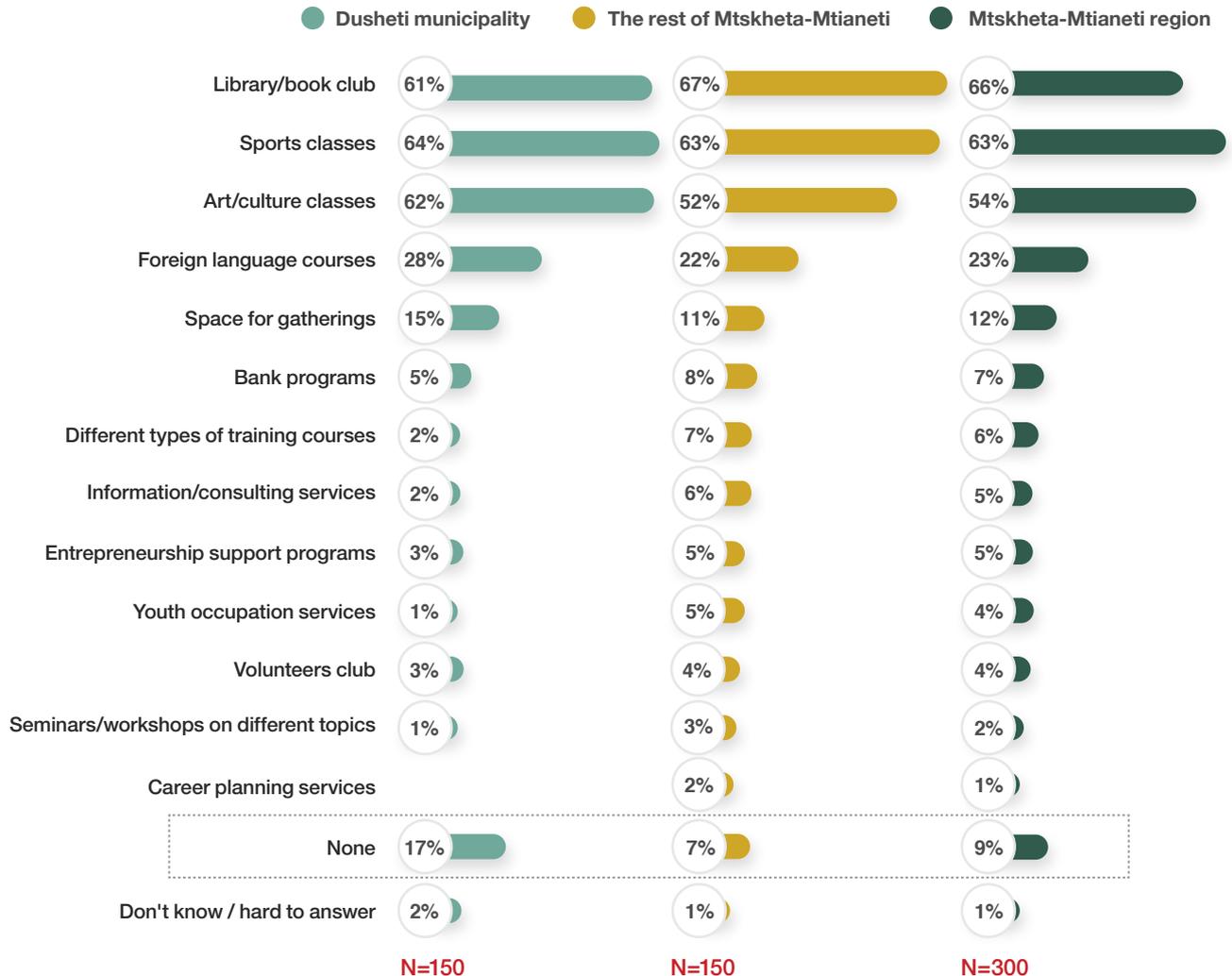
Chart 51. Particular importance of the availability of services for young people in the settlement



As for services that are currently available for young people in the settlement, it turns out that the three services identified as available by respondents in the entire region, as well as in the target municipality and the rest of the region, are *library/book club*, *sports classes* and *art classes*. *Foreign language courses* are available for one-fourth of respondents in the region (23%). A total of 28% of respondents in Dusheti municipality reported the same. It is worth mentioning that none of the listed services are available for 17% of respondents living in

Dusheti municipality. Among the young people inquired in *rural areas*, 12% reported that *none of the services are available in their settlement*, while almost no one said the same in the *urban settlements* (1%). The most available services in urban as well as in rural areas are *sports classes* (97% and 53%, respectively), *art classes* (87% and 45%, respectively) and *libraries/book clubs* (83% and 61%, respectively).

Chart 52. Availability of services in the settlement



Half of respondents in Mtskheta-Mtianeti reported not *using any activity or service* (48%). Similar results were reported in Dusheti municipality (50%) and the rest of the region (48%). Three out of ten respondents used *sports classes* in the entire region of Mtskheta-Mtianeti, while two out of ten did so in Dusheti municipality. In addition, one-fourth of respondents used a *library/book club* (Mtskheta-Mtianeti – 23%, Dusheti - 23%). From those respondents who confirmed the use of any activity or service, the majority did so in their own settlement or another settlement in their municipality. From those respondents who have not participated in any of the activities, 34% declared that they did not have time, and 28% did not have the desire. In Dusheti municipality, 28% reported not having time, and 26% mentioned not having the desire.

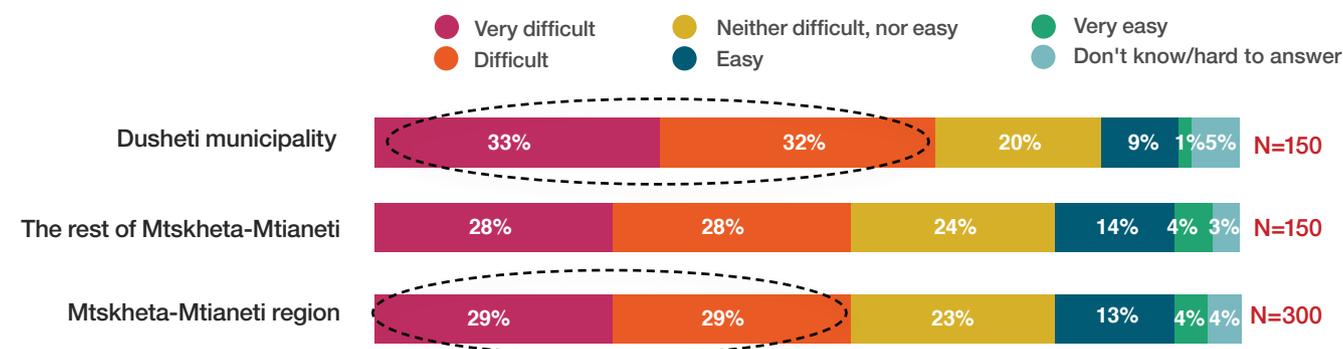
Employment

The share of research respondents in Mtskheta-Mtianeti who work full time or part time is 18%, and the majority of them (71%) have written agreements signed with an employer. A total of 61% from that 18% have contracts for 1 year, while 10% have contracts for less than a 1-year term. Among employed respondents, 35% work by their own profession. As for satisfaction with their job/occupation, it was rated by part-time and full-time employees as well as self-employed respondents who are involved in an entrepreneurial activity and freelancers. The share of these types of employees is 24% of respondents, and the majority of them are satisfied/very satisfied with their job/occupation (75%).

The number of respondents who consider starting entrepreneurial/business activity and/or self-employment is 83 respondents in the region, and the largest portion of those respondents declared that they are thinking of starting the said activity in the field of agriculture, tourism or retail trade.

More than half of respondents inquired in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** believe that it is *difficult/very difficult* for young people to get a job in their own municipality (58%). In case of **Dusheti municipality**, the number of such respondents is 65%.

Chart 53. Assessment of employment opportunities for young people in the municipality

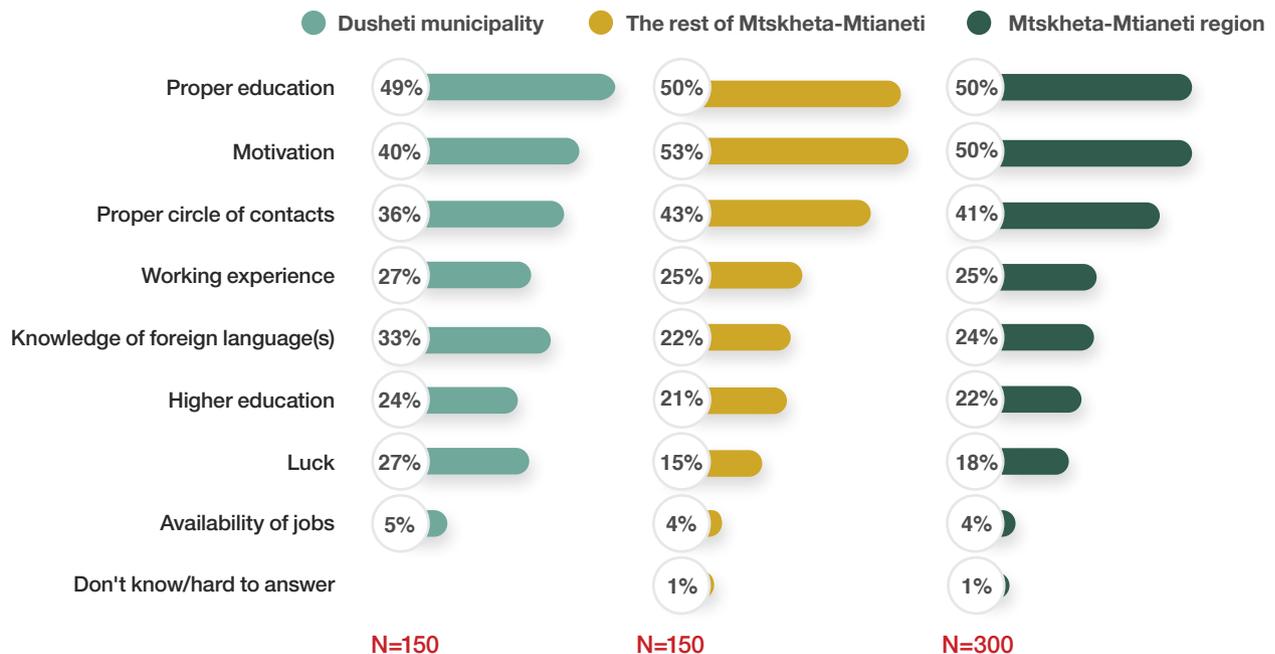


The quantitative study identified two main issues with employment for young people living in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti**: *proper education* (50%) and *motivation* (50%). A relevant circle of acquaintances is an important factor for four out of ten respondents (41%). The same factors are identified in **Dusheti municipality** as the most important

factors for employment. *Proper education* was named by 49% of respondents, while 40% deemed *motivation* important, and 36% of respondents named the respective circle of acquaintances.

As for age, it is worth mentioning that the group of 14-17 year-old young people identify proper education (64%) as the most important employment issue, while the 18-23 age group identified motivation (54%). As for the elder age group, identical parts of young people identified two factors: motivation (49%) and a respective circle of acquaintances (49%). It is also worth mentioning that the assessment of the importance of circle of acquaintances increases as the age of respondents increases (14-17 years - 29%, 18-23 years - 39%).

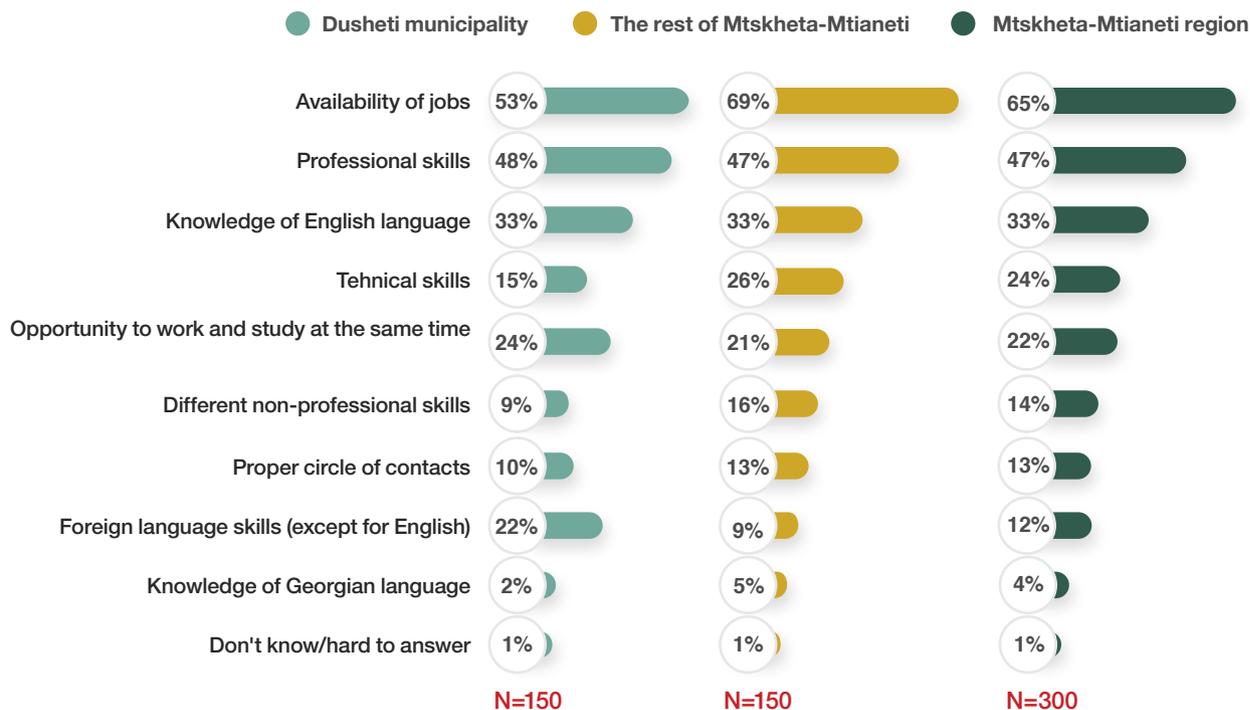
Chart 54. Main factors for the employment of young people in the municipality



The main factor that would assist with the employment of young people in **Mtskhea-Mtianeti**, as believed by the majority of respondents is the *availability of jobs* (65%). In addition, about half of respondents stressed the importance of *having professional skills* (47%). The following two factors were deemed important in **Dusheti municipality**: the *availability of jobs* (53%) and *having professional skills* (48%).

Availability of jobs as an important factor for employment was named by respondents in every age group (14-17 – 61%, 18-23 – 70%, 24-29 – 63%). In terms of age, it is noteworthy that professional skills as an assisting factor was identified by the largest portion in the 24-29 age group (53%; 14-17 years - 36%, 18-23 years - 46%). Literacy in the English language was identified by more respondents in the 14-17 age group (42%), than in the group of elders (18-23 years - 30%, 24-29 years - 31%).

Chart 55. Factors assisting employment in one's own municipality

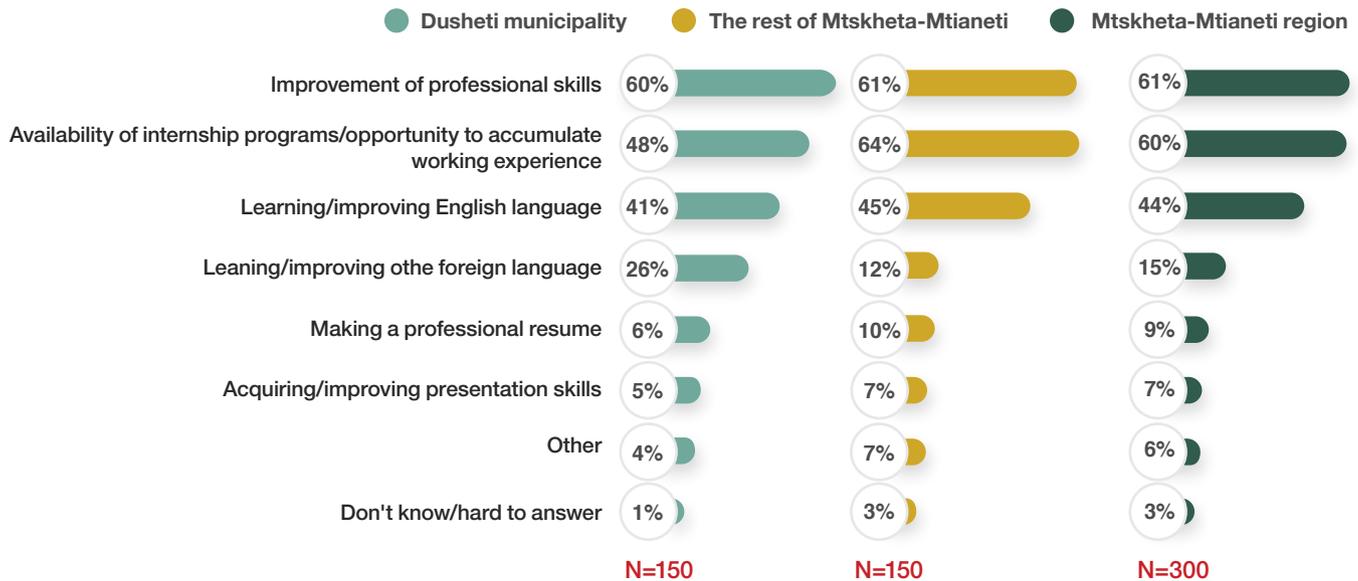


A total of 61% of respondents inquired in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** confirmed that young people from their settlement *get a job in the capital city most easily*, while one-fifth (19%) pointed out that *getting a job in their municipality* is more easy. Similarly, 61% of respondents in **Dusheti municipality** pointed out the capital city as the location where young people from their municipality get a job most easily. Two out of ten respondents stated that getting a job *in their region* was more easy (19%).

90% of young people in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** believe that *offering career planning services to school-aged children* that would inform them of different professions and requirements of the labor market is important/very important. Similar to the region, nine out of ten respondents share the same views in the target municipality (92%) and in the rest of the region (90%).

When asked what kind of support would help young people living in their municipality in terms of employment, two factors were identified in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti**. Namely, six out of ten respondents believe that *support in improving professional skills* (61%) and *availability of internship programs and opportunities to accumulate experience* (60%) would help young people in employment. It is also worth mentioning that for 44% of respondents, *support in learning/improving the English language* is deemed important. The same set of factors were identified in Dusheti municipality, and among them, the majority of respondents believe that *support in improving professional skills* is what would help young people in employment (60%).

Chart 56. Skills/knowledge support in the development of which would help young people in terms of employment



A total of 42% of respondents inquired in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** believe that the *environment in Georgia is quite convenient for young entrepreneurship, innovation and startups*. In addition, 20% believe that this environment *is not convenient/is not convenient at all*. Assessments are quite similar in **Dusheti municipality**, where 36% of respondents consider the *environment as convenient/completely convenient*, and 24% of respondents declared that the environment in Georgia for young entrepreneurs, innovation and startups is not convenient/is not convenient at all.

If young people did not stress the availability of education, the reality is different in case of employment. This is the biggest challenge young people face in the region and in Dusheti municipality as well. Respectively, providing support in a way that will help young people in terms employment is of particular importance. It is important to offer career planning services to young people while they are still in school. In addition, it is important to support them in acquiring and improving professional skills and foreign language skills, in particular with the English language.

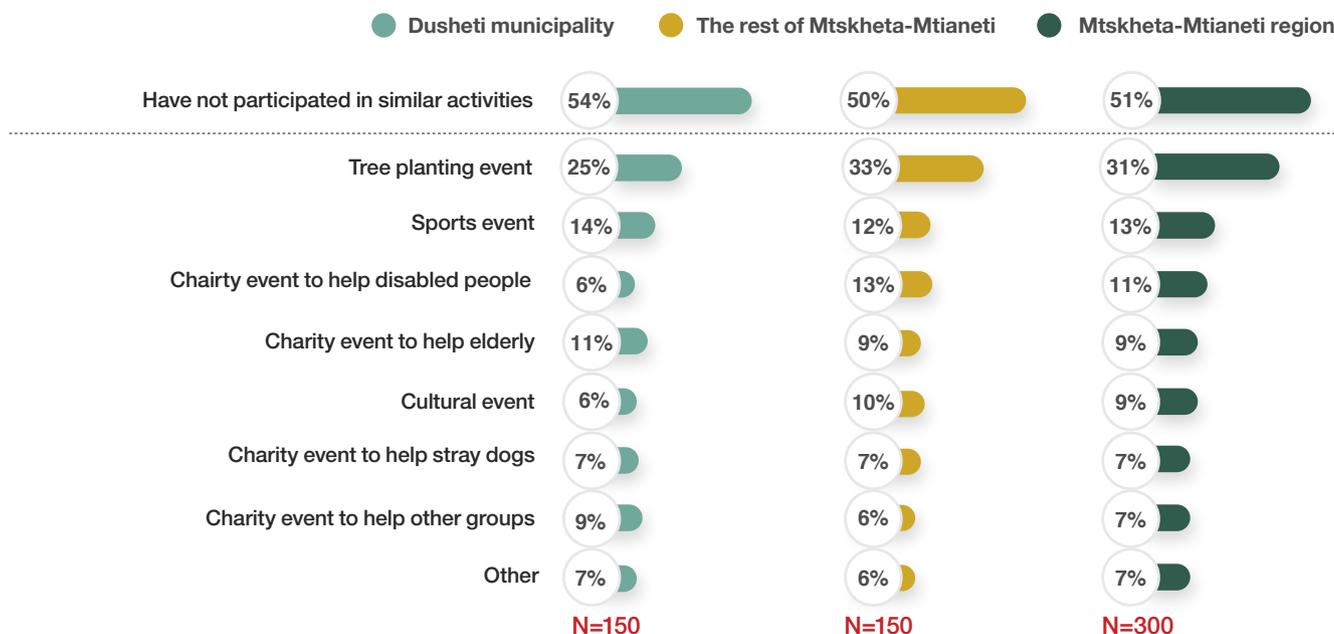
3.4. Political Participation and Activism

Research respondents were asked to assess topics related to Political Participation and activism. It turns out that the vast majority of respondents in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** believe that the participation of young people in a variety of *volunteer activities is important/very important* (94%). The majority of respondents in **Dusheti municipality** shared the same assessment (90%).

As the study results demonstrate, six out of ten respondents in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** *have not participated in any volunteer programs* over the past 2-3 years. The share of those respondents who participated in volunteer

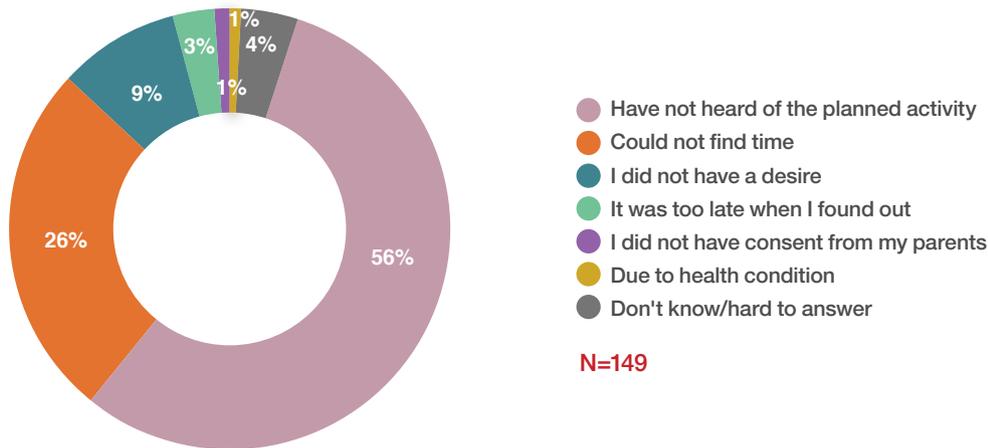
programs in the country is 38%. The reality is similar in **Dusheti municipality**. As for *volunteer activities*, half of the respondents in Mtskheta-Mtianeti *have not participated in any volunteer activities over the past 1-2 years* (51%). A tree planting event is the activity the largest number of respondents report participating in (31%). The reality is about the same in Dusheti municipality (have not participated - 54%, *tree planting event* - 25%). The index of not participating in similar activities is identical in the 14-17 and 18-23 age groups (39% and 38%, respectively), however, this index is significantly higher in the 24-29 age group, where it reaches 69%. Participation in a tree planting activity as the most prevalent activity looks as follows in the age perspective: 36% of respondents from the 14-17 age group participated in this activity, the number of such respondents was 43% in the 18-23 age group and only 18% in the 24-29 age group over the past 1-2 years.

Chart 57. Experience participating in volunteer activities over the past 1-2 years



As demonstrated by the research results, more than half of respondents in Mtskheta-Mtianeti stated that *they had not heard of the planned activities* (56%) as a reason for not participating in volunteer activities, while one-fourth *could not find the time* (26%). Reasons are similar in the target municipality and the rest of the region.

Chart 58. Reasons why young people did not participate in volunteer activities in Mtskheta-Mtianeti



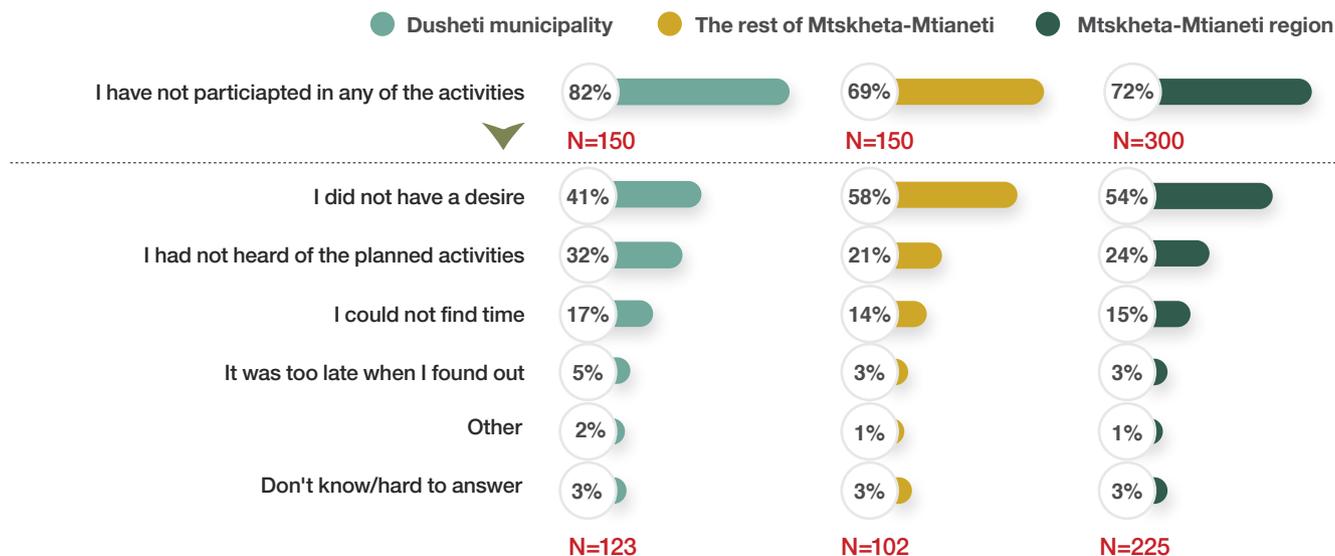
As believed by 77% of respondents inquired in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti**, the *active engagement of young people in different important processes for the country (discussion of topics, protest rallies, signing a petition, etc.) is important/very important*. The same view is shared by 80% of respondents in **Dusheti municipality**.

The importance of engagement in different important processes for the country was stressed within the scope of the *qualitative research*. According to the dominant view, engagement is important as it helps develop young people. Support in development is a kind of guarantee that young people will stay and won't think about domestic or international migration. Focus group discussion participants also noted that the engagement of young people in processes is important because it is a way to attract the attention of decision-makers. The latter is a guarantee that youth issues will become more important and their needs will be actually taken into account.

Even though the majority of respondents deemed the active engagement of young people important, actual participation in the region is quite rare. As the research results demonstrated, the majority of respondents in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** *have not participated in any of the civil activities over the past 1-2 years (72%)*. The share of such respondents is 82% in **Dusheti municipality**. Only 13% of respondents reported *attending civil meeting(s)* to discuss important issues/problems, and this activity was reported by the largest number of respondents, which means that engagement in other activities is even lower.

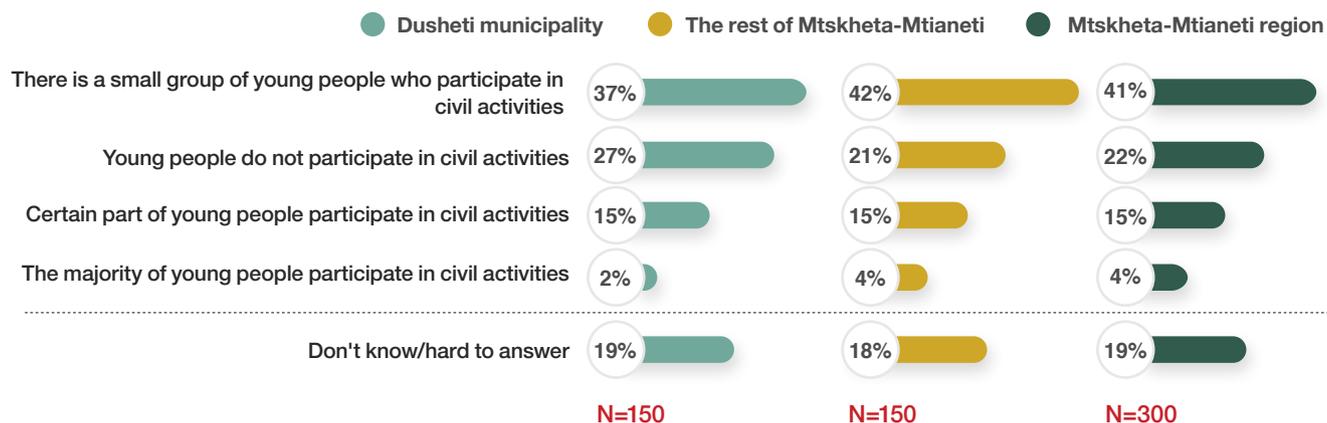
When asked about the reason for not participating in any civil activity, the largest portion of respondents in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** mentioned a *lack of desire to participate (54%)*. A total of 24% reported that they *had not heard of the planned activities*. The absence of desire was named by the largest number of respondents (41%) in **Dusheti municipality**, where one-third noted that they *had not heard of the planned activities (32%)*.

Chart 59. Experience participating in civil activities over the past 1-2 years / reasons for not participating



Four out of ten respondents in Mtskheta-Mtianeti region claimed that there is a *small group of young people in their municipality who participate in civil activities* (41%). One-fifth of respondents declared that *young people did not participate in civil activity* (22%). Assessments are similar in Dusheti municipality.

Chart 60. Assessment of young peoples' engagement in civil activities in their municipality

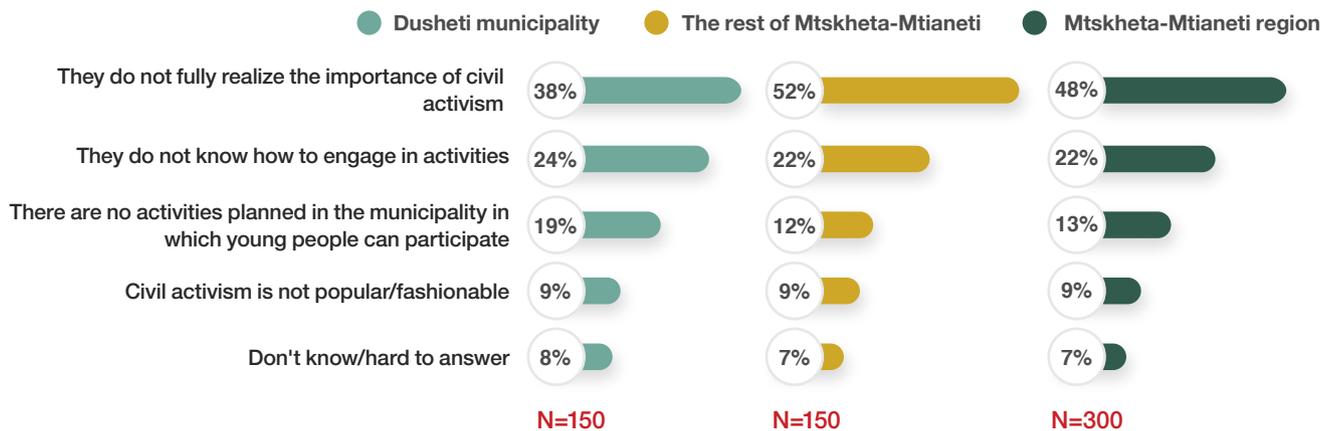


The fact that added to low engagement in civil activism, a small group of people are involved in activities was confirmed within the *qualitative research*. It was stressed that mostly the same people participated in activities.

When asked about reasons why almost no one or only a small group of *young people participate in civil activities*, the respondents of the quantitative research in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** reported that *young people are not fully aware of the importance of civil activism* (48%). In addition, one-fifth believe that *young people do not know how to engage in civil activities* (22%). Four out of ten respondents in **Dusheti municipality** reported that the reason behind the low level of engagement of young people in civil activities is that *young people are not fully aware of the importance of civil activism* (38%), while one-fourth believe that the reason is a *lack of knowledge on how to be involved in civil activism* (24%).

One-third of respondents who believe that the majority of young people participate in different civil activities find it difficult to name the kind of activities (32%). The largest number of respondents pointed out environmental activities (33%), charity events (25%) and discussions of important topics for youth (23%).

Chart 61. Main reasons why a small group / almost no one participates in civil activism



The low level of engagement of young people in processes and civil activities was particularly stressed within the *qualitative research*. As noted by young respondents participating in the discussion in Ducati municipality, the main reason is a lack of information. It is noteworthy that the latter reason was highlighted in two directions: one, a lack of information on the importance of activism and possible forms of activism. It is worth mentioning that such a lack of awareness was identified among discussion participants. An example to prove this point of view is that when speaking about civil activism, young people often mention attending different sports or art classes or the limited accessibility of the said activity. The other thing that was emphasized in terms of low awareness is that young people are often uninformed on activities that are rarely carried out. As noted before, this is particularly challenging in rural settlements -type settlements.

One of the reasons for low engagement is that *civil activism is not popular*, which can be related to unawareness about its importance. This was pointed out by the largest share of respondents in Dusheti municipality (38%). As noted by school-aged respondents, civil activism and active engagement in processes can become grounds for being “laughed at”, which is why their peers avoid participating in activities and expressing their initiatives.

One of the reasons for low civil activism is the nihilist attitude that nothing will change anyway and decision-makers will not take the interests of young people into account. Such a nihilist attitude is an explanation of why meetings with local self-governments, deputy candidates, council members and other decision-makers are almost never attended by young people, unlike elder generations. According to authors of this point of view, elder citizens voice their needs and problems at similar meetings and their problems are responded to. In addition to nihilism, as noted above, the low participation rate in this kind of activity is explained by the fact that asking for something is not a socially desirable behavior.

A representative of the local municipality confirms that young people have a nihilist attitude and do not believe in the support of local self-government. This respondent reported on the importance of working on this in a correct way. In this context, the research participant believes that projects planned together with Youth Agency will be ground-breaking. By establishing the position of a youth worker in the municipality, this nihilist attitude will change and young people will feel more enthusiastic about being involved in processes. The NGO representative participating in the study also emphasizes the existing nihilist attitude towards local self-government and points out that only a small group of young people are active, part of which "represent the government" themselves.



"It was identified that young people have a nihilist attitude and they don't think we can help them, that we can do something. They have lost hope and are looking for it elsewhere when we can help them locally... we have high hopes for Youth Agency and we think that lots of good things will be done..."

Representative of local self-government

"I have no desire to communicate with people who are currently in charge of the municipality... every time I communicated with those people, they may agree with you on many things, but when it comes to actual action, no outcome is achieved".

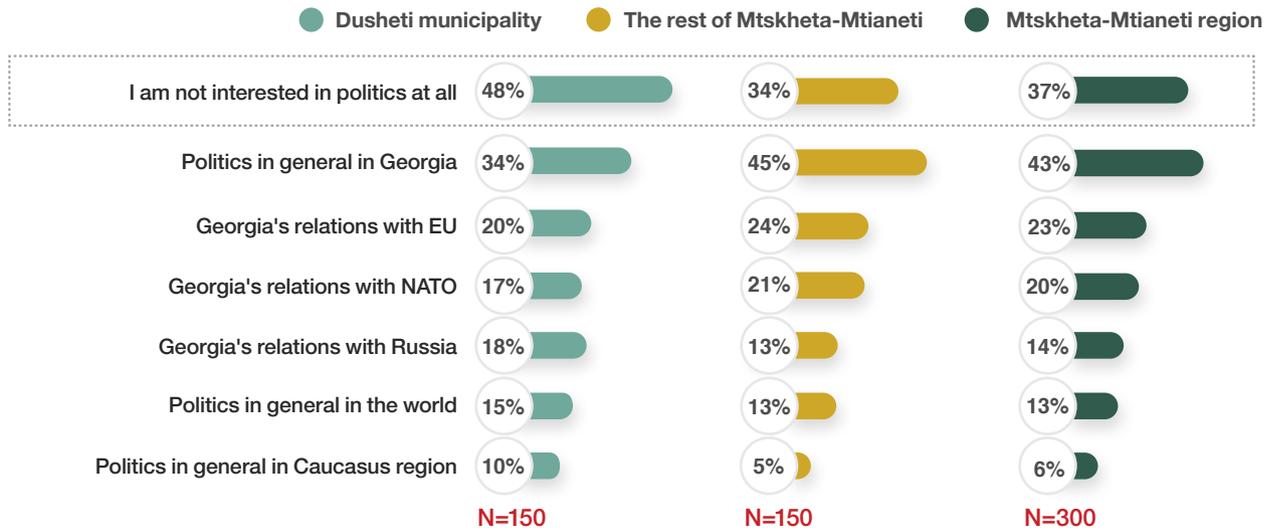
Representative of NGO sector

The absence of nihilism and having more trust in local self-government was deemed of particular importance by the respondents of the qualitative research. If we take into consideration that young respondents ultimately assign local self-government to address youth problems, plan and implement activities, including increasing the engagement of young people, it is important for the latter to take efficient steps to eliminate the nihilist attitude. As believed by research participants, this implies actual implementation of projects tailored to youth needs (arranging sports infrastructure, providing spaces for gatherings and leisure, etc.). As for their role and engagement in processes, it was pointed out that they may have initiatives, but according to the dominant point of view, engagement implies participation in planned activities and not initiatives.

As for the importance of young people being interested in politics, 54% of respondents in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** believe that it is important/very important. A total of 46% of respondents in **Dusheti municipality** share the same point of view, and one-fourth of respondents believe that young people being interested in *politics is not important/is not important at all* (24%).

When asked about their interest in politics, research results demonstrated that 37% of respondents in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** are *not interested politics at all*. The largest portion of respondents are interested in *politics in Georgia* (43%). It is worth mentioning that half of respondents in **Dusheti municipality** are completely uninterested in politics (48%), 34% are *interested in politics in Georgia*, one-fifth are interested in *EU-Georgian relations* (20%), and the same portion are interested in Georgia's relations with *Russia* (18%) and *NATO* (17%).

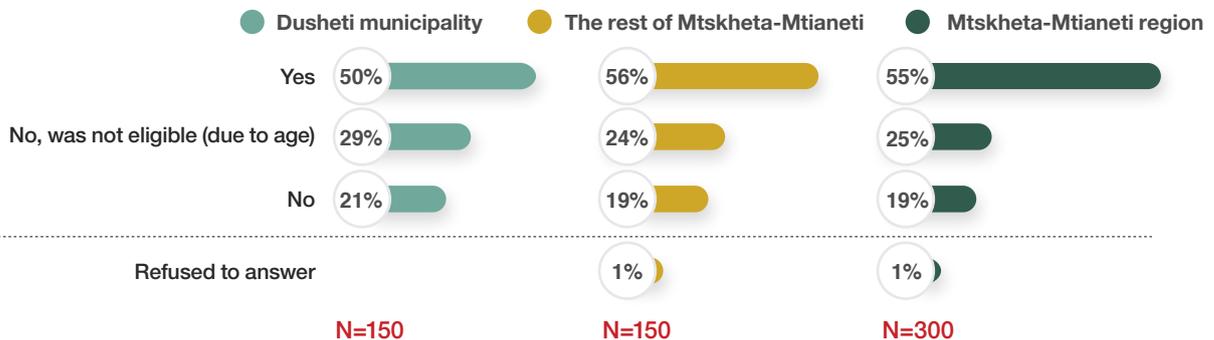
Chart 62. Interest in political issues



When asked about the frequency of discussing social, economic and political events taking place in the country, it turns out that the share of those who discuss these topics *frequently or sometimes* (51%) and *rarely or never* (49%) is almost identical in Mtskheta-Mtianeti.

A total of 55% of respondents inquired in Mtskheta-Mtianeti participated in the most recent elections (Parliamentary elections 2020), while one-fifth of respondents did not vote regardless of being eligible (19%). A total of 25% of respondents did not participate because they had not reached the age of eligibility. In Dusheti municipality, 50% of respondents participated in the last elections, and one-fifth did not participate regardless of being eligible (21%).

Chart 63. Experience participating in the most recent elections (Parliamentary elections 2020)



As the study results confirm, regardless of deeming civil activism and Political Participation important, the level of participation of young people is quite low in Dusheti municipality as well as in the region. Even though a large portion of respondents declare that the reason for low engagement is that they had not heard of activities planned within civil activism, the main reason is still connected to awareness. We can conclude this based on the fact that as stated by an important part of young people, they did not have the desire to engage in different types of activities (Mtskheta-Mtianeti – 54%, Dusheti – 41%). This can be explained by reasons such as nihilism, civil activism not being popular, and frequently perceived as a socially less acceptable behavior. Respectively, it is critically important to work actively on this issue as well as on raising the awareness of young people on the forms of civil activism.

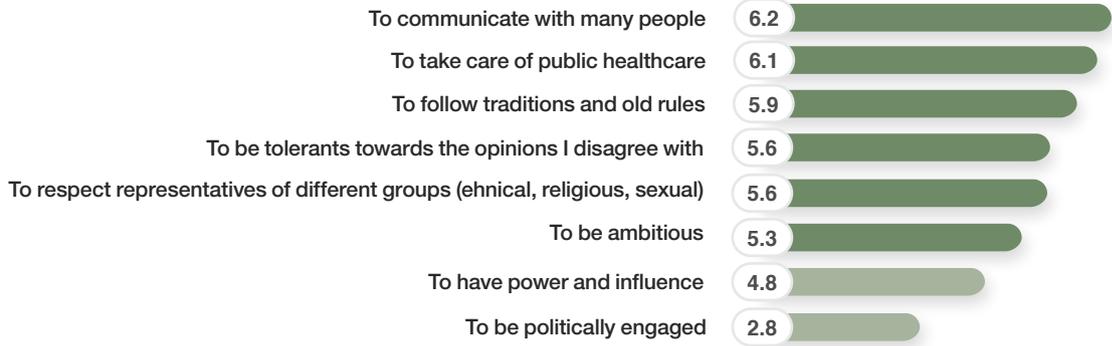
3.5. Values and Rights

Values

Research participants were asked to assess the importance of different values on a 7-point scale, where “1” means that the value is “totally unimportant” for them and “7” means “very important”. Almost every value listed appears to be important or very important in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti**. The three top values are: *having good friends*, *having a reliable spouse/partner*, *safety* (the mean value of each is 6.8 points). The least important values identified were *Political Participation* (to be politically engaged – 2.8 points) and *having power and influence* (to have power and influence – 4.8 points). Assessments are almost identical in Dusheti municipality as well as in the rest of Mtskheta-Mtianeti, excluding some differences. Namely, the following values are rated as more important in Dusheti municipality than the rest of Mtskheta-Mtianeti: *to have power and influence* (5.4 and 4.5 points, respectively); *to be ambitious* (6.1 and 5.1 points, respectively), *to be tolerant towards the opinions I disagree with* (6.3 and 5.4 points, respectively), *to follow traditions and old rules* (6.3 points and 5.8 points, respectively).

Chart 64. Assessment of the importance of values in Mtskheta-Mtianeti (assessment on a 7-point scale where “1” means “totally unimportant” and “7” means “very important”)

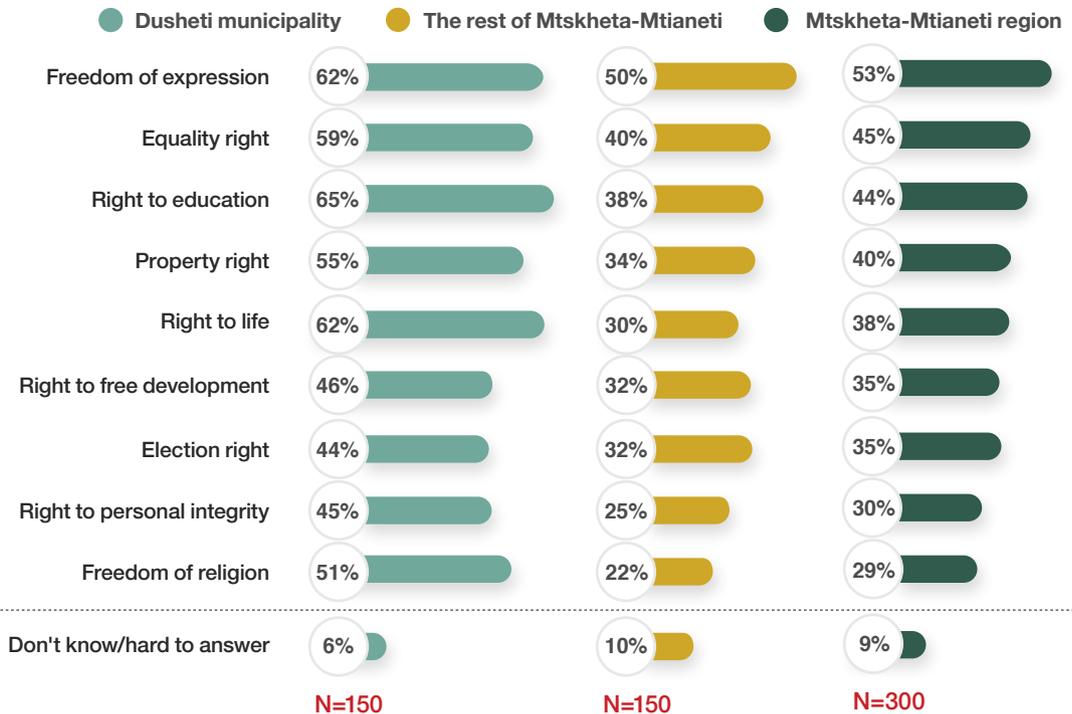




Rights

As for the rights young people have heard of, it turns out that every second respondent in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** have heard of *freedom of expression* (53%), four or more out of ten have heard of *equality* (45%), education (44%), *property* (40%), and the right to life (38%).

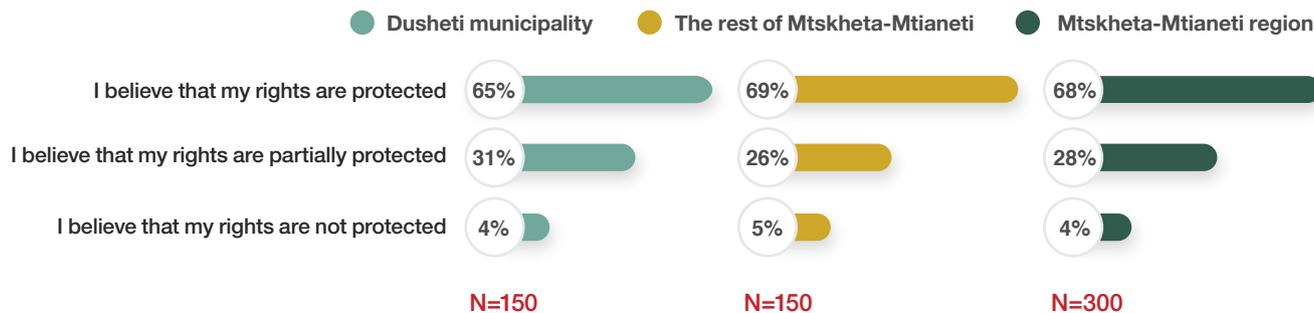
Chart 65. Human rights young people have heard of



In addition, 35%-35% of respondents named the right to *free development and election rights*. Three out of ten respondents stressed the *right of personal integrity* (30%) and *freedom of religion* (29%). The rights most of the respondents inquired in **Dusheti municipality** have heard of include the right to *education* (65%), *expression* (62%), *life* (62%), and *equality* (59%).⁹

The majority of respondents in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** believe that *their rights are protected* (68%); and 28% of respondents reported the *partial protections of rights*. A total of 65% of respondents in **Dusheti municipality** believe that *their rights are protected*, while 31% of respondents think that *their rights are partially protected*.

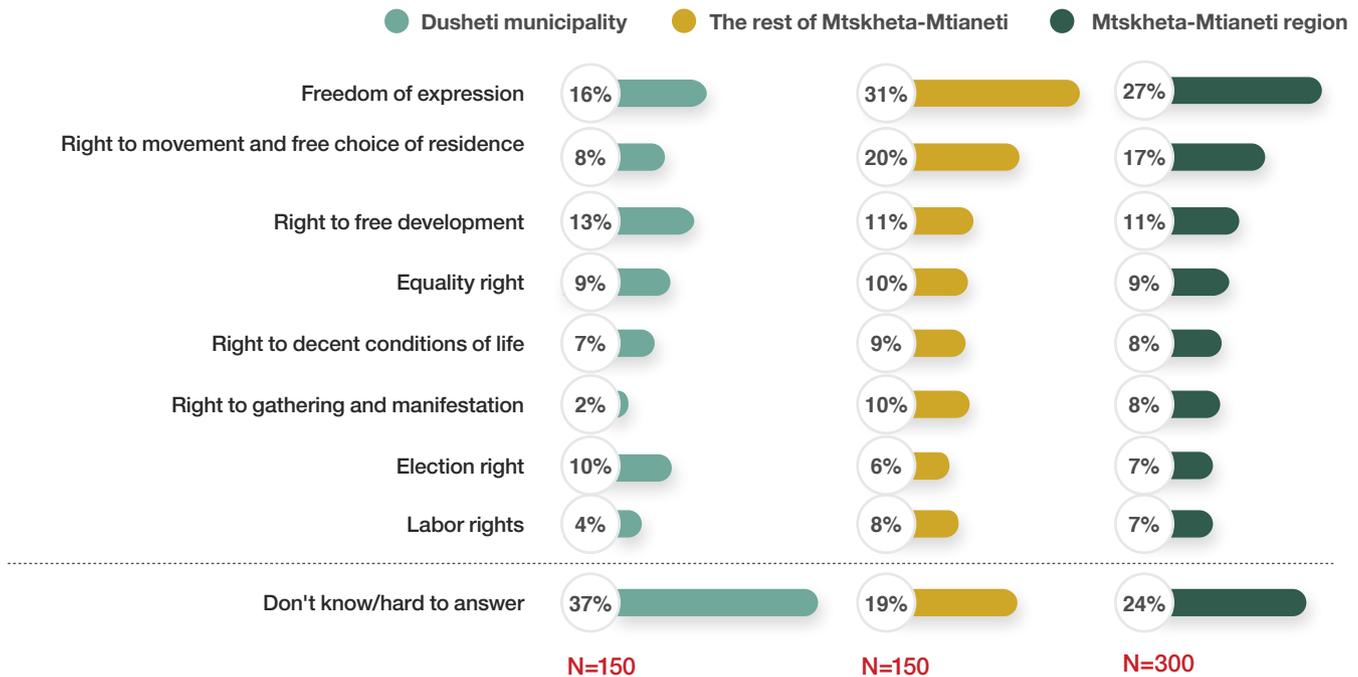
Chart 66. Feelings on the protection of rights



When speaking about rights that are not protected/partially protected, one-fourth of respondents in Mtskheta-Mtianeti find it difficult to name a specific right (24%), while roughly the same number feels that freedom of expression (27%) is not protected/partially protected. A total of 17% of respondents named the *right to movement and free choice of residence*, and 11% named the *right to free development*. It is worth mentioning that the largest share of *women* inquired in Mtskheta-Mtianeti believe that their freedom of expression is not protected/is partially protected (33%). A large portion of *men* named the right to movement and free choice of residence (26%). In terms of *age*, it is worth mentioning that one-fourth of school-aged young people cannot answer which of their rights is not protected/partially protected (27%), and one-fifth named freedom of expression (22%). Freedom of expression is believed to be unprotected/partially protected by the majority in the 18-23 age group (31%) and in the same age group, one-fifth of respondents cannot name a right that is not protected or partially protected. A total of 27% of respondents in the elder age category (24-29 years) find it difficult to answer this question, while 24% pointed to freedom of expression.

When speaking about rights, participants of the qualitative research noted that the right of education is violated in Dusheti municipality, first of all, in rural settlements-type settlements. According to the main argument, rural settlements have limited access to the internet. In addition, school education is not of high quality in the entire municipality, especially in rural settlements, which forces young people to take private lessons mostly in the capital city. As this is related to financial resources, not many young people can afford a tutor. All of this combined means that the right to a high-quality education is not provided for young people. It is worth mentioning that according to the results of quantitative research, the right to education is not protected/partially protected for only 4% of respondents in Dusheti municipality, the rest of Mtskheta-Mtianeti and the entire region.

⁹ Note: the chart presents only those rights at least 3 out of ten respondents have heard of in the region.

Chart 67. Rights that are not protected/partially protected¹⁰

3.6. Challenges and Aspirations

Challenges

Research participants were asked to assess different challenges and aspirations for migration, the socio-economic condition of the country, and other topics.

When assessing the difficulty of accessing different services in their municipality, it turns out that the three most important challenges for young people living in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** are *access to entertainment and leisure places* (6.2 points), *access to an internship* (5.7 points), and *access to higher education* (5.6 points).¹¹ The three least problematic issues in the region are *access to school education* (1.8 points), *access to internet* (2.2 points), and *access to transportation* (2.6 points).

¹⁰ Note: the list provides only those rights that were named by 7% and more of respondents

¹¹ Note: extent of severity of the problem was assessed on 7-point scale where "1" means it's not problematic/challenging at all and "7" means - it's a serious problem/challenge)

Respondents in Dusheti municipality identified the same problematic issues as the entire region of **Mtskheta-Mtianeti**, but in addition to the abovementioned issues, *access to education on reproductive health* (6.1 points) and *access to vocational schools* (6.1 points) were identified. The least problematic issues for Dusheti municipality are *access to transportation* (1.8 points) and *access to a school education* (1.4 points).

Table 6. Assessment of various issues for young people in their municipality (assessment on a 7-point scale where “1” means “it’s not problematic/challenging at all” and “7” means “it’s a serious problem/challenge”)

| To what extent are the following issues problematic/challenging for young people in the municipality | Dusheti | The rest of Mtskheta-Mtianeti | Region |
|--|---------|-------------------------------|--------|
| Access to places of recreation and entertainment (cinema, theatre, etc.) | 6.4 | 6.2 | 6.2 |
| Access to transportation | 6.2 | 5.5 | 5.7 |
| Access to higher education | 6.4 | 5.4 | 5.6 |
| Access to programs supporting entrepreneurship | 5.9 | 5.4 | 5.5 |
| Lack of jobs | 5.9 | 5.4 | 5.5 |
| Access to spaces for young people to gather, rest, have fun, or organize various events | 5.4 | 5.5 | 5.4 |
| Access to education on reproductive health | 6.1 | 5 | 5.3 |
| Access to training/education courses | 5.8 | 5 | 5.2 |
| Access to street infrastructure (street workout accessories, sports ground) | 4.7 | 5 | 4.9 |
| Access to vocational schools | 6.1 | 4.1 | 4.6 |
| Access to informal education | 5.3 | 3.6 | 4 |
| Access to healthcare services | 3.3 | 3.6 | 3.5 |
| Access to sport classes (football, basketball, etc.) | 4 | 3.3 | 3.5 |
| Access to art classes (dancing, art, musical instruments) | 3.2 | 3 | 3.1 |
| Access to computer | 2.7 | 2.7 | 2.7 |
| Access to transportation | 1.8 | 2.9 | 2.6 |
| Access to internet | 2.3 | 2.1 | 2.2 |
| Access to school education | 1.4 | 1.9 | 1.8 |

Access to a computer and internet turned out to be less problematic in the region in general, as well as in Dusheti municipality. It turns out that the majority of research participants in Mtskheta-Mtianeti have access to a computer at home and/or outdoors (69%), and the share of those who have no access to a PC neither at home nor outdoors is 20%. The reality is quite similar in Dusheti municipality.

Even though the accessibility of places for gathering, leisure and organizing other events was assessed as less problematic than places for just entertainment and fun, the extent of the severity of the problem is still high (5.4 points). It is worth mentioning that access to these two types of spaces was identified as severely problematic within the *qualitative research*. As noted by participants of focus group discussions in Dusheti municipality, the absence of places for gathering that often also implies entertainment and leisure instead of only for gathering or informal education, is severely problematic. Moreover, this is problematic for school-aged and elder young people in both types (urban settlements - rural settlements) of settlements. In addition to the fact that the availability of such spaces would help young people connect, get together and spend time productively, such spaces were considered as an important factor for coping with risk behaviors such as the addiction to digital technologies. The importance of such spaces was stressed not only by young people, but also by key informants from the local self-government.

It is worth mentioning that when speaking about problems, young participants of the qualitative study mostly spontaneously discussed problems that are not solely or directly related to young people (e.g. improper functioning of road infrastructure, problem of stray dogs). In addition, young people, first of all, women who have children, when discussing activities or problems focused on the issues that concern them not as young people, but as mothers (e.g. absence of entertainment centers for children, unavailability of different classes for children, etc.). In their narrative, we come across phrases that stressed the importance of this role and the main focus in the discussion is not on themselves, but on their children (e.g. “I, as a mother of children...”).

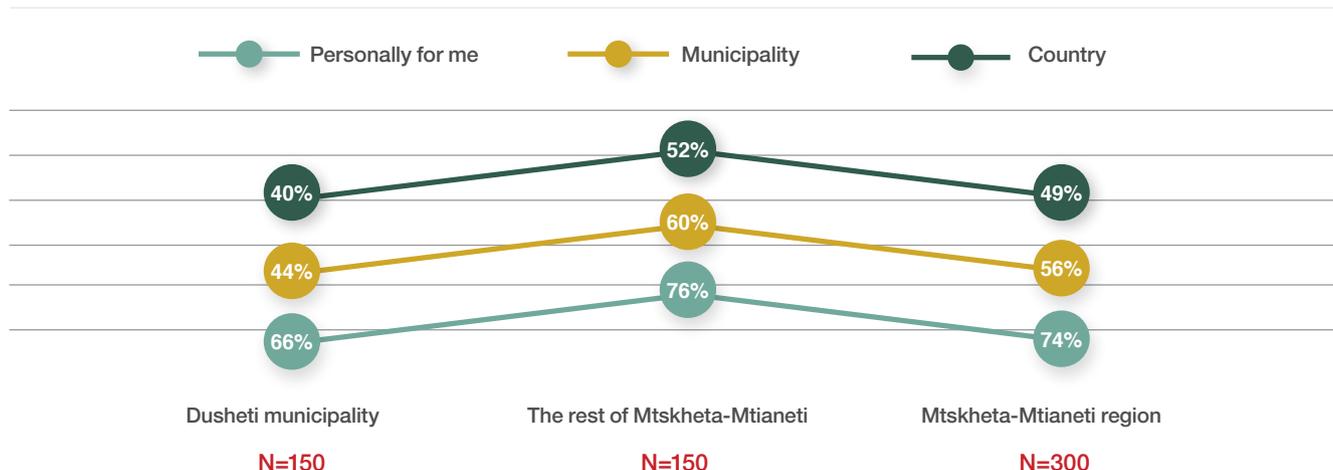
As the quantitative survey identified, the accessibility of transportation and internet was assessed as less problematic in Dusheti municipality than other issues (2.3 points and 1.8 points, respectively), however respondents of the qualitative study stressed that both of these problems are severe. It was noted that these issues are particularly important for young people living in rural areas. As assessed by discussion participants, in rare cases when activities are planned in the municipal center and young people are informed on those activities, they cannot manage to attend activities due to the absence of or limited access to transportation. In addition, low internet accessibility is a hindering factor in terms of participating in online activities.

As for the absence of internship opportunities and lack of jobs, which was particularly stressed as an important problem within the quantitative study, these were listed among challenges by young people participating in the qualitative research.

Regarding the assessment of the socio-economic condition of the country, municipality and the respondent's personal life over a 10-year perspective, it is noteworthy that attitudes are positive in the region as well as in the target municipality. At least four and more people out of ten respondents feel that the socio-economic condition of the country, municipality and their own life will be better than now. It is worth mentioning that the *prediction of positive changes in a respondent's own socio-economic condition* over a 10-year perspective is more positive (74%) than in case of the country (49%) or municipality (56%). Similar to the region, a larger portion of respondents in the target municipality and the rest of Mtskheta-Mtianeti believe that their condition will change for the better on all three levels. In addition, more positive assessments are made in terms of change in the respondent's own socio-economic condition than for the country or municipality.

Chart 68. Positive prediction of socio-economic conditions in the country, municipality and respondent's own life over 10 years

Socio-economic condition will be better in 10 years than it is now



As for the respondent's satisfaction with their own life, the majority of young people claim that at this point of life, considering every factor, *they are more satisfied with their life than average*. This assessment was an average of 5 points in Mtskheta-Mtianeti.¹² Results in the rest of Mtskheta-Mtianeti are identical. Assessments are similar in Dusheti municipality and reach 4.9 points.

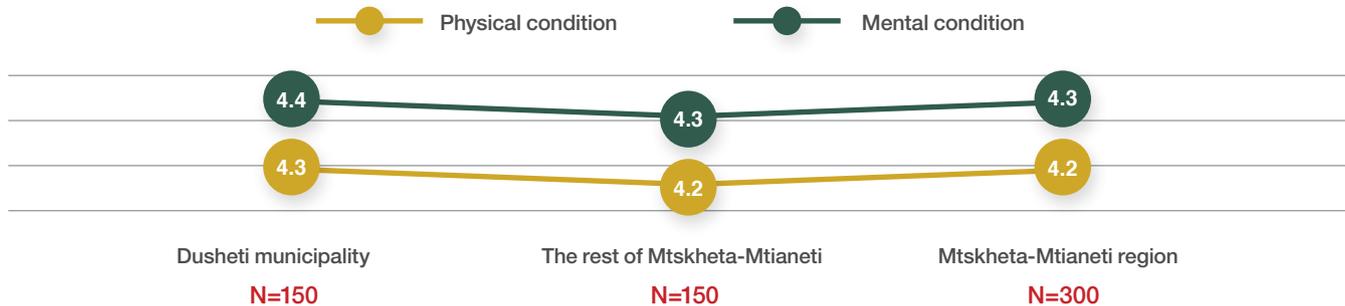
Chart 69. Satisfaction with life at the current stage (assessment on a 7-point scale where "1" means "I am not satisfied at all" and "7" means "I am very satisfied")



¹² Note: assessment on a 7-point scale where "1" means that respondents were not satisfied with his/her own life, and "7" means that s/he was very satisfied with his/her life at the current stage

When asked to assess their *physical and mental condition*, young people gave positive evaluations in Mtskheta-Mtianeti in general, as well as in the target municipality and the rest of the region. The assessment of both conditions is rated with 4.2 and higher points out of 5.

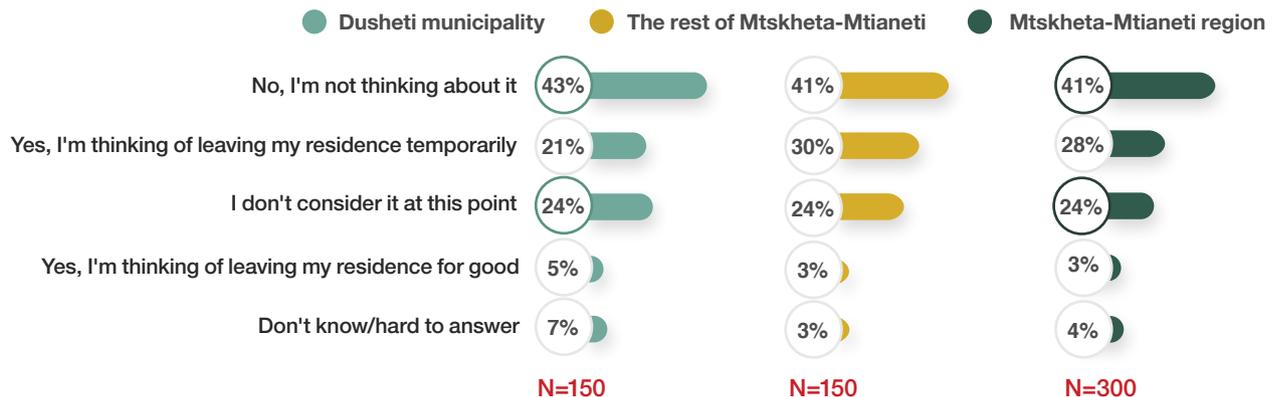
Chart 70. Assessment of current physical and mental condition (“1” – very negative, “5” – very positive)



Migration

Young people were asked to assess their intention of domestic and international migration over the next 2-3 years. It turns out that a large portion of respondents (65%) in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti region** do not *have/currently have no intention* of domestic migration. A total of 41% of respondents reported on not having such intention, while 24% of young people do not think about it at this stage of life. One-third (28%) of respondents reported having the intention to move out from their place of residence temporarily.

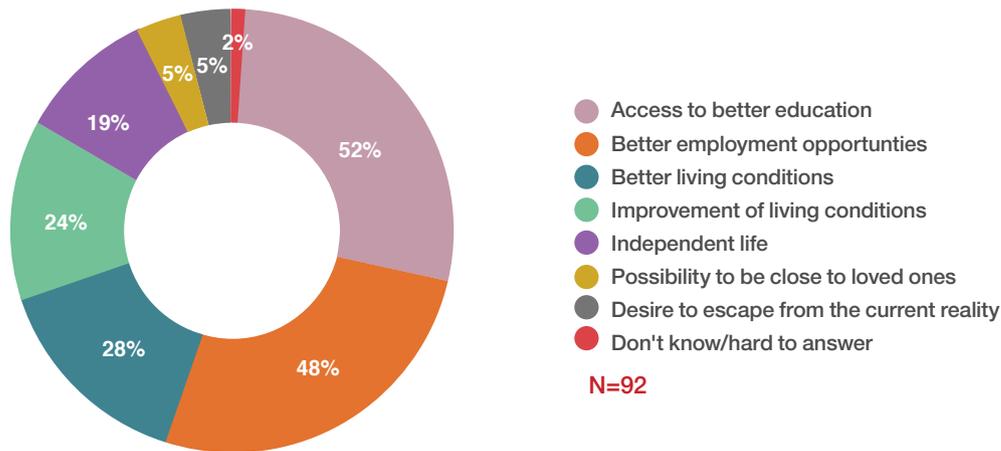
Chart 71. Intention of domestic migration over the next 2-3 years



Four out of ten respondents inquired in **Dusheti municipality** have no intention of migration over the next 2-3 years (43%), and it is worth mentioning that one-fourth (24%) of respondents are *not considering this option at this point*. As for the intention of *leaving their place of residence temporarily*, one-fifth (21%) of respondents inquired in Dusheti municipality reported having such intentions.

Those respondents who reported having the intention to move within the country identified three main reasons. Namely, *access to better education* (52%), *better employment opportunities* (48%) and *better living conditions* (28%).

Chart 72. Reasons for domestic migration in Mtskheta-Mtianeti



It is worth mentioning that a small portion of respondents in Mtskheta-Mtianeti have considered international migration (17%). A total of 24% of respondents in Dusheti municipality reported having the intention to move abroad, 21% think about temporary migration, and only 3% intend to leave the country for good. In total, 18% of respondents (57 young people) reported having the intention to leave the country. The three main reasons provided are *better employment opportunities*, *access to better education* and *better living conditions*.

Experience with discrimination

Within the scope of the study, young people were asked about their experience with discrimination on the following grounds: *education* (elementary education, secondary education, etc.), *economic condition* (rich/poor), *religious belonging*, *ethnic belonging*, *gender* (male/female), *age* (younger-elder; big-small), *place of residence* (suburb-center, rural settlements - town), and *political views*. According to the study results, the vast majority of respondents in the entire region as well as in the target municipality claim that they have not experienced discrimination. The largest portion of respondents in Mtskheta-Mtianeti reported having at least one case of *discrimination on economic grounds*, and the share of such respondents is 13% in the region. In addition, 10%-10% of respondents reported at least one case of discrimination due to *level of education and political views*, and 8% regarding their *place of residence*.

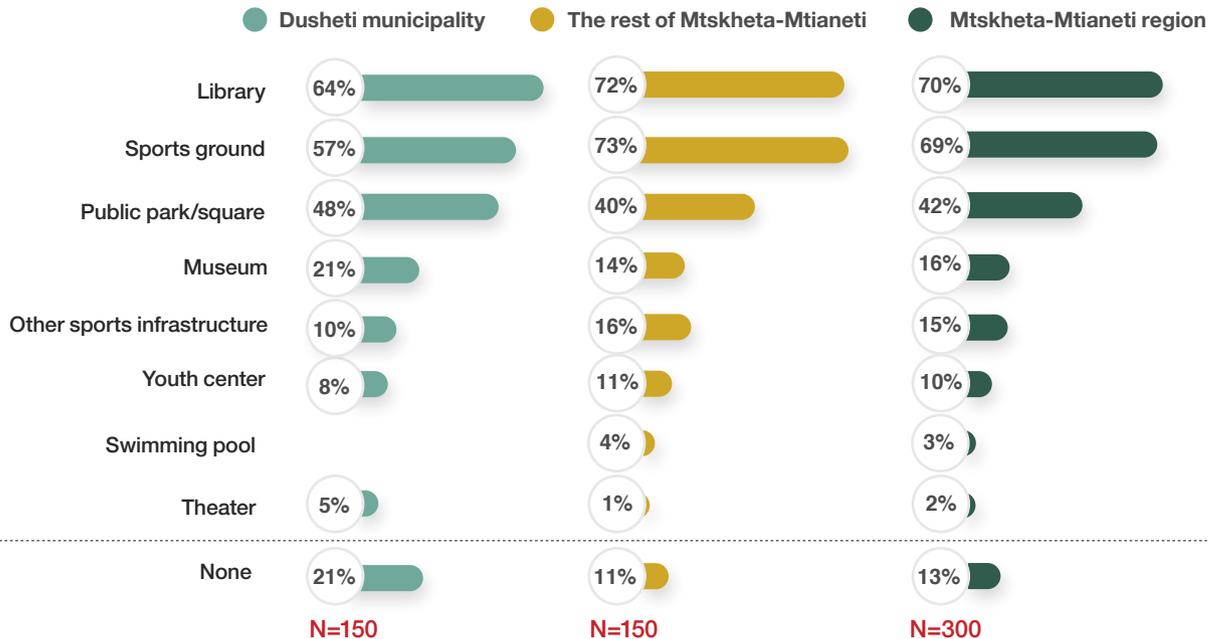
It is worth mentioning that respondents of the qualitative research in Dusheti municipality spoke about discrimination. It turns out that there has been and still is discrimination on different grounds. Namely, respondents mentioned discrimination due to age (“*you are a child and should not be interfering in someone else’s business...*”); gender-based discrimination that was related to limitations of the freedom of expression (“*boys at school are not supposed to have long hair... it’s not suitable for a boy and why wear long hair. This mostly comes from teachers and they make you cut your hair...*”); as well as discrimination based on place of residence (“*we were bullied because our [rural settlements] education was not better than their [urban settlements] education...*”).

3.7. Leisure and Lifestyle

Entertainment, leisure opportunities and sports activities

Research respondents were asked what places of leisure and entertainment they have access to in their settlement. It turns out that availability of *libraries* (70%), *sports grounds* (69%) and *public parks* (42%) are the highest in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti**. The list of the three most available services is identical in Dusheti municipality. It is also worth mentioning that one-fifth of respondents in **Dusheti municipality** reported not having access to any of the entertainment/leisure places in their settlement (21%).

Chart 73. Functioning entertainment/leisure places in the settlement

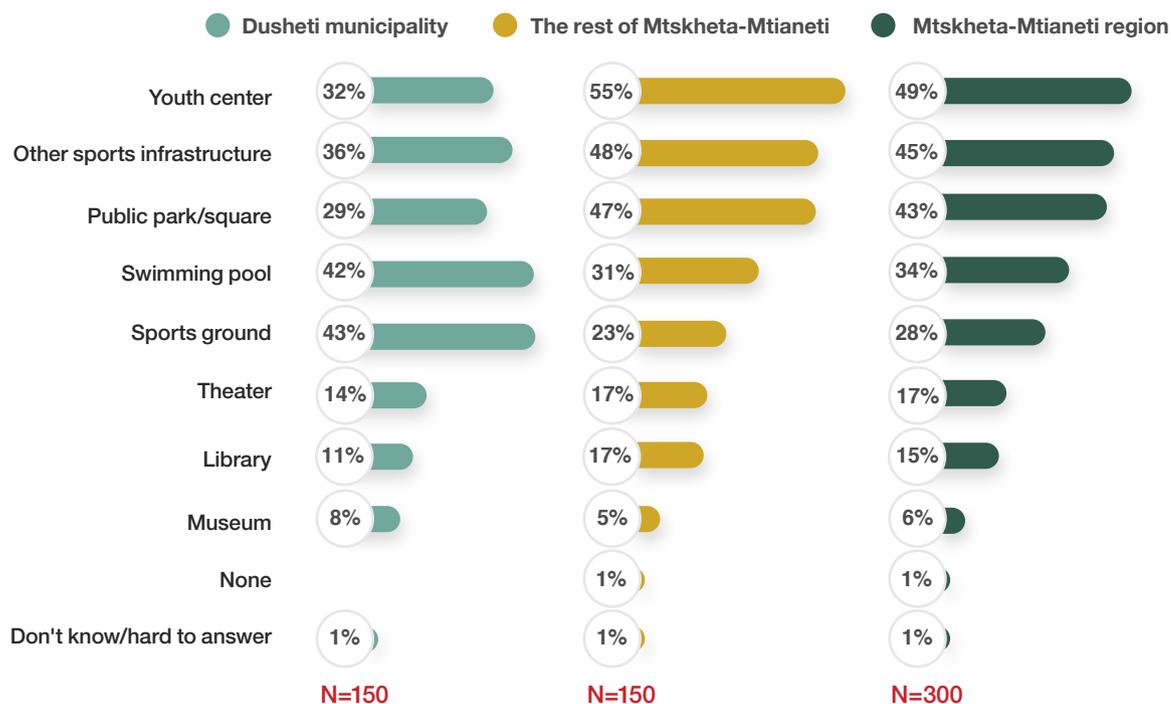


Respondents in *urban* settlements mostly reported the availability of sports grounds (96%), libraries (96%) and public parks (91%). Respondents in *rural settlements* reported the availability of libraries (63%) and sports grounds (62%). It is also worth mentioning that 17% of respondents in rural settlements (urban settlements – 1%) have no access to any leisure/entertainment places.

The majority of respondents inquired in the region and in the target municipality mostly believe that entertainment/leisure places available in their settlement are in good or average condition. It is worth mentioning that museums (poor condition – 42%) and other sports infrastructure (poor condition - 40%) have the most negative assessment in Dusheti municipality.

As for the places that need to function for young people in the settlement, it turns out that there are four priority places in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti**: *youth center* (49%), *other sports infrastructure* (45%), *public park* (43%), and *swimming pool* (34%). Priorities are slightly different in **Dusheti municipality**, where the top priorities are *sports grounds* (43%), *swimming pool* (42%) and *other sports infrastructure* (36%). One-third of respondents in Dusheti municipality reported on the importance of the youth center (32%).

Chart 74. Entertainment/leisure places that need to function properly for young people



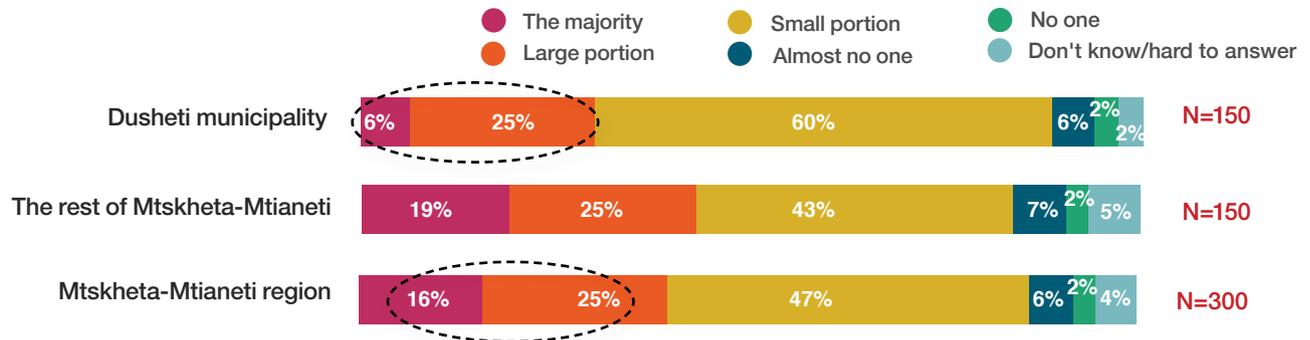
Speaking of age, the proper functioning of the youth center, public park and swimming pool was deemed important among 14-17 year-old young people (each named by 42%-42%). Respondents in the 18-23 age group stressed the importance of a properly-functioning youth center (46%). Young people in the 24-29 age group prioritized

the youth center (55%) and other sports infrastructure (54%). In terms of settlement type, it turns out that a properly-functioning swimming pool is a top priority in urban areas (55%), while respondents in rural settlements prioritized the youth center (51%) and public park (49%). It is worth mentioning that the *qualitative study* identified the importance of entertainment/leisure places such as youth center, proper sports infrastructure, and library. It is worth mentioning that in addition to a lack of properly functioning sports infrastructure, respondents from Dusheti municipality identified another problem – the lack of qualified personnel who would increase the motivation of children interested in sports and actively engage them in sports activities. Respectively, together with proper infrastructure, it is crucially important to hire qualified personnel. It is also worth mentioning that libraries with up-to-date literature and access to internet were identified as important entertainment/leisure locations by young respondents from urban and rural settlements.

In terms of leisure and entertainment, the study revealed that what young people in Mtskheta-Mtianeti have been doing most frequently over the past 1-2 years is *listening to music* (73%), *having fun with friends* (60%) and *watching movies* (47%). A total of 86% of young people have never travelled abroad, and 72% of young people never drew, danced or played any musical instrument. In addition, 60% of them have never done photography.

41% of respondents in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** declared that *the majority or a large portion of respondents are involved in sports/physical activity in their settlement*. In **Dusheti municipality**, 31% of respondents reported the same. The majority declares that a *small portion* of respondents are involved in sports/physical activity in their municipality (60%).

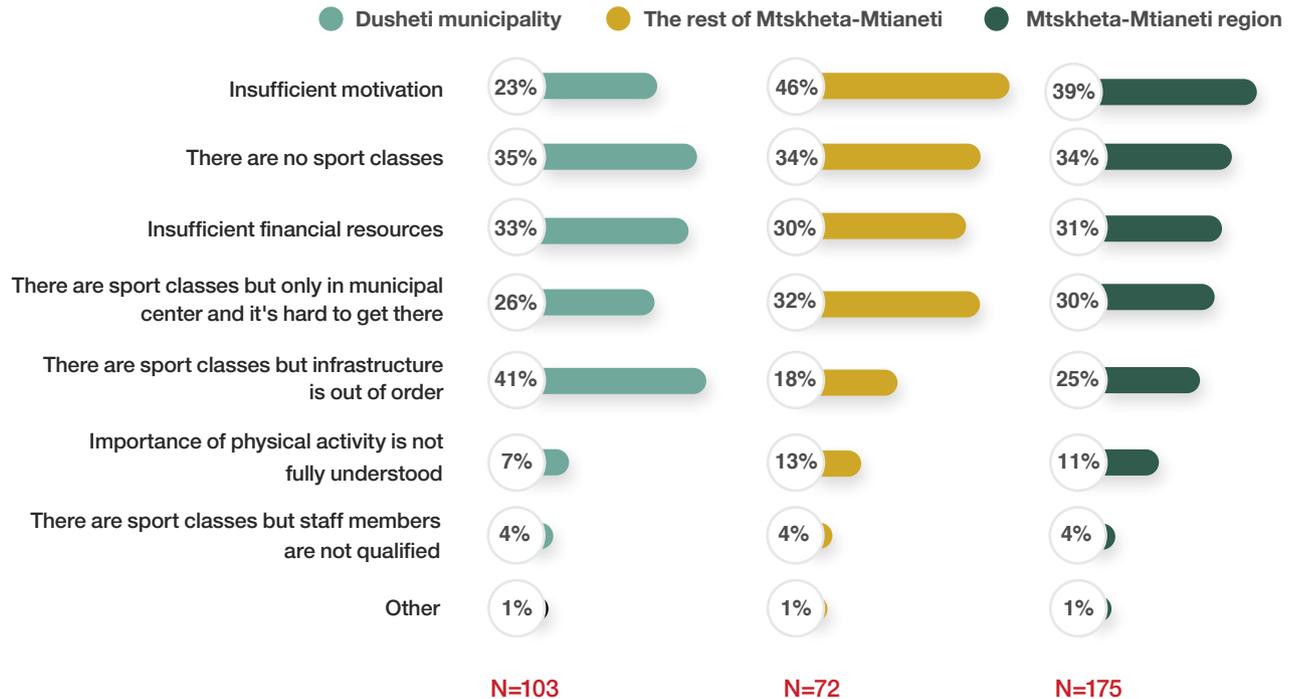
Chart 75. Assessment of young peoples' engagement in sports/physical activity in their municipality



From those respondents who reported that the majority or large part of young people is involved in sports/physical activity in their municipality (41%), the largest portion named sports such as wrestling (81%). Young people are reported to be involved in football (74%), basketball (31%), rugby (29%) and other kinds of sport.

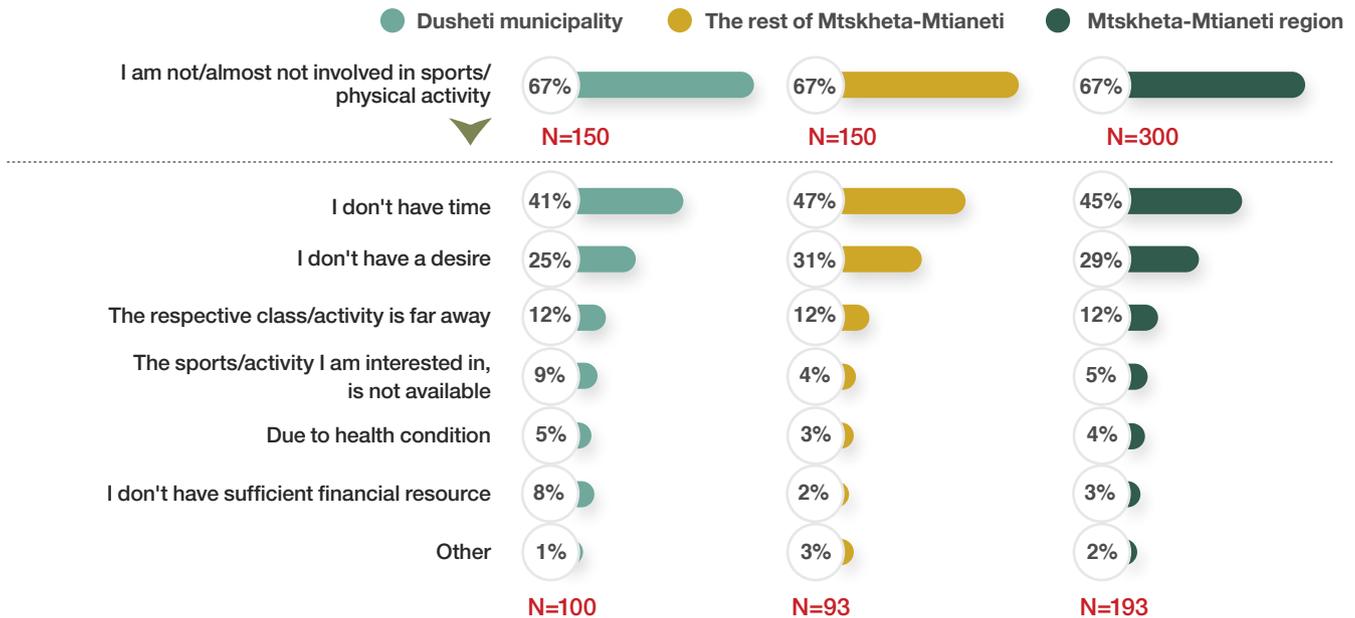
As for those who declared that a small portion or no one is involved in sports/physical activity in their municipality, the main reason provided in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** is *insufficient motivation* (39%). Other reasons included the *absence of sports classes* (34%) and the *absence of sufficient financial resources* (31%). In addition, 30% of respondents reported that *sports classes are available only in the municipal center and it's hard to get there*. The largest portion of respondents in **Dusheti municipality** declared that there are sports classes available, but the infrastructure is out of order and this is the reason for the low engagement of young people in sports/physical activity (41%). Respondents from rural areas mostly reported that sports classes are available only in the municipal center and it's hard to get there (46%), while the main reason in *urban areas* seems to be insufficient financial resource (52%).

Chart 76. Reasons why young people are not involved in sports/physical activity



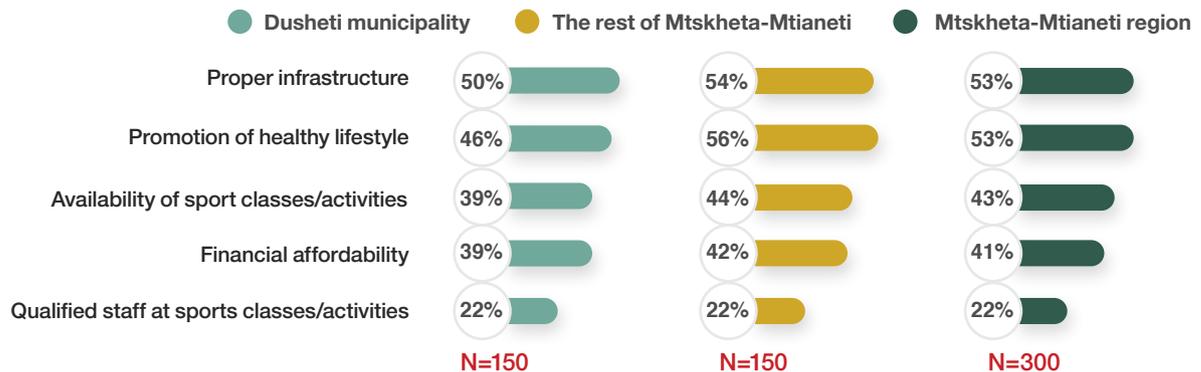
As for respondents' involvement in sports/physical activity, the study demonstrated that one-third of respondents in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** as well as in the target municipality and the rest of the region are involved in sports/physical activity at least 3 hours a week. The share of such respondents is identical in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti**, **Dusheti municipality** and the rest of the region – 33%. Others spend almost no time or do fewer than several activities a month. When asked about reasons why respondents are not involved in sports/physical activity, respondents in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** identified two main reasons: a *lack of time* (45%) and not having the desire (29%). The reality is quite similar in **Dusheti municipality**.

Chart 77. Reasons why young people are not involved in sports/physical activity



When asked what can be done to make more young people interested in sports/physical activity, the study revealed that more than half of respondents in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** believe that *proper infrastructure* (53%) and the *promotion of a healthy lifestyle* (53%) are important. These two factors were deemed important by the largest portion of respondents in **Dusheti municipality** (50% and 46%, respectively).

Chart 78. Mechanisms to increase the interest of young people in sports/physical activity

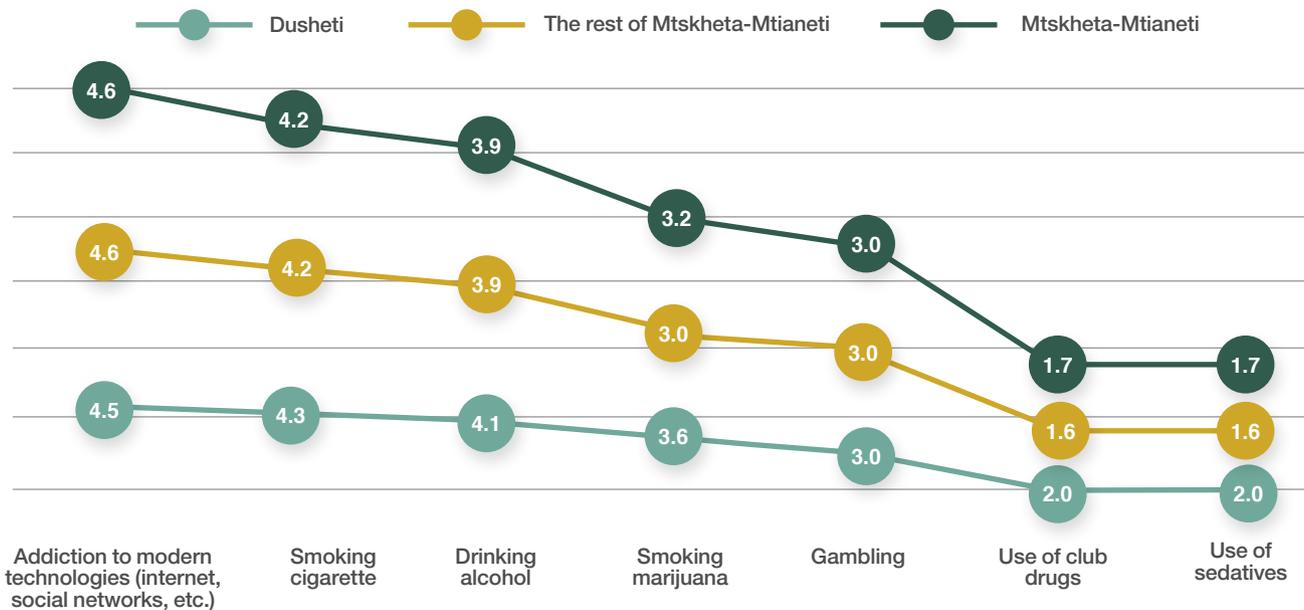


Risky behaviors

Research respondents also assessed how prevalent different risky behaviors are in their settlement. It turns out that the most prevalent risk behaviors in **Mtskheta-Mtianeti** include *addiction to modern technologies, such as social networks and internet* (4.6 points) and *smoking cigarettes* (4.2 points).¹³ Other widely practiced habits are *drinking alcohol* (3.9 points), *smoking marijuana* (3.2 points) and *gambling* (3 points). The use of *club drugs and sedatives*, is relatively rare (1.7-1.7 points).

As for **Dusheti municipality**, the prevalence of risk behaviors is similar, where the most prevalent behavior is *addiction to modern technologies* (4.5 points), while the least prevalent behavior is the *use of club drugs and sedatives* (2.0-2.0 points).

Chart 79. Spread of risk behaviors in the settlement (point “1” – not spread at all and “5” – very prevalent)



Young people participating in the *qualitative research* stressed the prevalence of risk behaviors such as drinking alcohol and using marijuana. This was assessed to be particularly problematic by the group of 18-23 year-old people. As believed by them, young people do not have a job and cannot engage in sports activities. There are no places for gatherings, and this leaves them with too much spare time, pushing them to risk behaviors. This is why young respondents of the study stressed important mechanisms for coping with risk behaviors. These mechanisms include taking the right steps to employment, promotion of a healthy lifestyle, ensuring the availability of sports infrastructure, as well as providing spaces for gathering.

¹³ Note: assessment on 5-point scale where “1” means that the behavior is not practiced in the settlement and “5” means that the behavior is very prevalent.

3.8. Discussion and Recommendations

As verified by the results of the quantitative and qualitative components of the study, young people living in **Dusheti municipality** are rarely offered activities planned within the youth policy, the number of beneficiaries of activities is small, and a wide circle of young people are not informed on activities that are implemented. In this context, it was identified that residents of rural settlements-type settlements face severe challenges, since when activities are planned, they are implemented in the municipal center. Added to a lack of information, limited access to transportation is also a challenge.

Regardless of the neutral and positive assessments of the outcomes achieved through youth-oriented programs and events, it is worth mentioning that a larger portion of young people in the region and target municipality are not informed on youth-oriented programs and services. Again, a large portion of young people do not participate in the decision-making process and moreover, a significant part of those young people have not even heard of such option.

Even though an equal number of young people in **Dusheti municipality** identified municipality officials (33%) and young people (30%) as initiators of youth-oriented planned and implemented activities, the qualitative research clarified that young people are rarely the initiators and in those rare cases, this includes a small group of young people. If we take into account that in response to other questions, 37% of respondents in Dusheti municipality pointed out a small group of active young people and 27% said that young people do not participate in civil activities, we can conclude that the engagement of young people in processes, including the decision-making process, is low. It is also worth mentioning that in the rest of Mtskheta-Mtianeti, excluding Dusheti municipality, 44% of respondents stressed that municipality officials are the initiators of youth-oriented activities.

What verifies the low level of engagement in processes is that a large portion of respondents in Mtskheta-Mtianeti (72%) have no experience participating in different civil activities over the past 1-2 years. This index is higher in Dusheti municipality (82%) than in the rest of the region (69%), and main reason in every location is that young people had no desire to participate. As demonstrated by the qualitative study, the reason behind the low level of engagement of young people in processes is nihilism. It was also identified that other severe challenges are low awareness and a lack of awareness on the importance of civil activism. The fact that young people do not fully realize the importance of civil activism, and that this is the reason why they do not participate in processes was also identified by the quantitative research. This is how every second young person feels in Mtskheta-Mtianeti region (48%). It is worth mentioning that this index is 38% in Dusheti municipality and 52% in the rest of Mtskheta-Mtianeti.

Even though respondents in Dusheti municipality, the rest of the region and the entire Mtskheta-Mtianeti region identified the absence of leisure and entertainment places as the most serious challenge, the main problem that needs to be fixed for young people is related to employment. This index is higher in Dusheti municipality (52%) than in the rest of Mtskheta-Mtianeti (41%).

The improvement of professional skills is believed to help young people in obtaining employment. In addition, it was deemed important to have access to internship programs. A total of 48% of respondents in Dusheti municipality and 64% in the rest of Mtskheta-Mtianeti pointed this out. In the context of employment, it is also worth mentioning that offering career planning services is deemed important in the entire region – it was stressed by eight and more respondents. In addition, support in learning/improving English language skills was deemed important, and four out of ten respondents stressed this factor.

When asked about the importance of entertainment/leisure places for young people in Dusheti municipality, it turns out that the proper functioning of sport grounds (43%), swimming pool (42%) and other sports infrastructure (36%) is deemed particularly important. For the rest of Mtskheta-Mtianeti, the proper functioning of the following places was deemed important: youth center (55%), other sports infrastructure except for sports grounds and swimming pools (48%) and public parks (45%). It is worth mentioning that the proper functioning of the youth center was deemed important by one-third of respondents in Dusheti municipality (32%). The importance of this topic was stressed within the scope of the qualitative research, too.

The fact that the availability of sports infrastructure is important, as well as the promotion of a healthy lifestyle was stressed by respondents of qualitative research in Dusheti municipality. This is verified by the results of the quantitative research, according to which a small portion of young people are involved in sports infrastructure (60%). The main reasons behind such low engagement is that the infrastructure is out of order (41%) and sports classes are not available (35%). Moreover, in addition to the availability of proper infrastructure (50%), the promotion of a healthy lifestyle (46%) was identified as a way to make young people interested in sports by a large portion of respondents.

The majority of respondents in Mtskheta-Mtianeti believe that their rights are protected (68%), and one-third think that their rights are partially protected (28%). The largest portion of respondents believe that their freedom of expression is not protected/partially protected (27%).

Even though the majority of respondents did not report experiencing discrimination, it is still worth mentioning that one out of ten respondents in Mtskheta-Mtianeti reported experiencing discrimination based on economic condition (13%), education level (10%), political belief (10%), or place of residence (8%).

It is also noteworthy that a large portion of young people in the region do not have the intention to migrate either domestically or internationally (65% and 81%, respectively), as well as in Dusheti municipality (67% and 74%, respectively). Considering all factors, young people's satisfaction with their life at this point is higher than average in Dusheti municipality (4.9 points out of 7) as well as in the rest of Mtskheta-Mtianeti (5 points) and in the entire region (5 points).

Based on these and other results of the qualitative and quantitative study components, we can conclude that for the effective implementation of youth policy in Dusheti municipality and possibly other municipalities in the region, it is recommended to take the following steps:

- Training individuals responsible for implementing the youth policy and equipping them with the relevant knowledge and skills;
- Empowerment of youth-oriented organizations. First of all, providing them with information on opportunities for fundraising and support in acquiring the knowledge and skills required for gaining those resources;
- Creating places for gathering, discussing and organizing different events where young people will be able to acquire informal education. In addition to the youth center, it is important to make similar spaces available in rural settlements-type settlements. One common space could be arranged for several adjoining rural settlements, where transportation would be less problematic;
- In order to increase the accessibility of informal education and different training/education courses, it is optional to plan part of the activities online, which would minimize the needed financial resources but ensure the engagement of more young people;
- It is recommended to actively cooperate with schools for planning and implementing awareness-raising activities, where the main focus will be on providing young people with information on the importance of civil activism, its forms and opportunities for utilization;
- It is important to support elder young people in acquiring and improving professional skills. It is also recommended to make English language courses and entrepreneurship support programs available so that may positively impact the employment of young people;
- In order to increase the interest of young people in sports and physical activity, in addition to arranging and maintaining sports infrastructure, it is highly recommended to promote a healthy lifestyle, which will positively affect the process of coping with risk behaviors.

IV Samtskhe-Javakheti and Adigeni Municipality

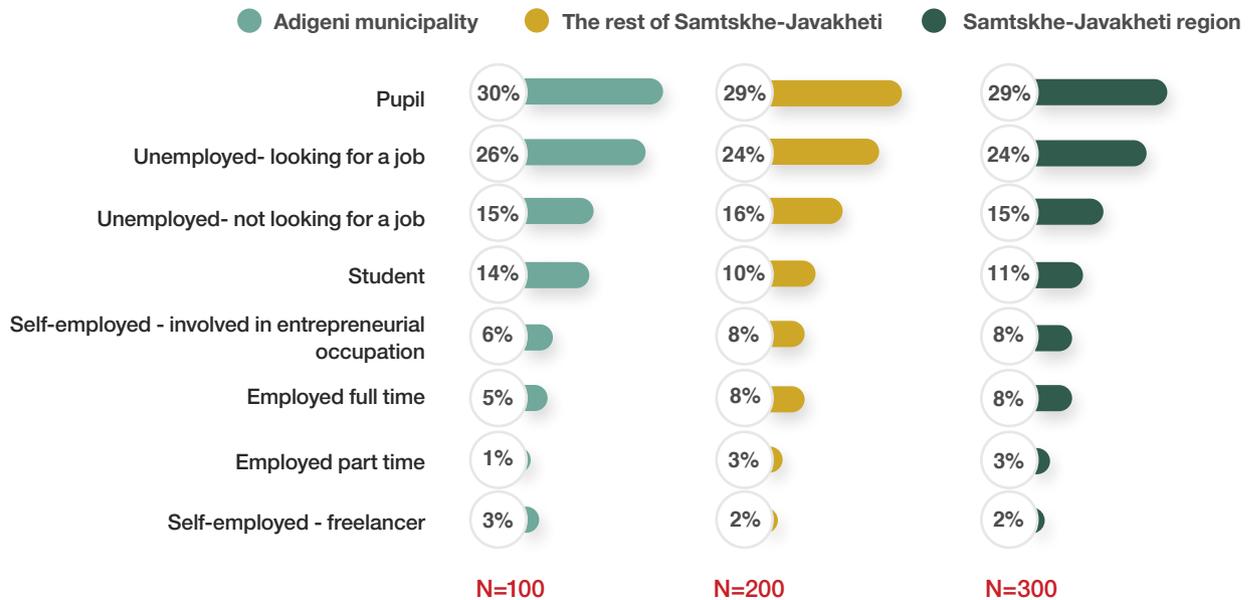
Introduction

As of 2021, the population of **Samtskhe-Javakheti** is 151.1 thousand people, 64% of which live in rural areas. The number of 14-29 year-old citizens is 36.3 thousand, which is 24% of the region's population.¹⁴

As for research respondents, 48% of respondents are women and 52% are men. The largest portion of respondents are 24-29 years old (43%). In addition, secondary education is the highest level of education for the largest share of respondents (36%).

Three out of ten respondents (29%) are pupils, four are unemployed. 24% of those who are unemployed are looking for a job, and 15% are not looking for a job. As for employment, 8% of respondents are self-employed in an entrepreneurial activity, the same amount work full time, just 3% work part-time, and 2% of respondents are freelancers.

Chart 80. Occupation of respondents

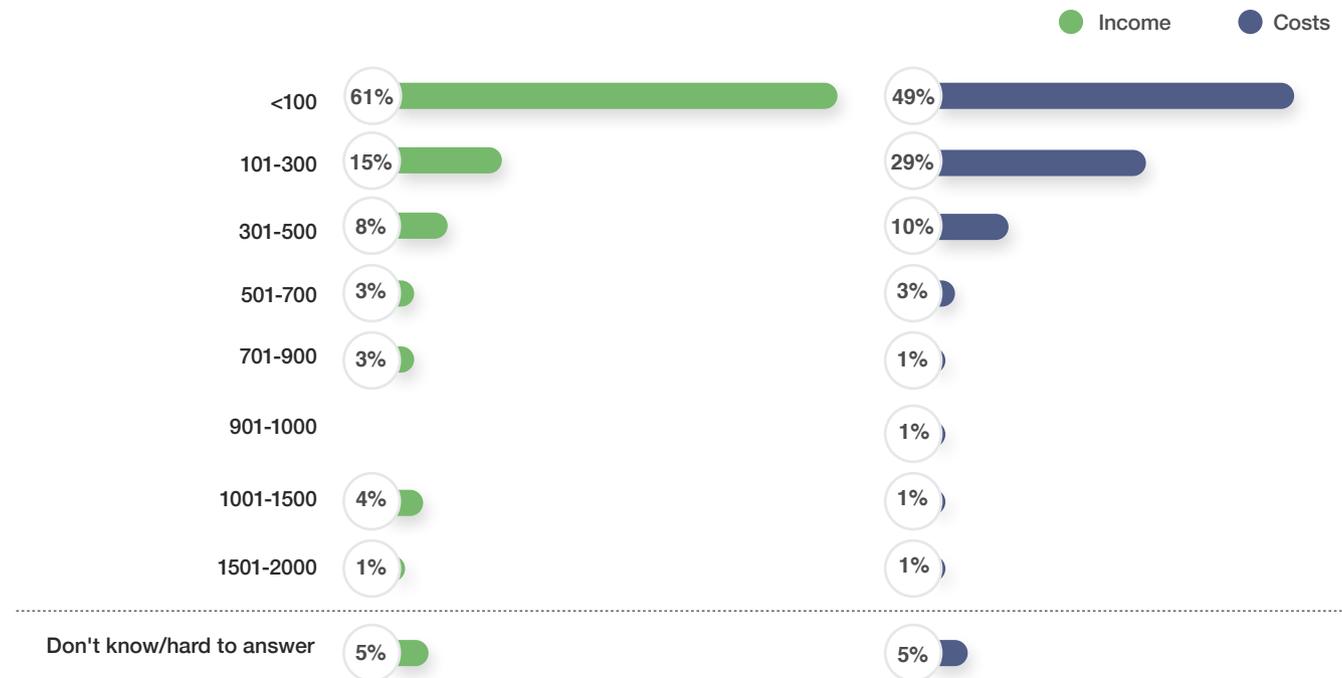


¹⁴ GeoStat. Regional statistics

A total of 51% of inquired respondents are Armenians and 49% are ethnic Georgians. The majority of respondents are not married (65%) and one-third are married (state and/or religious registration - 31%). The vast majority of respondents do not have socially vulnerable or IDP status (95%).

Six out of ten respondents have an income of less than 100 GEL per month (61%) and five out of ten respondents spend less than 100 GEL on different needs (49%). The largest portion of expenses are focused on clothes and shoes (60%) as well as on mobile telephone and internet (57%). The largest portion of young people are financially dependent on their parents (53%).

Chart 81. Personal monthly income of respondents (including all kinds of income) and monthly expenses on various needs in Samtskhe-Javakheti



N=300



Main Findings

- ✔ Youth-oriented activities under the youth policy in Adigeni municipality include concerts, sports competitions and camping. Activities planned and implemented for young people are not very frequent. They are mostly planned in municipal centers and the beneficiaries mostly include school-aged children.
- ✔ The largest portion of youth in Samtskhe-Javakheti are financially dependent on their parents (53%). Income is less than 100 GEL for six out of ten respondents (61%), and costs are also less than 100 GEL for five out of ten respondents (49%). The largest portion of costs are focused on clothes and shoes (60%) as well as on mobile phone and internet (57%).
- ✔ Young people in Samtskhe-Javakheti have the most access to services such as sports classes (38%), library/book clubs (27%) and art/culture classes (18%). The largest portion of respondents identified access to sports classes as the most important in the region (54%), as well as in Adigeni municipality (53%). In addition, in Samtskhe-Javakheti in general, as well as in Adigeni municipality young people stressed the importance of availability of foreign language courses (39%-39%) and places for gatherings (30% and 38%, respectively). At this point, one out of ten respondents in Samtskhe-Javakheti have access to different types of training courses, space for gatherings and foreign language courses.
- ✔ A total of 46% of respondents inquired in rural areas of Samtskhe-Javakheti reported not having access to any of the services in their settlement, while the same was reported only by 5% in urban areas. Half of young people in Adigeni municipality have no access to any service (52%), while the most available service in the municipality is a library/book club (28%).
- ✔ Serious problems for young people include a lack of jobs and limited/no access to entertainment and leisure places (cinema, theater, etc.) in Adigeni municipality (6.1 and 5.9 points, respectively). The same is true in the rest of Samtskhe-Javakheti (5.5 points and 5.5 points, respectively) and the entire region (5.6 and 5.6 points, respectively).
- ✔ The ultimate problem/challenge that young people identify as very important to fix is related to supporting employment in Samtskhe-Javakheti (48%) as well as in Adigeni municipality (62%).
- ✔ As the age of respondents increases, the share of those respondents in Samtskhe-Javakheti who think that it is difficult/very difficult for young people to get a job in their municipality also increases (14-17 years – 61%, 18-23 years – 71%, 24-29 years - 81%). In addition, more respondents in the group of ethnic minorities (80%) reported this issue than in the group of ethnic Georgians (64%).
- ✔ When asked about important factors for employment in Samtskhe-Javakheti, a large portion of respondents mentioned education (42%) and a circle of acquaintances (40%). It is worth mentioning that the main factor for young people in the 14-17 and 18-23 age groups is reported to be proper education (56% and 44%, respectively), while 24-29 year-old respondents believe that the main factor is a proper circle of acquaintances (53%). The importance of having a proper circle of acquaintances was stressed by 39% of young people in the 18-23 age group and 20% of young people in the 14-17 age group. More young people stress the importance of acquaintances in the group of ethnic minorities (47%) than in the group of ethnic Georgians (33%).

- ✓ The majority of respondents inquired in the region believe that the availability of jobs would help young people get a job in their municipality (53%). The second most important factor is believed to be knowledge of the Georgian language (41%). Literacy in the Georgian language is named as an assisting factor for employment by the majority of respondents in the ethnic minorities group (73%). The largest portion (39%) of respondents in the region believe that support in learning and improving the Georgian language will help young people obtain employment.
- ✓ A total of 41% of respondents inquired in Samtskhe-Javakheti confirm that young people from their settlement get a job in another country most easily, while one-fourth of respondents reported that young people get a job in the capital city most easily (23%). On the contrary, 45% of respondents in Adigeni municipality believe that getting a job is the easiest in the capital city, while 26% reported that it is the easiest to get a job abroad.
- ✓ A large portion of respondents inquired in the region identified support in learning and improving the Georgian language (39%) and professional skills (38%) as the skill/knowledge that would assist in getting employment. Another factor that would assist in getting employment is having access to internship programs/accumulating working experience, which was reported by 53% of respondents in Adigeni municipality, 31% in the rest of Samtskhe-Javakheti, and 33% in the entire region.
- ✓ Even though a healthy lifestyle is assessed as important, engagement in sports/physical activity is not high, as seven out of ten respondents is not/is almost never involved in sports/physical activity in Samtskhe-Javakheti (68%). Six out of ten respondents reported the same in Adigeni municipality (64%).
- ✓ Even though the active engagement of young people in different important processes is assessed to be important/very important by the majority of respondents in Samtskhe-Javakheti (63%) as well as in Adigeni municipality (71%), direct participation in these processes is low. The majority of respondents have never participated in any civil activity over the past 1-2 years in the entire region (81%), in Adigeni municipality (80%), or in the rest of the region (81%).
- ✓ Political Participation and civil activism among young people is low. Eight out of ten respondents in Adigeni Municipality (80%) as well as in the rest of Samtskhe-Javakheti (81%) and the entire region (81%) reported not participating in different civil activities over the past 1-2 years. The main reason identified everywhere is the absence of desire.
- ✓ More than half of young people have not participated in volunteer activities over the past 1-2 years (Samtskhe-Javakheti – 59%, Adigeni municipality – 55%, the rest of Samtskhe-Javakheti – 59%). The share of those respondents who have not participated in any volunteer activity is higher in rural areas than in urban areas (65% and 45%, respectively). Those who have participated reported mostly being involved in charity events.
- ✓ A large portion of respondents are not interested in politics (Samtskhe-Javakheti -62%, Adigeni municipality – 55%, the rest of Samtskhe-Javakheti – 63%). This was confirmed when assessing the importance of values, where Political Participation was identified as the least important value for young people (mean point – 2.7).
- ✓ A total of 55% of respondents in Samtskhe-Javakheti participated in the most recent elections (Parliamentary elections 2020). One-fifth have not participated, despite being eligible (17%).

- ✓ Six out of ten respondents are not informed on the existence of youth municipal programs and services (61%). This index is also high in Adigeni municipality (67%).
- ✓ The majority of ethnic Georgians in the region identified the Facebook page of the municipality as the main source of information on events taking place in the municipality (46%), while the main source is friends/relatives for the majority of ethnic minorities (49%). Only 19% of ethnic minorities report using the municipal Facebook page.
- ✓ Among respondents in Samtskhe-Javakheti, 37% believe that the interests of young people are considered and not considered at the same time in the work of the municipality. A total of 23% of them said that the interests of young people are considered/fully considered, while 25% believe that their interests are not considered/are not considered at all. In Adigeni municipality, 33% of respondents believe that the interests of young people are not considered/are not considered at all, while 21% of respondents believe that their interests are considered.
- ✓ In the region, 35% of respondents declared that initiators of youth-oriented activities are mostly young people in the municipality, and one-fourth declared that the initiators are municipal representatives (26%). In Adigeni municipality, 44% of respondents reported that youth-oriented planned or implemented activities are initiated by young people.
- ✓ Nine out of ten respondents have no experience participating in the process of making important decisions for young people in the region (88%), as well as in Adigeni municipality (90%).
- ✓ A total of 64% of respondents in the region believe that their rights are protected, and 26% said that their rights are partially protected. When asked about the rights that are not protected/are partially protected, one-fourth of respondents find it hard to answer (24%), and one-fourth name the freedom of expression (26%). In addition, 15% of respondents believe that labor rights are not protected or are partially protected, and 10% believe that the right to decent living conditions are not protected/are partially protected in their region.
- ✓ The majority of respondents did not have any experience with discrimination on different grounds. However, one-third reported at least one case of discrimination on economic grounds (27%). In addition, respondents reported discrimination based on education level (17%), age (17%) and place of residence (10%).
- ✓ Among young people inquired in Samtskhe-Javakheti, 39% report having the intention to move within the country over the next 2-3 years, and 21% of young people plan on leaving the country. In both cases, the main reasons are related to better employment opportunities, better education and improvement of existing living conditions.
- ✓ More young people inquired in Samtskhe-Javakheti predict that their personal socio-economic condition will be better (49%) within the next 10 years, than the socio-economic condition of the country (35%) or the municipality (37%).
- ✓ At this point of life, considering every factor, young people are more satisfied with their life than dissatisfied. It is also worth mentioning that this index is lower in Adigeni municipality (4.2 points) than in the rest of the region (5.2 points) and Samtskhe-Javakheti (5.1 points).

4.1. Municipal Policy

Youth issues in Adigeni municipality are regulated by the Department of Culture, Education, Sports, Monument Protection, Youth Affairs and Tourism Development, which consists of 4 staff members. The position that is directly responsible for youth affairs is currently vacant. Activities that are held in the municipality and are planned for this year mostly imply sports activities, concerts dedicated to specific holidays (New Year, Zarzma holiday, the holiday of St. Antimoz) and camping for school-aged children. The budget is allocated cumulatively for the department. It reaches 40 000 GEL this year and as declared in the Mayor's office of Adigeni municipality, the majority of the amount is allocated for activities planned within the youth policy. The number of beneficiaries will be 300-400 young people.

For the effective implementation of the youth policy, respondents of the qualitative research identified *financial and human resources* as a problematic topic. If in the first case, respondents stressed a limited budget, in the other case it was noted that there is no professional who would want to take a vacant position the respective department has announced. Challenges in terms of human resources were highlighted by NGO representatives. It was also noted that it is important for the relevant official to be focused on youth issues, and to have the entire unit concentrated on youth issues without combining the unit with sports, culture or education. The unit is also recommended to have an independent budget.



"We have a vacant position for a specialist of youth and education affairs. This vacancy has been open for a long time, but no one applies, to hire someone young and open-minded. It was open last week too, but no one applied. This is a problem".

Representative of local self-government

"When everything depends on one person, and there is only a specialist or two in the youth unit, they cannot physically handle it and I think it is recommended to have a separate unit concentrated on youth issues. The same specialist should not be working on sports, youth, and culture. Respectively, this unit should have its own budget".

NGO sector representative

When discussing human capital with key informants, it was recommended to train those specialists who work or will work on youth affairs. As believed by an NGO representative, oftentimes these specialists do not even know what is included in youth affairs, what methods can be applied when working with young people, what the approach should be, etc. In the end, this results in a situation where new groups of young people are not included in activities, and the already active small group of young people are left frustrated. In order to respond to this challenge, it was deemed important to fully launch a certification program for youth workers and train specialists under this program.

Key informants participating in the qualitative research declared that even though a small budget is a challenge, even under these conditions, priorities can be better defined during the budget planning phase. As noted by the NGO sector representative, instead of other activities (concerts, sports competitions), it is better to spend money on prioritizing the arrangement of youth spaces in the municipality. In addition to financial and human resources, one challenge regarding the effective implementation of the youth policy identified by the representative of the NGO sector was the fact that the concept and importance of youth affairs are not fully realized. To prove his point, the respondent mentioned that municipalities do not have separate units for youth affairs and these issues are subordinate to the culture and sports unit. This is why whenever the municipality organizes sports infrastructure or a concert, it is considered as a youth-oriented activity. However, it was also noted that the active work of the youth agency at this point, such as the work on policy documents and the readiness to work

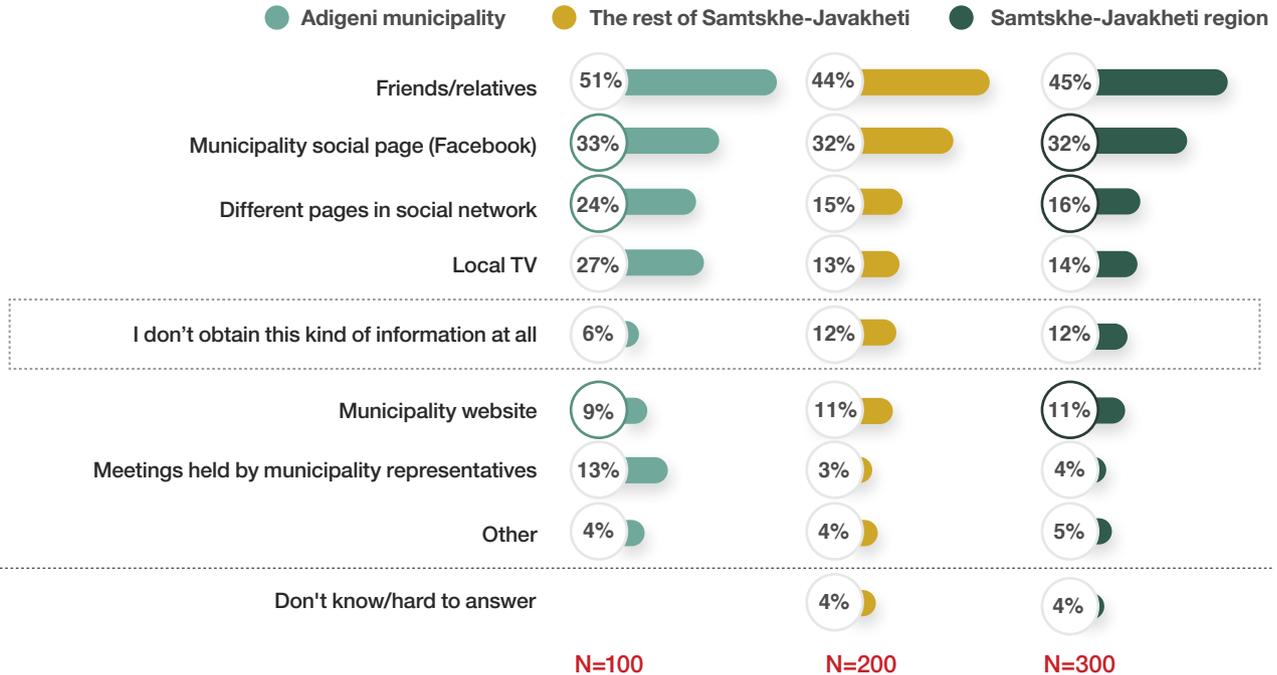
on action plans based on the research are of special importance. Representatives of the NGO sector deem active work on education to be crucially important in this process. This implies offering informal education services, for which making youth spaces available is critical.

Key informants believe that the effective implementation of youth policy necessarily means not only empowering local self-governments by training the relevant units or individual specialists, but actively engaging the NGO sector in the process. Active cooperation with the youth agency is deemed important by key informants from local self-government as well as from the NGO sector. In addition to supporting the respective agencies in acquiring the knowledge necessary for youth affairs, the role of the youth agency is believed to be the empowerment of youth organizations. Here, representatives of the NGO sector ultimately imply organizing trainings, equipping people with knowledge and skills, and ensuring their engagement in the process of working on policy documents.

4.2. Youth Programs and Services

Respondents expressed their opinions about different aspects of youth programs and services. It turns out that 45% of respondents in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** receive information on ongoing news in the municipality (municipal programs, services, news) from *friends/relatives*. A total of 59% of respondents use different *internet resources*. Namely, 32% of respondents identified the *Facebook page of the municipality*, 16% identified different social network pages, and 11% identified the municipality website.

Chart 82. Sources of information on ongoing events in the municipality (municipal programs, services, novelties)



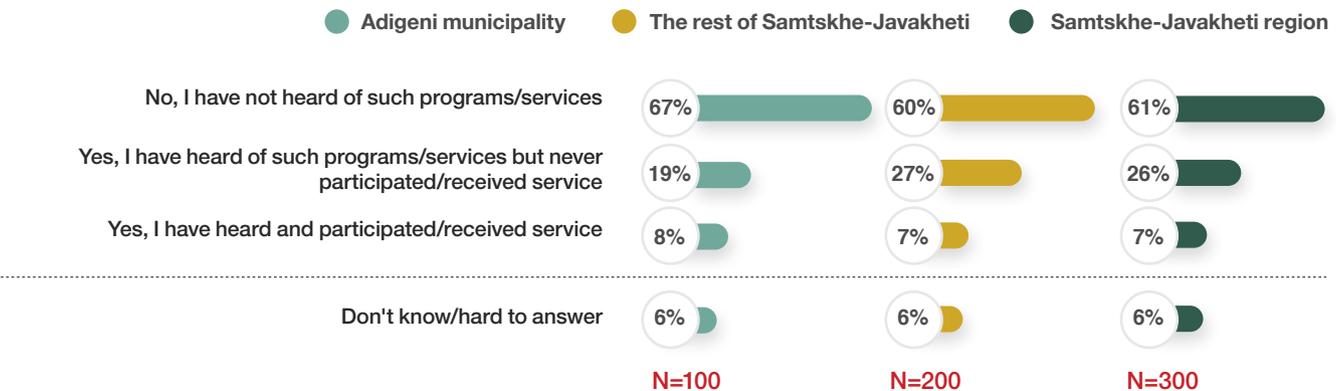
Every second respondent in **Adigeni municipality** identified friends/relatives (51%) as a source of information on municipal programs, services or news, while different *internet resources* act as a main source for 66% of respondents. The largest portion of respondents identified the *Facebook page of the municipality* (33%).

It is worth mentioning that the majority of ethnic Georgians identified the municipal social page on Facebook (46%) as a main source of information on ongoing events in the municipality, while ethnic minorities identified friends/relatives (49%) as the main source. Only 19% of ethnic minorities mentioned getting information from a municipal Facebook page.

As believed by 37% of respondents in **Samtskhe-Javakheti**, the *interests of young people are both considered and not considered in the municipality's work*. In addition, 23% of respondents said that the interests of *young people are considered/fully considered*, while 25% of respondents believe that the *interests of young people are not considered/are not considered at all*. In **Adigeni municipality**, 33% of respondents believe that the interests of young people like them are not considered/are not considered at all in the work of the municipality, while 21% of respondents believe the interests of young people are considered.

The majority of respondents inquired in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** *have not heard of youth municipal programs/services* (61%), and *one-fourth* reported hearing about these programs or services but haven't used them (26%). One-fifth of respondents in Adigeni municipality reported hearing about, but not using any services, while 67% of respondents *have not heard of youth municipal programs/services*.

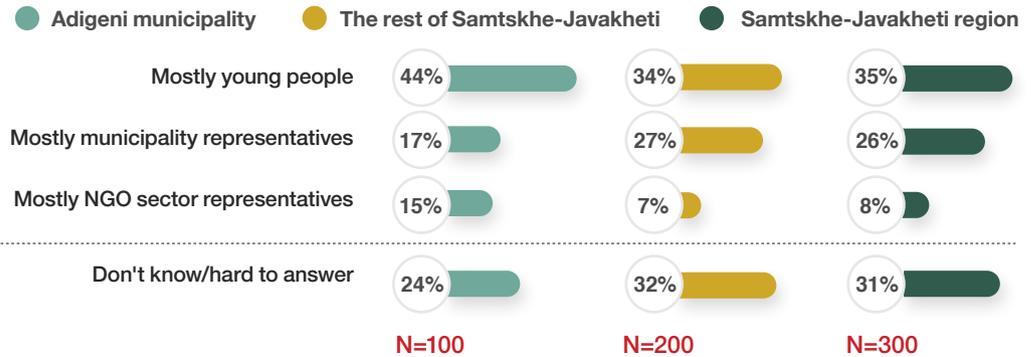
Chart 83. Awareness of youth municipal programs/services in the municipality



From those respondents who have heard of youth municipal programs/services in their municipality, the largest portion named youth camps and summer schools (60%). Respondents also named programs that support sports club teams, volunteer activities, and mass sports development.

One-third of respondents (35%) inquired in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** declared that the *initiators of activities planned/implemented for young people in the municipality are mostly young people*, while one-fourth of young people believe that the *initiators of such activities are mostly representatives of municipalities* (26%). In **Adigeni municipality**, 44% of respondents believe that the *initiators of activities planned or implemented in the municipality are young people*.

Chart 84. Initiator of activities planned/implemented for young people in the municipality

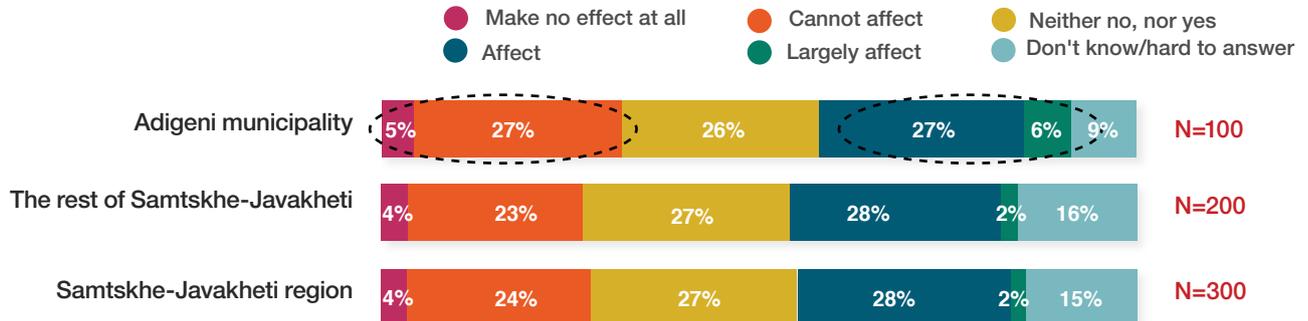


Even though 44% of respondents inquired within the quantitative study reported that young people are initiators of the planned activities in the municipality, the *qualitative research* demonstrated that it is quite rare. Furthermore, it was stressed that for the older age group of young people (18-29), there is no activity, and if anyone's active, it is usually school-aged children. As noted by focus group discussion participants, young people mostly participate in the activities planned by others, and “others” typically implies local self-government.

As for membership in a youth organization/association, the majority of respondents are not and have never been a member in Samtskhe-Javakheti (86%) or in target municipality (79%). As for those respondents (13% - 54 respondents in total) who are members of a youth organization/association, the majority declared that supporting volunteer activity, organizing sports activities, trainings/workshops, and youth activities was the main focus of their youth organization/association. They also mentioned the experience of organizing charity events/activities and cultural activities.

As believed by 30% of research respondents in **Samtskhe-Javakheti**, *young people like them affect/largely affect the decision-making process at the local level*, while 28% reported the opposite. An almost equal amount of respondents inquired in **Adigeni municipality** claim that *young people like them affect/largely affect the decision-making process* (33%) or *do not affect/have no affect at all* (32%) on the decision-making process at the local level.

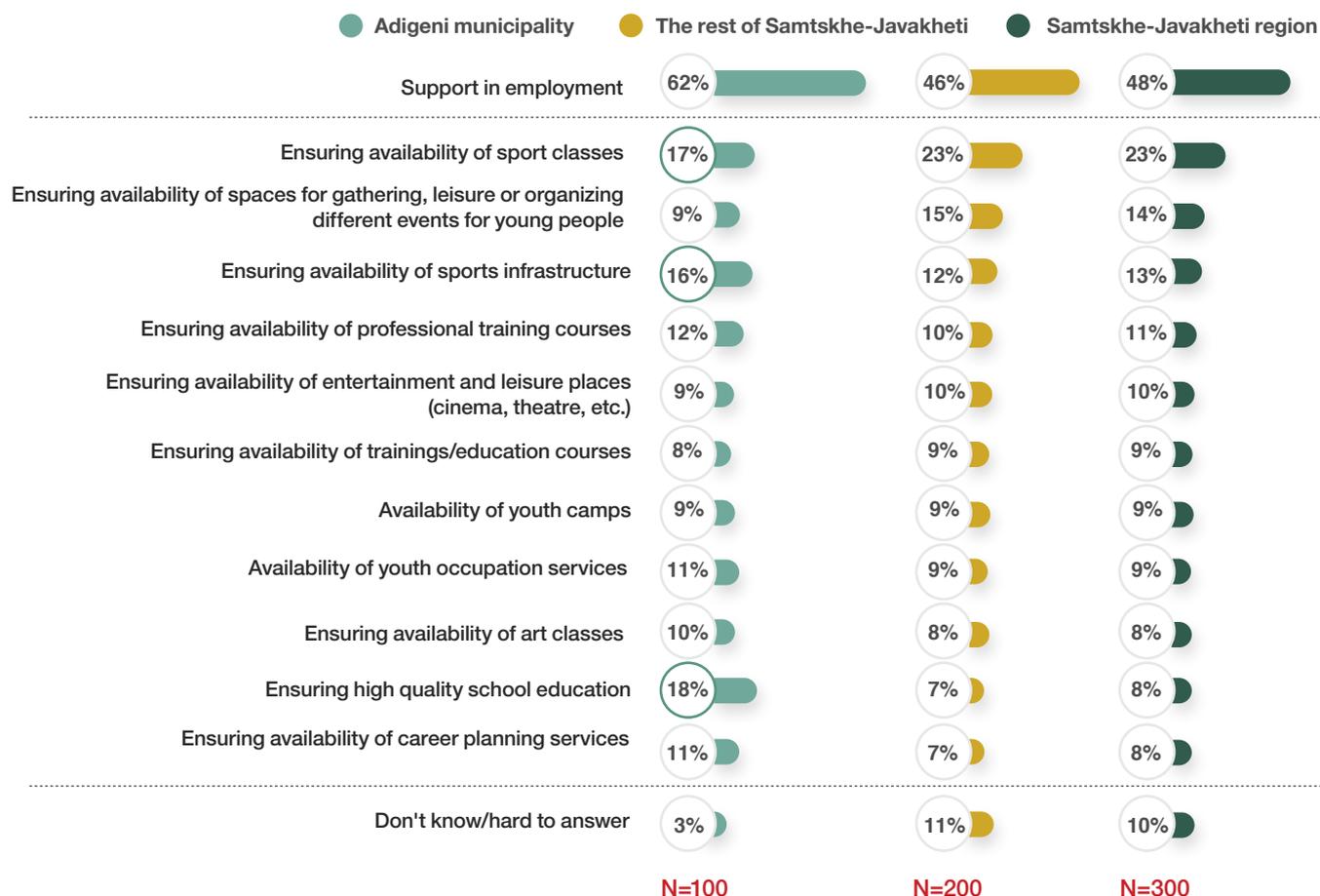
Chart 85. Assessment of whether or not young people affect the decision-making process at the local level



When asked if they have participated in the process of making important decisions for young people in their municipality over the past 1-2 years, the majority of respondents reported having no such experience in either the region of Samtskhe-Javakheti (88%) or in target municipality (90%). Out of those respondents (11%) who have participated in this process, 14 attended meeting(s) and 13 participated in a discussion. From those respondents who have not participated in the process of discussing/making important decisions for young people in the municipality, four out of ten answered that *they had not heard of such an opportunity* (42%), and the same quantity reported *having no spare time* (38%).

For half of the respondents inquired in **Samtskhe-Javakheti**, the ultimate problem/challenge that is particularly important for young people in their municipality is *support in finding employment* (48%).

Chart 86. Main challenges/problems that are important to be addressed in the municipality for young people



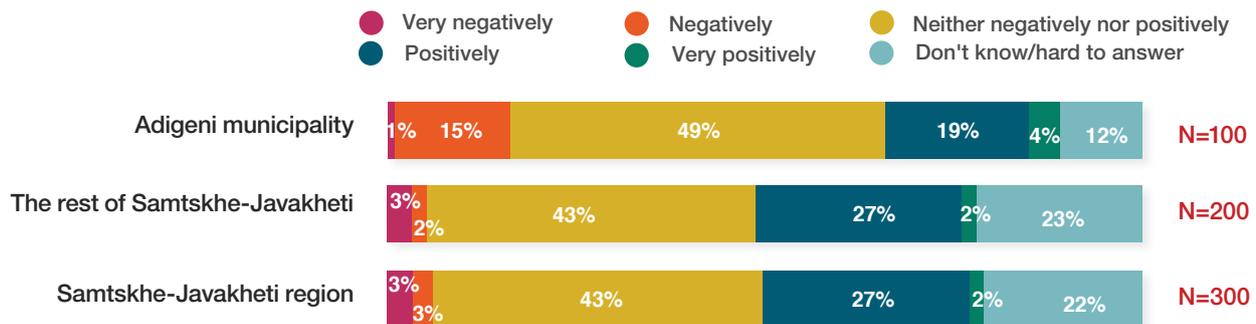
Moreover employment was reported by the majority of respondents in **Adigeni municipality** (62%), where two out of ten respondents believe that it is also important to tackle problems such as ensuring the availability of a *high-quality school education* (18%), *sports classes* (17%) and *other sports infrastructure* (16%).

The availability of sports classes and sports infrastructure was identified as problematic in the *qualitative research*, too. Even though a representative of local self-government participating in the study declared that mini stadiums and workout accessories were arranged in 57 rural settlements over the past 2 years, the absence of sports infrastructure was identified as an important challenge by focus group participants – especially those from rural settlements -type settlements.

Half of the respondents (52%) inquired in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** think that *local government implements some projects/programs, but they are insignificant*. As believed by 15% of respondents, *local government does nothing to tackle the problems*. Every second respondent in **Adigeni municipality** believes that *certain projects or programs are implemented, but they are insignificant* (47%), while one-third thinks that *local government does absolutely nothing to tackle the problems* (30%). It is worth mentioning that more respondents in rural settlements -type settlements of Samtskhe-Javakheti region think that *local government does nothing* to tackle these problems (18%) than in *urban-type settlements* (7%).

Four out of ten respondents in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** rated youth oriented programs and events implemented at the national and local levels neither negatively nor positively (43%). Half of respondents in **Adigeni municipality** agreed (49%).

Chart 87. Assessment of outcomes achieved with youth-oriented programs and events at the national and local levels



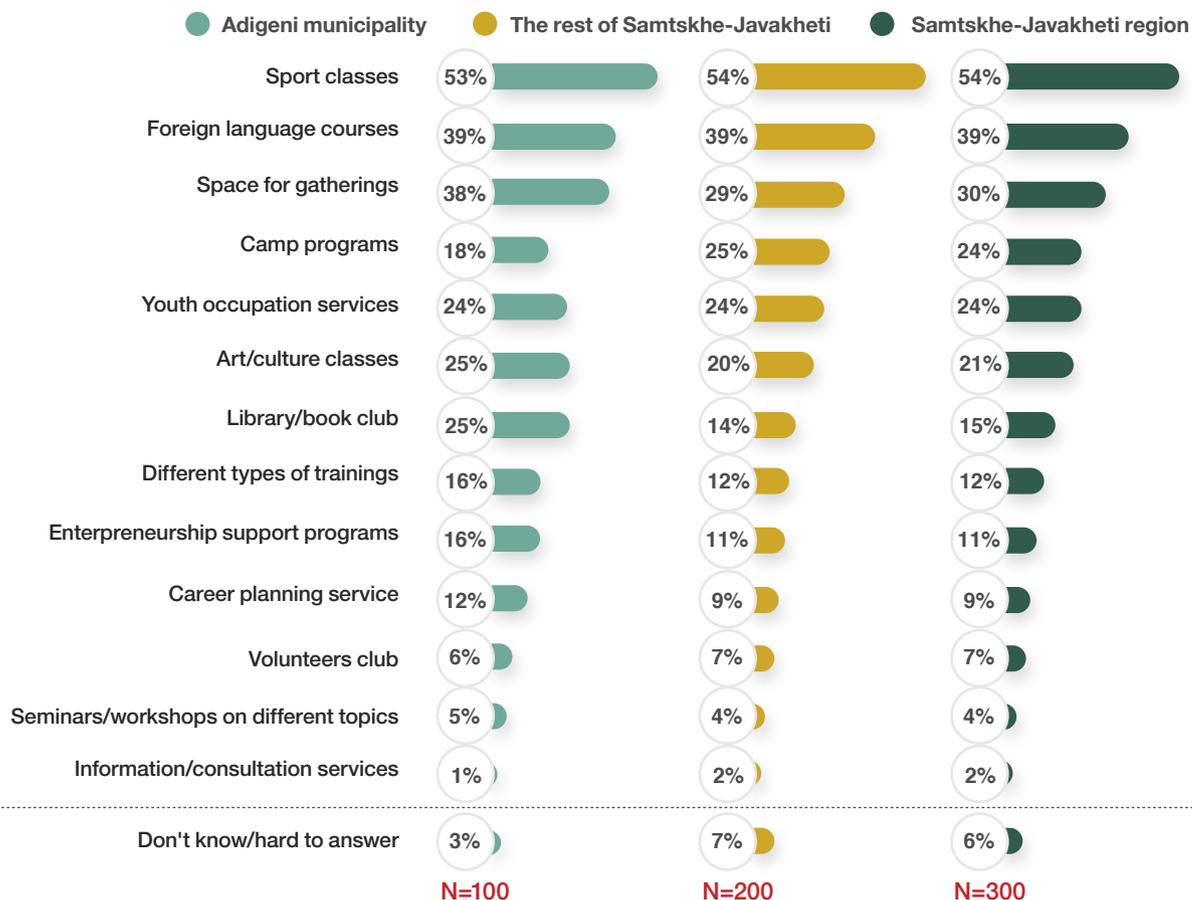
It is worth mentioning that it was not easy for key informants participating in the study to assess outcomes achieved through youth-oriented programs and events at the national and local levels. As declared by an NGO sector representative, the state's decision on creating an independent agency in the form of Youth Agency that would be focused on youth affairs was important and clearly positive. The decision to merge the agency with the Ministry of Culture and Sports, however, raises doubts about whether youth affairs will be prioritized or not. Furthermore, there are expectations that the youth direction will be solely focused on organizing sports and cultural events, while its core, substantial aspect- supporting youth occupation – will be left without attention.

4.3. Education and Employment

Education

A large portion of respondents inquired in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** believe that a *high-quality school education is available/fully available for young people* (61%). A total of 54% of respondents agreed with this statement in **Adigeni municipality**. When assessing the services that are important for young people to have access to in **Samtskhe-Javakheti**, the majority of respondents named *sports classes* (54%) and foreign language courses (49%). Other important services listed by respondents were *space for gatherings* (30%), camping programs (24%) and the availability of youth services (24%). The three most frequently named services in **Adigeni municipality** access to which is believed to be critical include *sports classes* (53%), *foreign language courses* (39%) and *space for gatherings* (38%). It is worth mentioning that the majority of *women* in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** believe that access to foreign language courses (41%) is of particular importance for young people, while the majority of *men* prioritize the availability of sports classes (68%).

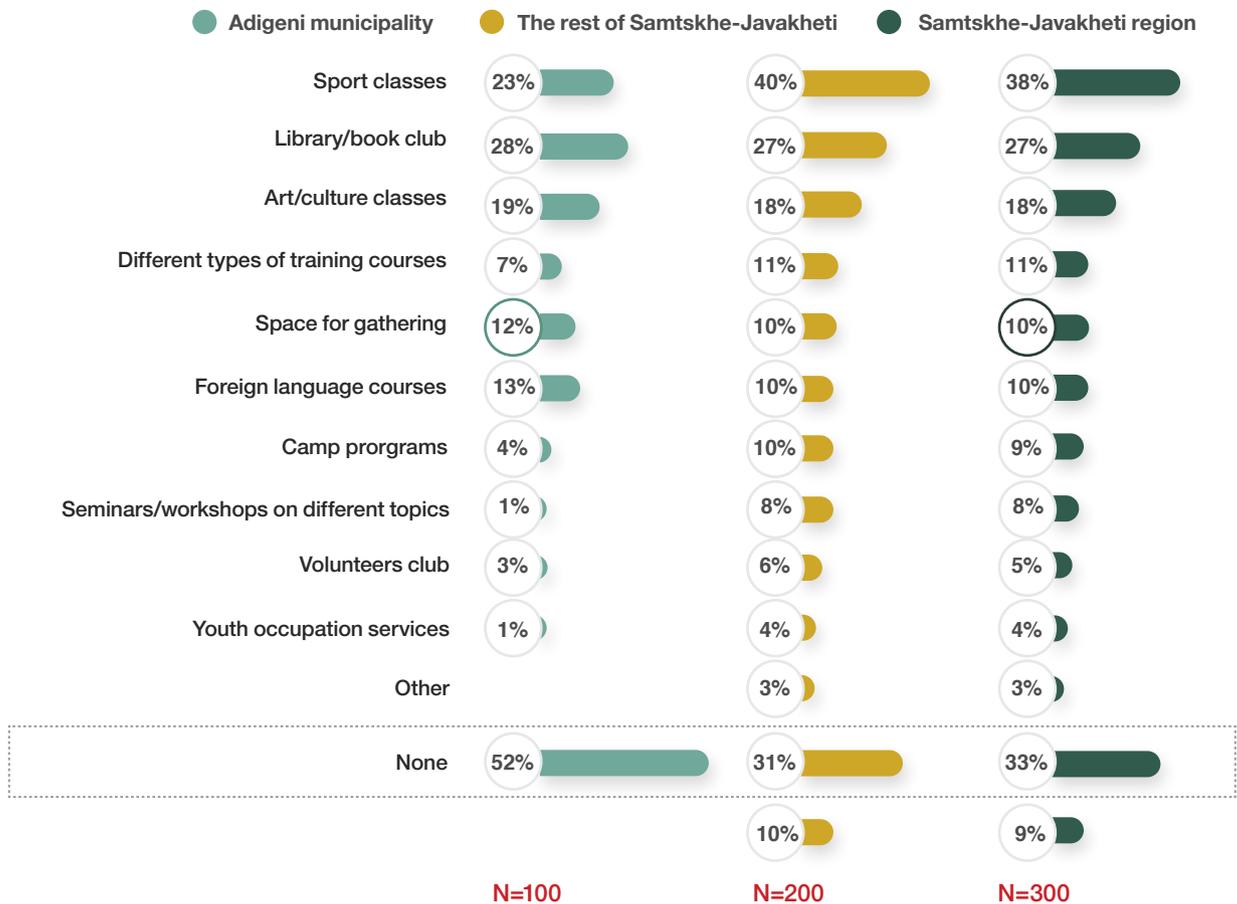
Chart 88. Particular importance of the availability of services for young people in the settlement



The largest portion of respondents in urban areas identified foreign language courses (42%) and sports classes (36%) as the most important activities. The majority of respondents in *rural* areas also identified those two services, but here the majority of respondents mentioned the importance of availability of sports classes (62%). Foreign language courses are assessed as important by 38% of respondents. As for age, the availability of sports classes is the most frequently named service in all *age* categories. Three services are reportedly available for young people in the entire region of Samtskhe-Javakheti, as well as in the target municipality and the rest of Samtskhe-Javakheti. These services are sports classes, library/book club and art/culture classes. It is worth mentioning that one-third of young people inquired in Samtskhe-Javakheti have no access to any of these services (33%), and the share of such respondents is 52% in Adigeni municipality.

The most available services both in urban and rural areas are sports classes (52% and 32%, respectively), library/book club (46% and 18%, respectively), and art/culture classes (36% and 10%, respectively).

Chart 89. Availability of services in the settlement



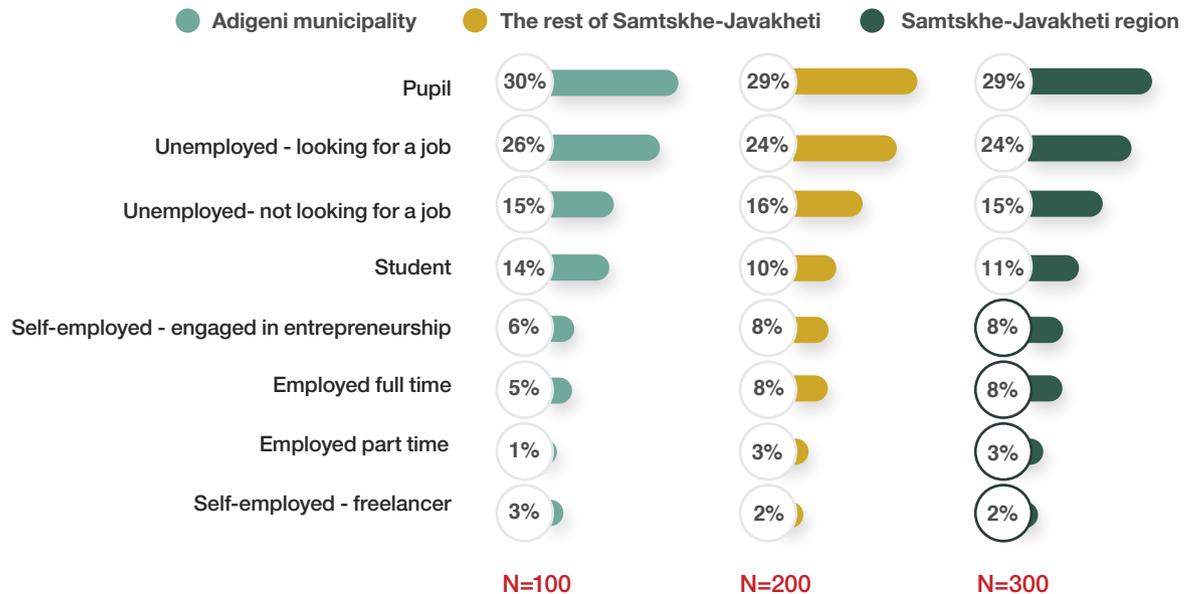
The low availability of different services, especially in rural settlements-type areas was confirmed by the *qualitative study*. Participants of focus group discussions in Adigeni municipality noted that the low accessibility of sports classes and infrastructure for young people, and almost no availability of gathering places where young people could communicate, obtain informal education and even have fun is especially challenging. It was stressed that the absence of such opportunities negatively affects the level of civil engagement of young people.

More than half of respondents in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** reported that they did not use any service or activity over the past 1-2 years (58%). The share of those who have not used any service at all is 65% in **Adigeni municipality**. A total of 15% of respondents are engaged in sports classes in the entire region of Samtskhe-Javakheti, and this indicator is 10% in Adigeni municipality. Among respondents, 13% used a library or book club in Samtskhe-Javakheti, while the number of such respondents is 7 percent in Adigeni municipality.

Employment

Among respondents in **Samtskhe-Javakheti**, 21% are employed. The share of respondents working full or part time is 11%, and the majority of them have a written contract signed with an employer (61%). A total of 32% of respondents working full or part time work by their own profession. Full-time, part-time, self-employed entrepreneurial, and freelance workers were asked to evaluate their satisfaction with their occupation. The total share of such workers is 21%, and 40% of them are satisfied or very satisfied with their job/occupation.

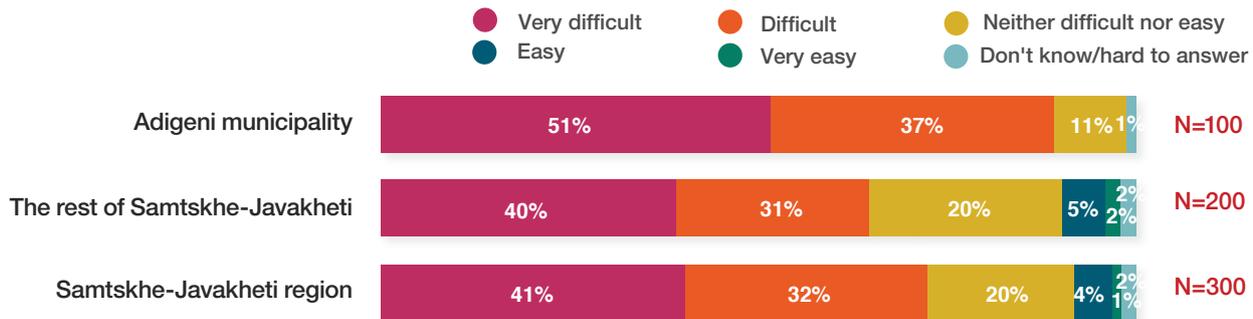
Chart 90. Respondents' employment/occupation status



The share of respondents who think of starting entrepreneurial/business activity and/or self-employment is 12%. The largest portion of respondents planning to start such activity are interested in retail trade, agriculture and tourism.

A large portion of respondents in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** believe that it is difficult or very difficult for young people to get a job in their municipality (73%). This index is higher in Adigeni municipality and equals 88%.

Chart 91. Assessment of employment opportunities for young people in their municipality



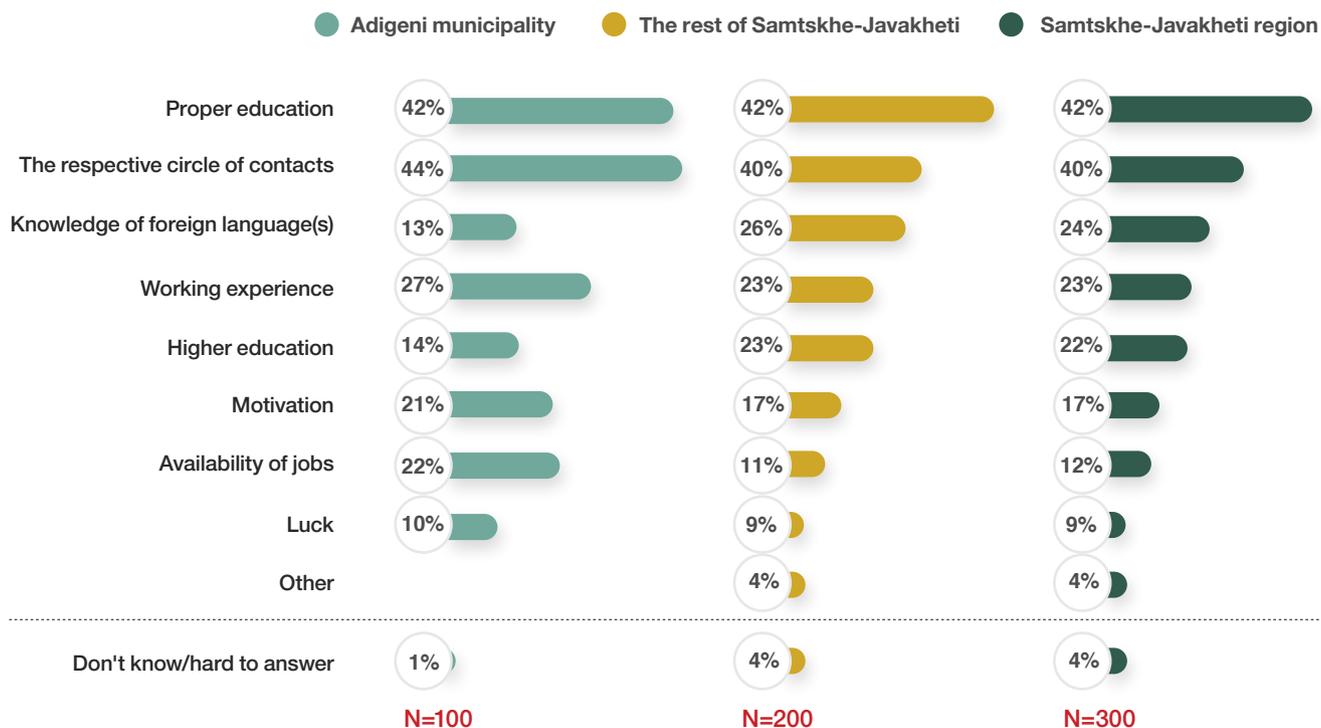
The share of those who believe that it is difficult/very difficult for young people in their municipality to get a job increases as the age of respondents increases in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** (14-17 years – 61%, 18-23 years – 71%, 24-29 years - 81%). This view is more prevalent in the group of *ethnic minorities* (80%) than in the group of ethnic Georgians (64%).

As the quantitative study revealed, respondents named two main factors of employment for young people living in **Samtskhe-Javakheti**: *the proper education and the circle of acquaintances* (42% and 40%, respectively). The same factors were identified in **Adigeni municipality**, where proper education was deemed important by 42% of respondents and the *circle of acquaintances* was deemed important by 44% of respondents.

Among respondents, those in the 14-17 and 18-23 year-old age groups identified proper education (56% and 44%, respectively) as an important factor for employment, while the 24-29 age group named a circle of acquaintances (53%). The importance of having circle of acquaintances was stressed by 39% of young people in the 18-23 age group and 20% in the 14-17 age group. The importance of having circle of acquaintances was a greater focus of young people in ethnic minorities (47%) than of the group of ethnic Georgians (33%).

The fact that employment is a serious challenge not only for Adigeni municipality, but for entire country was stressed by respondents of the *qualitative research*. Young people, especially from the older group, noted that challenges related to employment push young people towards domestic or international migration. In addition to a lack of jobs in the municipality and region, two other problems were identified. One problem is that employers require work experience that young people cannot accumulate. Focus group discussion participants think that asking young graduates to have several years of experience is not logical. The other challenge that hinders the employment of young people is that employers require literacy in a foreign language, namely, the English language.

Chart 92. Main factors affecting the employment of young people in their municipality

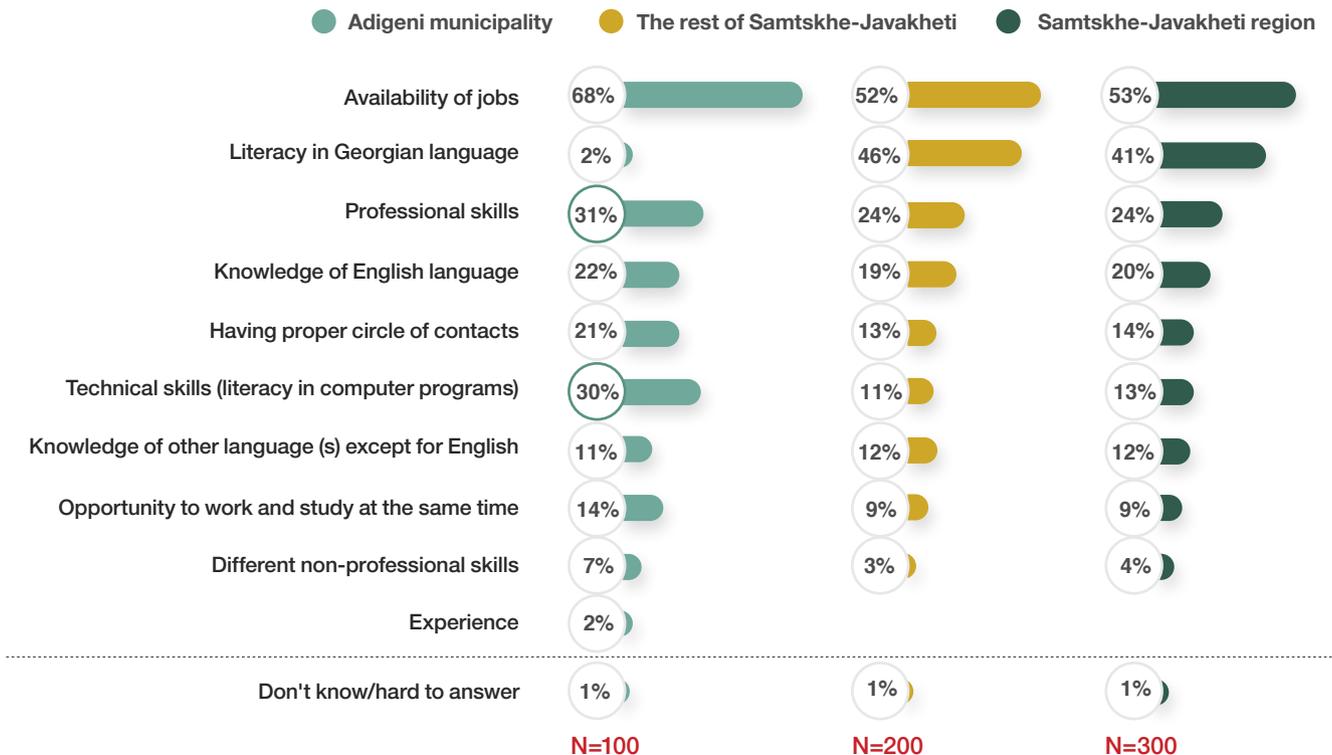


The majority of respondents in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** believe that the *availability of jobs* would help young people to get a job in their municipality (53%). Another important factor is literacy *in the Georgian language* (41%). A total of 68% of respondents in **Adigeni municipality** identified the *availability of jobs* as an important factor for gaining employment. One-third of respondents stressed the importance of *professional skills and technical skills* (31% and 30%, respectively). It is worth mentioning that focus group participants in Adigeni municipality paid particular attention to the importance of technical skills and literacy in the English language as factors that would assist in resolving the employment issue.

The availability of jobs as an important factor in obtaining employment was named by the majority of respondents in every age group (14-17 – 49%, 18-23 – 62%, 24-29 – 50%). Seven out of ten respondents in the group of ethnic minorities identified literacy in the Georgian language as important for employment (73%), and an important factor for respondents in both the groups of ethnic Georgians and *ethnic minorities* is the availability of jobs (53%-53%).

A total of 41% of respondents in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** confirm that young people from their settlement get a job *most easily in another country*, while one-fourth (23%) of respondents identified the *capital city* as the location where young people from their settlement get a job easily. In **Adigeni municipality**, 45% of respondents think that young people can get a job in the *capital city* most easily, while 26% stressed the ease of getting a job in another country.

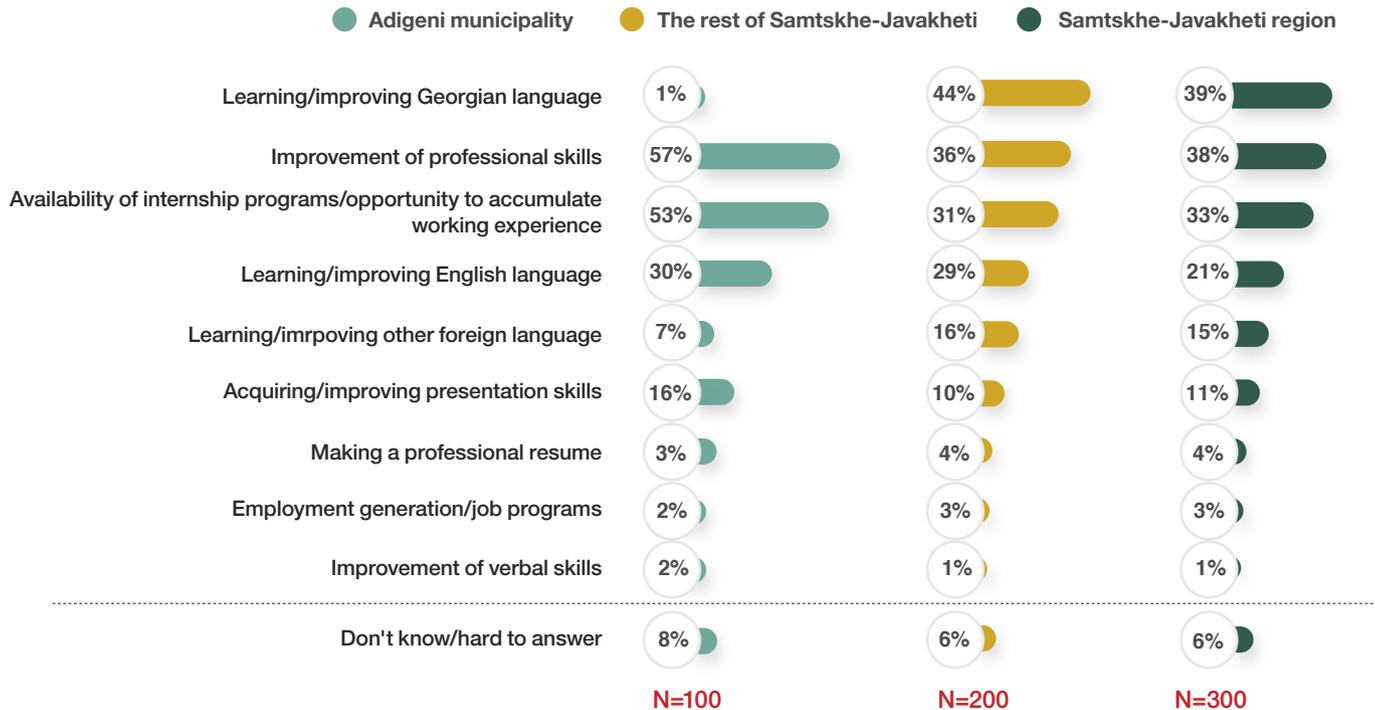
Chart 93. Factors assisting employment in one's own municipality



Among young people in **Samtskhe-Javakheti**, 85% believe that *offering career planning services to school-aged people* that will inform them of different professions and the requirements of the labor market is important/very important. The vast majority of respondents inquired in **Adigeni municipality** share this view (97%).

Four out of ten respondents in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** believe that providing *support for learning/improving the Georgian language and improving professional skills* would help young people in employment (39% and 38%, respectively). It is worth mentioning that the majority of respondents in the group of *ethnic minorities* believe that providing support for learning and improving the Georgian language would help young people (73%). Six out of ten respondents in **Adigeni municipality** think that providing *support for improving professional skills* (57%) is important, while two out of ten identified the importance of *access to internship programs/accumulating working experience* (53%). Three out of ten respondents named providing support for *learning/improving the English language* (30%).

Chart 94. Skills/knowledge support in the development of which would help young people in employment



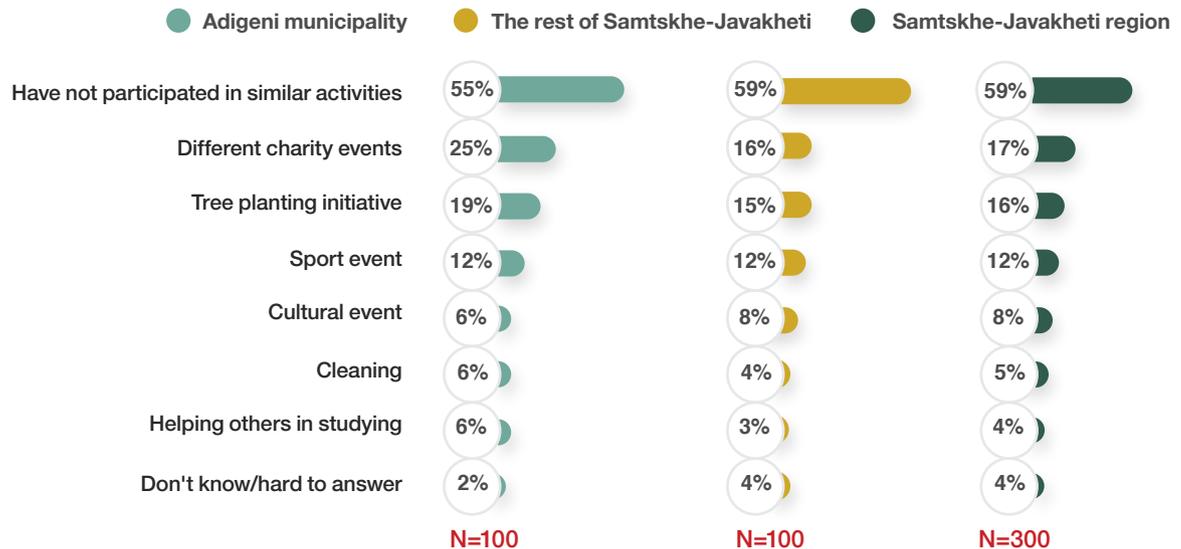
Among respondents inquired in Samtskhe-Javakheti, 29% believe that *the environment in Georgia is quite convenient for young entrepreneurship, innovations and startup*, and 21% think that *the environment is not convenient/not convenient at all*. In Adigeni municipality, 29% of respondents assess the environment as convenient/completely convenient, and 29% declared that the environment is not convenient/not convenient at all for young entrepreneurship, innovations and startups. It is worth mentioning that focus group participants in Adigeni did not say much about a favorable environment for entrepreneurship. On the contrary, it was noted that older young people have serious problems in this field, which is ultimately related to a lack of the relevant knowledge and skills. As assessed by focus group discussion participants, it is critically important to support older young people, which means equipping them with the relevant knowledge and skills necessary for entrepreneurship and providing funding for their projects. Young people see the biggest potential for startups in the tourism and agriculture fields. It was noted that the tourism potential of Adigeni municipality as well as the entire region is not fully utilized, and to this end, it is necessary to incorporate the potential of young people.

4.4. Political Participation and Activism

The majority of respondents inquired in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** believe that the *participation of young people in different volunteer activities is important/very important* (85%). The majority of respondents share this view in *Adigeni municipality* (96%) and in the rest of the region (84%). Additionally, 91% of ethnic Georgians and 80% of ethnic minorities agree.

Six out of ten respondents in target municipality (64%), the rest of the region (66%) and the entire region of Samtskhe-Javakheti (66%) *have not participated in any volunteer programs* over the past 2-3 years. It is also worth mentioning that the share of those respondents who participated in domestic volunteer programs is 31% in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** and 34% in Adigeni municipality. Furthermore, six out of ten respondents in Samtskhe-Javakheti have not participated in *any volunteer activities* over the past 1-2 years. A total of 55% of respondents reported the same in **Adigeni municipality**. Different charity events and tree-planting initiatives were activities mentioned by the largest share of respondents in the entire region (17% and 16%, respectively), and in Adigeni municipality (25% and 19%, respectively).

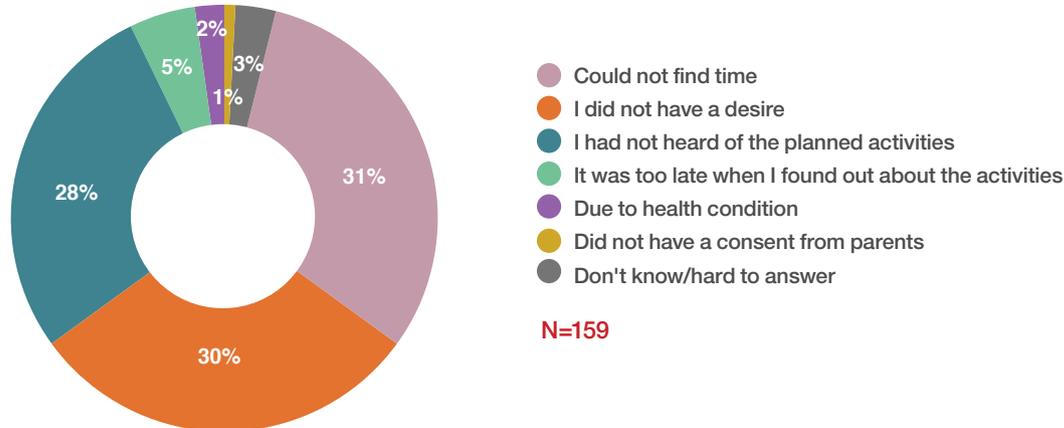
Chart 95. Experience participating in volunteer activities over the past 1-2 years



The non-participation rate increases alongside the age of respondents (have not participated in any volunteer activities: 14-17 years - 43%, 18-23 years - 55%, 24-29 years - 70%). The study did not identify any differences in terms of ethnicity. As for the type of settlement, it turns out that the share of those respondents who have not participated in any volunteer activities over the past 1-2 years is larger in rural areas than in urban areas (65% and 45%, respectively).

As for the main reason why young people did not participate in volunteer activities, young people in Samtskhe-Javakheti responded that they did not have time (31%), did not have the desire (30%) or had not heard of the planned activities (28%).

Chart 96. Reasons why young people did not participate in volunteer activities in Samtskhe-Javakheti

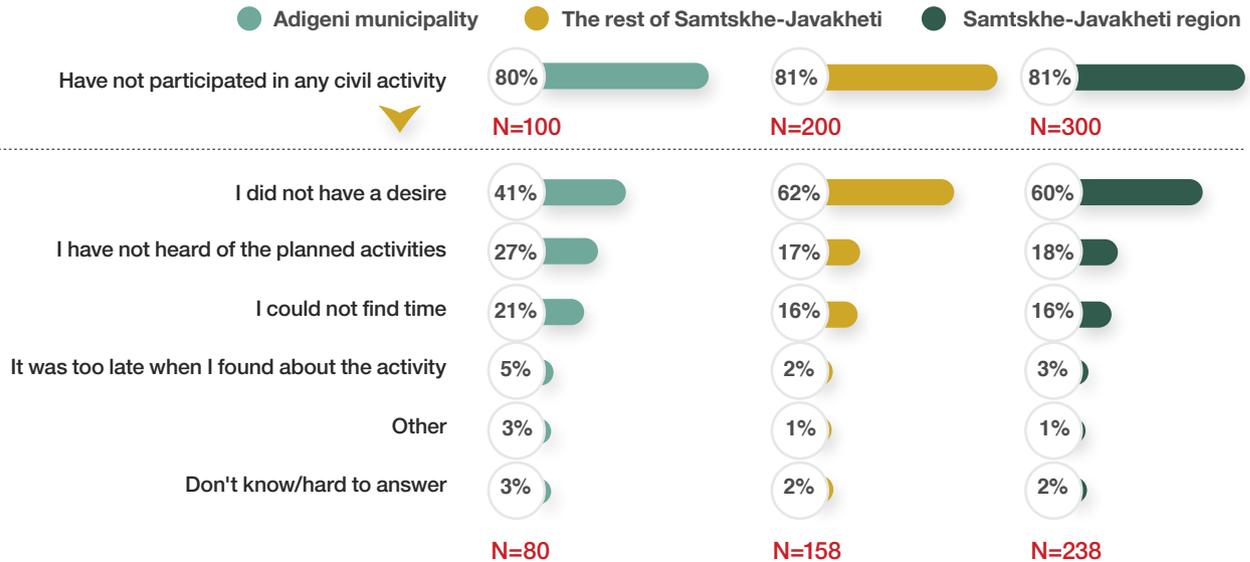


As believed by 62% of respondents inquired in **Samtskhe-Javakheti**, the *active engagement of young people in different important processes for the country (discussion of topics, protest rally, signing a petition, etc.) is important/very important*. This view is shared by 71% of respondents in Adigeni municipality. It is worth mentioning that seven out of ten respondents inquired in urban areas (72%) and six out of ten respondents (57%) in *rural* areas believe that the engagement of young people in different processes is important/very important. In addition, 78% of respondents in the group of ethnic Georgians and 46% of respondents in the group of ethnic minorities *stressed the importance of the engagement of young people in different activities*.

Regardless of stressing the importance of active engagement, the majority of respondents have not participated in any civil activity over the past 1-2 years in the entire region, in Adigeni municipality, and in the rest of the region (Samtskhe-Javakheti – 81%, Adigeni municipality – 80%, the rest of Samtskhe-Javakheti – 81%). The share of those who have not participated in any type of civil activity is minimal.

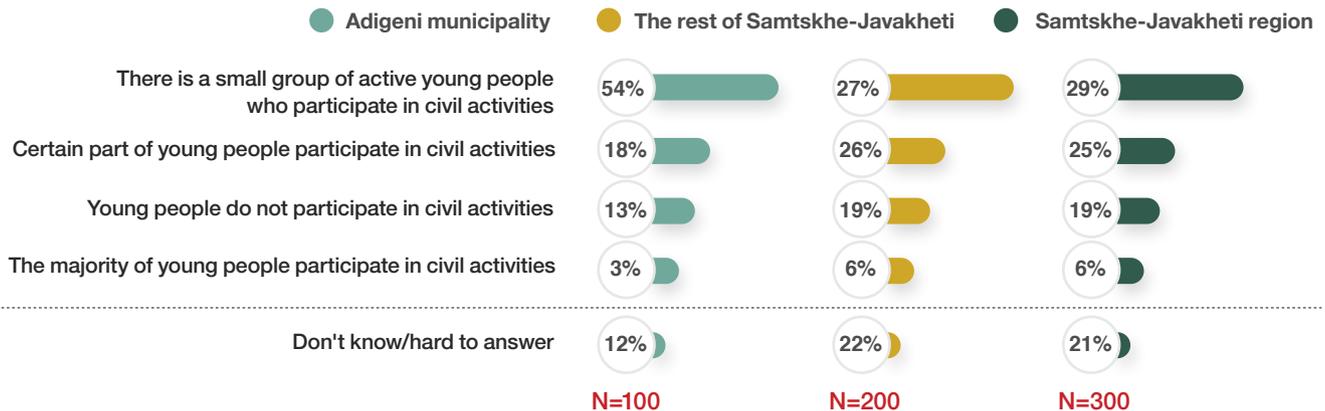
As for reasons why respondents have not participated in any of the civil activities, the largest portion of respondents named a lack of desire (Samtskhe-Javakheti – 60%, Adigeni municipality – 41%). A total of 18% of respondents in Samtskhe-Javakheti and 27% in Adigeni municipality reported not hearing about the planned activities.

Chart 97. Experience participating in civil activities over the past 1-2 years / reasons for not participating



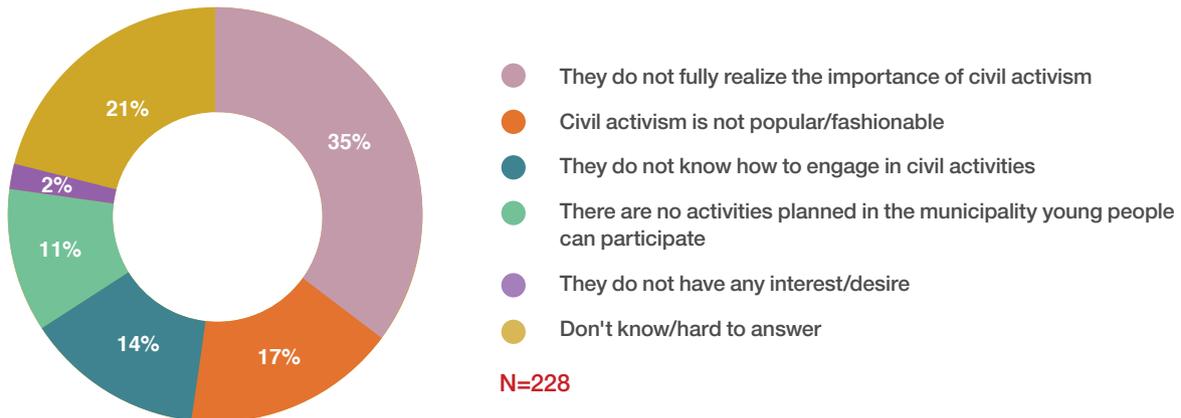
Three out of ten respondents in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** declare that there is a small group of active young people who participate in civil activities (29%). One-fourth of respondents believe that a *certain part of young people participate in civil activities* (25%). More than half of the respondents inquired in **Adigeni municipality** believe that *there is a small group of active young people* in their municipality who participate in different civil activities (54%).

Chart 98. Assessment of young peoples' engagement in civil activities in their municipality



One-third of respondents who believe that the majority of young people are involved in civil activities found it difficult to specify the type of activities they are involved in (31%). The largest portion of respondents identified activities such as *environmental activities* (44%), *charity events* (28%) and *discussions of important topics for young people* (13%). When speaking about the reasons why almost no one or only a small group of young people participates in civil activities, respondents stated that *young people do not fully realize the importance of civil activism* (35%) and that *civil activism is not popular/fashionable* (17%). It is also worth mentioning that one-fifth of respondents find it hard to provide reasons (21%).

Chart 99. Main reasons why a small group / almost no one participates in civil activism



According to the results of the qualitative research, civil activism is low in Adigeni municipality. As young people participating in focus group discussions and key informants noted, there are a few active young individuals in the municipality; a small group of young people who are involved in different activities simultaneously. The main reasons behind the low level of civil activism identified by respondents are low awareness, low belief in the importance of civil activism, and a lack of information on the forms of civil activism. Other reasons behind the low level of civil activism include laziness and low expectations of support. When speaking about laziness, discussion participants stressed that young people “became so lazy” that “they do not bother” being active. As for not having the hope of support, it was noted that young people do not have hope that local self-government will support their initiatives and that interesting ideas will be encouraged. It is worth mentioning that research participants ultimately expect support from local self-government, as this agency is believed to be the main agency responsible for planning and implementing activities. It was noted, however, that the expectation of receiving support from young people is also challenging. As declared by discussion participants, in those rare cases when a small group of active young people have initiatives that are related to the engagement of young people, the participation of peers is low, which results in low civil activism.



“There is one group who cooperates with every organization and Mayor’s Office and they are involved in projects...”

NGO sector representative



“We wrote a project regarding the placement of trash bins in the rural settlements , and when I was in the process of writing a proposal, young residents of the rural settlements told me it was not my business, and that this would be taken care of anyways without me bothering...”

Adigeni municipality, rural type settlement, female, representative of 18-23 age category

“Young people just need a little push – someone to do something for them, such as those who are truly responsible for that, and then these young people will do two times more”.

Adigeni municipality, urban type settlement, male, representative of 24-29 age category

It is interesting to examine the vision of the local self-government itself. As assessed by key informants, there are cases in which young people present their initiatives, but these cases are very rare. One of the main reasons for this is an absence of motivation, which is related to the fact that the vision of young people in terms of project planning and implementation does not coincide with the procedures that an idea should pass before being approved. As declared by a key informant, *bureaucratic barriers* add unnecessary time and impose selection criteria that may lead to young peoples' ideas not being supported. Not receiving support after submitting one initiative, young people become demotivated and even those rare cases disappear.



“They don't come to us. I often notice that they do not have sufficient motivation and trust. If they tell me it will be done for sure... because you know it's the state and requires a different approach. You cannot spend [budget] the way they imagine. They think it's easy... this process goes through bureaucratic stages and there was a case where they applied and the timeframe was so limited that there was no way of doing it. You have to announce the tender, which increases both disappointment and distrust”.

Representative of local self-government

Even though young people and key informants agree that civil activism is low in Adigeni municipality and the region in general, it was stressed that when comparing the current situation with the situation 10 years ago, positive conclusions can be drawn. As noted by participants, many more people are now informed about the idea of civil activism and its importance. Even though activism is low, it is still higher than it was years ago. In order to increase the engagement of young people in processes, the key mechanism needed is to raise awareness in an organized, regular and systemic fashion. According to the main argument, one-time events and campaigns are less oriented on long-term outcomes. This is why it is critical to have a systemic approach towards the issue. In this context, it was emphasized that *it is important to begin raising awareness from school age* which implies not only pupils, but teachers and school administrators, too.



“An awareness-raising campaign needs to be regular and planned according to specific days, weeks or a month, when young people will have a chance to attend, learn something, and increase their activism... After a specific project is completed, young people remain at the position they were in before the project...”

Adigeni municipality, urban type settlement, male, representative of 18-23 age category



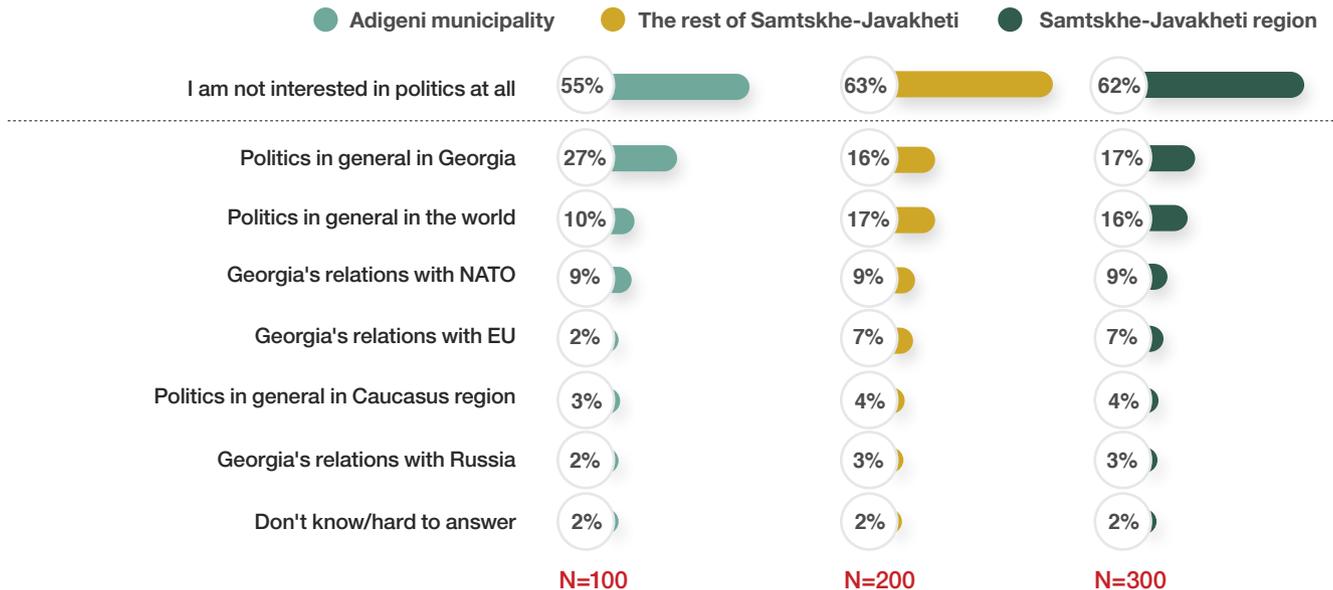
“Professional development training being delivered once a month... 1 session for three months, i.e. an hour and a half session is not achieving any outcome unless it is regular...”

Civil activist

In order to increase civil activism, it is important to inform young people of successful cases. As noted by discussion participants, if there are multiple cases that will prove that young people spoke up about the problem or wrote a project and it was supported by decision-makers (the problem was tackled or the project was funded), young people will feel that being active brings outcomes. Research participants believe that such a development will surely increase engagement in processes.

As for the importance of young peoples' interest in politics, 41% of respondents in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** believe that *it is important/very important*. Half of respondents in **Adigeni municipality** share the same view (49%), and one-fifth believe that young people being interested in politics is not important/is totally unimportant (22%). As for the extent to which respondents are interested in politics, the majority of respondents in **Samtskhe-Javakheti are not interested in politics** (62%), while 17% of respondents are interested in *politics in Georgia*. In **Adigeni municipality**, 55% of respondents are not interested in politics at all, while three out of ten respondents are interested in politics in Georgia (27%).

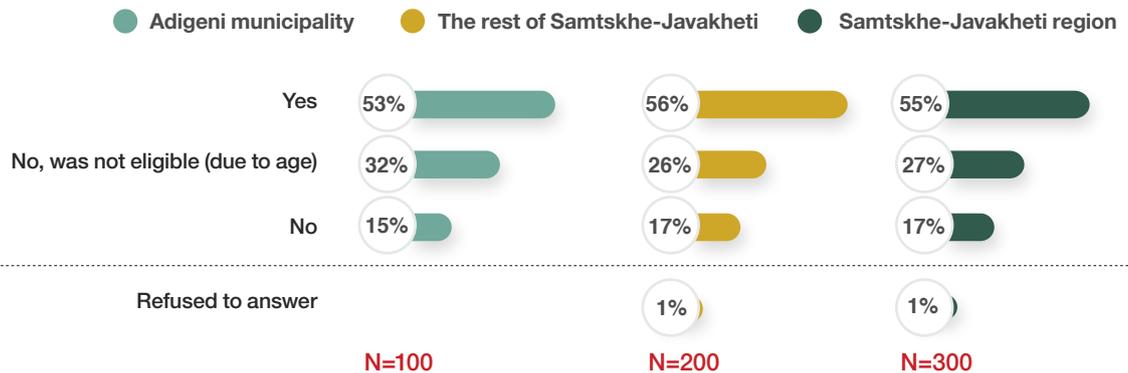
Chart 100. Respondents' interest in political issues



When asked how often respondents discuss social, economic and political issues taking place in the country, 45% of respondents discuss these topics often or sometimes, while 54% never discuss these issues. As for Adigeni municipality, the share of those who frequently/sometimes discuss social, economic and political events in the country is higher (57%), and the share of those who rarely or never do this is smaller (43%).

A total of 55% of respondents participated in the most recent elections (2020 Parliamentary elections), however one-fifth did not participate even though they were eligible (17%). Among respondents, 27% did not take part in the voting process because their age made them ineligible. The picture is almost similar in Adigeni municipality.

Chart 101. Experience participating in the most recent elections (2020 Parliamentary elections)



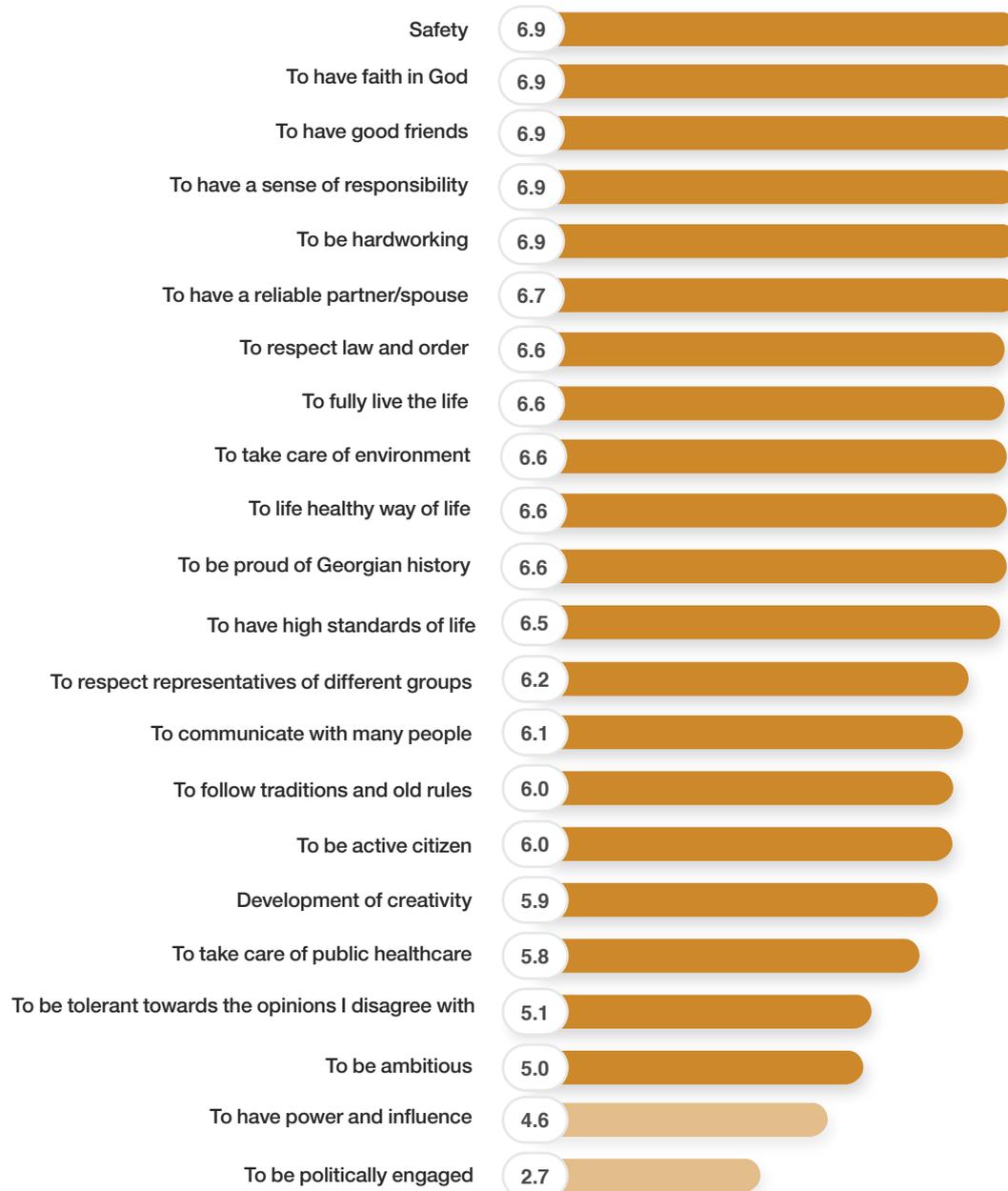
Regardless of assessing civil activism as highly important and noting positive changes over the last years, focus group participants and key informants agree that this rate of activism is low both in Adigeni municipality as well as in the region. Respondents unanimously agreed that the main challenge is low awareness, and work needs to be done in this direction. In addition, it was deemed important to inform young people on real cases in which decision-makers showed support. It was believed that this will motivate young people to not only engage in processes, but to be initiators of changes.

4.5. Values and Rights

Research participants were asked to assess the importance of different values. The majority of values included in the list were assessed as either important or very important. The following values received fewer points by the respondents: *Political Participation* (2.7 points), *having power and influence* (4.6 points); being ambitious (5.0 point), and *tolerant towards opinions they may not agree with* (5.1 points).¹⁵

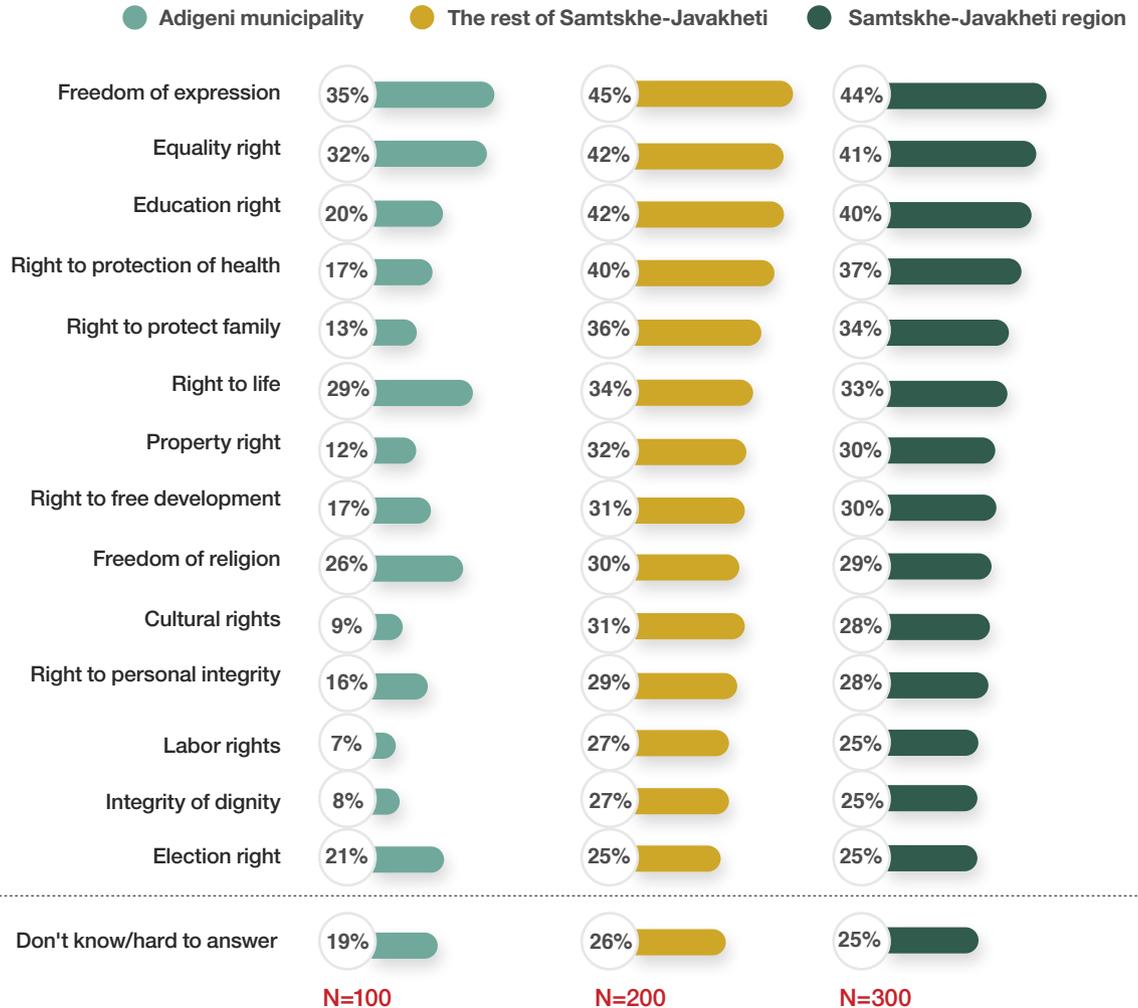
¹⁵ Note: importance of the issue was assessed on 7-point scale where 1 means “totally unimportant” and 7 means “very important”.

Chart 102. Assessment of the importance of values (7-point scale where “1” means “totally unimportant” and “7” means “very important”)



Four out of ten respondents in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** have heard of the rights of *freedom of expression* (44%), *equality* (41%), *education* (40%) and *protection of health* (37%). Together with *freedom of expression* (35%) and *equality rights* (32%), the largest portion of respondents in **Adigeni municipality** have heard of the *right to life* (29%) and *freedom of religion* (26%).¹⁶

Chart 103. Human rights young people have heard of

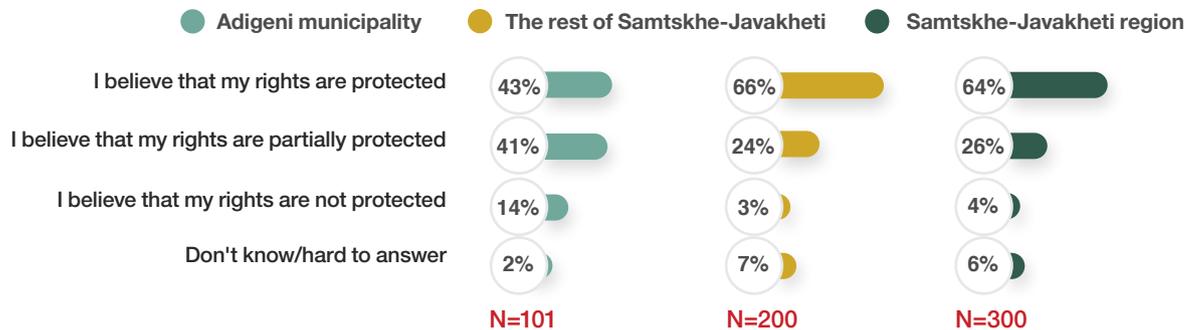


¹⁶ Note: the chart presents only those rights that were named by at least one-fourth of respondents.

It is worth mentioning that one-third of *women* in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** have not heard of any rights (32%), and the share of such *men* is 19%. The largest portion of women have heard of education rights (40%), and the largest share of men have heard of equality rights (50%). As for age, the majority of respondents in the 18-23 age group have heard of freedom of expression (55%), while in the 14-17 and 24-29 age groups more respondents have heard of equality rights (39% and 42%, respectively). It is also worth mentioning that 41% of respondents in the group of *ethnic minorities* failed to name a right they have heard of. The largest portion in this group have heard of freedom of expression (34%). The largest portion of the group of *ethnic Georgians* have heard of equality rights (59%).

The majority of respondents in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** believe that their *rights are protected* (64%), and one-fourth reported on that their rights are *partially protected* (26%). A total of 43% of respondents in **Adigeni municipality** believe that their rights are protected, while 41% reported on that *their rights are partially protected*.

Chart 104. Feelings on the protection of rights



When speaking about the rights that are not protected/partially protected, one-fourth of respondents in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** named *freedom of expression* (26%), and the same share of respondents found it difficult to answer this question (24%). A total of 15% of respondents named *labor rights*, while 10% named the right to decent living conditions. It is worth mentioning that important topic such as *education rights* are believed to not be protected/partially protected for 4% of respondents in the entire region. Almost no one reported this in Adigeni municipality, while the share of such respondents was 5% in the rest of Samtskhe-Javakheti. The largest portion of **women** inquired in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** believe that their freedom of expression is not protected/partially protected (30%). One-fourth of *men* found it difficult to answer this question (25%), and the same amount pointed to freedom of expression (25%). Regarding age, it is worth mentioning that three out of ten school-aged children find it difficult to identify which of their rights is not protected/partially protected (29%), and four out of ten respondents identify freedom of expression (38%). The majority of respondents in the 18-23 age group identified freedom of expression (35%) as not protected/partially protected, and one-fifth of respondents find it difficult to identify a right that is not protected or is partially protected (20%). One-fourth of the older age group (24-29 years) found it difficult to answer this question (24%), and roughly the same share point to equality rights (25%).

Even though young people participating in the *qualitative research* did not pay much attention to the violation or lack of protection of rights, they mentioned the violation of education rights, which implies the lack of availability of high quality education in schools. Young people did not stress challenges in terms of freedom of expression, but as assessed by an NGO representative participating in the study, the free expression of opinion is still problematic in the entire region. Furthermore, there are a few young people who express their opinions freely. Here, focus is made on two things One, the vast majority of respondents are not aware of their rights and can express their opinions. And the second thing is that the rights of those people who have critical opinions they wish to express are violated.

4.6. Challenges and Aspirations

Challenges

Research participants were asked to assess to what extent the availability of different services is problematic for young people in their municipality.

Table 7. Assessment of various issues for young people in their municipality (assessment on a 7-point scale where “1” means “it’s not problematic/challenging at all”, and “7” means “it’s a serious problem/challenge”)

| To what extent are the following issues problematic/ challenging for young people in the municipality | Adigeni municipality | The rest of Samtskhe-Javakheti | Samtskhe- Javakheti region |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Lack of jobs | 6.1 | 5.5 | 5.6 |
| Access to entertainment and leisure places | 5.9 | 5.5 | 5.6 |
| Access to vocational school | 5 | 5.2 | 5.2 |
| Access to internship | 5.3 | 5 | 5.1 |
| Access to programs supporting entrepreneurship | 5.1 | 5 | 5 |
| Access to spaces for young people to gather, rest, have fun, or organize various events | 5.5 | 4.8 | 4.9 |
| Access to higher education | 4.9 | 4.8 | 4.8 |
| Access to education on reproductive health | 5.1 | 4.8 | 4.8 |
| Access to informal education | 4.3 | 4.4 | 4.4 |
| Access to trainings/educational courses | 4.9 | 4.1 | 4.2 |
| Access to sports classes | 4.8 | 3.6 | 3.7 |
| Sport infrastructure | 4.1 | 3.6 | 3.7 |
| Access to art classes | 4.6 | 3.5 | 3.6 |
| Access to healthcare services | 4.3 | 3.2 | 3.3 |
| Access to transportation | 3.6 | 3.1 | 3.1 |
| Access to computer | 4.1 | 2.8 | 2.9 |
| Access to school education | 2.1 | 2.2 | 2.2 |
| Access to internet | 3.7 | 1.7 | 1.9 |

It turns out that the two most serious challenges for young people in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** are a lack of jobs (5.6 points) and the availability of entertainment and leisure places (5.6 points).¹⁷ The least problematic issue are *access to internet* (1.9 points) and access to school education (2.2 points). The most problematic issues in **Adigeni municipality** and in the entire Samtskhe-Javakheti region are reported to be a lack of jobs (6.1 points) and the availability of entertainment and leisure places (5.9 points). The least problematic issue is access to school education (2.1 points).

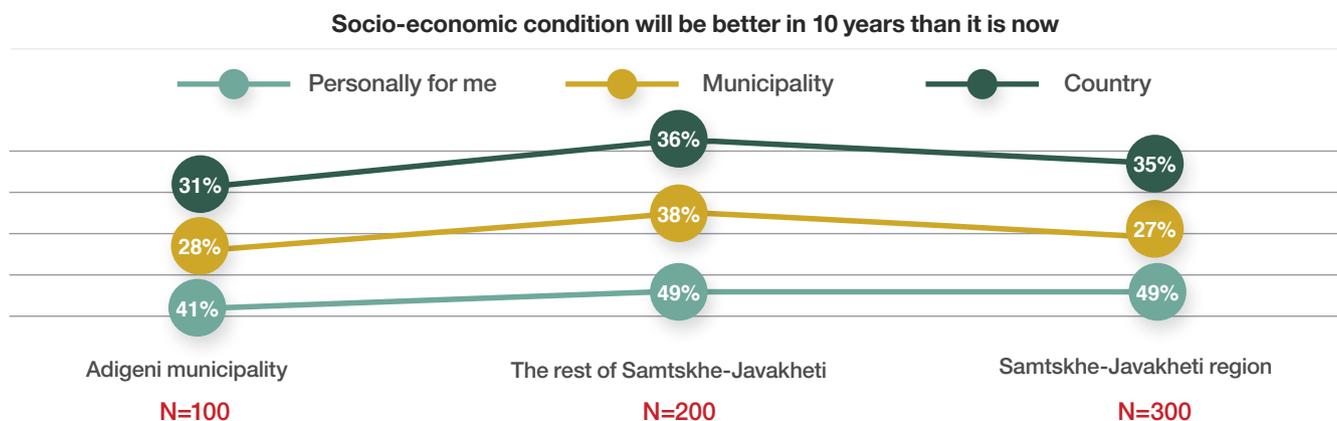
More than half of research respondents have access to a computer at home and/or outdoors. A total of 44% of respondents have no access to a computer either at home or outdoors. As for internet usage, 91% and more respondents in entire the region as well as in target municipality reported using the internet for several hours a day.

Even though internet access is identified as the least problematic issue in the region (1.9 points) and it's less problematic in Adigeni municipality as well (3.7 points), respondents of the qualitative research stressed the importance of this issue, especially for residents in urban areas. As assessed by research respondents, limited access is problematic for everyone, regardless of age. For young people, this is problematic as they get limited access to different kinds of information. Therefore, it is difficult for them to engage in activities that are organized online. It is also worth mentioning that limited internet access is a barrier for young people to engage in activities that can be planned online and do not require travel.

It is worth mentioning that access to informal education was assessed as moderately challenging by the respondents of the qualitative research in Adigeni municipality (4.3 points). Focus group discussion participants, however, stressed the importance of this issue. The absence of or limited access to informal education, as well as the absence of gathering places that could be used by young people for discussion, communication and obtaining informal education, was deemed particularly problematic. As assessed by research participants, the absence of such opportunities make youth indifferent and thus, the engagement in processes is low. It is also worth mentioning that even though access to transportation was identified as the least problematic issue, this problem was stressed by focus group participants, who stated that this issue is particularly problematic for rural settlements -type settlements.

In addition to problems, respondents also provided predictions on the socio-economic condition of the country, municipality and their own lives over a 10-year perspective.

Chart 105. Positive prediction of the socio-economic conditions in the country, municipality and respondent's own life over 10 years

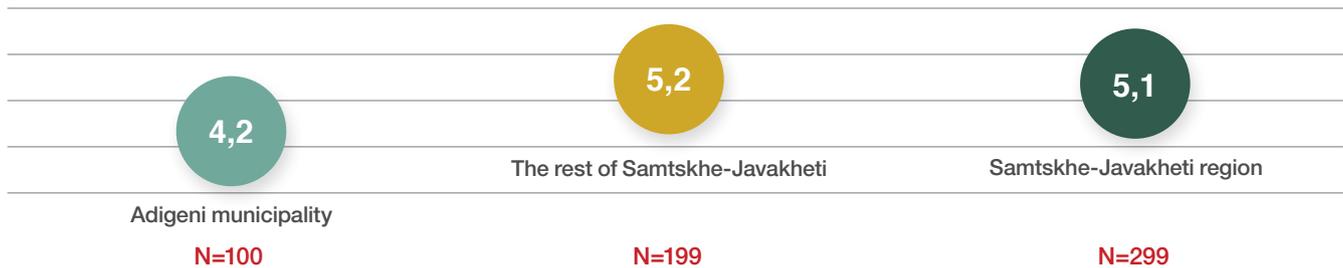


¹⁷ Note: extent of severity of the problem was assessed on 7-point scale where "1" means it's not problematic/challenging at all and "7" means - it's a serious problem/challenge)

Their predictions are as follows: when assessing the future condition of the country, an equal share of respondents in Adigeni municipality (31%), the rest of Samtskhe-Javakheti (36%) and the entire region (35%) believe that the situation will be better than it is now. Three out of ten respondents assess the future condition of the municipality positively in Adigeni municipality, and four out of ten reported the same in the rest of Samtskhe-Javakheti (38%) and in the entire region overall (37%). As for the assessment of one's own socio-economic condition, the share of those respondents who assess it positively is 41% in Adigeni municipality, and 49%-49% in the rest of Samtskhe-Javakheti and the entire region overall.

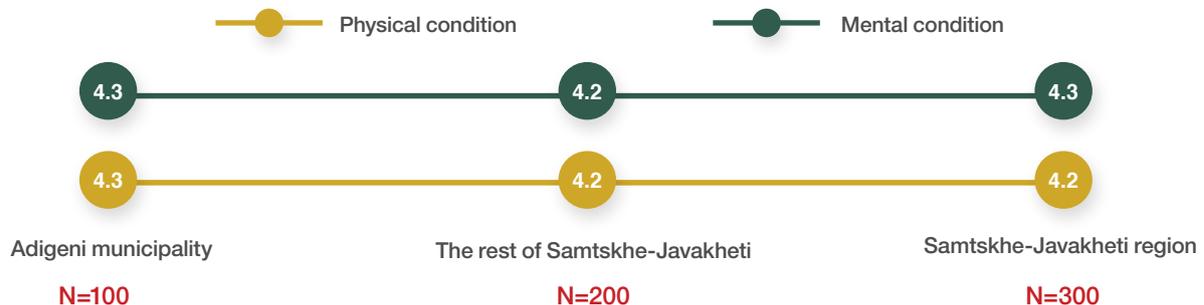
As for satisfaction with their life at this point, the majority of young people declare that at this point of life, considering every factor, they are more satisfied with own their life than dissatisfied. Their satisfaction was rated on a 7-point scale, where 1 meant the respondent was not satisfied with their life, and 7 meant that they were very satisfied with their life. Their assessment was 5.1 points on average in Samtskhe-Javakheti, and 4.2 in Adigeni municipality.

Chart 106. Satisfaction with life at the current stage (assessment on a 7-point scale where “1” means “I am not satisfied at all” and “7” means “I am very satisfied”)



Respondents positively assessed their physical and mental health in Samtskhe-Javakheti, Adigeni municipality, and the rest of the region. Both of these conditions were assessed with 4.2 points or more out of 5.

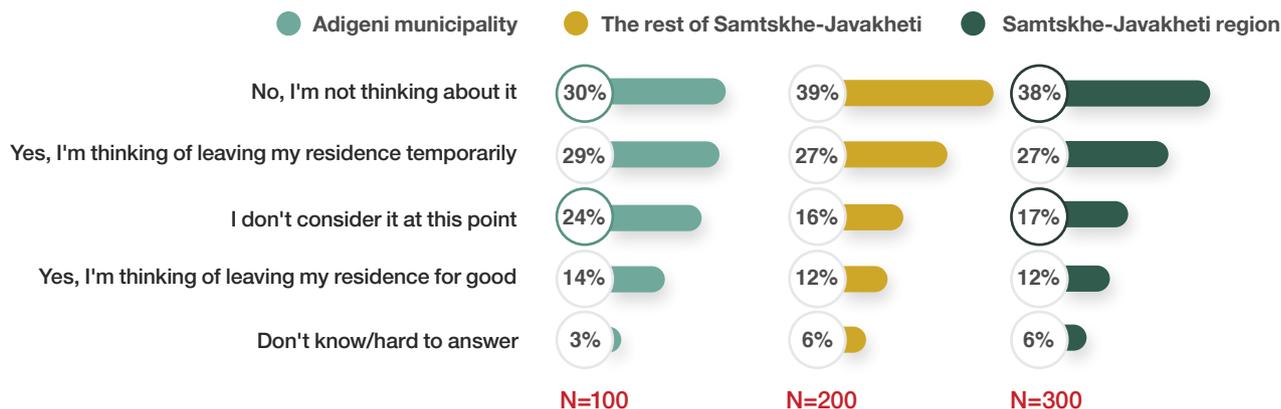
Chart 107. Assessment of current physical and mental condition (“1” – very negative, “5” – very positive)



Migration

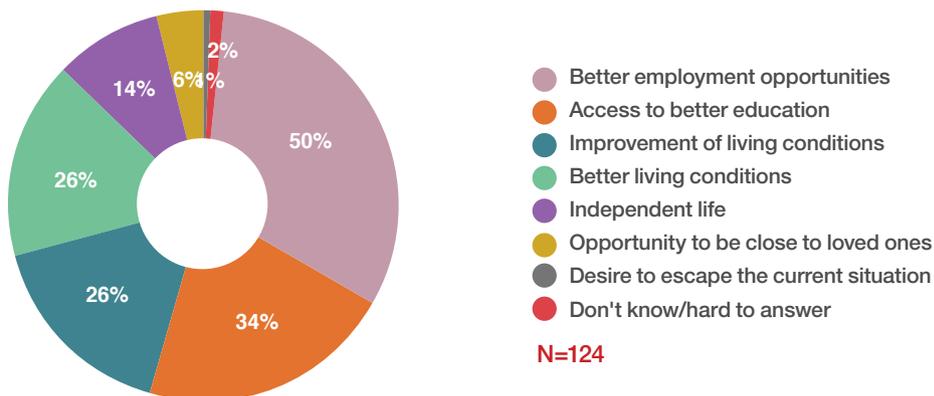
Young people assessed their intentions of *domestic migration* within the next 2-3 years. It turns out that more than half (55%) of young people have no intention/no intention at this point. A total of 38% of respondents report having no such intention, and 17% of young people are not currently considering such a move. Three out of ten respondents inquired in **Adigeni municipality** have no intention of domestic migration within the next 2-3 years (30%), and two out of ten respondents are not considering it at this point (24%).

Chart 108. Intention of domestic migration over the next 2-3 years



Those who reported considering domestic migration, identified four main reasons. Namely: *better employment opportunities* (50%), which is the reason for domestic migration for the largest portion of respondents; access to *better education* (34%), the *improvement of existing living conditions* (26%) and better living conditions (26%).

Chart 109. Reasons for domestic migration in Samtskhe-Javakheti



One-fifth of the respondents in Samtskhe-Javakheti have considered *international migration* (21%). A total of 34% of respondents in Adigeni municipality and 19% in the rest of Samtskhe-Javakheti reported having the same thoughts. Three main reasons for considering international migration/leaving the country include *better employment opportunities* (50%), *access to better education* (24%) and *improvement of existing living conditions* (21%).

Experience with discrimination

Within the scope of the study, young people were asked about their experience with discrimination on the following grounds: *education level* (elementary, secondary, etc.), *economic condition* (rich/poor), *religious belonging*, *ethniurban settlements*, *gender* (male/female), *age* (younger-elder; big-small), *place of residence* (suburb-center, rural settlements-town), and *political views*. According to the study results, the majority of respondents in the region and target municipality reported having no such experience. It is worth mentioning, however, that 27% of respondents inquired in Samtskhe-Javakheti declared that they had experienced *at least one case of discrimination on economic grounds*. In addition, 17%-17% reported experiencing at least one case of discrimination on the grounds of *education level and age*, 10% on the grounds of *place of residence*.

It is worth mentioning that young people participating in the *qualitative research* spoke not about their own experience, but the experience of young people around them. Discrimination on three main grounds were stressed by FG participants. Namely, discrimination on the grounds of religion, age and gender. It is worth mentioning that discrimination on the grounds of religion was stressed by ethnic Georgians. Ethnic Georgians mention that there are conflicts between Orthodox and Muslim communities, which is a challenge.



“There are conflicts in mountainous rural settlements quite often, where representatives of the Muslim community live. Conflicts are very frequent; a group of Orthodox people attack Muslims or vice versa...”

Adigeni municipality, urban type settlement, female, representative of 18-23 age group

“There is an Orthodox church in Zarzma... Muslims live nearby and they are not allowed to enter the church, but I know that they do it secretly...”

Adigeni municipality, rural type settlement, female, representative of 24-29 age group

As for discrimination on the grounds of gender and age, it was stressed that the younger the person is, the more s/he is perceived as “little”, so speaking up and expressing an opinion is not socially acceptable behavior. The same perception applies to cases of gender-based discrimination, which results from traditional beliefs according to which a woman’s duties are limited to household chores.

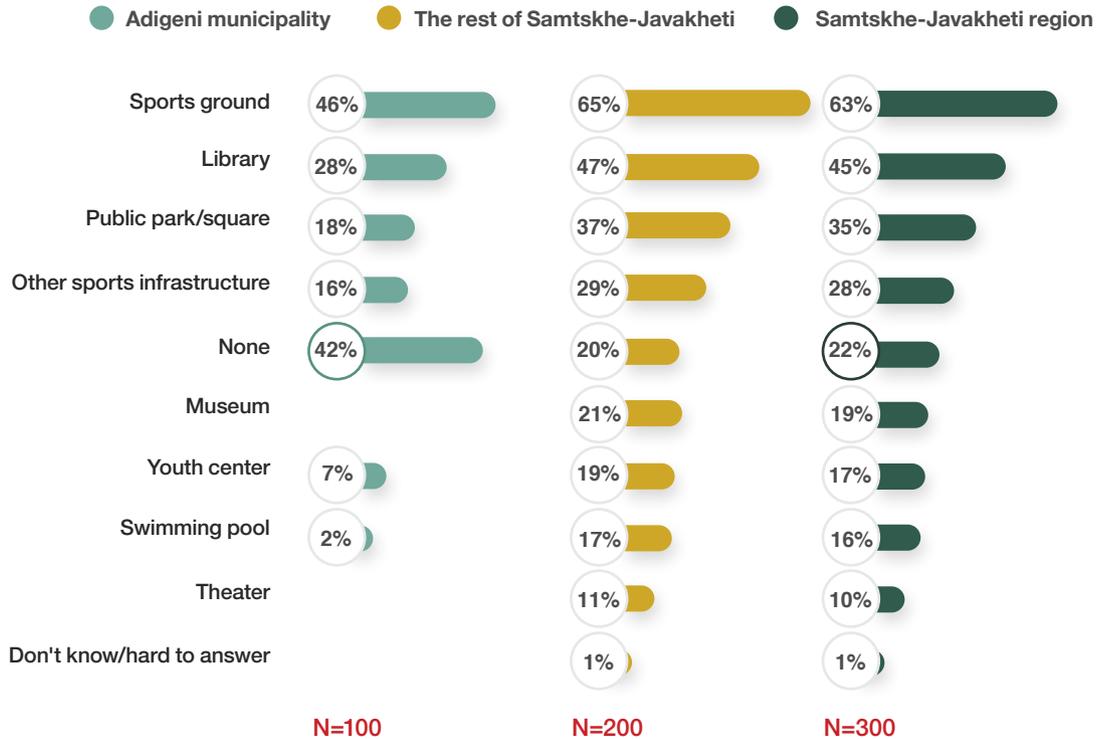
4.7. Leisure and Lifestyle

Entertainment, leisure opportunities and sports activities

Research respondents were asked which places of leisure and entertainment they have access to in their settlement. It turns out that the most accessible places in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** are *sports grounds* (63%), *libraries* (45%) and *public parks* (35%). The list of the top three most often available places are similar in **Adigeni**

municipality. It is worth mentioning that four out of ten respondents *reported not having access to any of the listed entertainment or leisure places* (42%). Entertainment and leisure places being unavailable or out of order was identified as a particular challenge during the qualitative research. As assessed by the discussion participants in Adigeni municipality, even the public park is not taken care of in the municipal center, while gathering spaces for informal education or entertainment are unavailable.

Chart 110. Functioning entertainment/leisure places in the settlement

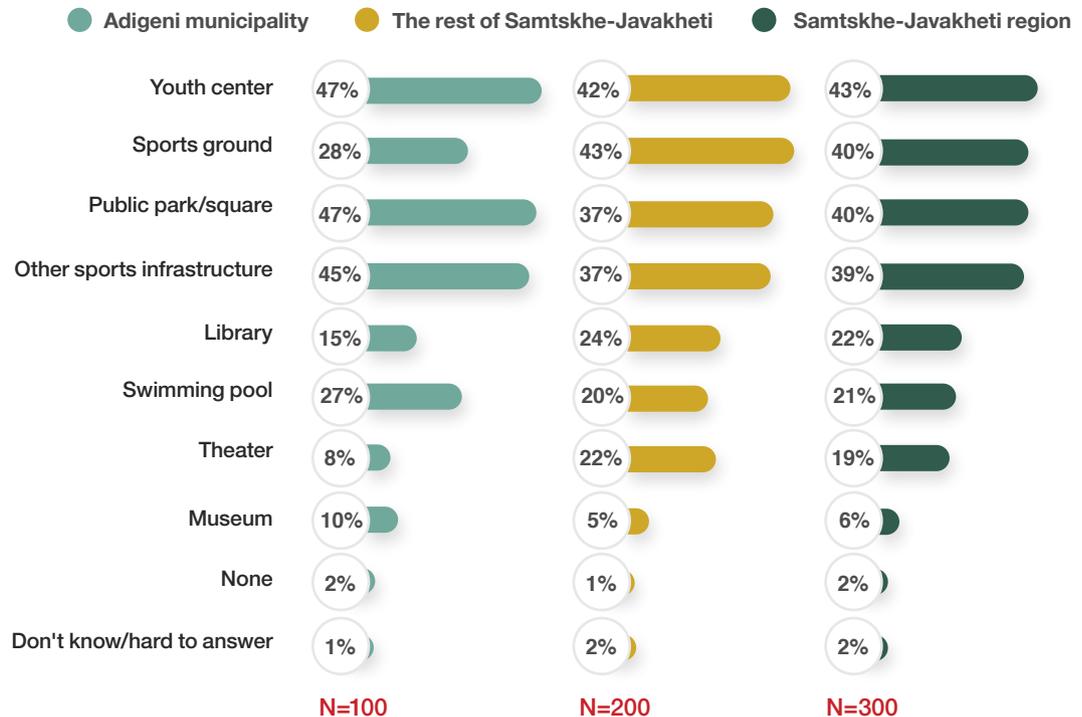


In urban type settlements of Samtskhe-Javakheti region, respondents mostly reported on having a public park (86%), library (82%) and sports ground (76%). It is important that 29% of respondents in rural type settlements reported on not having access to any entertainment/leisure place; 57% reported availability of sports ground and 28% - library.

As for places that need to function properly for young people, it turns out that four places are prioritized in **Samtskhe-Javakheti**. These are: *youth center* (43%), *sports ground* (40%), *public park* (40%) and other sports infrastructure (39%). Four high priority places in **Adigeni municipality** are as follows: *youth center* (47%), *public park* (47%), *other sports infrastructure* (45%), *sports ground* (28%).

The most frequently named places are similar for different age groups. Sports grounds (14-17 – 43%, 18-23 – 36%, 24-29 – 52%) and public parks (14-17 – 37%, 18-23 – 51%, 24-29 – 37%) were named most frequently in all three age groups. These two places are also prioritized according to settlement type. In *urban areas*, 34% of respondents identified sports grounds as the most important, and in *rural areas*, 49% reported the same.

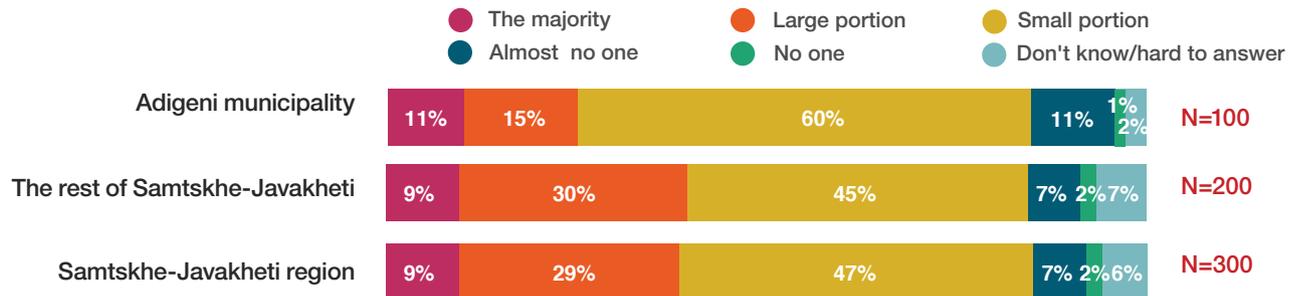
Chart 111. Entertainment/leisure places that need to function properly for young people



In terms of entertainment and entertainment, the study demonstrated that what young people have been doing most frequently over the past 1-2 years in Samtskhe-Javakheti is listening to music (76%), having fun with friends (61%) and watching movies (53%). It is interesting that 68% of respondents have never been involved in internet games, 73% never drew, danced or played any musical instrument. In addition, 55% of respondents have never been into photography. Among respondents, 40% sometimes watch TV. The distribution is quite similar in target municipality and in the rest of Samtskhe-Javakheti.

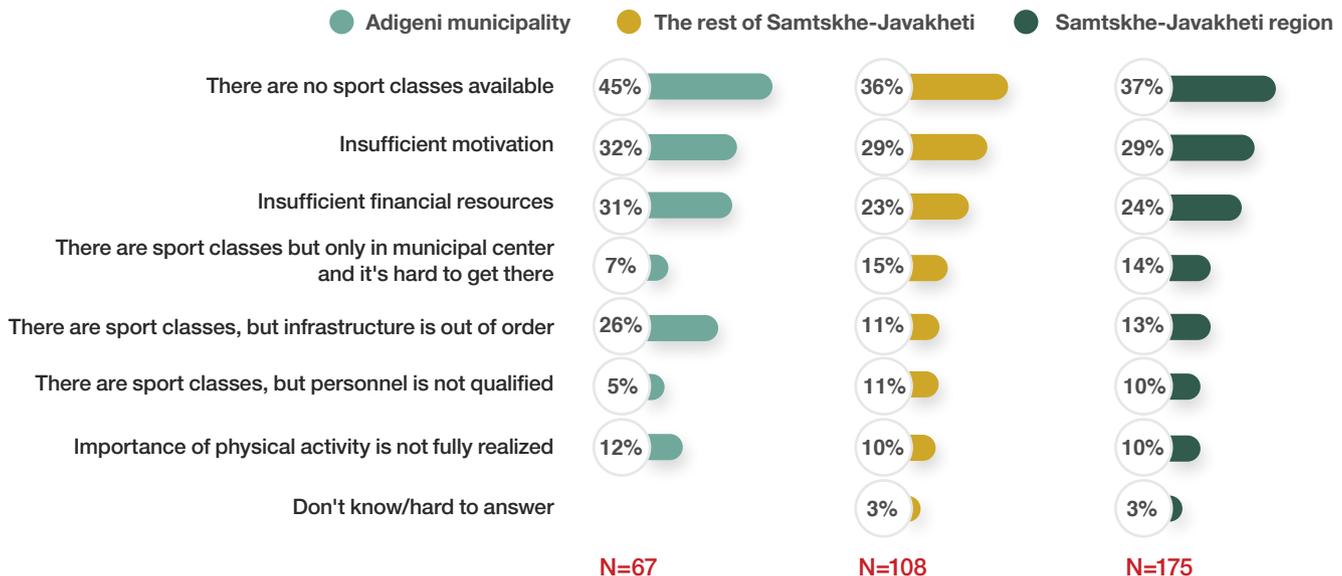
A total of 38% of the respondents inquired in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** stated that the majority of young people in their municipality are involved in sports or physical activity. The same is stated by 26% of young people in **Adigeni municipality**. A large portion of respondents, both in the region and in Adigeni municipality, reported that a small portion and/or almost no one in their municipality are involved in sports or physical activity.

Chart 112. Assessment of young peoples' engagement in sports/physical activity in their municipality



From those respondents who noted that the majority or a large portion (38%) of young people in their municipality are involved in sports/physical activity, the vast majority named football (95%). Young people also practice boxing (34%), basketball (31%), tennis, rugby, wrestling (17%-17%) and other kinds of sports. As for those who declared that only a small portion or no one in their municipality is involved in sports/physical activity, the reason provided was a lack of access to *sports classes* in **Samtskhe-Javakheti region** (37%). Other reasons included a *lack of motivation* (29%) and a *lack of financial resources* (24%). The top three reasons named most frequently in **Adigeni municipality** are similar to those listed above, but one-fourth of respondents in this municipality also reported the *improper condition of infrastructure* (26%).

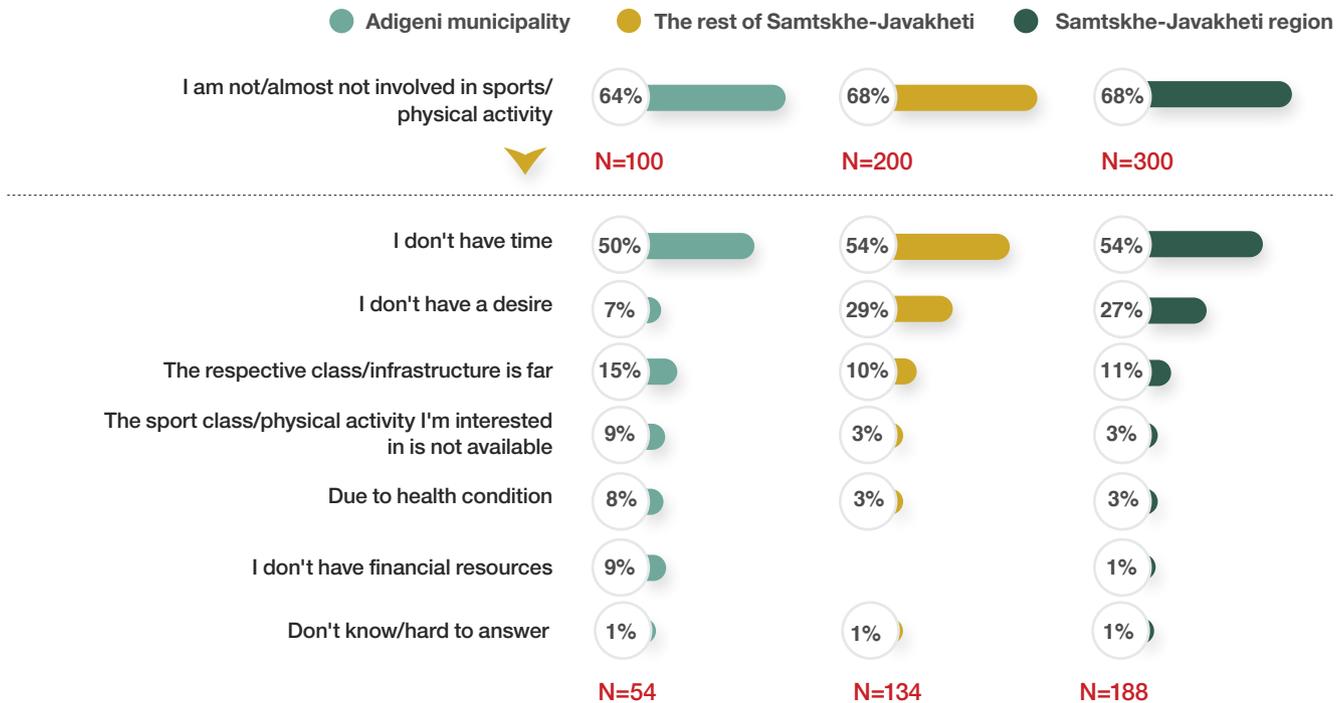
Chart 113. Reasons why young people are not involved in sports/physical activity



Residents of *rural* settlements mostly noted the absence of sport classes (46%), while respondents in urban settlements identified the absence/lack of personnel (33%) and financial resources (32%).

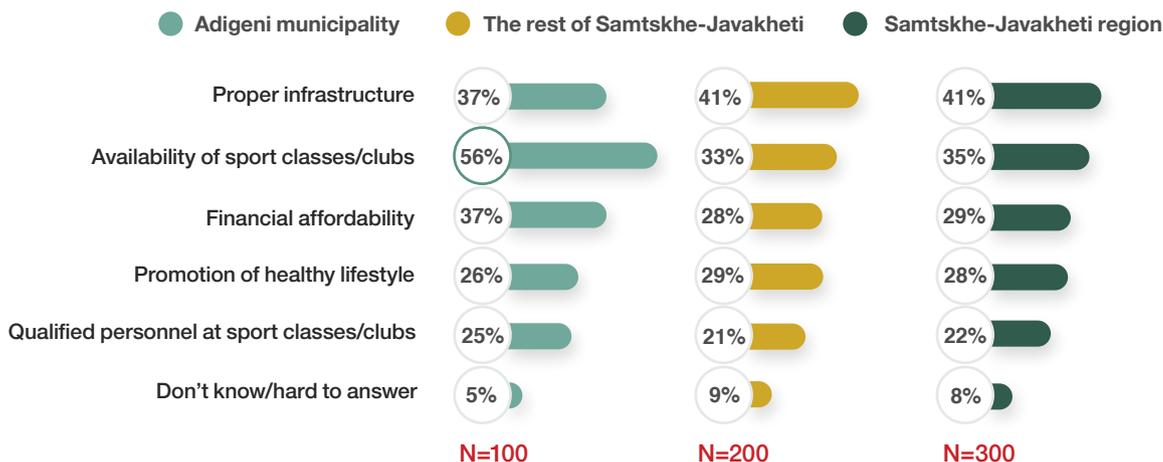
The study demonstrated that one-third of respondents inquired in Samtskhe-Javakheti as well as in Adigeni municipality and the rest of region are involved in sports/physical activity at least three hours a week. Others spend no time on sports/physical activity or engage in activity less frequently than several times a month. When speaking about the reasons why respondents are not involved in sports/physical activity, two main reasons were identified in **Samtskhe-Javakheti**: a lack of time (54%) and a lack of desire (27%). The main reason identified in Adigeni municipality is a lack of time (50%).

Chart 114. Reasons why young people are not involved in sports/physical activity



When asked what can be done to make more young people more interested in sports/physical activity, the study answered that four out of ten respondents in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** identified the importance of the *respective infrastructure* (41%), while one-third emphasized *sports classes and clubs* (35%). Also, three out of ten respondents mentioned *financial affordability* (29%) and the *promotion of a healthy lifestyle* (28%). The majority of respondents in Adigeni municipality believe that it is important to make sports classes/clubs available in order to increase the interest of young people in sports (56%).

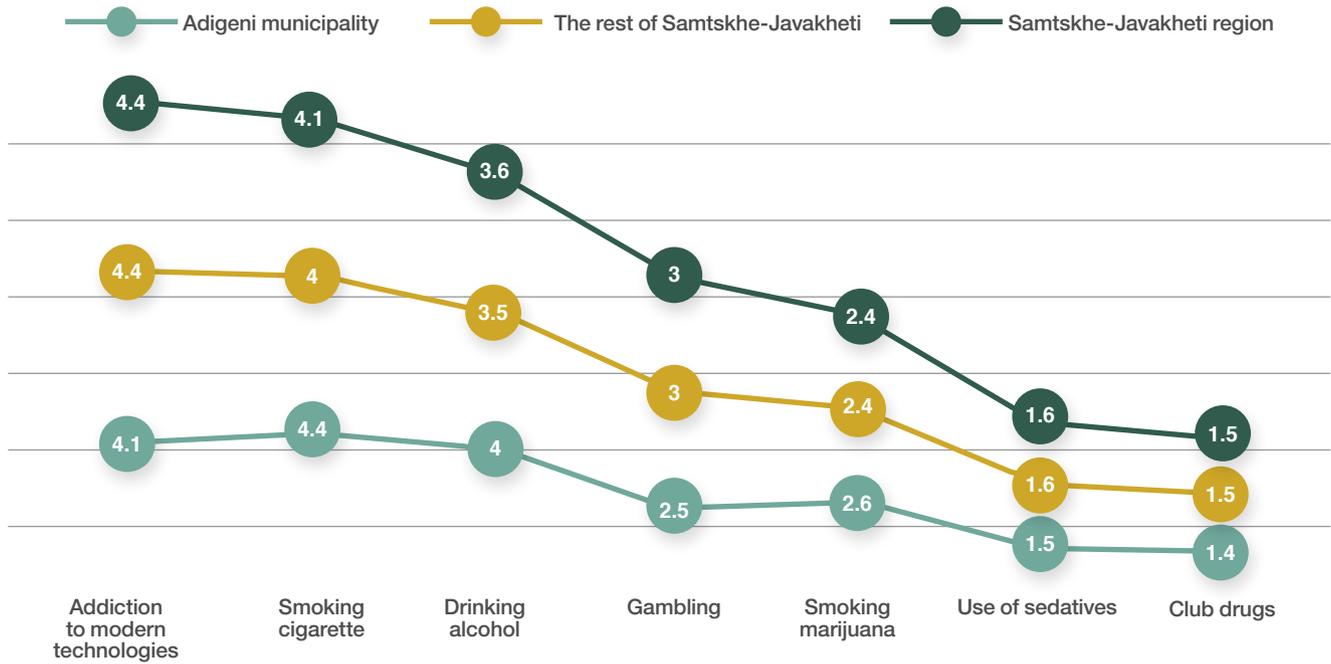
Chart 115. Mechanisms to increase the interest of young people in sports/physical activity



As the study results clarify, there are different risk behaviors in the region. Respondents assessed the prevalence of risk behaviors on a 5-point scale where “1” means that the behavior is not widespread at all in the settlement and “5” means that the behavior is very prevalent. It turns out that the most prevalent risk behaviors in **Samtskhe-Javakheti** include *addiction to modern technologies such as social networks and internet* (4.4 points) and *smoking cigarettes* (4.1 points). Quite widely spread behaviors include *drinking alcohol* (3.6 points), *gambling* (3 points) and *smoking marijuana* (2.4 points). Club drugs (1.5 points) and sedatives (1.6) are relatively less prevalent. The most widespread risk behavior in **Adigeni municipality** is *smoking cigarettes* (4.4 points).

It is worth mentioning that respondents of the *qualitative research* focused on the prevalence of risk behaviors such as drinking alcohol and smoking cigarettes, as well as the involvement of young people in gambling. Focus group participants believe that unemployment as well as the lack of involvement in sports activities results in the prevalence of risk behaviors. This is why it is of particular importance to provide sports centers and infrastructure in urban as well as in rural areas.

Chart 116. Spread of risk behaviors in the settlement (where “1” = not spread at all and “5” = very prevalent)



4.8. Discussion and Recommendations

As the results of the study conducted in Adigeni municipality demonstrated, youth-oriented activities are limited and monochromatic. The majority of such activities are carried out in municipal centers, which, considering the limited access to transportation, becomes problematic for young people from rural areas. The latter segment also report limited access to the internet.

A large portion of young people in the region and in Adigeni municipality are not informed about youth municipal services and programs. The engagement of young people in the decision-making process is very low. Even though more young people from Adigeni municipality declared that young people are the initiators of youth-oriented activities than in the rest of the region (44% and 34%, respectively), the study undertaken in Adigeni showed that the engagement of young people in the processes is very low. This refers to participation in volunteer activities as well as in different civil activities and the decision-making process. It was stressed that there is a small group of active young people, but the majority of youth are passive. The largest portion of respondents blame this lack of activity on a lack of desire, which considering the results of the qualitative research, can be related to having no expectation of support. Young people do not feel hopeful that their initiatives will be supported by decision-makers (local self-government) or their peers. This can be combined with laziness, however, we can conclude that the main reasons are a lack of awareness of civil activism and mechanisms of engagement. This was particularly stressed by respondents of the qualitative research, in which 35% of respondents inquired in the region point out the lack of awareness as the reason behind low civil activism.

Employment is a particular challenge for young people. The largest portion of respondents (46%) stressed the importance of support in this direction. It is worth mentioning that this challenge is more severe for Adigeni municipality (62%) than for the rest of the region (46%). It is noteworthy that the largest portion of respondents in Samtskhe-Javakheti mentioned that together with support in improving professional skills (38%) and the availability of internship programs (33%), support in learning and improving the Georgian language (39%) is what would help young people most of all. This factor is totally unimportant for respondents in Adigeni municipality (1%), while it is very important in the rest of the region (44%).

In addition to employment, having no/limited access to entertainment and leisure places is very challenging for young people. This is particularly important for Adigeni municipality, where 42% of young people have no access to any entertainment or leisure places (the rest of the region – 20%). The Youth Center is the most important place for the largest portion of respondents in every location. Having access to spaces for gatherings and informal education services through the availability of these centers is of particular importance, as confirmed by the results of the qualitative research. In addition, research results demonstrated that it is important for young people to have access to sports classes or different infrastructure, which in addition to a healthy lifestyle, is critical for fighting against the risk behaviors that are prevalent among youth. Among those behaviors, drinking alcohol is one of the most problematic.

Access to sports infrastructure, the availability of youth centers, as well as access to spaces for gathering and informal education were deemed critically important for increasing engagement in processes.

The majority of respondents in Samtskhe-Javakheti believe that their rights are protected (64%), and one-fourth believe that their rights are partially protected (26%). One-fourth of respondents could not identify which of their rights are not protected or partially protected (24%), and one-fourth noted that their freedom of expression is not protected/partially protected (26%). A total of 15% of respondents reported on labor rights, while 10% discussed the right to decent living conditions.

Even though the majority of respondents in Samtskhe-Javakheti reported not having experience with discrimination based on any grounds, it is worth mentioning that one-third of respondents inquired in the region reported experiencing at least one case of discrimination based on economic grounds (27%). In addition, respondents mentioned cases of discrimination based on the grounds of education level (17%), age (17%) and place of residence (10%).

In Samtskhe-Javakheti, 39% of respondents reported having the intention to migrate domestically within the next 2-3 years, which is explained by four main reasons. Namely, better employment opportunities (50%), which was the reason for domestic migration for the largest part of respondents, access to better education (34%), improvement of existing living conditions (26%) and better living conditions (26%).

One-fifth of respondents in the region (21%) have considered international migration. More young people (34%) have such intentions in Adigeni municipality. This index equals 19% in the rest of Samtskhe-Javakheti. The main reasons for international migration/leaving the country include access to better education and improvement of existing living conditions.

As for satisfaction with their life, considering every factor, young people in Samtskhe-Javakheti are more satisfied with their life than dissatisfied (5.1 points out of 7). The satisfaction level is lower in Adigeni municipality (mean value - 4.2 points) than in the rest of Samtskhe-Javakheti (mean value - 5.2 points).

Based on these and other results of the study, it is important to:

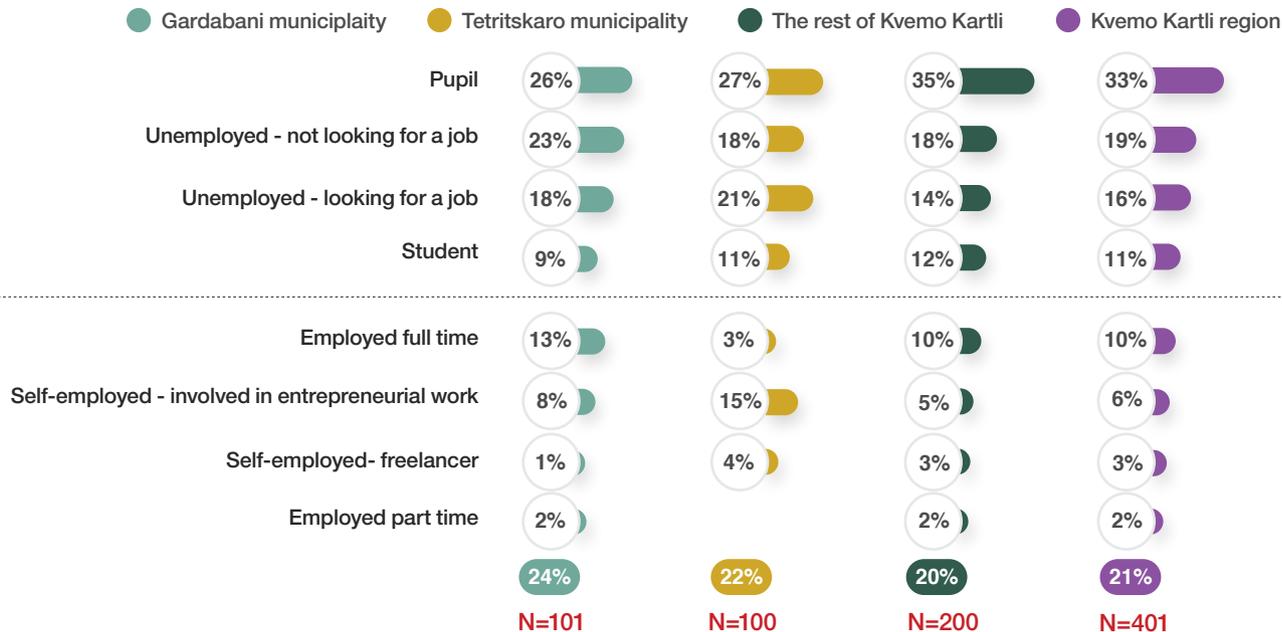
- Create spaces for gatherings, discussions and informal education;
- Raise awareness of the importance of civil activism and inform young people of engagement mechanisms;
- Arrange sports infrastructure in both urban and rural types of settlements and promote a healthy lifestyle;
- Offer older young people special programs/training courses focused on acquiring and improving professional skills. It is of particular importance to offer young people programs that support entrepreneurship, where focus will be made on opportunities to utilize the tourism potential of the region and Adigeni municipality in particular;
- Organize English language courses in Adigeni municipality and Georgian language courses in the rest of the region for representatives of ethnic minorities;
- Empower youth organizations/communities by giving them important knowledge of youth affairs. To this end, it is necessary to develop the relevant training modules; and
- Recognize the importance of youth issues and assign at least one employee focused on youth affairs in the local municipality. In addition, it is important to train this and other employees working in the same field and equip them with the relevant knowledge.

Kvemo Kartli and Tetrtskaro and Gardabani Municipalities

Introduction

As of 2021, the population of Kvemo Kartli is 437.1 thousand people, 56% of whom live in rural areas. The number of 14-29 year-old citizens is 101.6 thousand, which is 23% of the region's population.¹⁸ A total of 45% of the population are ethnic Georgians, while others represent different ethnic minorities. Azeri residents make up 45% of the group of ethnic minorities. The unemployment rate is 22.2% in the region, and the employment rate is 39%. Unfortunately, statistical data on the share of young people in each category are not available. The demographic profile of research participants is as follows: 52% of respondents are women, and 48% are men. The largest portion belongs to the 18-23 age group (37%). In addition, the largest portion of respondents have secondary education (29%). One-third of research participants are pupils, 11% are students, and 35% are unemployed. An almost equal share are looking for a job (16%) and not looking for a job (19%). As for employment, one-fifth of respondents inquired in the region are employed (21%), 10% have a full-time job, and only 2% have a part-time job.

Chart 117. Occupation of respondents

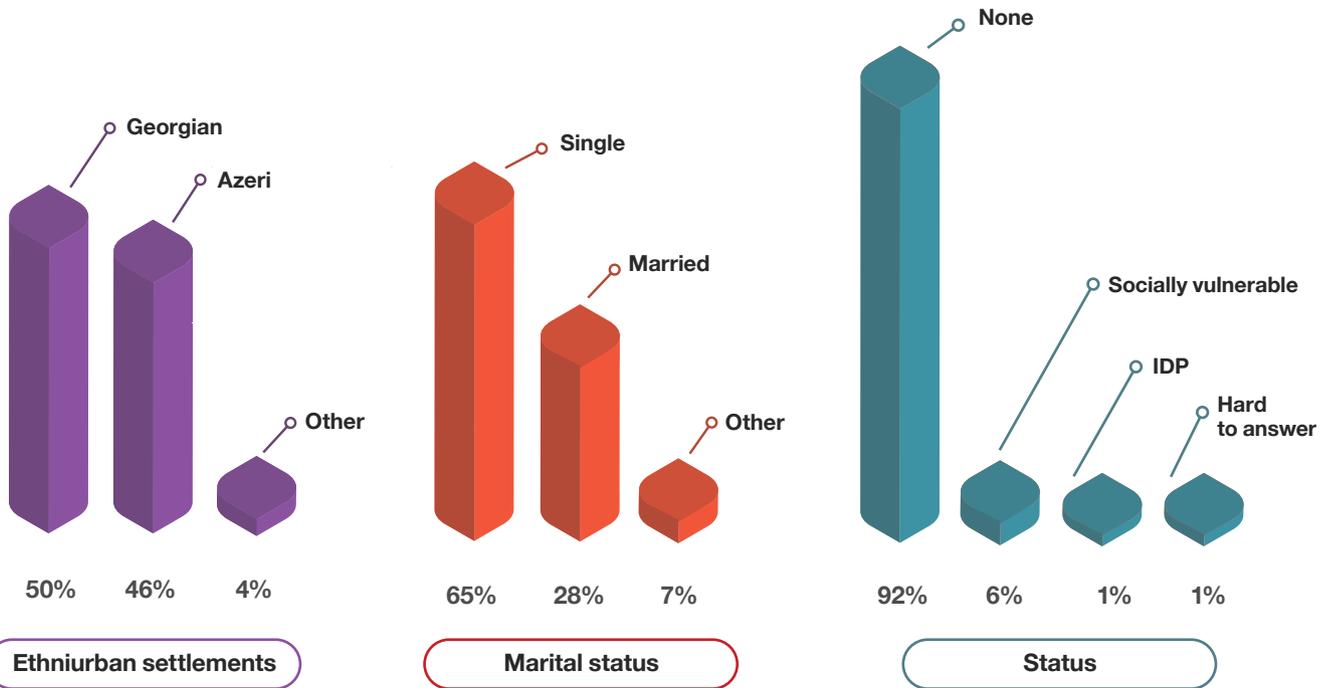


¹⁸ GeoStat. Regional statistics

Freelancers make up 3% of respondents, and 6% of those who are self-employed are involved in an entrepreneurial occupation. It is worth mentioning that the share of such respondents is 8% in Gardabani municipality and 15% in Tetrtskaro municipality, where only 3% reported having full-time employment.

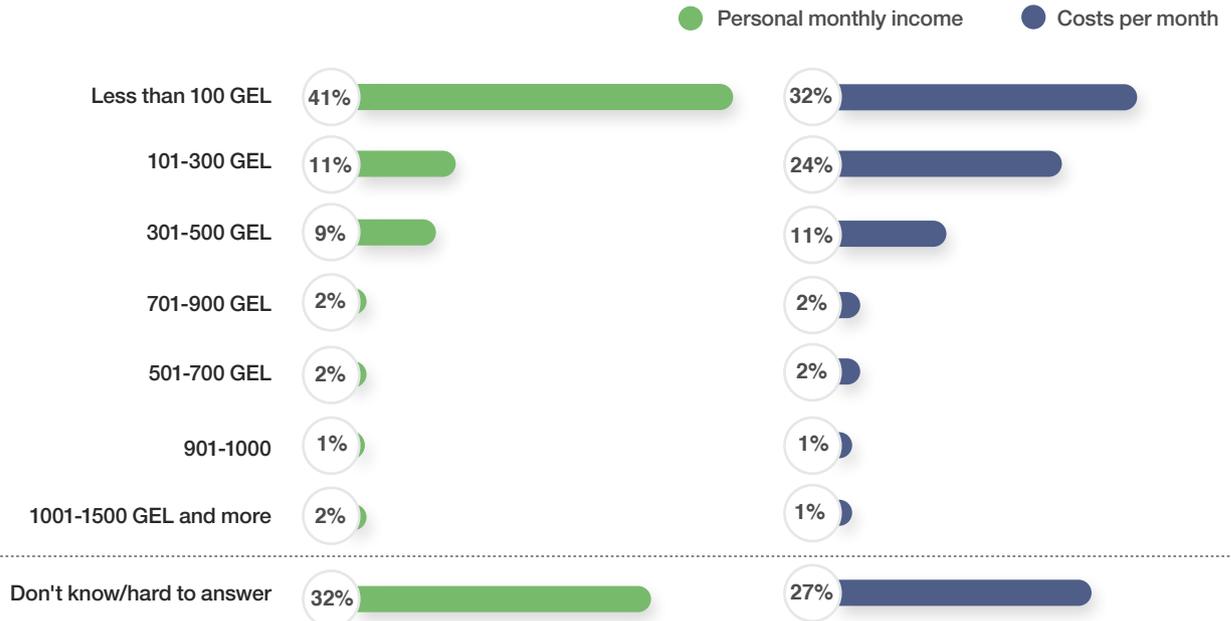
50% of inquired respondents are ethnic Georgians, and 50% represent ethnic minorities. The vast majority of ethnic minorities are Azeri (46%). The majority of respondents are single (65%), and one-third of them are married (state and/or religious registration – 28%). The majority of respondents do not have socially vulnerable or IDP status (92%).

Chart 118. Ethniurban settlements, marital status, status of respondents



One-third of young respondents (32%) found it difficult to specify the amount of their personal monthly income including every source of income (e.g. remittances, salary, gift) and their monthly costs including every need (27%). The largest portion of respondents have less than 100 GEL per month (41%), and one-third spend less than 100 GEL on different needs (32%). The largest part of costs are spent on mobile/internet (65%) and clothes and shoes (51%). The largest portion of respondents depend on their parents for financial support (60%).

Chart 119. Personal monthly income of respondents (including all kinds of income) and monthly expenses on various needs in Kvemo Kartli



N=401

Main Findings

- ✓ Activities focused on young people in Tetrtskaro municipality of Kvemo Kartli mostly imply support in for art, sports and music classes and courses. Planned and implemented youth-oriented activities are not that frequent, and the number of beneficiaries is three-thousand.
- ✓ Activities are mostly planned in municipal centers, and a large portion of respondents are not informed about them. This is especially problematic for young people in rural settlements -type settlements and from the group of ethnic minorities, as information on activities is in the Georgian language, as are the activities themselves.
- ✓ A significant part of respondents in Kvemo Kartli find it difficult to identify the initiators of youth-oriented planned/implemented activities in their municipality (region – 52%, Gardabani municipality – 50%, Tetrtskaro municipality - 66%). In addition, if one-fourth of respondents in the entire region believe that young people are mostly the initiators of activities (24%), one-third in Gardabani municipality identified municipality representatives as initiators (27%).
- ✓ The largest portion of respondents in Kvemo Kartli in general and in the target municipality currently have access to sports classes. Access to sports classes was prioritized by the majority of respondents in Kvemo Kartli (60%), Gardabani (59%) and Tetrtskaro (53%) municipalities. One-third of respondents in Kvemo Kartli (31%) have no access to any of the services (sports or art classes, libraries, youth services, space for gatherings, etc.). The reality is similar in target municipalities and in the rest of the region.
- ✓ Access to spaces where young people would be able to gather, rest, have fun, and organize different events is important for just two out of ten respondents in Kvemo Kartli (19%), while only one out of ten respondents reported the same in Gardabani and Tetrtskaro municipalities (14% and 10%, respectively).
- ✓ Support in finding employment in their municipality is the main challenge for the majority of young people in Kvemo Kartli (68%) as well as in Gardabani (75%) and Tetrtskaro (59%) municipalities. The main problem identified by respondents is a lack of jobs in the region in general as well as in target municipalities.
- ✓ Half of respondents inquired in Kvemo Kartli declared that young people from their municipality get a job in the capital city most easily (51%), while one-fifth of respondents (21%) report on the simplicity of getting a job abroad. Half of respondents in Gardabani municipality declare that young people from their settlement get a job in the capital city most easily (54%), while the share of such respondents is 74% in Tetrtskaro municipality. Only 12% of respondents inquired in Kvemo Kartli reported that it is easy to get a job in the region, including in their municipality.
- ✓ Two main factors that would assist young people in terms of employment include working experience (56%) and proper education (51%), as reported in Kvemo Kartli. The majority of respondents in Gardabani municipality believe the main factor is the respective circle

of acquaintances (63%), while every second respondent stated working experience (51%). As for Tetrtskaro municipality, the majority of respondents believe that having relevant education is the main criterion for young people to get a job (58%).

- ✓ Support for improving professional skills is deemed important for the employment of young people in Kvemo Kartli in general (58%) as well as in target municipalities (Gardabani – 68%, Tetrtskaro - 63%) and the rest of the region (55%).
- ✓ An important factor assisting young people in finding employment is believed to be support for learning the Georgian language in Gardabani municipality (32%), and especially in the rest of the region excluding Gardabani and Tetrtskaro municipalities (41%). This factor is less important for Tetrtskaro municipality (13%), where one-third of respondents prioritized support for learning the English language (30%).
- ✓ Literacy in the Georgian language as an important factor for employment is identified by one-third of respondents inquired in Kvemo Kartli (30%). Only 7% of ethnic Georgians and every second respondent from the ethnic minorities (53%) stressed this. It is worth mentioning that 79% of ethnic Georgians deem employment opportunities in their own municipality as difficult/very difficult to find, while this index is even higher among ethnic minorities and includes almost everyone (93%).
- ✓ Even though a healthy lifestyle is assessed as important, the majority of young people are not involved in sports/physical activity (Kvemo Kartli – 81%, Gardabani municipality – 83%, Tetrtskaro municipality – 86%, the rest of the region - 80%).
- ✓ One-third of respondents in Kvemo Kartli find it difficult to assess whether or not young people affect the decision-making process (32%). A total of 26% of respondents provided a neutral assessment to this question (they affect and do not affect the decision making process). Young people in Gardabani municipality mostly think that young people make no affect/make no affect at all on the decision making process at the local level (43%). In Tetrtskaro municipality, 43% could not provide an assessment, while one-fourth of the respondents have a neutral position (26%).
- ✓ The active engagement of young people in different important processes for the country is believed to be important/very important for 82% of ethnic Georgians and 56% of ethnic minorities.
- ✓ Even though a large portion of respondents (69%) assess the active engagement of young people in different important processes as important/very important, this practice is not widespread. The majority of respondents in Kvemo Kartli reported not participating in any civil activity over the past 1-2 years (88%).
- ✓ Political Participation and civil activism among youth is low. Nine out of ten respondents in Kvemo Kartli (88%) have not participated in different civil activities over the past 1-2 years. The reality is quite similar in target municipalities (Gardabani – 85%, Tetrtskaro – 85%) and the rest of the region (89%). The main reason provided everywhere is that young people did not know about the planned activities.
- ✓ Half of young people in Kvemo Kartli are not interested in politics (54%), and the largest part of those who are interested in politics, are interested in politics in Georgia in general (33%). A large portion of young people in Tetrtskaro municipality (66%) and the rest of the region (58%) are not interested

in politics at all, while the majority of young people find politics interesting in Gardabani municipality (63%). A total of 53% of respondents are interested in politics in Georgia in general, one-fifth are interested in Georgia's relations with Russia (20%), and one-third are interested in Georgia's relations with NATO and EU (28%).

- ✓ Seven out of ten and more respondents are not aware of youth municipal programs and services in target municipalities (Gardabani – 79%, Tetrtskaro – 76%) or the rest of the region (74%).
- ✓ Almost nine out of ten and more respondents have not participated in the process of making important decisions for the country over the past 1-2 years in Kvemo Kartli (88%), as well as in target municipalities (Gardabani – 85%, Tetrtskaro – 85%) and the rest of the region (89%). Half of the respondents in Kvemo Kartli declared that they had not heard of such opportunities (54%). A similar answer was provided by 59% of respondents in Gardabani municipality and 71% in Tetrtskaro municipality.
- ✓ The most important value for young people in Kvemo Kartli is faith in God (6.6 points). The least important value is Political Participation (3.2 points).
- ✓ The majority of respondents in the region declared that their rights are protected (76%), while 17% said that their rights are partially protected. As the age of respondents increases, the number of those who think that their rights are protected decreases, but the feeling of protection is shared by the majority of respondents in every age category (14-17 years - 86%, 18-23 years - 75%, 24-29 years - 68%). In addition, more representatives of ethnic minorities believe that their rights are protected (82%) than ethnic Georgians (70%).
- ✓ The majority of respondents in the group of ethnic minorities believe that their right to education is not protected/is partially protected (41%). Two out of ten respondents in the group of ethnic Georgians reported the same for rights such as labor rights (20%), equality (20%) and freedom of expression (19%).
- ✓ A total of 54% of respondents in Kvemo Kartli have no intention to migrate domestically, 27% do not think about this at this point. A small portion of respondents (19%) think about migrating internationally. Reasons for domestic and international migration include better living conditions, better employment opportunities and improvement of existing living conditions.
- ✓ A more positive assessment of the change socio-economic conditions over the next 10 years was more noticeable for individuals than for the country or municipality (the country – 58%, the municipality – 58%, personally mine – 71%). It is worth mentioning that more respondents inquired in urban areas believe that the country's socio-economic condition will be better in 10 years (63%) than in rural areas (55%).
- ✓ Considering every factor, the level of satisfaction of with their life at this point is higher than the average. This assessment in Kvemo Kartli, similar to Gardabani municipality and the rest of the region, is equal to 4.8 points on a 7-point scale. The satisfaction level is lower in Tetrtskaro municipality, where it is rated with 4.3 points out of 7.

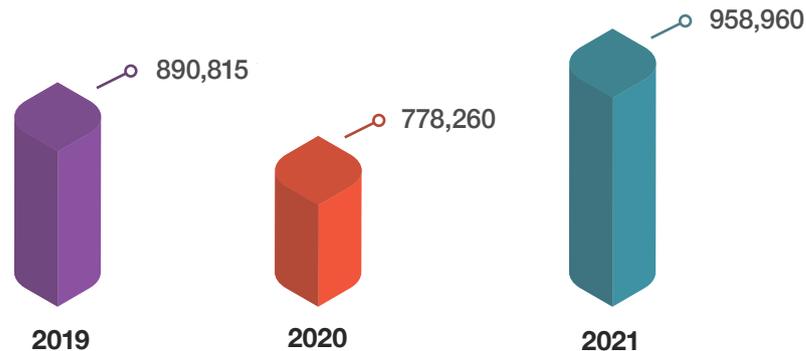
5.1. Municipal Policy

Youth Affairs in Tetrtskaro municipality are regulated by the Education, Culture, Sports and Youth Affairs Unit of the Department of Healthcare and social protection, education, culture, sports and youth affairs at the Municipality Mayor's Office. The unit is comprised of 3 members ,and none of them is specifically assigned to Youth Affairs.¹⁹

The municipality did not have a line in the budget specifically allocated to the youth direction in 2019-2020, but the Mayor's Office of the municipality and its subordinate agency non-entrepreneurial (non-commercial) legal entity , the Tetrtskaro Culture and Sports Center, implemented programs and projects that were oriented on youth.

A total of 1, 669,075 GEL was spent on youth-oriented projects and programs in 2019-2020. As for the budget allocated in 2021, no amount is allocated for youth policy in particular, but the budget for programs and projects that are focused on other segments, including young people is 958,960 GEL, which is more than what was allocated in recent years.

Chart 120. Budget allocated for youth-oriented projects and programs in Tetrtskaro municipality from 2019-2021



¹⁹ As target municipality of qualitative research was Tetrtskaro municipality and key informants participating in the research from this municipality, information on activities planned within the youth policy, the respective department and budget is presented for Tetrtskaro municipality only.

As for projects and programs for which the budget was and still is allocated, it is distributed as follows:

Table 8. Youth-oriented projects and programs from 2019-2021

| Projects / programs | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Support in functioning of art, sport and music classes and courses | 874,215 | 772,000 | 930,000 |
| Engagement of pupils-youth in different educational programs/projects (transportation costs occurred only in 2019) | 16,600 | 2,960 | 2,960 |
| Program supporting professional development, education in Tetrtskaro municipality and social initiatives of local community groups/organizations | | 3,300 | 26,000 |
| Total: | 890,815 | 778,260 | 958,960 |

According to the Mayor's office of Tetrtskaro municipality, these projects had a total of 3 000 beneficiaries in the 14-29 age category from 2019-2020. Unfortunately, the Mayor's Office keeps no statistics on beneficiaries of programs and projects according to age category (14-17, 18-29). Respectively, it is impossible to tell what the share of school-aged beneficiaries is and how many young people were covered by projects or programs from older age categories. In 2021, the Tetrtskaro municipality Mayor's office presumes that their programs and projects have at least 3 000 beneficiaries.

The fact that the Tetrtskaro municipality Mayor's office does not have a separate unit with the respective specialist or a budget focused on youth affairs is categorized as a challenge by the representative of local self-government. As declared by this respondent, in the department that regulates youth affairs "everyone does everything", but it is important to allocate a separate specialist as well as a budget for this direction. As noted by the key informant, there is a challenge in terms of human and financial resources. Here, it was stressed that regardless of scarce financial resources, there is donor support, but insufficient knowledge to utilize that support. This is why, as noted by the research participant, the municipality failed to utilize international financial resources. It is noteworthy that *sharing the relevant knowledge in terms of utilizing international grants* is what the local self-government would ultimately wish to receive from the Youth Agency.

It is also worth mentioning that the NGO sector representative spoke about the desire for support from a Youth Agency. As believed by this respondent, it is important to have an *effective feedback mechanism*. Even for cases in which the Agency rejects a grant proposal submitted by a youth organization, it needs to return feedback stating not only that support or funding for the specific organization was rejected, but the reason for the decision. This would enable youth organizations to acquire more knowledge on the gaps that they need to fill in to submit successful grant proposals in the future. In addition, effective and relevant feedback makes

organizations feel that there is organization in the country “I’m proud of having this in the country...”. Together with effective feedback, the NGO sector representative stressed the importance of a Youth Agency to regularly study the actual needs of young people and respond to them. In addition, the agency should be open to actively communicate and cooperate with youth organizations.

In addition to this, key informants deem it important to involve stakeholders in policy document development. As noted by representatives of the civil sector, so far they are not involved in the process of policy document development, but they are informed of the policy document’s development and importance from the Mayor’s Office. Research participants believe that cooperation with the Mayor’s Office will become more active in the near future, and the NGO sector will engage in youth policy document development. As for the engagement of young people in the policy document development process individually instead of organizationally, a civil activist participating in the study assessed this kind of engagement skeptically and sees it as more of a long-term goal. As noted by this participant, this goal requires serious work in terms of raising awareness, which will take a significant amount of time.

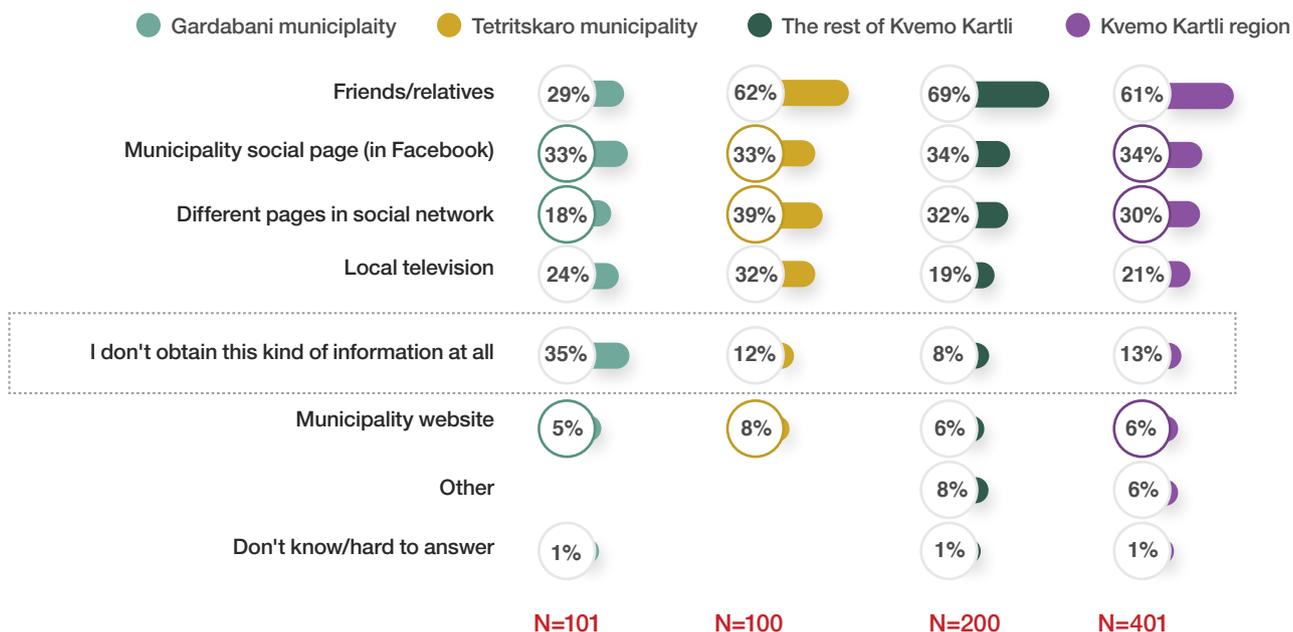
In addition to engagement of stakeholders in policy document development, importance of taking actual youth needs into account, mobilization of financial and human resources a representative of local self-government participating in the study also identified *decentralization* as an important factor for youth policy implementation. Here, two aspects were emphasized. First, it was noted that it is important for the municipality to have the freedom to make decisions and not be restricted to “agreeing with others”. The other aspect stressed by the respondents is eliminating bureaucratic barriers. As assessed by respondents, youth initiatives that are already quite rare need to be responded to by the local municipality more quickly than it is currently possible. Even though the Mayor’s Office as a public agency is obliged to follow certain procedures for reviewing or approving projects, it needs to have more freedom and be able to make decisions in a simplified regime. As stated by the respondent, delayed responses to youth initiatives make young people feel that they will not receive support; that they will be left frustrated, and even those rare initiatives may not be submitted.

5.2. Youth Programs and Services

Within the scope of the study, respondents expressed their opinions on youth programs and services. More than half of the respondents in **Kvemo Kartli** obtain information on ongoing events in the municipality (municipal programs, services, novelties) through their *friends/relatives* (68%). A large portion of respondents (70%) also obtain this kind of information through different *internet resources* (municipality social page on Facebook, websites and different pages on a social network). The main source of information is *internet resources* for the majority of respondents in **Gardabani municipality** (56%), where 35% of respondents do not obtain information on local news at all. For the majority of respondents in **Tetritskaro municipality**, a major source of information on ongoing local news is a *friend/relative* (62%). Other *internet resources* are utilized by eight out of ten respondents (80%), with many of them identifying different pages on a social network (39%). It is also worth mentioning that local TV channels also act as a source of information on local news for young people.

It is worth mentioning that friends/family are the main source of information on ongoing events in the municipality (municipal programs, services, novelties), however, the study revealed certain differences with regard to internet resources as a source of information. For example, if 82% of respondents identified pages on a social network (municipality FB page and different pages on a social network) as a main source of information in *urban* areas, 49% reported the same in *rural* areas. A total of 80% of ethnic Georgians and 48% of ethnic minorities identified the same sources of information. It is also worth mentioning that local television is named as source of information by more ethnic Georgians (26%) than representatives of ethnic minorities (16%).

Chart 121. Sources of information on ongoing events in the municipality (municipal programs, services, novelties)



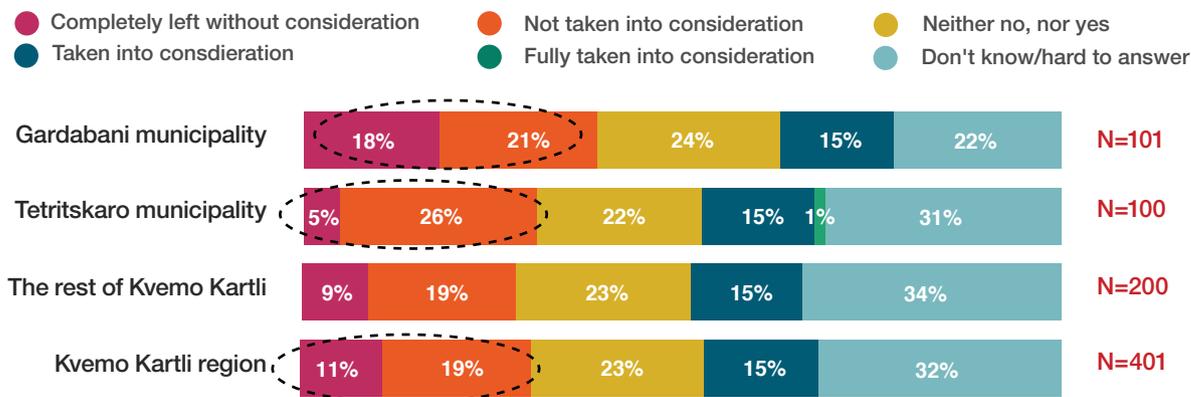
As for *age*, it is worth mentioning that one-fifth of respondents in the 14-17 age group (21%) reported that they did not obtain information on municipal programs, services or novelties at all, while this index is 8% in the 18-23 age group and 12% in the 24-29 age group. As respondents get older, the rate of naming pages on social networks and local television stations as source of information increases. Namely, pages on social networks were named as a source by 56% of respondents in the 14-17 age group and 67%-67% in older groups. Local television was named by 12% of respondents in the 14-17 age category and one-fourth in older groups (18-23 years - 25%, 24-29 years - 23%).

In addition to this, it is important to note what the *qualitative research* revealed. Namely, focus group participants or key informants in Tetrtskaro municipality noted that there are challenges in terms of the awareness of young people, and these challenges can be grouped into two categories. One challenge is related to limited internet access in rural settlements-type settlements, and the second challenge is the language barrier that is particularly problematic in compact settlements of ethnic minorities. It is important to take these factors into consideration when disseminating information on municipal programs or services or in general, writing a communication strategy in the context of youth policy and providing target groups with information through different sources simultaneously.

One-third of respondents inquired in **Kvemo Kartli** (32%) found it difficult to assess whether the interests of young people are considered in the work of the municipality. A total of 23% of respondents believe that the interests of young people are considered and left without consideration at the same time. In addition, 15% of respondents reported that the interests of young people like them are taken into consideration, while one-fifth believes that the interests of young people are not considered at all (20%). One-fifth of respondents in **Gardabani municipality** find it difficult to answer this question (22%), while four out of ten respondents think that the interests of young people like them are not taken

into consideration in the work of the municipality (39%). One-third of respondents in **Tetritskaro municipality** find it difficult to answer this question (31%), and another third shared the point of view that the interests of young people are not considered at all (31%).

Chart 122. Assessment of the extent the interests of young people are considered in the work of the municipality



It is worth mentioning that 19% of respondents in urban areas believe that the interests of young people like them are taken into consideration in the municipality's work, while only 12% pointed out the same in rural areas. While one-fourth of ethnic Georgians (23%) share the same position, the number of such respondents is just 7% in the group of *ethnic minorities*. In terms of age, the largest portion of respondents find it difficult to assess this issue (44%). In the 18-23 age group, the largest share reported that the interests of young people are not taken into consideration/ are not taken into consideration at all (27%), and in the older age group, four out of ten respondents agree (41%).

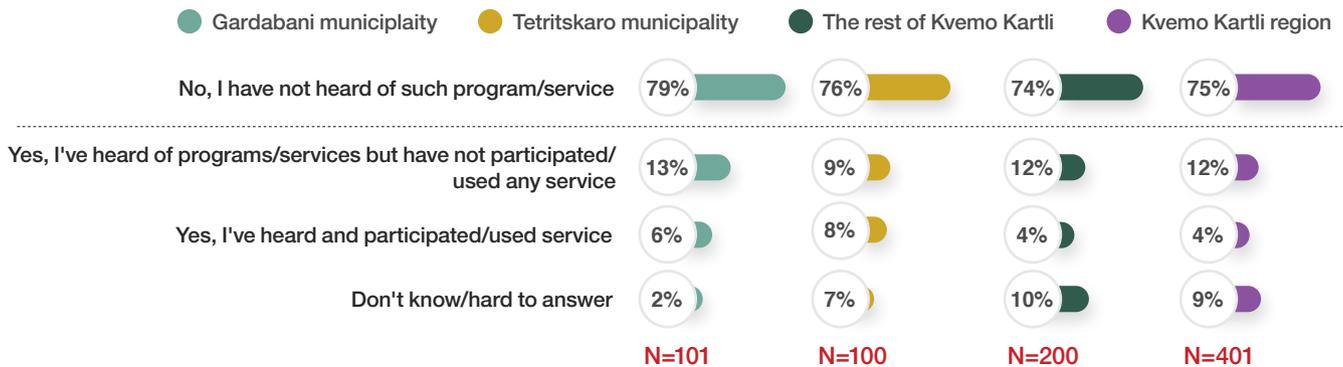
In terms of youth-oriented activities planned and implemented in the municipality, the *qualitative research* revealed that these activities are mostly for school-aged youth, and a major part of those activities are cleaning initiatives and volunteer work, which implies helping senior residents and socially vulnerable citizens. It is also worth mentioning that such activities are mostly related to specific holidays (e.g. New Year, Easter Day). When speaking about implemented activities, older age groups mostly mention sports activities. It is also noteworthy that these activities are mostly related to the availability of different sports classes and activities. These activities do not include young people, but are available for those who attend classes and are seriously involved in sports, rather than just for fun or a healthy lifestyle. In addition, these activities are mostly concentrated in municipal centers and are rarely available in rural settlements.

The fact that activities are mostly oriented on school-aged children is explained by research participants. They believe that after graduating from school, many young people leave the municipality to work or study elsewhere. Those who return "are involved in different things" and do not bother to become involved in activities. Thus, the largest portion of young people in the region are school-aged, and it is easier and more realistic to engage them in activities. With regard to the *location* of activities, it is noteworthy that 14-17 year-old respondents from rural settlements-type settlements were less informed on whether any activities were carried out in municipal centers. Respondents from other groups noted that activities are mostly concentrated in municipal centers. In addition, it was declared that different classes (sports, art) for young people are available in the center, and they are difficult

to access for young people from rural settlements-type settlements due to problems related to *transportation*.

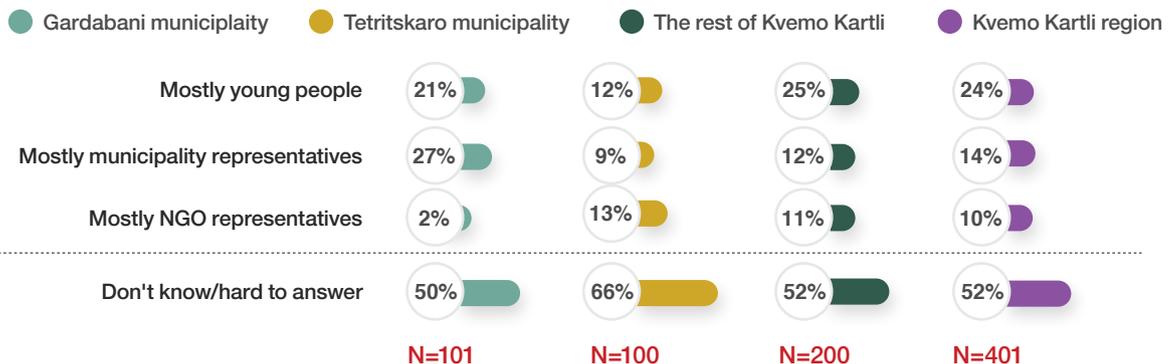
The majority of respondents inquired in **Kvemo Kartli** have not heard of youth municipal programs/services (75%). The distribution is almost similar in target municipality and in the rest of the region. From those respondents (16%) who had heard of youth municipal programs/services, the largest portion named youth camps and summer schools. Respondents also mentioned the promotion of sports and a healthy lifestyle, volunteer work, and support programs for sports club teams.

Chart 123. Awareness of youth municipal programs/services in the municipality



Half of respondents in **Kvemo Kartli** find it difficult to identify the initiator of youth-oriented planned/implemented activities in their municipality (52%), while one-fourth of respondents believe that the *initiators are young people* (24%). Half of respondents in **Gardabani municipality** find it difficult to assess this issue (50%), while one-third identified *municipality representatives as initiators* (27%). As for **Tetrtskaro municipality**, a large portion of respondents found it difficult to identify the initiator of youth-oriented planned/implemented activities (66%).

Chart 124. Initiator of youth-oriented activities planned/implemented in the municipality

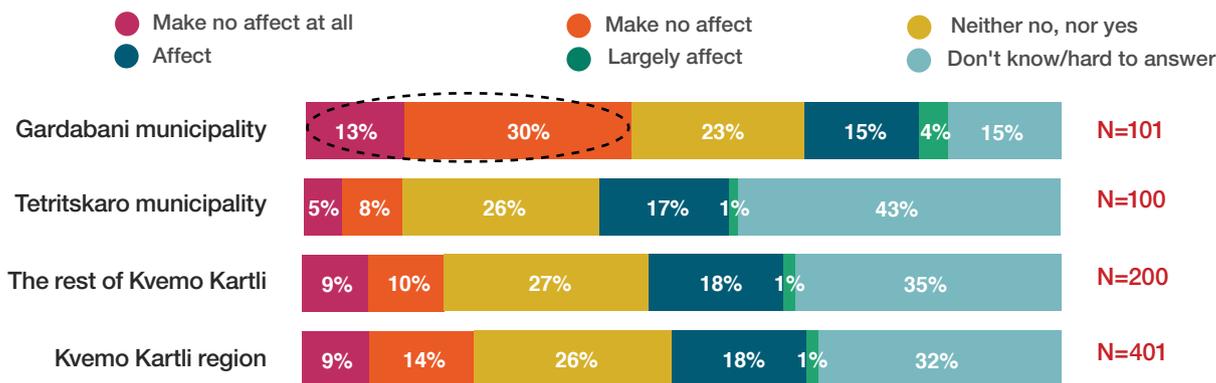


Qualitative research revealed that young people in Tetrtskaro municipality are rarely initiators of youth-oriented activities. Even though the representative of local self-government noted that young people apply to them with initiatives, this is rare exception rather than a common practice.

As for membership of youth organization/association, the vast majority of respondents are not and have never been their member in Kvemo Kartli region as well as in target municipalities. From those respondents (6% - 22 individuals in entire region) who are or have been members of youth organization/association, the majority declared that organizing trainings/workshops was main activity their youth organization/association practiced. Respondents also reported on having organized cultural activities, charity events/activities and sports activities.

Respondents also assessed the extent to which young people like them affect the decision-making process. According to the study results, one-third of respondents in **Kvemo Kartli** find it difficult to answer this question (32%), while 26% said that *young people affect and do not affect the decision making process at the same time*. The majority of respondents in **Gardabani municipality** mostly shared the position that *young people like them cannot affect/make no affect at all on the decision making process at the local level* (43%). Four of ten respondents in **Tetrtskaro municipality** could not provide an assessment (43%), while one-fourth of respondents took a neutral position (26%).

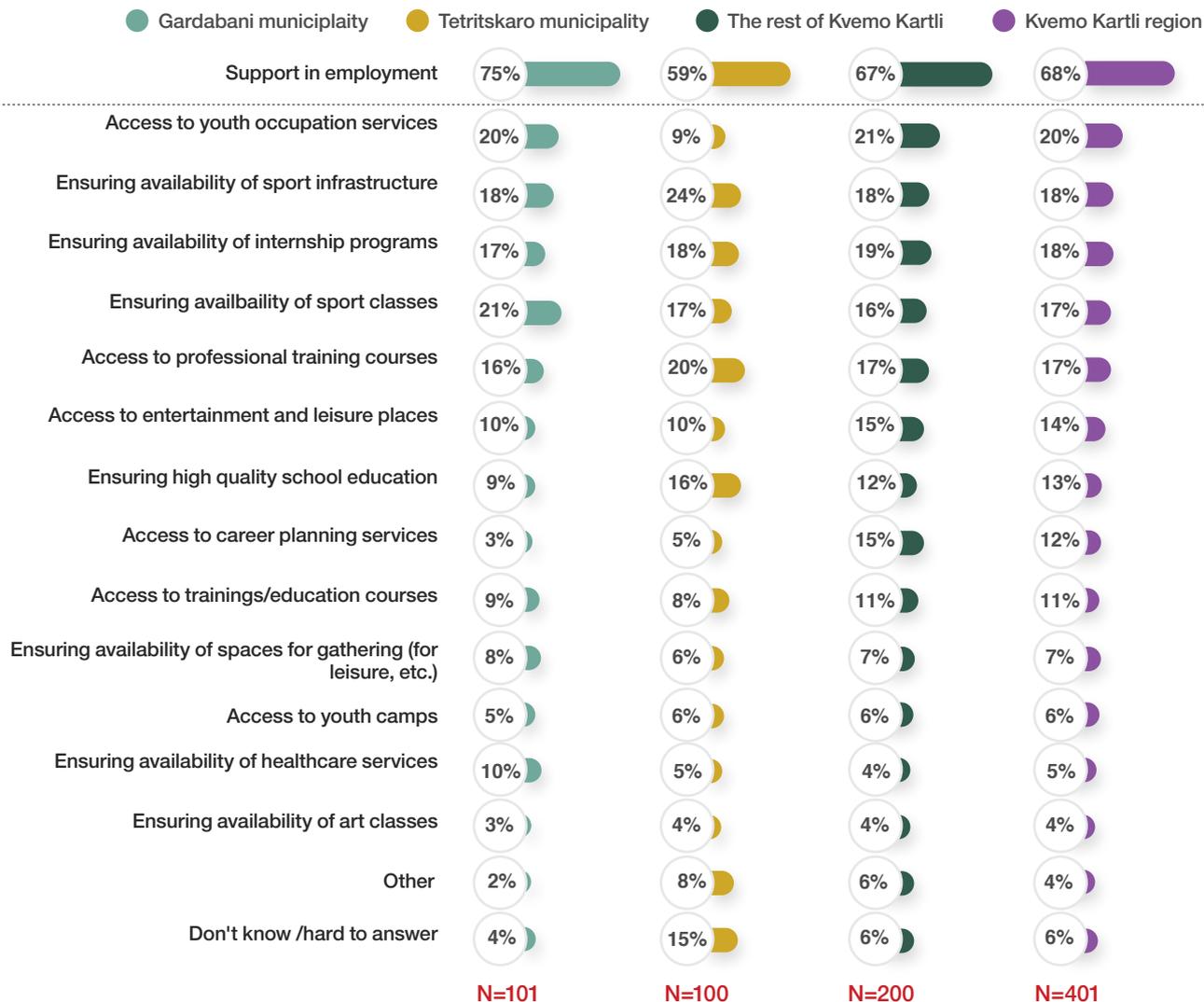
Chart 125. Assessment of whether or not young people affect the decision-making process at the local level



When asked whether or not respondents have participated in the process of making important decisions for young people in the municipality over the past 1-2 years, the vast majority of respondents in Kvemo Kartli in general (88%) as well as in target municipalities (Gardabani – 85%, Tetrtskaro – 85%) reported having no such experience. Half of the respondents in Kvemo Kartli explained that they had not heard of such an opportunity (54%). A total of 59% of young people in Gardabani municipality and 71% in Tetrtskaro municipality provided the same reason. Low participation of young people in decision-making processes together with other issues that we will discuss later in the sub-chapter of Political Participation and civil activism can be explained by the fact that young people fully assign the responsibility of making important decisions as well as the implementation of those decisions to the local self-government. This was clearly demonstrated as a result of the qualitative research. As school-aged and older young people participating in focus group discussions in Tetrtskaro municipality mentioned, the main responsibility for the planning and management of processes is assigned to local self-government, which has their respective duties and obligations taken from the central government. It is also worth mentioning that when speaking about their responsibility, young people mostly imply engagement in the activities that are already planned and not those that require planning.

The majority of respondents in **Kvemo Kartli** believe that the main challenge/problem that is important to be addressed for young people in their municipality is *support in employment* (68%). A similar vision is shared by respondents in the target municipalities and the rest of Kvemo Kartli.

Chart 126. Main challenges/problems that are important to be address in the municipality for young people

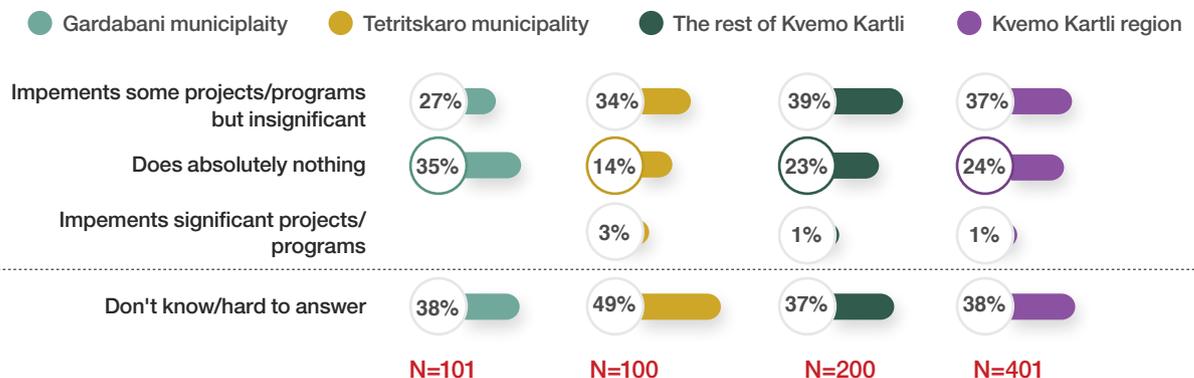


Two out of ten respondents in the region stressed the importance of addressing challenges related to youth services, sports infrastructure, internship programs, and the availability of sports classes. The majority of respondents (75%) also identified *support in employment* as the most important problem that needs to be addressed. As for **Tetritskaro municipality**, *support in employment* was named by the majority of respondents as the most important challenge to address (59%). One-fourth of respondents pointed out the importance of tackling problems related to the availability of *sports infrastructure* (24%).

When speaking about themselves as young people living in Tetritskaro municipality, participants of the *qualitative research* focused on challenges regarding the availability of sports infrastructure and classes, as well as spaces for entertainment, leisure, gatherings, and informal education. The older age group paid more attention to challenges regarding the employment of young people. Limited access to transportation was also identified as a challenge that is particularly problematic in rural settlements-type settlements. Respondents also stressed the importance of problems related to Georgian language literacy. We will discuss of each of them in the respective sub-chapters, but it is worth mentioning here that young participants of the qualitative research did not point out important steps made by the local government to address the above-mentioned problems. It was noted that there are a few cases in which certain activity is noticeable (“they arranged a sports ground in our settlement”), but young people did not say much about progress.

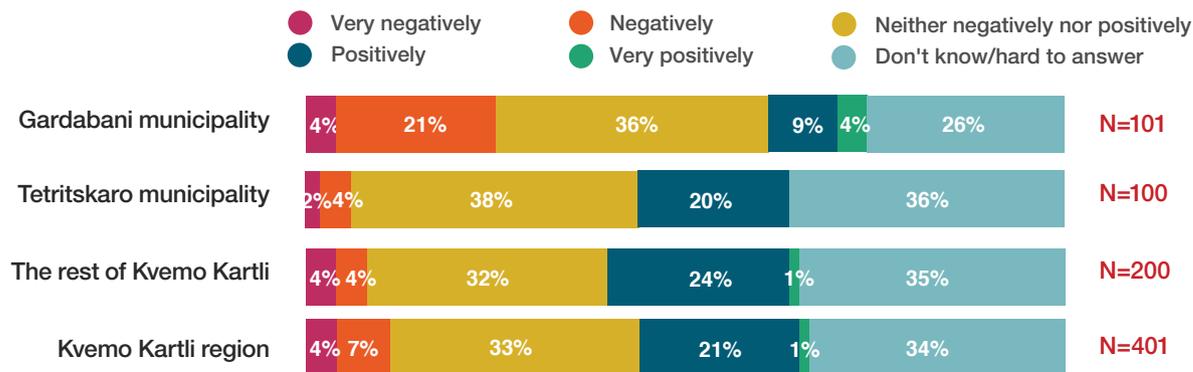
Respondents of the quantitative study were asked to assess what the local government does to tackle these problems, and it turned out that four out of ten respondents in **Kvemo Kartli** (38%) find it difficult to answer this question. A similar portion of respondents believe that *local self-government implements some projects/programs, but the amount is insignificant* (37%). It is worth mentioning that one-fourth of respondents believe that local government does nothing to address problems. In **Gardabani municipality**, 38% of respondents could not answer the question and 35% reported that local government does nothing to address these problems. Every second respondent (49%) in Tetritskaro municipality found it difficult to provide an assessment, while 34% of respondents believe that local government implements some projects/programs, but that the amount is insignificant.

Chart 127. Assessment of local government’s work in terms of addressing problems



One-third of respondents inquired in Kvemo Kartli declared that they assess youth outcomes achieved through youth-oriented programs and projects on the national and local levels neither negatively nor positively (33%). Assessments are similar in target municipalities and in the rest of the region.

Chart 128. Assessment of outcomes achieved through youth-oriented programs and events at the national and local levels



When discussing outcomes achieved in youth direction at the national level, a key informant from the local self-government mentioned the latest changes that were made in the Youth Agency. Namely, as assessed by the respondent, returning the agency's functions to the structural unit of the Ministry raises many questions. In addition, there are questions about why it is a better option to merge the agency with the Ministry again, and whether or not it would be important to engage young people in discussions around this process. This respondent did not display a clearly positive or negative attitude, but his narrative enables us to determine that the main questions are with regard to incorporating the agency into the structural unit of the ministry again.

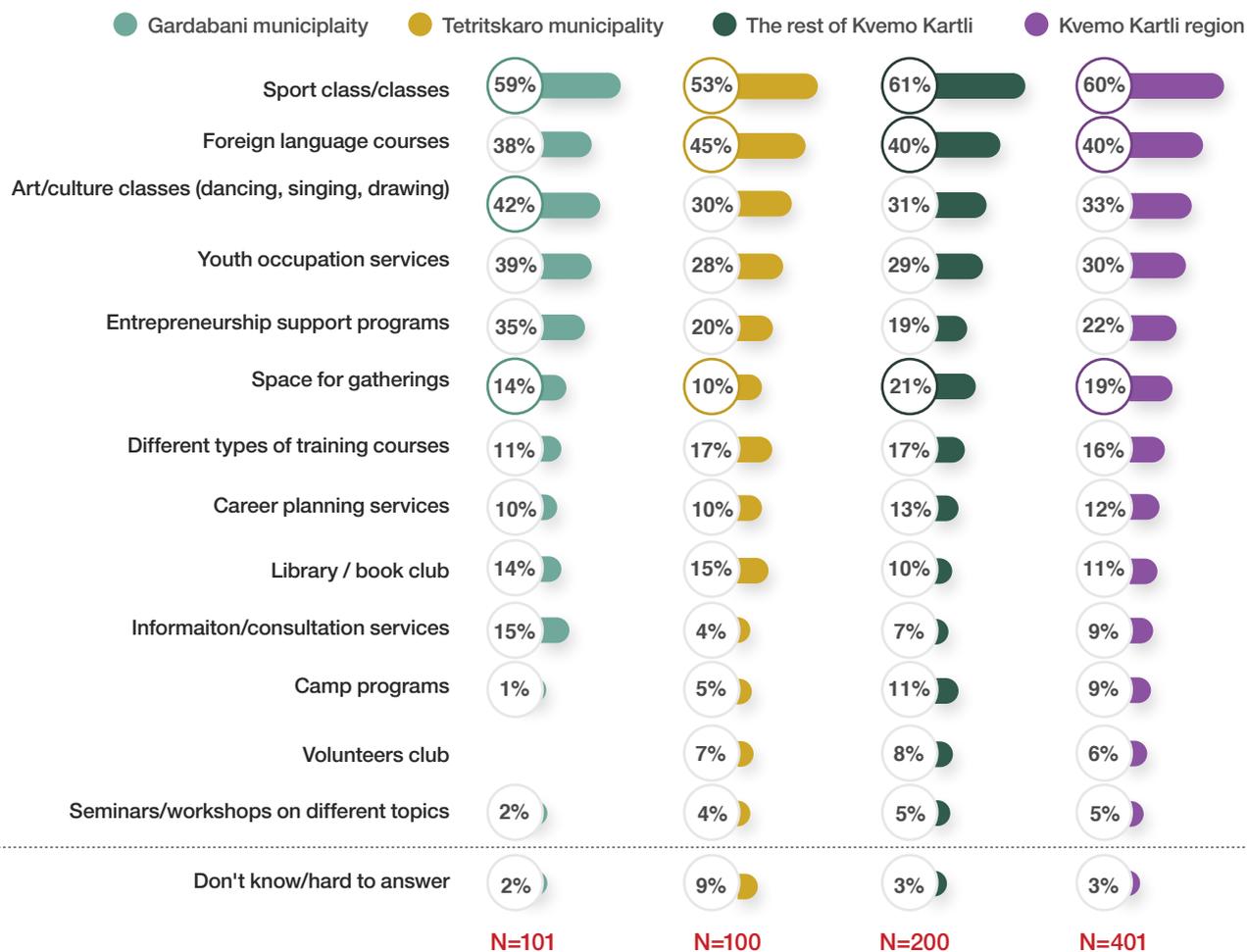
5.3. Education and Employment

Education

The majority of respondents inquired in **Kvemo Kartli** believe that a *high quality school education is available/fully available for young people* (75%). About seven out of ten respondents have a similar belief in **Gardabani** and **Tetrtskaro municipalities** (68% and 73%, respectively). As for the rest of Kvemo Kartli, a similar point of view is shared by 77% of inquired young people.

When assessing services that are particularly important for young people in the settlement, the majority in **Kvemo Kartli** named *sports classes* (60%) and *foreign language courses* (40%). The two most frequently named services that are considered the most important for young people in **Gardabani municipality** are sports (59%) and *art/culture classes* (42%). Two most frequently named services in **Tetrtskaro municipality** are *sports* (53%) and *foreign language courses* (45%). The reality is similar from a rural settlements-urban settlements perspective. It is worth mentioning that seven out of ten respondents (69%) in rural areas prioritized access to sports classes in their settlement. This index is 49% in urban areas. Interesting results were obtained in terms of an age perspective. Access to sports classes is deemed important for every age group. as for the second most frequently named service that is important for young people, it is interesting that if school-aged (14-17 years) respondents prioritized access to art/culture classes (35%), older age groups deem it important to have access to foreign language courses (18-23 years - 47%, 24-29 years - 42%). As for a *gender* perspective, the majority of women and men think that it is very important for young people to have access to sports classes in their settlement (52% and 68%, respectively).

Chart 129. Particular importance of the availability of services for young people in the settlement

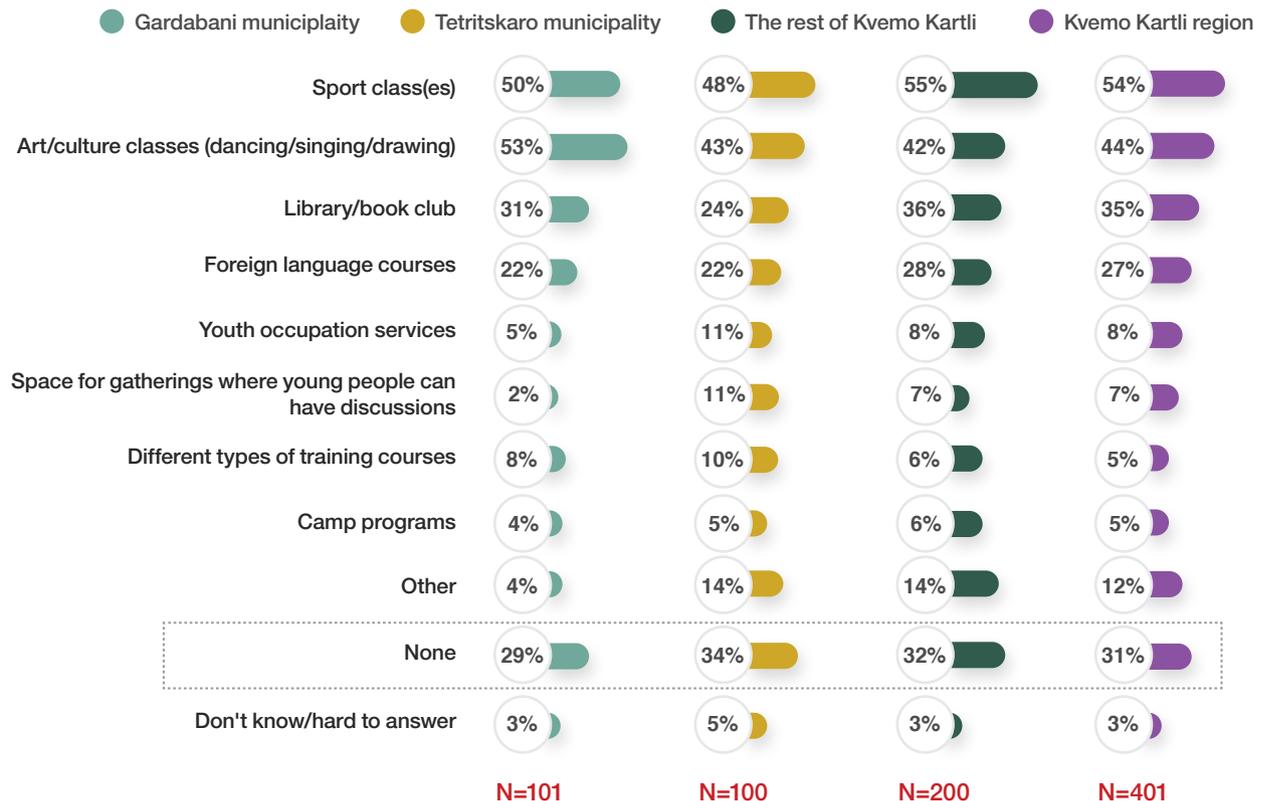


It is worth mentioning that young respondents of the *qualitative research* in Tetrtskaro municipality prioritized access to services such as *space for gathering*, where young people would be able to have discussions, organize trainings, share opinions, and communicate with each other. Even though only 10% of young people identified access to this type of service as important for young people in Tetrtskaro municipality, participants from all age groups from urban and rural areas stressed the importance of such spaces. The importance of these spaces was also pointed out by key informants participating in the study. Furthermore, it was noted that it will be important to create similar spaces online in order to achieve the main goal – discussions, communication and informal education. It was noted that since the main purpose of these spaces is to discuss different topics, get to know each other and share opinions, using an online format is also acceptable. However, even though the idea of planning activities in an online format was

approved, it is also worth mentioning that respondents believe this can't be the main format for gatherings, due to the fact that internet access is limited in rural areas. Thus, young participants as well as key informants of the study shared the vision that such physical spaces should be made available not only in municipal centers, but in rural settlements -type settlements. The idea of gathering in an online format is considered more as an auxiliary mechanism.

It is noteworthy that space for gatherings where young people can have discussions or plan and organize different activities is available only for 7% of young people in the entire region. As for other services young people currently have access to in their settlement, it turns out that the two most accessible services in the region as well as in both target municipalities and the rest of the region are *sports and art/culture classes*. The third most frequently named service in the entire region is a *library/book club*. It is also worth mentioning that *foreign language courses* were a prioritized service for almost three out of ten respondents (27%) in the entire region and two out of ten in Gardabani (22%) and Tetrtskaro (22%) municipalities. It is important to note that none of the *listed services* were available for about three out of ten respondents inquired in the entire region as well as in target municipalities. Half of respondents inquired in *rural settlements* noted that none of the services were available in their settlement (53%), while almost no one (2%) stated the same in urban areas. The most highly accessible service in urban and rural areas is sports classes (87% and 29%, respectively).

Chart 130. Availability of services in the settlement



More than half of respondents in entire **Kvemo Kartli** declared that *they have not used any of the services over the past 1-2 years* (59%). A total of 65% of respondents said the same in **Gardabani municipality**, while the number of such respondents in **Tetrtskaro municipality** is 74%. Only 22% of respondents in the entire region of Kvemo Kartli reported participating in sports classes, and this indicator is quite similar in Gardabani municipality as well as in the rest of Kvemo Kartli. Only 9% of respondents in Tetrtskaro municipality reported attending sports classes.

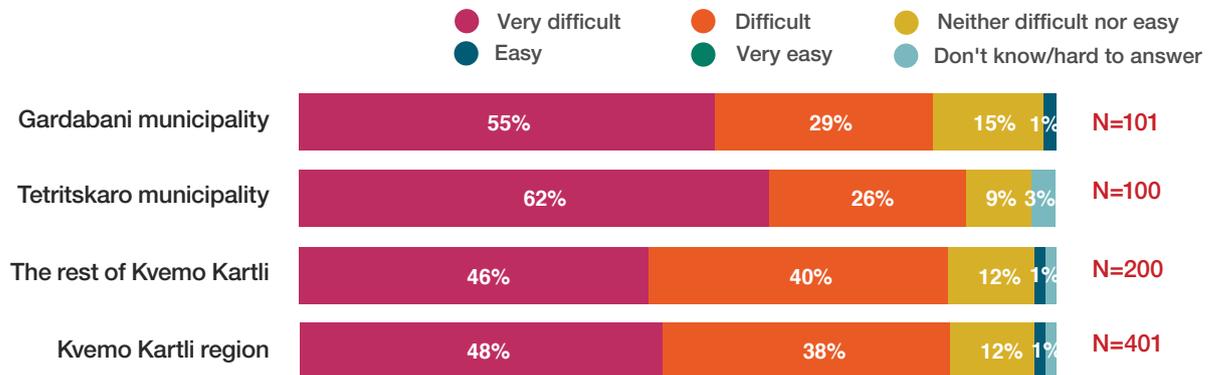
Employment

The share of respondents who work full or part time is 12% in the entire region. The majority of them have a written contract signed with an employer (71%). Most of these contracts are one-year contracts (65%). A total of 40% of employed respondents working full or part time work within their profession. Satisfaction with the job/occupation was rated by full or part-time workers as well as self-employed individuals who are involved in entrepreneurial occupations, as well as those who are freelancers. The share of such respondents was 20%, and half of them are satisfied or very satisfied with their job/occupation (49%).

The number of those respondents who are thinking of starting an entrepreneurship/business activity or/and self-employment is only 8%. The largest portion plans on starting such an activity in retail trade, agriculture, or tourism.

The majority of respondents inquired in **Kvemo Kartli** believe that it is either difficult or very difficult for young people to get a job (86%), and every second respondent believes that getting a job is very difficult (48%). This indicator is especially pronounced in **Tetrtskaro municipality**, where nine out of ten respondents think that getting a job is either *difficult or very difficult* in their municipality (88%), and six out of ten assesses obtaining employment as *very difficult* (62%). This index is 55% in **Gardabani municipality**.

Chart 131. Assessment of employment opportunities for young people in the municipality



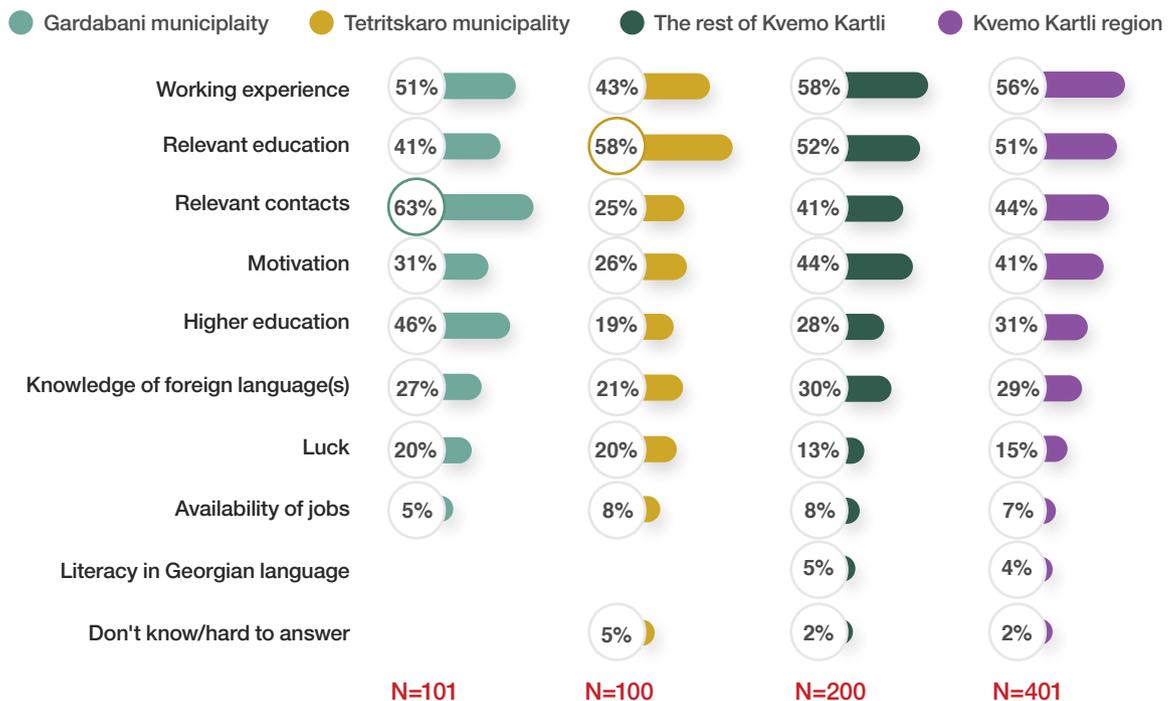
It is worth mentioning that as the age of respondents increases, so does the assessment of obtaining employment opportunities in Kvemo Kartli as “very difficult”. Namely, if one-third of 14-17 year old respondents agree that obtaining employment is very difficult(30%), almost every second respondent provided the same assessment

(47%) in the 18-23 age category, and this index is 67% in the older age group. It is noteworthy that 79% of ethnic Georgians assess obtaining employment opportunities as difficult or very difficult, while this belief is more prevalent among ethnic minorities and applies to almost everyone (93%).

Participants of the *qualitative research* in Tetrtskaro municipality confirmed that employment is a challenge in the municipality, as well as in the region and in the country in general. This was particularly stressed by the older (24-29 year-old) age group. According to them, many young people leave the municipality due to unemployment and seek better work or living opportunities either domestically or internationally.

As demonstrated by the quantitative survey, the majority of respondents in **Kvemo Kartli** identify two main issues for the employment of young people: *working experience* (56%) and *relevant education* (51%). The majority of respondents in **Gardabani municipality** identify a *circle of acquaintances* as the most important employment issue (63%), while every second respondent named *working experience* (51%). *Relevant education* is identified as the main employment issue for young people in **Tetrtskaro municipality** (58%).

Chart 132. Main factors for the employment of young people in the municipality



In terms of *age*, it is noteworthy that if respondents in the 14-17 age group identify relevant education as the main employment issue (56%), elder age groups think that working experience is the most important issue (64% in each older age group). In terms of *ethniurban settlements*, it is worth mentioning that the majority of ethnic

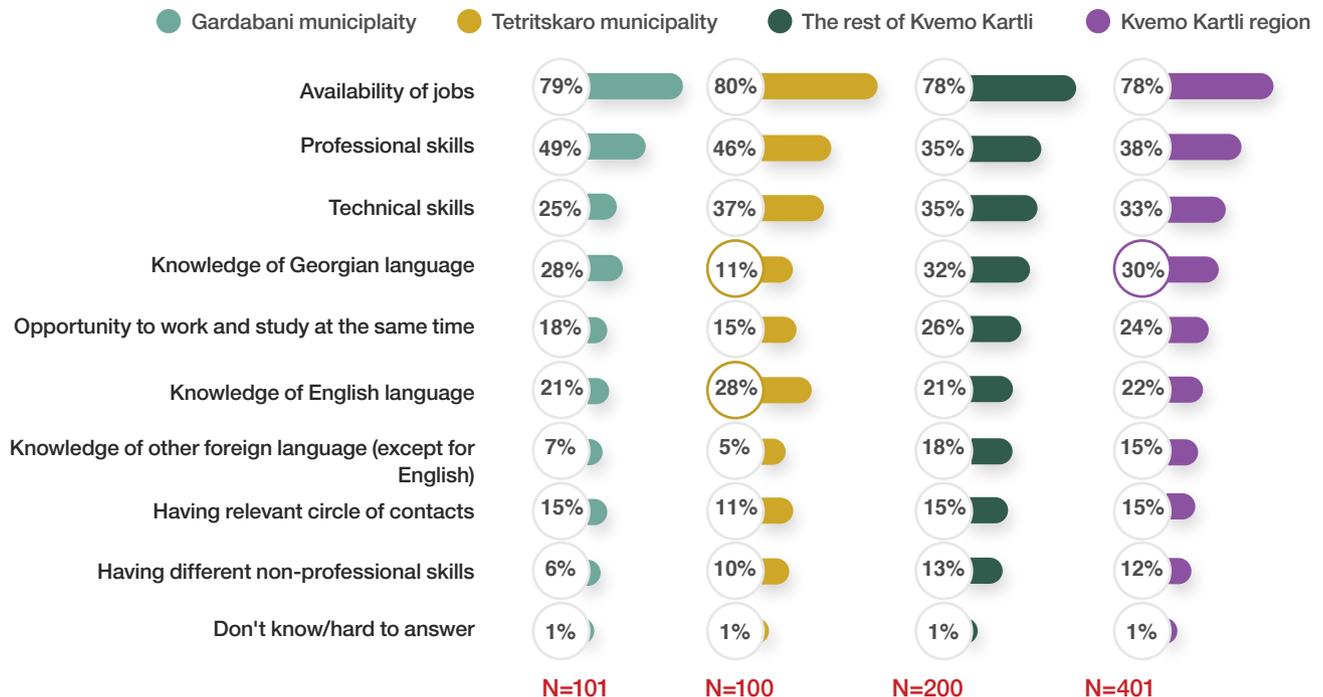
Georgians identify relevant education (58%) as the most important factor, while the majority of ethnic minorities (58%) named working experience. It is also interesting to see the difference regarding the importance of a circle of acquaintances. Namely, this factor is deemed important by every second ethnic Georgian (51%), while 38% of ethnic minorities share the same view.

The majority of respondents believe that the *availability of jobs* would assist young people in their municipality to get a job. Eight out of ten respondents in Kvemo Kartli (78%) as well as in target municipalities and the rest of the region share this view. The second most important factor named in the region in general (38%) as well as in target municipalities and the rest of the region is *having professional skills*.

The availability of jobs as important employment issue was named by the majority of respondents in all age groups. In terms of *age*, it is worth mentioning that professional skills, as the assisting factor, was named by the largest share of respondents inquired in Kvemo Kartli for the 24-29 age group (45%; 14-17 years - 37%, 18-23 years - 33%). Literacy in the English language was named by more respondents in the 14-17 age group (26%), than in elder groups (18-23 years - 18%, 24-29 years - 22%).

It is noteworthy that literacy in the Georgian language as important factor for employment was identified by one-fourth of respondents in the region (30%). This factor was prioritized by only 7% of ethnic Georgians and every second respondent from the group of ethnic minorities (53%).

Chart 133. Factors assisting employment in one's own municipality

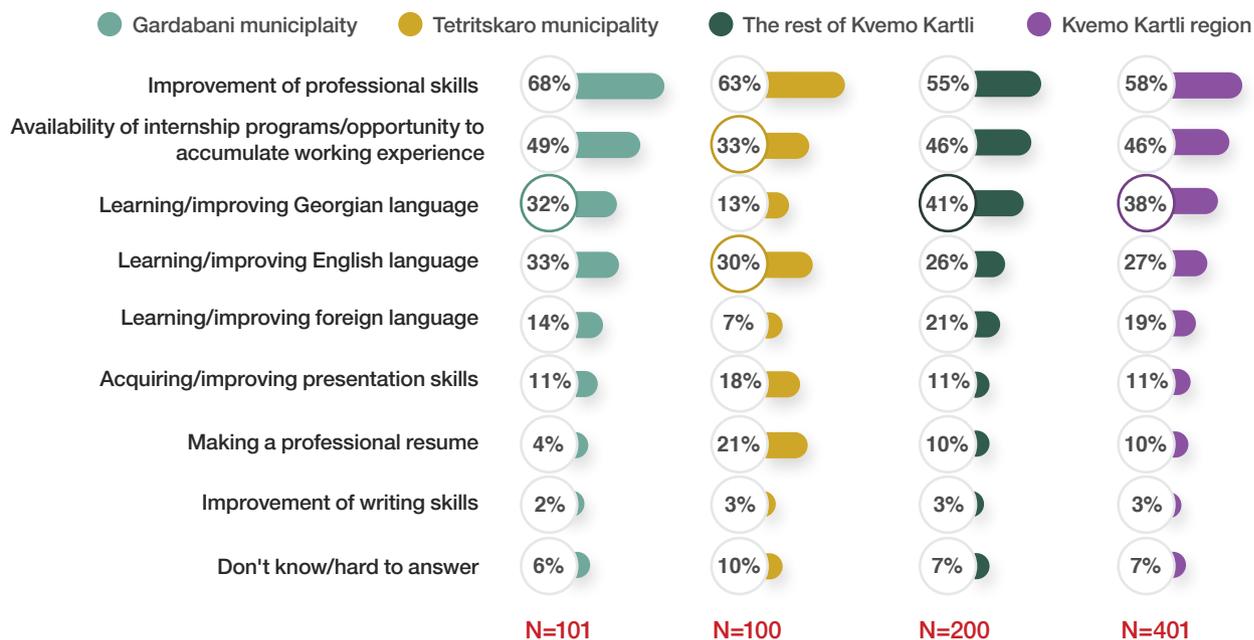


Half of the respondents in **Kvemo Kartli** confirmed that young people from their settlement *get a job in the capital city most easily* (51%), while one-fifth (21%) of respondents think young people find *employment in another country to be easy*. A total of 54% of respondents in **Gardabani municipality** believe that young people from their settlement get a job in the capital city most easily, and the same was reported by 74% of respondents in **Tetrtskaro municipality**. Only 12% of respondents reported that it is easy to get a job in the region including their municipality.

A total of 81% of respondents inquired in **Kvemo Kartli** believe that *offering career planning service to school-aged people* that will inform them on different professions and requirements of the labor market is important/very important. Similar to the region, eight out of ten respondents share the same views in target municipalities (Gardabani – 84%, Tetrtskaro – 82%) and in the rest of the region (80%). It is worth mentioning that these views are similar across all age groups.

In **Kvemo Kartli**, 58% of respondents believe that *support in improving professional skills* would help young people living in their municipality to get a job. In addition, 46% of respondents think that *access to internship programs and opportunities to accumulate working experience* are important. In **Gardabani municipality**, 68% of respondents deemed *support in improving professional skills* as important, while the same view was shared by 63% in **Tetrtskaro municipality** and 55% in the rest of the region. It is worth mentioning that one-third of respondents inquired in Tetrtskaro municipality identified *access to internship programs/opportunities to accumulate working experience* (32%) and *support in learning/improving the English language* as important factors. In general, one-third of respondents stressed the importance of this factor (27%), while four out of ten respondents assessed support in learning/improving the Georgian language as important (38%).

Chart 134. Skills/knowledge support in the improvement of which would help young people obtain employment



One-third of respondents in Kvemo Kartli (33%) find it difficult to assess whether the *environment in Georgia is convenient for young entrepreneurship, innovation and startups*. One-third believes that this environment is not convenient (27%), while 17% said that the environment is convenient. It is worth mentioning that assessments are quite similar in Tetrtskaro municipality. As for Gardabani municipality, one-fifth find it difficult to assess whether the environment is convenient for young entrepreneurship, innovation and startups; while 40% declared that this environment is not convenient/is not convenient at all and only 9% reported on the environment being convenient.

Speaking of employment and acquiring professional skills, as the *qualitative research* conducted in Tetrtskaro municipality revealed, after-school education is a problem. As noted by discussion participants from elder age groups, there is no access to such education, which can be considered as a hindering factor for employment. Considering the fact that it is impossible to have a university in every municipality, young people believe it is important to have vocational school in the municipality. As noted by respondents, Tetrtskaro is quite a large municipality and the availability of a vocational school there would enable many young people to acquire a useful profession without having to leave their place the residence during their studies and after graduation. Key informants (representatives of local self-government as well as the NGO sector) participating in the study confirmed the importance of having access to a vocational school in the municipality.

5.4. Political Participation and Activism

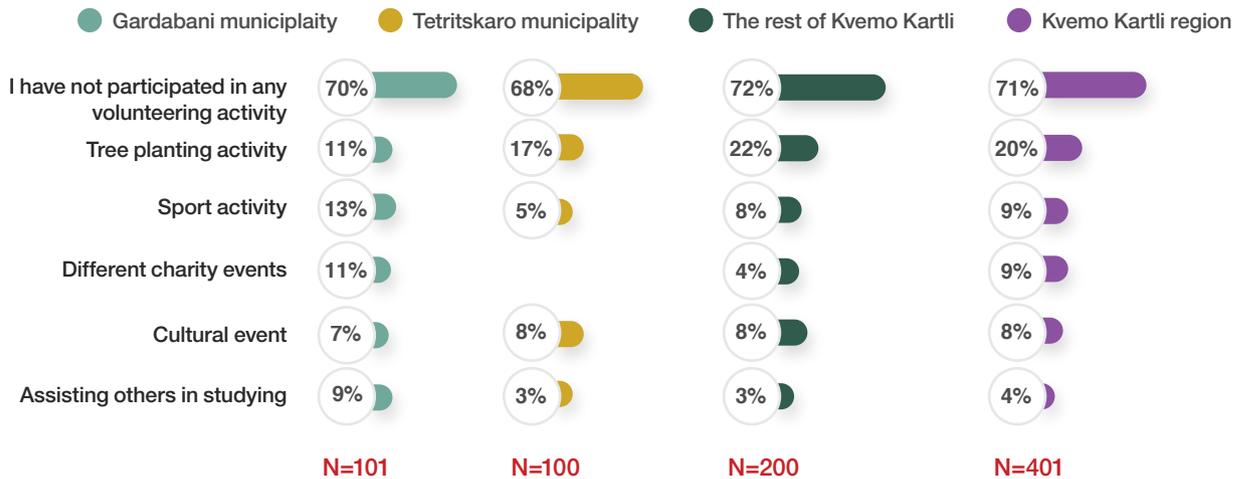
The majority of respondents in **Kvemo Kartli** believe that the *participation of young people in different volunteer activities is important/very important* (81%). The majority of respondents share this vision in target municipalities (Gardabani – 86%, Tetrtskaro – 87%) and the rest of the region (80%). The study did not identify any differences according to age, gender or settlement type. As for *ethniurban settlements*, it is worth mentioning that the participation of young people in volunteer activities is deemed important/very important by 89% of ethnic Georgians and 74% of ethnic minorities.

The majority of respondents in target municipalities as well as in the rest of the region and Kvemo Kartli as a whole *have not participated in any volunteer programs* over the past 2-3 years (Gardabani municipality – 85%, Tetrtskaro municipality – 75%, the rest of the region – 81%, Kvemo Kartli region - 82%).

As for volunteer activities in **Kvemo Kartli**, similar to target municipalities and the rest of the region, seven out of ten respondents *have not participated in any volunteer activity over the past 1-2 years* (Gardabani municipality – 70%, Tetrtskaro municipality – 68%, the rest of the region – 72%, Kvemo Kartli – 71%). Among those who participated in similar activities, the majority named a tree-planting activity. It is noteworthy that when speaking about volunteering or other types of civil activities, participants of the qualitative research predominately mentioned tree-planting activities in Tetrtskaro municipality.

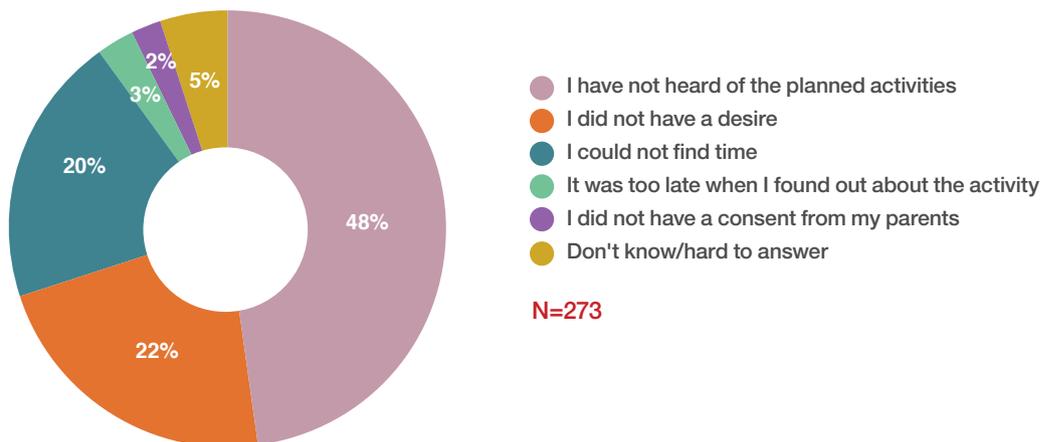
As the study results clarify, the participation rate in different civil activities decreases as the age of young people increases. For example, if 57% of respondents from the 14-17 age group have not participated in any volunteer activity, the same is reported by 69% of respondents from the 18-23 age group, while the index reaches 87% in the 24-29 age group. It is also worth mentioning that more young people from *rural settlements -type settlements* (79%) reported not participating in volunteer activities than those from *urban areas* (62%). It is also worth mentioning that 56% of respondents in the ethnic Georgians group have not participated in any volunteer activities, while the index is much higher in the group of *ethnic minorities* and reaches 86%.

Chart 135. Experience participating in volunteer activities over the past 1-2 years



When asked about the reasons for not participating in volunteer activities, half of inquired respondents in **Kvemo Kartli** mentioned that *they had not heard of the planned activities* (48%). One-fifth said that they *did not have the desire* (22%) and *could not find the time* (20%). Reasons are similar in target municipalities and in the rest of the region. It is worth mentioning that six out of ten respondents reported not being informed on the planned activities in *rural settlements* - type settlements (64%), while the share of such respondents was 22% in *urban areas*.

Chart 136. Reasons why young people did not participate in volunteer activities in Kvemo-Kartli

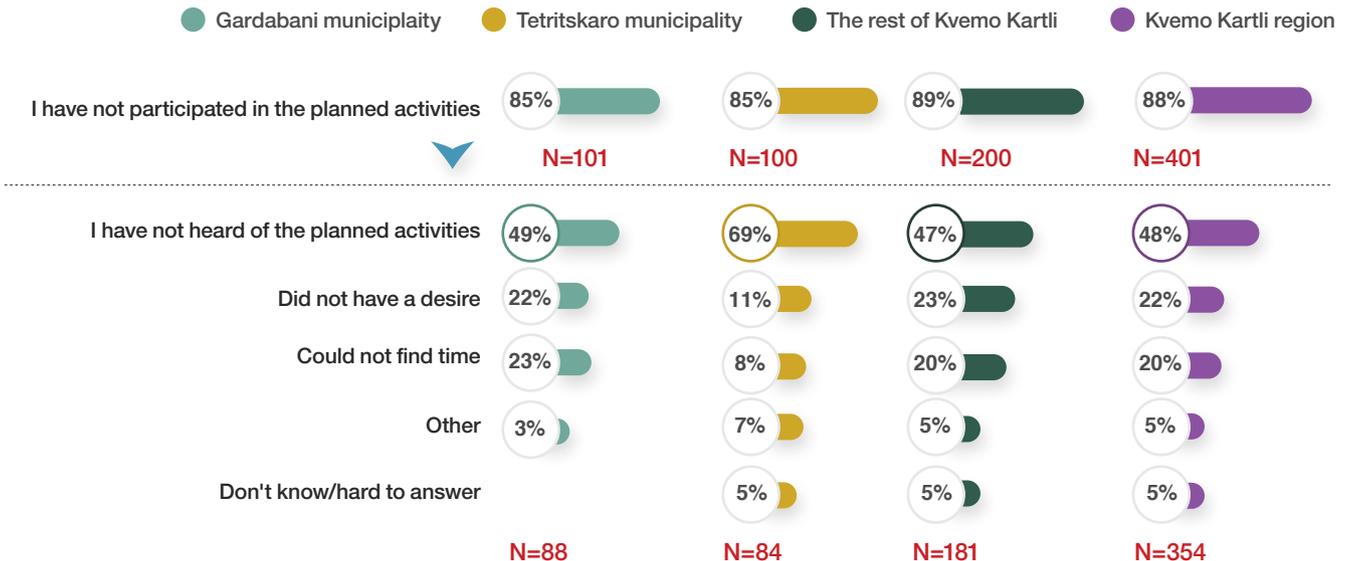


A total of 69% of respondents inquired in **Kvemo Kartli** believe that the *active engagement of young people in different important processes for the country (discussion of topics, protest rallies, signing petitions, etc.) is important or very important*. The same vision is shared by the majority of respondents in target municipalities and the rest of the region. It is worth mentioning that the engagement of young people in different processes is important/very important for eight out of ten respondents in *urban areas* (77%) and six out of ten respondents in *rural areas* (63%). This vision is shared by 82% of ethnic Georgians and 56% of respondents from the group of ethnic minorities.

Regardless of stressing the importance of the active engagement of young people in different processes, the said practice is not prevalent. Namely, as demonstrated by the study, the majority of respondents in target municipalities as well as in **Kvemo Kartli** have not participated in *any civil activity over the past 1-2 years* (88%). The number of those who have participated in public meetings, different demonstrations, signed a petition, etc. is minimal. For example, the largest number of respondents reported *attending civil meeting(s) to discuss important issues/problems* and their share is 5%. The reality is similar in target municipalities and the rest of the region.

As for reasons why respondents have not participated in any of the civil activities, similar to volunteering, the largest portion of respondents inquired in **Kvemo Kartli** responded that they *had not heard of the planned activities* (48%). Every second respondent in **Gardabani municipality** reported the same (49%). This reason is also provided by 69% of respondents in **Tetrtskaro municipality**. Similar to volunteering, the study identified that *more respondents in rural areas reported the absence of information than in rural areas* (rural settlements - 60%, urban settlements - 18%).

Chart 137. Experience participating in civil activities over the past 1-2 years / reasons for not participating



Low civil engagement was confirmed with the results of the qualitative research. Examples of civil engagement in Tetrtskaro municipality were limited to participation in tree planting or charity events, mostly organized by the school or local self-government. It was also emphasized that charity events were mostly related to specific holidays (e.g. Christmas, Easter, etc.).

It is worth mentioning that when discussing the engagement of young people, research participants mostly implied participation in already planned activities instead of planning activities with their initiative. In the best case, for 14-17 year-old respondents, engagement means voicing their initiatives with the elder generation, who will report the problems or opinions of young people to local self-government. Both of these visions were mentioned in elder groups. According to one point of view, engagement ultimately means the presence of initiatives. Engagement can also mean participating in activities that are supposed to be organized by local self-government most of the time.



“[Initiators] should be elders, not young people, as elders are more aware of things. I mean, young people should provide them with information and then the elder generation will report this information to local self-government”.

Tetrtskaro municipality, rural settlement, male, representative of 14-17 age category

“[Engagement implies] having initiatives, because you need to make one interested to participate in some activity”.

Tetrtskaro municipality, urban settlement, male, representative of 18-23 age category

“...initiatives should come from local self-government – for example, 50 plants are to be planted in the rural settlements on Saturday and young people, come and engage! Yes, I will go and engage, I just need to hear their voice”.

Tetrtskaro municipality, rural settlement, male, representative of 14-17 age category

Considering the fact that engagement is more related to activities organized by others, naturally, it becomes important to inform young people about those activities. This, as noted before, is particularly problematic for rural areas where activities are rarely planned, young people are either not informed on activities planned in the municipal center, or there are challenges related to internet access. When it comes to the dissemination of information, another challenge identified by the respondents is knowledge of the Georgian language, which is important considering the specifications of this region. In addition to the fact that young people have a hard time perceiving information disseminated in the Georgian language, it is problematic to engage them in activities because the working language is mostly Georgian.

A key informant participating in the study stressed challenges in terms of awareness. As declared by the representative of local self-government, there is no effective mechanism for sharing information and feedback, and it can be said that the only thing the municipal Mayor’s office uses consistently to spread information is the Mayor’s official Facebook page. This is where they post information on activities so young people can write to the Mayor’s office in regard to their initiatives, in addition to applying to them with statements. As the key informant noted, there are challenges in this direction, too. Namely, the municipality mostly posts information on already implemented activities. Thus, a large portion of respondents receive information on activities post-factum. As there is no youth council that would be exclusively focused on youth affairs, collect important issues, communicate with young people, and obtain information from them, the only way young people have left is to write to a Facebook page or send a statement to reach out to the Mayor’s office.



“[young people] are eager to obtain information but they may not be able to comprehend it because of the language barrier”.

Tetritskaro municipality, rural settlement, male, representative of 14-17 age category

“There have been many events, cultural and sports activities, but the information does not reach everyone. There are rural settlements and categories [of young people] who are not informed and may not be able to participate”.

Tetritskaro municipality, rural settlement, male, representative of 24-29 age category

“Basically, we just recently had feedback. There was a tree planting activity planned and one of the young citizens wrote to us telling that if we had announced that activity earlier, s/he would have participated with pleasure. Our Facebook posts are written in past forms – this activity was carried out. We never post that something is planned to inform young people and allow them to participate. Whenever there is a large-scale event, it can be announced. It’s a small thing, but necessary to make sure that young people are informed if they want to participate – plant a tree or do cleaning, and when we write that the activity has already been carried out, we kill their enthusiasm to participate”.

Representative of local self-government

In addition to their civil activism, respondents also assessed how active young people are in their municipality. As it turns out, one-third in **Kvemo Kartli** found it difficult to assess (32%), and another one-third of respondents think that there is a small group of active young people in the municipality who participate in different civil activities (28%). One-fourth of respondents believe that young people do not participate in civil activities (26%). In **Gardabani municipality**, 45% of respondents believe that young people in their municipality do not participate in civil activity, while half of respondents in **Tetritskaro municipality** find it difficult to assess the extent of young people’s engagement (52%). A total of 19% of respondents reported that young people are not involved in civil activity, while 16% of respondents reported that there is a small group of active young people.

Chart 138. Assessment of young peoples’ engagement in civil activities in their municipality



The fact that civil activism is low and there is a small group of young people who are active was confirmed by the *qualitative research*. As noted by young people participating in discussions in Tetrtskaro municipality, there is a small group of active young people who participate in different activities at the same time. A key informant from local self-government confirmed that there is a small group of active young people in the municipality. As this respondent declares, self-government often fails to respond to their requirements and cannot provide them with support. The main reason for this is believed to be scarce financial resources. As a result, as noted by the key informant, young people are left frustrated and feel less trust towards the local self-government. This was confirmed by a civil activist participating in the study, who believes that regardless of applying to the municipal Mayor's office on different issues, they did not often get a response. Respectively, as declared by the activist, youth-oriented projects are mostly organized and supported by the NGO sector and not with the support of the self-government.

In addition, the qualitative research also demonstrated that regardless of low civil engagement, the dynamics of recent years are positive. As believed by respondents who have this vision, more young people are now involved in volunteer activities than they were years ago. In addition, they apply to local self-government with initiatives more frequently than they did years ago.



"I can say that there are 100 young people in the urban settlements, not more [who are active] and this is an interesting phenomena that those young people who attend informal education classes, dance classes, etc. also actively go to the youth center. If a young person is active, s/he is active everywhere".

Tetrtskaro municipality, rural settlement, female, representative of 18-23 age category

"There is an active group of young people in the municipality. Even though there were cases when local self-government could not and sometimes did not support them, they feel mistrust and pessimism and may not even want to communicate with local self-government again".

Representative of local government

"I have a good perception of what was going on in our municipality before 2016... the engagement of young people in volunteer activities has increased..."

Representative of NGO sector

As for the reasons why a small group/almost no one participates in civil activities, two main reasons provided in **Kvemo Kartli** were that *young people do not fully realize the importance of civil activism* (32%) and that they do not know how to engage in civil activities (25%). These two reasons are dominant in target municipalities and in the rest of the region. It is also worth mentioning that the majority of young people in *urban areas* do not participate in civil activities because they do not fully realize the importance (41%), and the majority of young people from *rural areas* believe that young people do not know how to participate in civil activities (36%).

Half of those respondents who think that at least a certain part of respondents participate in different civil activities find it difficult to name what kind of activities those are (50%). The largest portion of respondents report participating in activities such as discussions of important topics (26%) and environmental activities (24%).

Chart 139. Main reasons why a small group of young people / almost no one participates in civil activities in Kvemo Kartli



According to *qualitative research*, the main reasons for a lack of civil engagement are low awareness and a lack of information. According to supporters of this argument, a large portion of young people do not fully realize what civil activism means and why it is important. In addition, the challenge is that young people are not informed on the forms of civil activism and opportunities to engage in the process.

When discussing the reasons for low civil activism, the qualitative study revealed *public pressure*. In this context, there were two aspects emphasized. In one case, speaking up about problems as a sign of civil activism was related to a cultural factor, in which young people try not to offend their reference group and the society in general. Considering the fact that relatives or acquaintances are very important connections for our society, not making them mad or keeping a benevolent attitude can be considered an important cultural factor. This factor can be discussed as the barrier that prevents young people from speaking up, protesting and raising problems as their acquaintances or relatives can be responsible for addressing those problems.

In the other case, public pressure was related to the negative role of family members. Namely, it was noted that family members often create barriers for young people and do not allow them to participate in different activities. Or at least, the engagement of young people is not supported by family members. As it turns out, this problem is even more severe in the group of ethnic minorities, where the engagement of girls in different activities is even more problematic due to specific attitudes towards traditions.



“The sad reality is that when we can speak up about big problems and protest those severe problems, we remain silent because someone is someone’s relative, someone is silent because of someone and this is so problematic... when you don’t have hope that others will support you and realize that there is no point in speaking up, why say something?”

Tetrtskaro municipality, urban settlement, female, representative of 24-29 age category

“The rural settlements s where [ethnic minorities] these communities are settled in are compact settlements, and they do not even cross the border of that settlement. For example, there are cases when families do not let girls participate in projects. When a girl turns 18, why study? She is supposed to get married and have a family”.

Representative of NGO sector



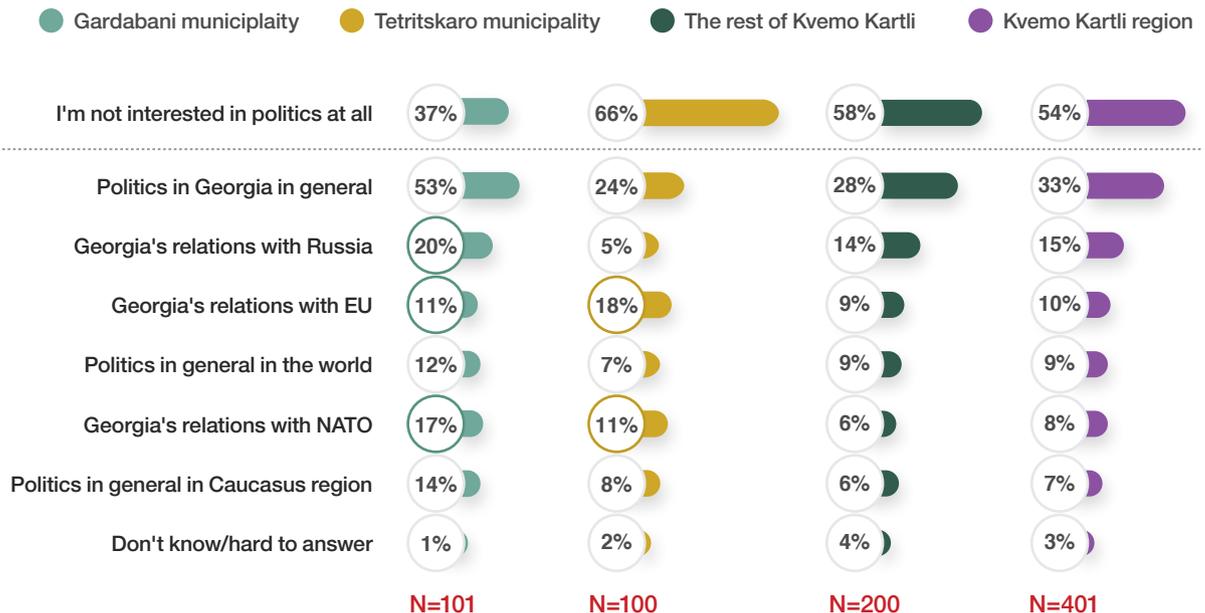
“Even the environment and families who don’t let their children participate in different projects... these are stereotypes in different groups, it used to be stereotypical in ethnic minorities and still is... I may arrange different activities in the rural settlements somewhere, but many children may not participate due to different reasons. Not because they are not interested or do not want to, but because family members do not let them, do not allow them...”

Tetrtskaro municipality, urban settlement, female, representative of 24-29 age category

In **Kvemo Kartli**, 45% of respondents believe that it is *important/very important* for young people to be interested in politics. The same number of respondents share this vision (45%) in **Gardabani municipality**, however it is also worth mentioning that one-fourth of respondents think that young people being interested in politics is not important/not important at all (23%). A total of 43% of respondents reported the importance of the abovementioned in **Tetrtskaro municipality** while one-fifth (20%) share the contradictory vision. It is worth mentioning that as the age of respondents increases, so does their assessment that it is important or very important for young people to be interested in politics. Namely, if the number of such respondents is 34% in the 14-17 age group, the same vision is shared by 44% of respondents in the 18-23 age group and 54% of respondents in the 24-29 age group.

As for how interested respondents are in politics, it turns out that 54% of respondents inquired in **Kvemo Kartli** are not interested in politics. The largest portion is interested in *politics in general in Georgia* (33%).

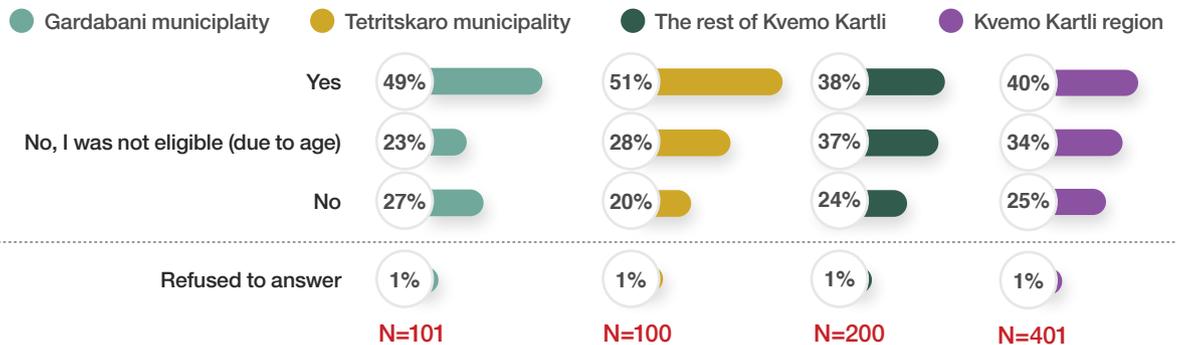
Chart 140. Interest in political issues



Half of respondents in **Gardabani municipality** are interested in *politics in Georgia* (53%), one-fifth are interested in *Georgia's relations with Russia* (20%), and one-third are interested in *Georgia's relations with NATO and EU* (28%). For the majority of respondents in **Tetritskaro municipality**, politics is not interesting (66%), one-fourth are interested in *politics in Georgia* (24%). It is also worth mentioning that one-third of respondents are interested in *Georgia's relations with NATO and EU* (29%). A majority of respondents rarely or never discuss social, economic and political issues in the country. The number of such respondents is six out of ten and more in the region as well as in target municipalities. The majority of those who still discuss these topics do so with friends.

In **Kvemo Kartli**, 40% of respondents participated in the most recent elections (Parliamentary elections 2020), one-fourth did not participate regardless of being eligible (25%), And 34% did not participate due to minor age. Among young people in **Gardabani municipality**, 49% participated in the last elections, but one-third did not regardless of being eligible (27%). Every second respondent in **Tetritskaro municipality** participated in the most recent elections (51%), but one-fifth did not regardless of being eligible (20%).

Chart 141. Experience participating in the most recent elections (Parliamentary elections 2020)



As noted above, young respondents and key informants participating in the *qualitative research* noted that engagement in different processes is increasing. Regardless of this trend, they believe that civil engagement is still very low and definitely requires work. According to the main argument, civil activism is important since it signals development and positive change. The latter affects the process of domestic and international migration. As believed by respondents, active youth signify change. This implies the availability of more opportunities locally, thus, the development. All this combined, is a mechanism to ensure that young people stay and make efforts not only for the sake of their own development, but also their homeland (municipality, region, country).

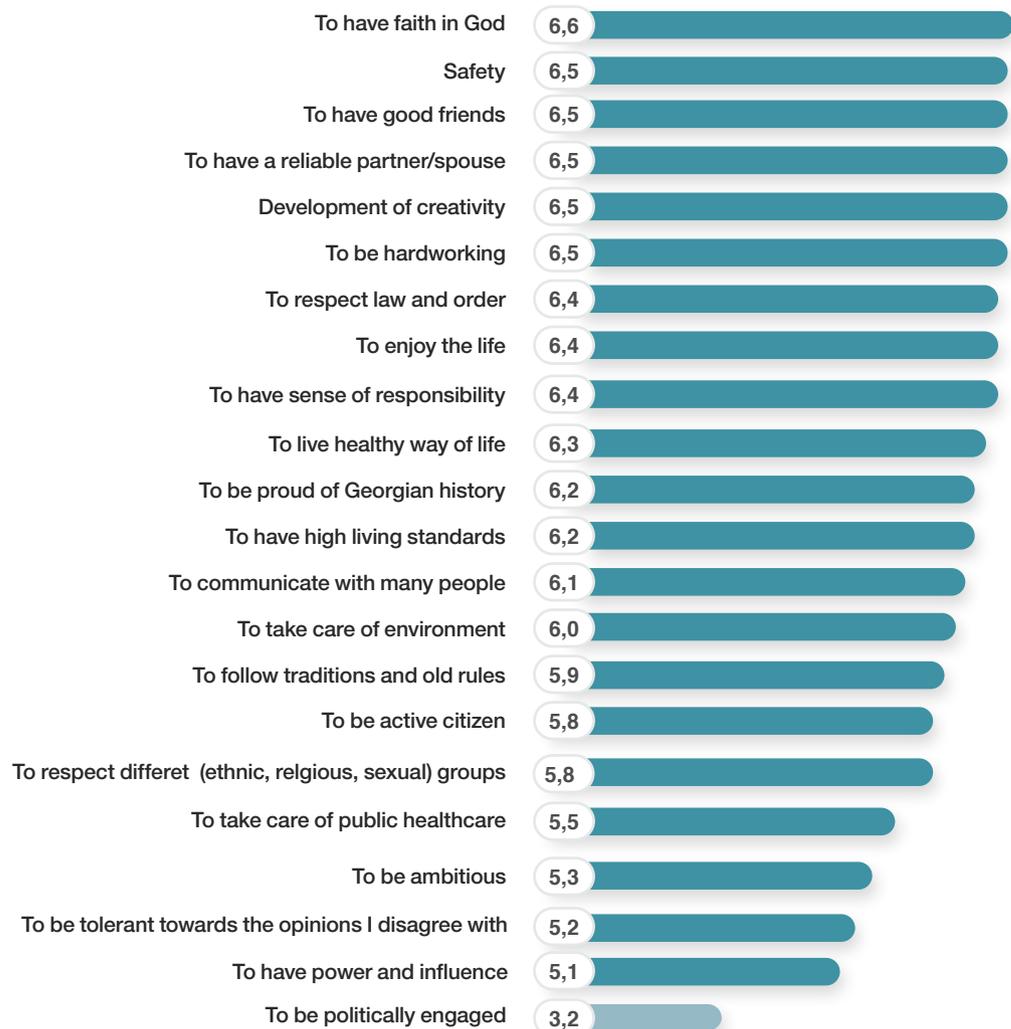
When asked how civil activism can be increased, the qualitative research identified two main mechanisms. Namely, in order to increase the engagement of young people, it is important to have a *support mechanism* in place. Here, research participants imply gathering a small group of young respondents encouraged by the NGO sector, as well as those who are already active in their municipality or region and equipping them with the relevant knowledge and information so they can become active and introduce their own initiatives. It is also worth mentioning that as believed by an NGO sector representative, considering the fact that there are signs of civil activism in locations where a team works in the form of a community or non-governmental organization, we can assume that this mechanism is quite effective.

Another issue that is believed to increase civil activism and is directly related to encouraging already motivated young people even more and making wider groups of young people more active is connected to support. Namely, providing young people with *informal education*. Here, as emphasized by research respondents, this support needs to be particularly active among school-aged children, as older people already have different interests and are less likely to be interested in informal education or civil activism once they graduate from school.

5.5. Values and Rights

Research participants were asked to assess the importance of different values. Results show that almost every listed value is important/very important for young participants.

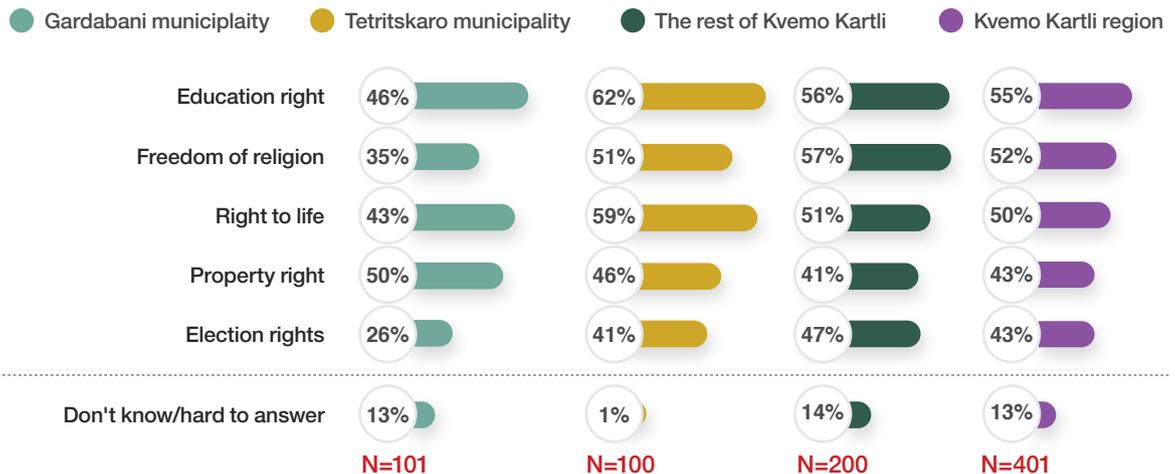
Chart 142. Assessment of the importance of values (7-point scale where “1” means “totally unimportant” and “7” means “very important”)



The most important value is believed to be **faith in God** (to have faith in God – 6.6 points), while the least important value is **Political Participation** (to be politically active – 3.2 points). Assessments are similar in target municipalities, but several differences were identified. Namely, it turns out that the following values are deemed more important in Tetrtskaro municipality than in Gardabani municipality: to be an active citizen (6.4 points and 5.2 points, respectively); to have power and influence (5.1 and 4.3 points, respectively); and to take care of the environment (6.5 points and 6.8 points, respectively).

As for the rights young people have heard of, it turns out that every second respondent in **Kvemo Kartli** has heard of the right to education (55%), freedom of religion (52%) and right to life (50%). Four out of ten respondents have heard of property (43%) and election rights (43%), and one out of ten respondents has heard of other rights provided in the list. It is worth mentioning that the largest portion of respondents inquired in **Gardabani municipality** have heard of property (50%) and education (46%) rights. The two most frequently named rights in **Tetrtskaro municipality** were the right to education (62%) and the right to life (59%).

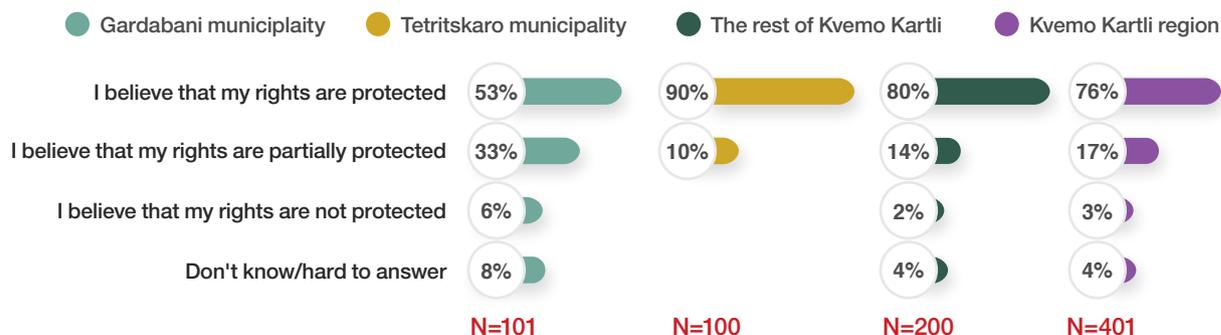
Chart 143. Human rights young people have heard of²⁰



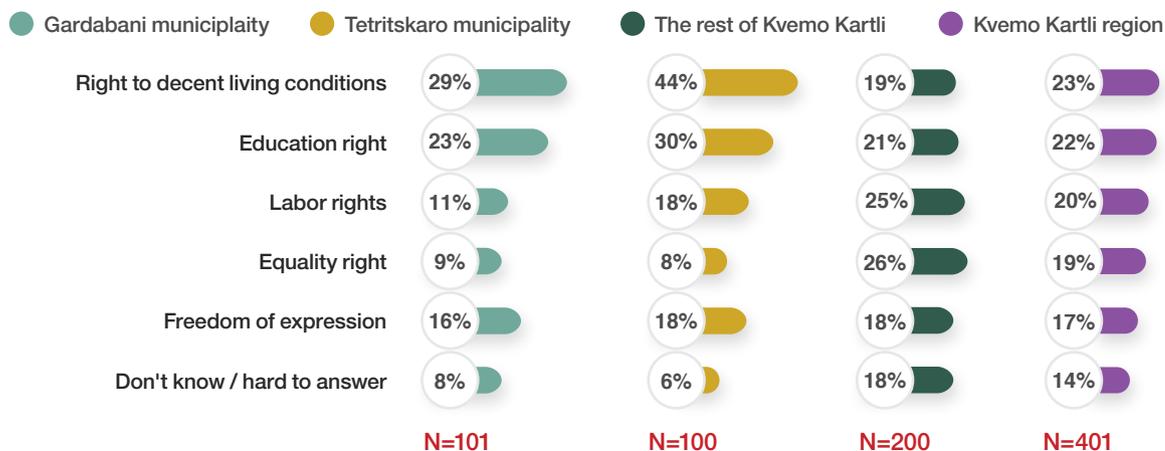
The majority of respondents in **Kvemo Kartli** believe that their rights are protected (76%), and 17% reported that their rights are partially protected. Every second respondent in **Gardabani municipality** reported that their rights are protected (53%), and one-third said that their rights are partially protected (33%). A majority (90%) of respondents in **Tetrtskaro municipality** believe that their rights are protected. It is worth mentioning that as age increases, the feeling that rights are protected decreases, however the majority in every age category still think that their rights are protected (14-17 years - 86%, 18-23 years - 75%, 24-29 years - 68%). The majority agrees both in *rural areas* (81%) and in *urban areas* (69%). In addition, more respondents from the group of ethnic minorities have a feeling that their rights are protected (82%) than ethnic Georgians (70%).

²⁰ The chart presents only those rights at least four out of ten respondents have heard of

Chart 144. Feelings on the protection of rights



When speaking about the rights that *are not protected/partially protected*, 14% of respondents in **Kvemo Kartli** find it difficult to answer this question, while one-fifth of respondents said that the following rights are not protected/partially protected: *right to decent living conditions, right to education, labor rights, equality rights, and freedom of expression*. A total of 5% and fewer respondents reported that the remaining rights are not protected/are partially protected. The largest portion of respondents in **Gardabani municipality** reported that the right to decent living conditions is not protected/partially protected, and 44% of respondents agreed in **Tetrtskaro municipality**. Among all respondents, 16% in Gardabani municipality and 18% in Tetrtskaro municipality reported that the freedom of expression is not protected/partially protected.

Chart 145. Rights that are not protected/partially protected²¹

²¹ The chart presents the rights two out of ten or more respondents mentioned in the region

It is worth mentioning that the largest number of *women* inquired in **Kvemo Kartli** believe that equality rights (28%) are not protected/partially protected. As for *men*, the largest number identified education rights (22%). In terms of *age*, it is noteworthy that one-third of school-aged children find it difficult to identify which of their rights are not protected/partially protected (32%), and similarly, one-third think that education rights are not protected/partially protected (31%). Education rights are believed to be unprotected/partially protected by the majority of respondents in the 18-23 age group (37%). The majority in the older group (24-29) reported that their right to decent living conditions is not protected/partially protected (44%). The majority of respondents in the group of ethnic minorities think that their right to education is not protected/partially protected (41%). Two out of ten ethnic Georgians identified rights such as labor (20%), equality (20%) and freedom of expression (19%).

It is worth mentioning that young people participating in the *qualitative research* in Tetrtskaro municipality found it difficult to name their rights, especially those rights that are violated or less protected in their municipality. It is worth mentioning that according to one of the arguments, one of the most important rights – freedom of expression and speech – is guaranteed, but the problem is that young people are not interested in expressing their opinions.

A civil activist that acted as a key informant of the study stressed the violation of education rights. As believed by the respondent, young people have no access to after-school education locally, while moving to other cities (mostly the capital city) requires financial resources and not everyone can afford it. A representative of the NGO sector stressed challenges in terms of the awareness on rights and noted that it is necessary to inform school-aged children on both their rights and mechanisms for the protection of those rights.

5.6. Challenges and Aspirations

Challenges

Research participants were asked to assess to what extent the availability of different services is problematic for young people in their municipality. As it turns out, young people in **Kvemo Kartli** identified the three most important challenges for young people like them: a *lack of jobs* (5.9 points), *access to entertainment and leisure places* (5.8 points) and *entrepreneurship support programs* (5.6 points).²² The three least problematic issues are access to internet (2.2. points), access to transportation (2.4 points) and access to a computer (2.7 points).

The same issues were deemed problematic in **Gardabani municipality**. As for **Tetrtskaro municipality**, the most problematic issues identified were challenges related to the accessibility of entertainment and leisure places (5.9 points), access to an internship (5.9 points) and a lack of jobs (5.8 points).

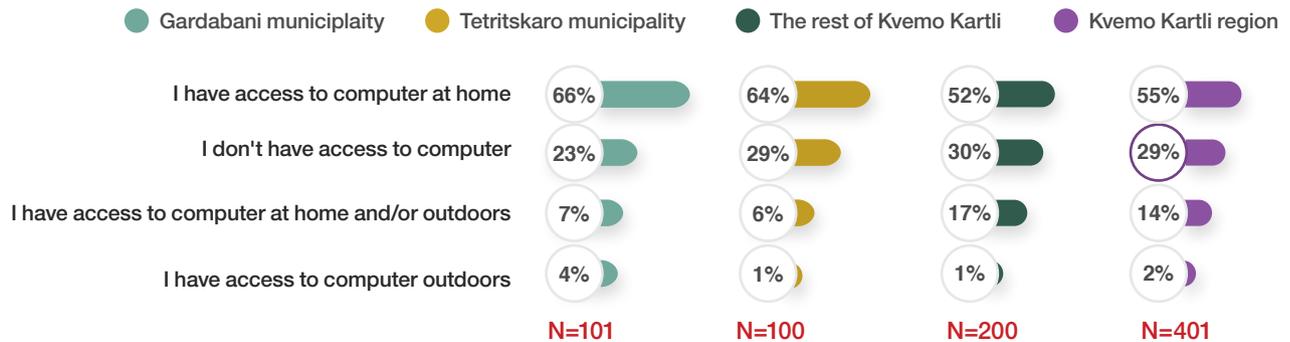
²² Note: the extent of the severity of the problem was assessed on a 7-point scale where “1” means it’s not problematic/challenging at all, and “7” means it’s a serious problem/challenge)

Table # 9. Assessment of various issues for young people in their municipality (assessment on a 7-point scale where “1” means “it’s not problematic/challenging at all”, and “7” means “it’s a serious problem/challenge”)

| To what extent are the following issues problematic/challenging for young people in the municipality | Gardabani | Tetrtskaro | The rest of Kvemo Kartli | Kvemo Kartli |
|--|-----------|------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| Lack of jobs | 5.8 | 5.8 | 6.0 | 5.9 |
| Access to entertainment and leisure places | 5.7 | 5.9 | 5.8 | 5.8 |
| Access to programs supporting entrepreneurship | 5.8 | 5.4 | 5.6 | 5.6 |
| Access to spaces for young people to gather, rest, have fun, or organize various events | 5.2 | 5.5 | 5.4 | 5.4 |
| Access to an internship | 5.3 | 5.9 | 5.3 | 5.3 |
| Access to higher education | 5.6 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 5.0 |
| Access to trainings/educational courses | 5.2 | 5.4 | 4.8 | 4.9 |
| Access to education on reproductive health | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.9 | 4.8 |
| Access to vocational school | 5.3 | 5.5 | 4.6 | 4.8 |
| Access to informal education | 4.9 | 5.3 | 4.4 | 4.6 |
| Access to sports infrastructure | 4.5 | 5.0 | 4.5 | 4.5 |
| Access to sports classes | 4.1 | 4.5 | 4.0 | 4.1 |
| Access to art classes | 3.8 | 4.2 | 4.0 | 3.9 |
| Access to healthcare services | 3.9 | 3.6 | 3.3 | 3.4 |
| Access to a computer | 3.0 | 3.4 | 2.6 | 2.7 |
| Access to transportation | 3.1 | 3.6 | 2.2 | 2.4 |
| Access to the internet | 3.1 | 2.3 | 2.0 | 2.2 |

Access to the internet and a computer was assessed as the least problematic in the region. As it turns out, even though the majority of respondents have access to a computer at home and/or outdoors, one-third has no access to a computer either at home or outdoors (29%). As for the use of the internet, seven out of ten and more respondents in the entire region as well as in target municipalities report using the internet for several hours a day.

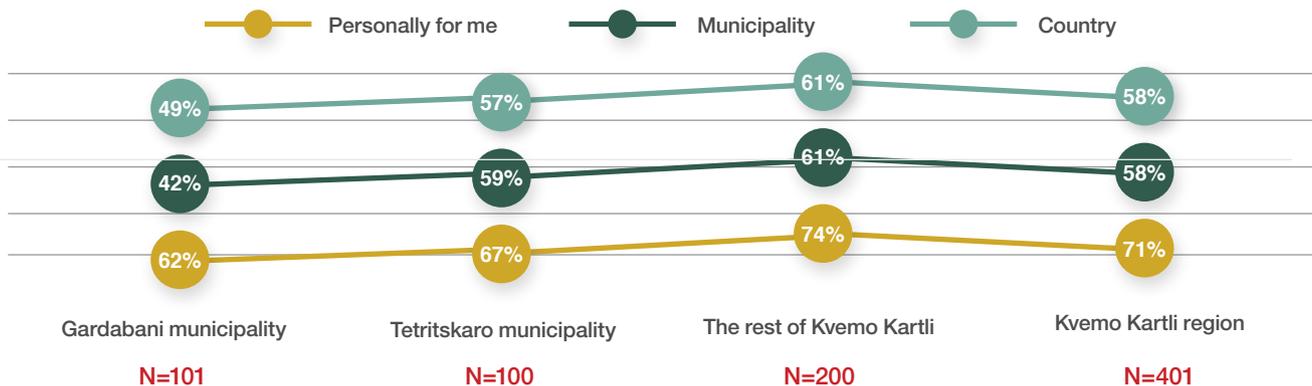
Chart 146. Access to a computer



In addition to the above-mentioned problems, respondents also provided predictions for the socio-economic condition of the country, municipality, and themselves over a 10-year period. It is worth mentioning that attitudes are positive in the region as well as in target municipalities. At least four out of ten and more respondents have a feeling that the socio-economic condition of the country, municipality and themselves will be better than it is now. Similar to the region, a large portion of respondents in target municipalities and the rest of Kvemo Kartli believe that all three situations will change for the better. In addition, a respondent's own socio-economic condition is believed to improve more than that of the country and the municipality. No differences have been identified according to age or ethnurban settlements. We can, however, spot differences from a rural settlements /urban settlements perspective. Namely, more respondents inquired in urban areas believe that the socio-economic condition of the country will be better after 10 years (63%) than in rural areas (55%). Assessments of the municipality's and respondent's socio-economic condition show no differences in terms of rural and urban areas.

Chart 147. Positive prediction of the socio-economic conditions in the country, municipality and respondent's own life over 10 years

Socio-economic condition will be better in 10 years than it is now



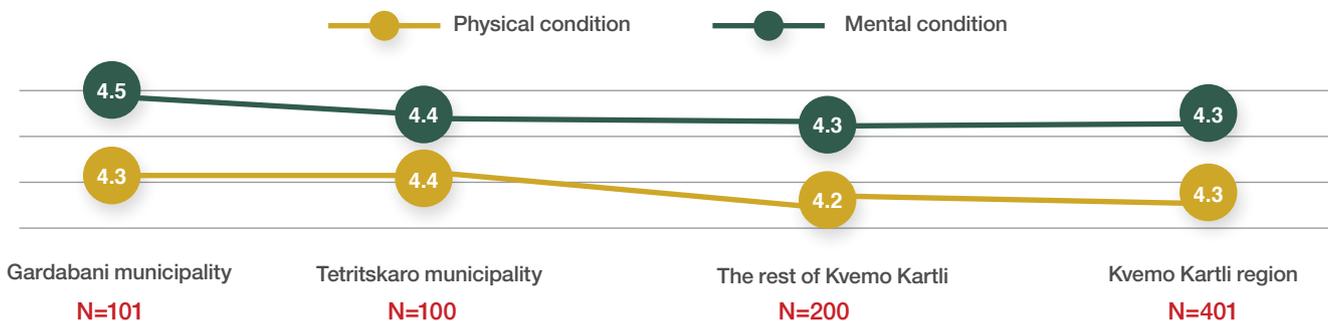
As for the level of satisfaction with their own life, the majority of respondents claim that considering every factor, their level of satisfaction with life is higher than moderate. This assessment equals 4.8 points in Kvemo Kartli, Gardabani municipality and the rest of the region. The satisfaction rate with life is lower in Tetrtskaro municipality, where it equals 4.3 points out of 7.

Chart 148. Satisfaction with life at the current state (assessment on a 7-point scale where “1” means “I am not satisfied at all” and “7” means “I am very satisfied”)



The assessment of respondents' physical and mental health was positively assessed by respondents in Kvemo Kartli in general, as well as in target municipalities and the rest of the region. Physical and mental health conditions were assessed with 4.3 points or more out of 5.

Chart 149. Assessment of current physical and mental condition (“1” – very negative, “5” – very positive)

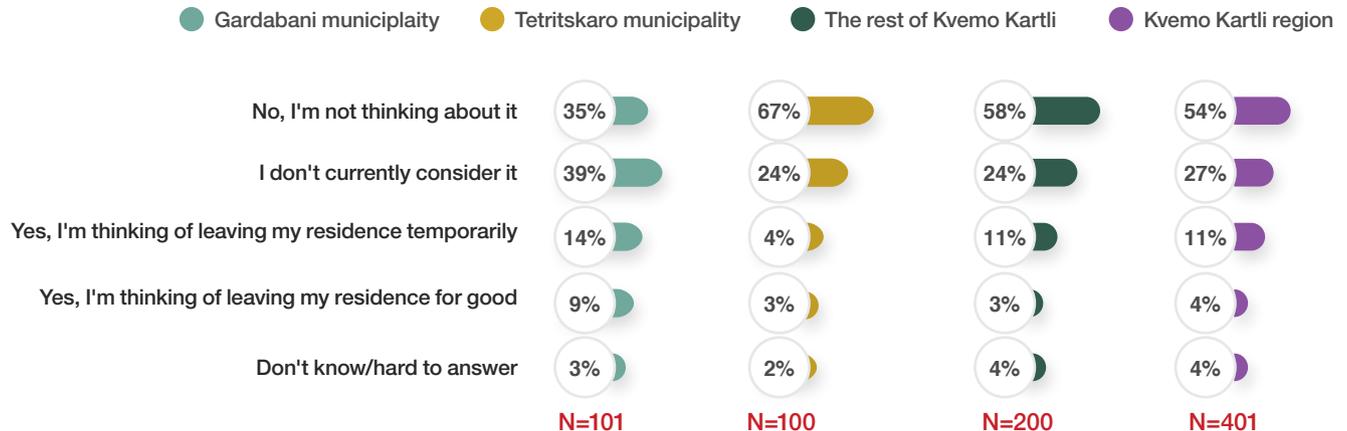


Migration

Young people were asked about their intention to migrate domestically within the next 2-3 years. A large portion of respondents *have no intention/currently have no intention* to migrate within the country. Among respondents in **Kvemo Kartli**, 54% reported having no such intention, while one-third of young people (27%) do not currently

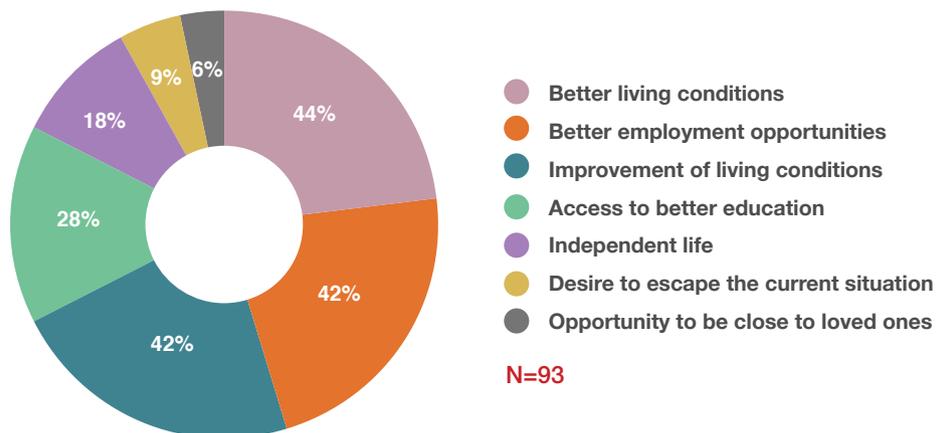
consider it. Seven out of ten respondents in **Gardabani municipality** have no intention to migrate within the next 2-3 years (74%) and four out of ten respondents currently have no such intention (39%). In **Tetritskaro municipality**, 67% do not think about domestic migration, while 58% of respondents in the entire Kvemo Kartli region have no such intention.

Chart 150. Intention of domestic migration within the next 2-3 years



Among those with the intention to migrate, three main reasons were provided: *better living conditions* (44%), *better employment opportunities* (42%) and *improvement of existing living conditions* (42%).

Chart 151. Reasons for domestic migration in Kvemo Kartli



It is worth mentioning that a small portion of respondents from Kvemo Kartli (19%) have the intention to migrate internationally. This indicator applies to target municipalities as well as the rest of the region. In total, only 59 respondents reported having the intention to migrate internationally. Three main reasons provided for this intention are better living conditions, better employment opportunities and improvement of existing living conditions.

Experience with discrimination

Within the scope of the study, young people were asked about their experience with discrimination on the following grounds: *on the ground of education* (elementary education, secondary education, etc.), *economic condition* (rich/poor), *religious belonging*, *ethniurban settlements*, *gender* (male/female), *age-based discrimination* (younger-elder; big-small), *place of residence* (suburb-center, rural settlements-town), and *political views*. According to the study results, the vast majority of respondents in target municipalities (at least nine out of ten) reported not having such experience.

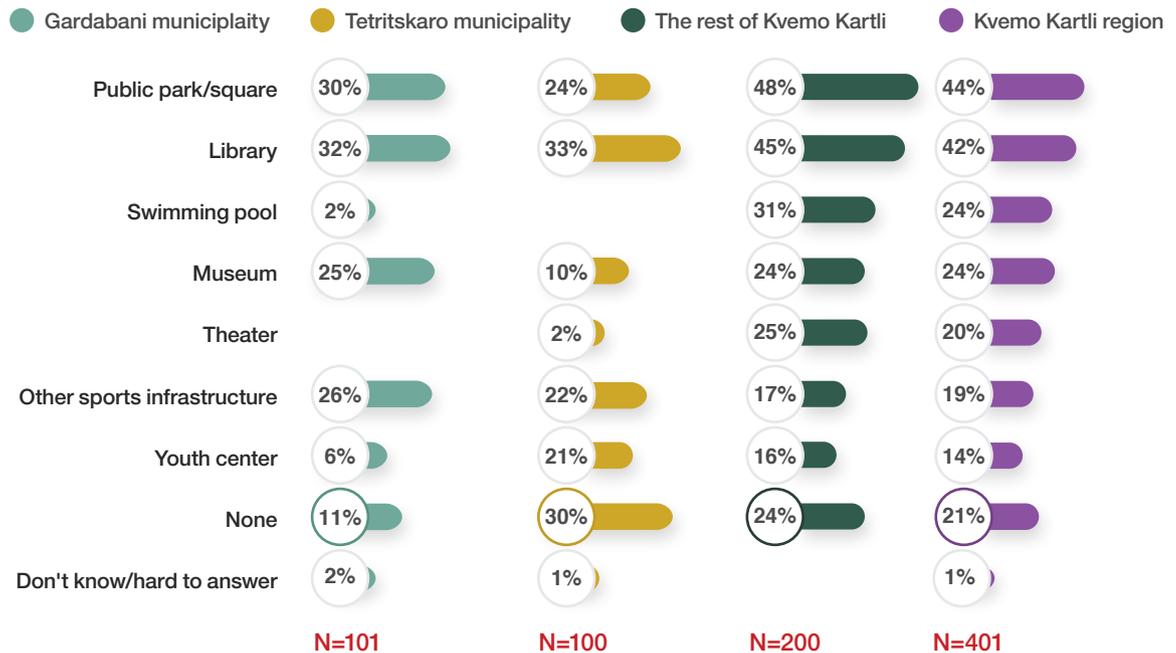
It is worth mentioning that participants of the *qualitative research* in Tetrtskaro municipality did not talk much about discrimination. They only noted rare cases of discrimination based on age and economic condition. It is also worth mentioning that those rare cases were mentioned by school-aged children, while respondents from older groups did not point out cases of discrimination.

5.7. Leisure and Lifestyle

Entertainment, leisure opportunities and sports activities

Research respondents were asked what places of leisure and entertainment they have access to in their settlement. It turns out that entertainment/leisure places are more or less accessible in **Kvemo Kartli**, and the most accessible places are *public parks* (44%) and *libraries* (42%). Only one-third of respondents in **Gardabani municipality** have access to functioning places such as a *public park*, *library*, *sports infrastructure and museum*. Three out of ten respondents inquired in **Tetrtskaro municipality** reported not having access to any entertainment/leisure facilities in their settlement (30%), while the largest portion reported the availability of a *library* (33%). It is worth mentioning that 38% of respondents from *rural areas* reported not having any functioning place for entertainment and leisure, however, respondents mostly have access to sports grounds (58%).

Chart 152. Functioning entertainment/leisure places in the settlement



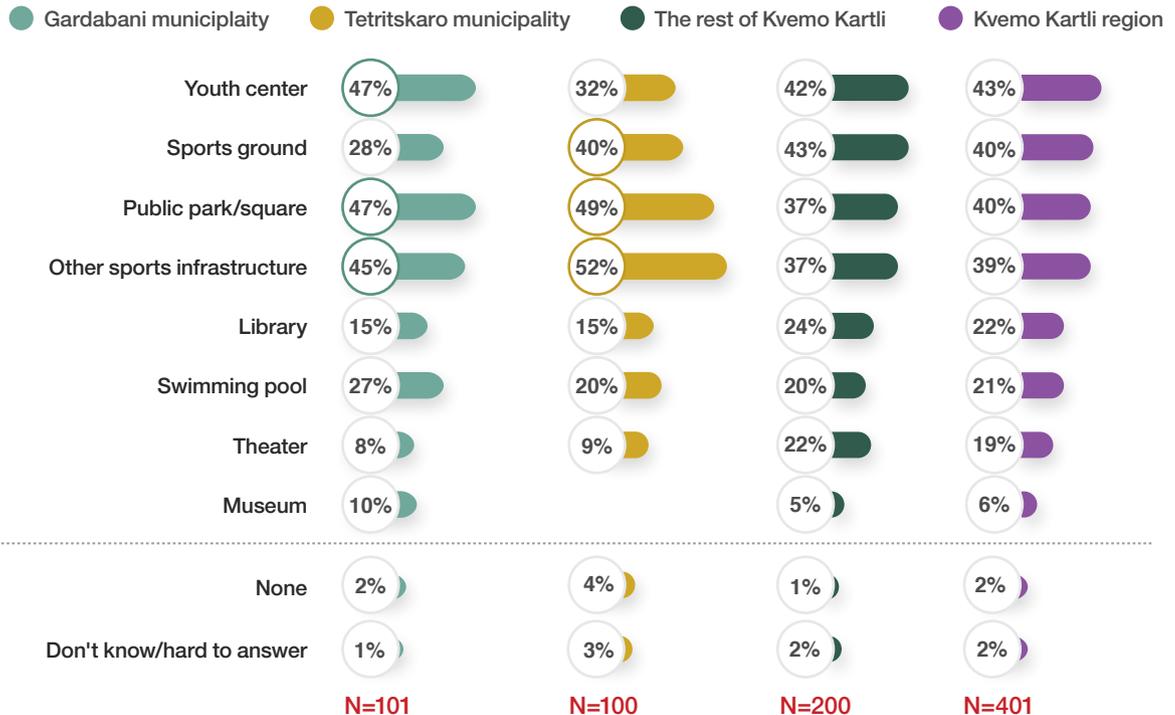
The majority of respondents in the region as well as in target municipalities mostly believe that entertainment/leisure places in their settlement are in good or moderate condition. It is worth mentioning that museums are the worst rated in Gardabani municipality (in poor condition – 36%), while respondents in Tetrtskaro municipality gave the worst ratings to the condition of sports grounds (in poor condition - 27%).

Speaking of entertainment/leisure places, respondents of the *qualitative research* identified two challenges. One issue is that those places simply do not exist even though they are particularly important for young people in rural areas. The other issue is that available places are *not in proper condition*.

When speaking about entertainment/leisure places, young people mostly pointed out places such as parks, and youth centers. It was noted that the availability of a youth center is necessary for young people to be able to gather for different reasons (just to have a discussion or have fun). This important factor for communication was pointed out by discussion participants in all groups. As noted by one of the respondents, the availability of places for youth to gather would ensure socialization and better integration in the society, which is particularly important for representatives of ethnic minorities.

As for places that need to function properly for young people, it turns out that four places are prioritized in **Kvemo Kartli**. These are: *youth centers* (43%), *sports grounds* (40%), *public parks* (40%) and *other sports infrastructure* (39%). The situation is slightly different in target municipalities. Namely, respondents in **Gardabani municipality** prioritized the proper functioning of *youth centers* (47%), *public parks* (47%) and *other sports infrastructure* (45%). Respondents in **Tetrtskaro municipality** prioritized the proper functioning of *other sports infrastructure* (52%), *public parks* (49%) and *sports grounds* (40%).

Chart 153. Entertainment/leisure places that need to function properly for young people



It is interesting to view these assessments from a different perspective. Namely, in terms of age, it turns out that respondents in the 14-17 age category prioritize the proper functioning of other sports infrastructure (39%), while respondents from older groups highlight the proper functioning of youth centers (18-23 years - 45%, 24-29 years - 48%). In terms of settlement type, it turns out that young people from urban areas prioritize the functioning of two places: sports grounds (37%) and theaters (37%). Respondents from rural areas named youth centers (50%) and public parks (49%). It is also worth mentioning that the proper functioning of youth centers is a top priority for ethnic Georgians (37%) as well as for ethnic minorities (49%).

Qualitative research confirmed that the absence of spaces for sports activities and infrastructure or the improper functioning of those places is a challenge. Even though some respondents participating in focus group discussions in Tetrtskaro municipality noted that there are certain sports activities in their settlement and that sports infrastructure is more or less functioning, they are unable to positively assess the functioning of sports grounds or other sports infrastructure in their municipality in general. As it was noted, many settlements of the municipality either have no access to sports infrastructure or the existing infrastructure is out of order. This situation is particularly relevant for rural settlements -type settlements. In addition, even when sports infrastructure exists, it is mostly available for those who participate in professional sports and not for every young resident. It is worth mentioning that challenges in terms of the availability of different sports infrastructure were stressed by a representative of the local self-government, who noted that out of the 84 rural settlements of Tetrtskaro municipality, 20 administrative units do not have easy access to sports or art classes.

The qualitative study also demonstrated that another important problem identified in Tetrtskaro municipality is the *absence of spaces* that can function as youth centers. The purpose of such centers would be to offer an environment in which young people could gather to have fun, arrange discussions, communicate, or obtain informal education. As noted above, the absence of such spaces hinders the socialization of young people. In this context, respondents emphasized the language barrier, which is important for regions inhabited by ethnic minorities. Young people as well as representatives of the civil sector participating in the study perceive the availability of such spaces not only as a mechanism to accumulate knowledge, but also to communicate and better integrate into the society.

Since the inability to speak Georgian is problematic in the region and representatives of ethnic minorities almost never participate in the rare activities that are carried out in the municipality, it is important to address this issue. Based on the results of the qualitative and quantitative research, we can assume that Georgian language classes could become an important feature in youth centers that young people could become engaged in. This would make it possible to achieve two goals. Namely, young people will get to know each other, and representatives of ethnic minorities will learn the Georgian language and become better able to integrate into the society.



“You live in Georgia, every activity is carried out in Georgian language and young people do not speak Georgian. For example, there are Azeris who cannot engage in similar activities...”

Tetrtskaro municipality, rural area, female, representative of 14-17 age group and ethnic minority

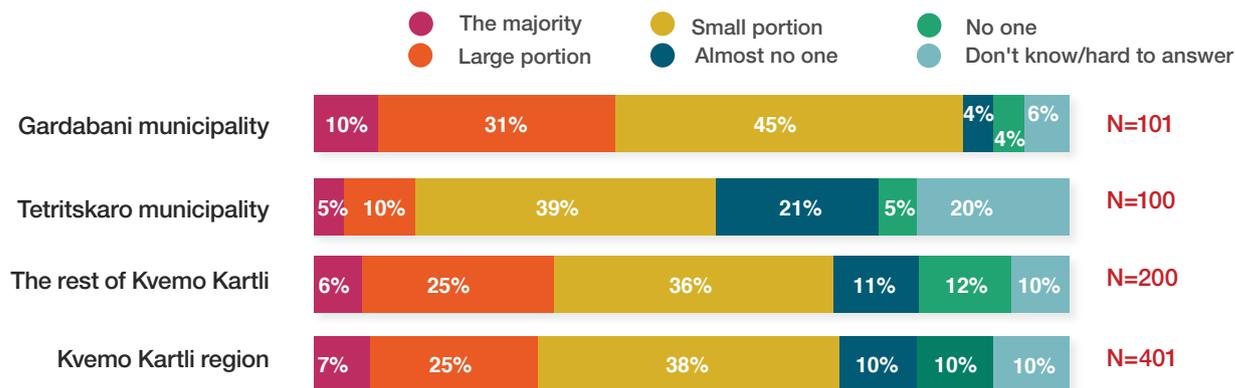
“[not knowing the language] is a serious problem and it can be addressed by creating a space where they will teach children, and this problem will be solved”.

Tetrtskaro municipality, rural area, male, representative of 14-17 age group

“In our region ethnic minorities are settled together. For example, Azeris who speak the Azeri language and Armenians who speak Armenian... I mean they are less integrated with Georgian-language speakers or other citizens, because they may not even need to speak Georgian in the environment in which they live. This prevents them from moving outside that environment and move to another phase of development”.

Tetrtskaro municipality, urban area, female, representative of 24-29 age group

Chart 154. Assessment of young peoples' engagement in sports/physical activity in their municipality

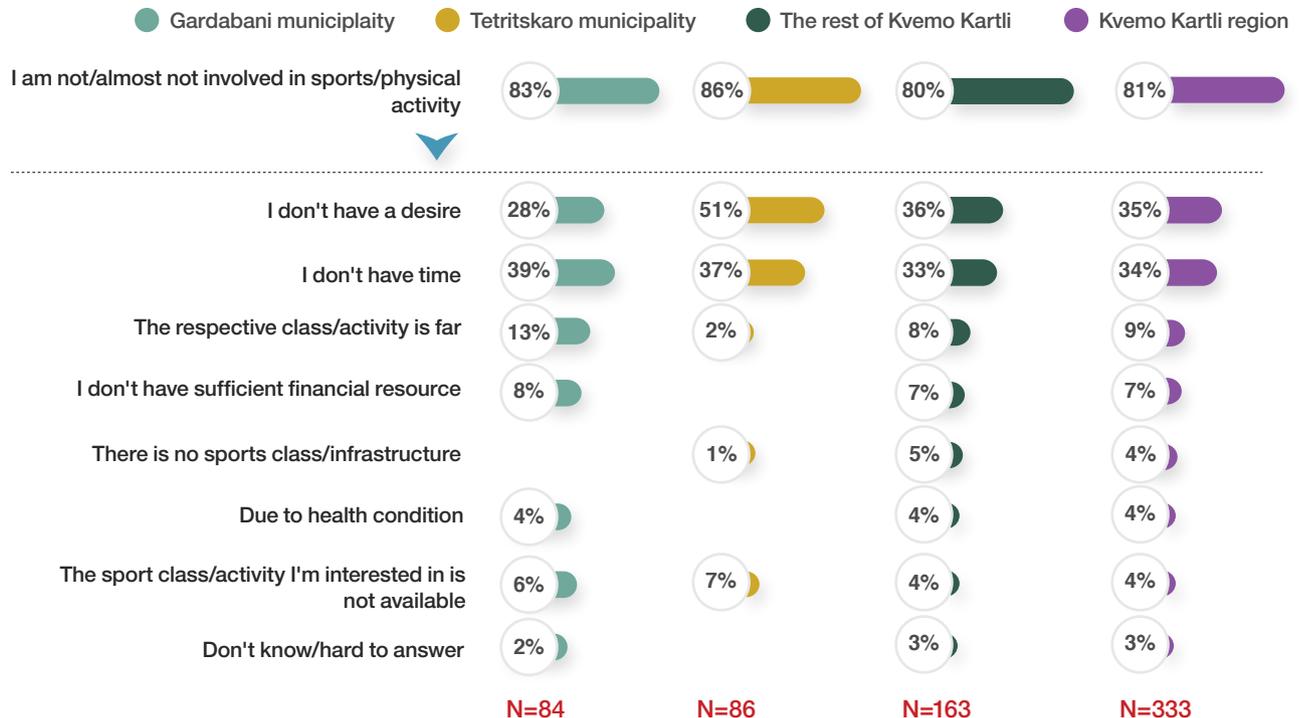


From those respondents who noted that a large portion of young people in their municipality are involved in sports/physical activity, the vast majority in Kvemo Kartli region named football (86%). Young people also mentioned wrestling, rugby, basketball, and other kinds of sports.

As for those who declared that only a small portion or no one in their municipality was involved in sports/physical activity mentioned the lack of access to sports classes in **Kvemo Kartli** as the reason (52%). Other reasons included a *lack of financial resources* (42%). The same set of reasons were named in **Gardabani municipality**, but there, the largest portion of respondents mentioned *insufficient financial resources* (62%). As for **Tetrtskaro municipality**, the largest portion of respondents named a lack of the *availability of sports classes*. It is worth mentioning that having no access to sports classes was identified by the majority in *rural settlements -type settlements* (73%), while the main reason provided in *urban areas* was insufficient financial resources (82%).

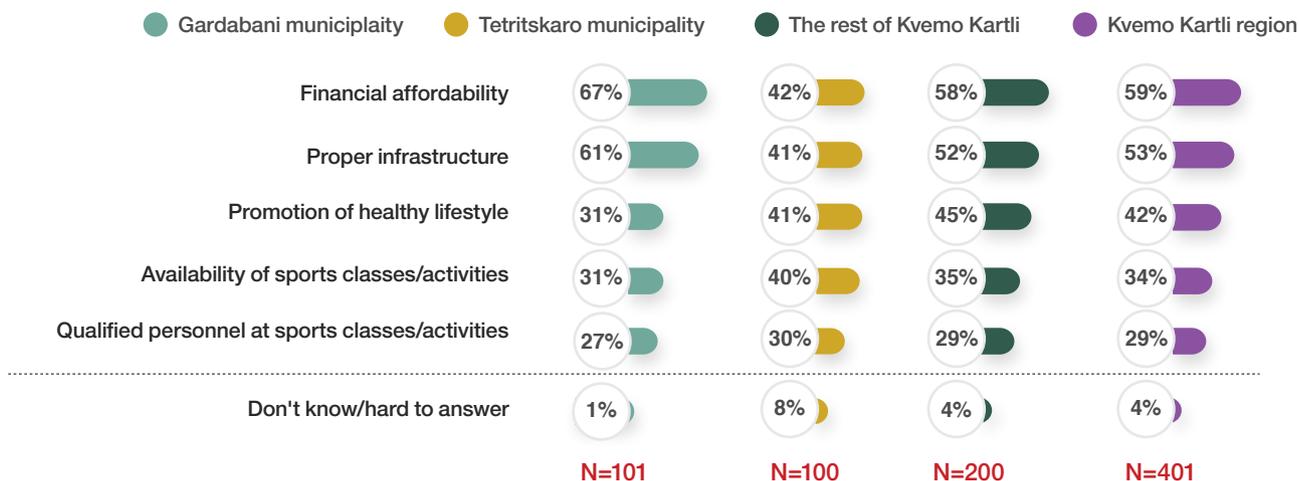
The study demonstrated that only a very small portion of young people in Kvemo Kartli, as well as in the target municipalities and the rest of the region are involved in sports/physical activity at least three hours a day. The share of such respondents is 18% in **Kvemo Kartli**, 16% in **Gardabani municipality**, 14% in **Tetrtskaro municipality**, and 19% in the rest of the region. Others do not spend time on sports/physical activity or do this less frequently than several times a month. Respondents identified two main reasons that are dominant everywhere: a *lack of time* (35%) and a *lack of desire* (34%).

Chart 155. Reasons why young people are not involved in sports/physical activity



When asked what can be done to make more young people interested in sports/physical activity, study results revealed that more than half of the respondents in Kvemo Kartli identified the importance of *financial affordability* (59%) and *respective infrastructure* (53%). Four out ten respondents approve the idea of *promoting a healthy lifestyle* (42%), while 29% of respondents named the *availability of sports classes/clubs*.

Chart 156. Mechanisms to increase the interest of young people in sports/physical activity



The importance of sports infrastructure, the organization of activities, and the engagement of young people in those activities was identified as an issue by the *qualitative research* in Tetrtskaro municipality. As assessed by young participants of the study, it is important to enable everyone who is interested in sports and physical activity to participate in those activities, not only professional sportsmen. In order to engage more young people and make them interested in sports, in addition to making infrastructure or classes available, research participants believe that the use of encouraging mechanisms is important. One example of such a mechanism is the organization of sports activities, where non-professionals would have a chance to participate and success would be awarded with a symbolic prize.

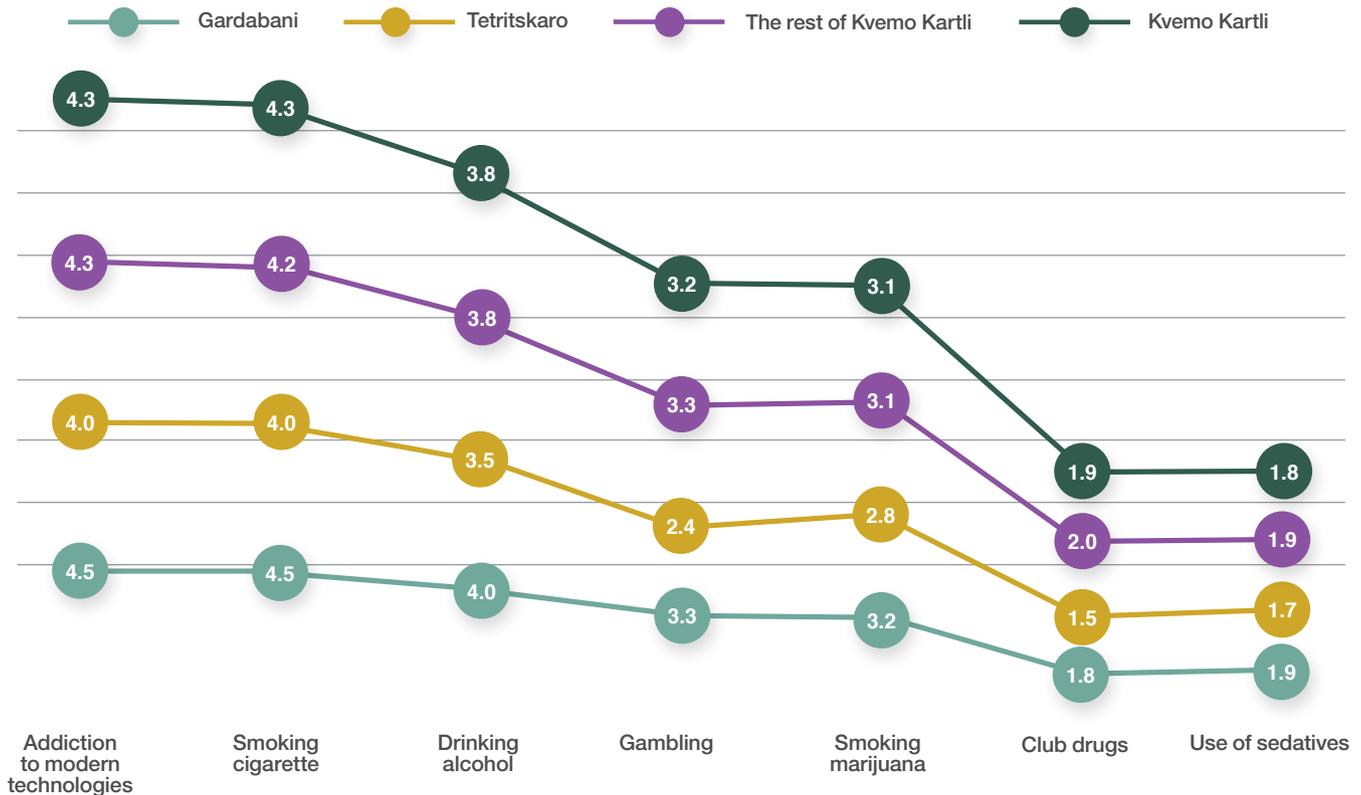
It was noted that promoting sports or physical activity will help spread the idea of a healthy lifestyle. In addition, it is perceived as aiding in the prevention of many bad habits, which due to the high unemployment rate is a challenge. In order to address this challenge, the availability of sports centers or other infrastructure was deemed important.

Risky behaviors

As clarified by the study results, there are different risk behaviors prevalent in the region. It turns out that the most prevalent risk behaviors in the region include: addiction to *modern technologies*, such as social networks, and internet (4.3 points) and *smoking cigarettes* (4.3 points).²³ Other prevalent behaviors are *drinking alcohol* (3.8 points), *gambling* (3.2 points) and *smoking marijuana* (3.1 points). As for the *use of drugs and sedatives*, these are relatively rare. A similar tendency is reported in target municipalities as well as the rest of the region.

²³ Note: Assessment on 5-point scale where "1" meant that the behavior is not practiced in their settlement at all and "5" meant that the behavior is very prevalent.

Chart 157. Spread of risk behaviors in the settlement (where “1” is “not spread at all” and “5” is “very prevalent”)



It is worth mentioning that respondents in the *qualitative research* reported the prevalence of risk behaviors such as gambling, consuming alcohol and marijuana. It is also noteworthy that the prevalence of gambling was stressed by school-aged children, while elders emphasized the prevalence of behaviors such as drinking alcohol and smoking marijuana. As noted above, one of the reasons behind the prevalence of this behavior is unemployment and challenges related to employment. One effective mechanism to prevent or fight against risk behaviors is the promotion of a healthy lifestyle and sports. To this end, it is important to ensure the availability of the respective infrastructure.

5.8. Discussion and Recommendations

As the results of the qualitative and quantitative research clarify, youth-oriented activities planned or implemented in Kvemo Kartli are diverse. Even though certain services are available, challenges are serious, especially in terms of civil activism and engagement in processes.

Out of the services that are important for young people, the largest portion of respondents in Kvemo Kartli in general as well as in the target municipalities have access to sports classes. However, it is also worth mentioning that one-third of respondents in Kvemo Kartli (31%) have no access to any of the services (sports or art classes, library, youth services, space for gatherings, etc). This the reality in target municipalities and in the rest of the region. This problem is especially severe in rural areas.

Even though the availability of sports classes is the highest everywhere, the majority of respondents in the entire region still deem access to this service very important. Respondents also prioritize foreign language courses. As for the places that need to function properly for young people in the settlement, it turns out that the proper functioning of youth centers, sports grounds, public parks, and other sports infrastructure is problematic everywhere.

Even though the majority of young people are not involved in sports/physical activity, they deem it important. This activity does require the proper functioning of sports infrastructure and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle. The latter was deemed an important issue within the qualitative research. It was stressed that engaging more young people in sports is important to cope with risk behaviors such as smoking marijuana or drinking alcohol, which are prevalent.

Employment is the main problem according to research participants, and as they say, their peers who live in the municipality. In addition to making jobs available, support is needed for acquiring professional skills, which would help young people in finding and maintaining employment. This vision is shared by the majority of respondents. In terms of employment, it is also important to enable young people to have access to internship programs across all regions and municipalities. In addition, providing support in learning and improving the Georgian language was identified as important in Gardabani municipality (32%) and the rest of the region (41%). This factor is less important for Tetrtskaro municipality (13%), where more respondents (30%) identified the need for support in learning/improving the English language. However, if we take the results of the qualitative research into consideration, eliminating barriers related to literacy in the Georgian language is an issue for the entire region, especially where the concentration of ethnic minorities is higher.

Civil activism and engagement in processes is low in the region and target municipalities. This was a particular focus in the qualitative research. As it turned out, reasons for low civil activism are related to factors such as low awareness of the importance of civil activism, which was confirmed by respondents during the quantitative research (25%). In addition, the qualitative research identified public pressure as another important factor. This factor is related to the fact that “everyone knows everyone” and people avoid making their relatives or acquaintances mad. Public pressure is also directly connected to the family – young people are not allowed or at least not supported by family members in this process. This problem is especially severe among ethnic minorities, where civil activism and engagement in processes is unacceptable behavior, especially for women.

To cope with this and other important problems for young people, key informants participating in the study stressed how important it is to implement the youth policy document effectively. In addition to addressing issues related to the lack of financial resources, it was deemed critical to support and empower local self-government officials as well as youth organizations. This predominately means equipping specialists working on youth issues with the relevant knowledge and skills. In this context, respondents identified the importance of having youth centers in many locations and supporting the small groups that represent active young people.

The majority of young people inquired in Kvemo Kartli believe that their rights are protected (76%), while 17%

reported that their rights are partially protected. It is worth mentioning that every second respondent inquired in Gardabani municipality reported that their rights are protected (53%), while the vast majority (90%) share the same vision in Tetrtskaro municipality. It is worth mentioning that as the age of respondents increases, the number of those who feel that their rights are protected decreases, even though the majority of respondents in every age group believe that their rights are protected (14-17 years - 86%, 18-23 years - 75%, 24-29 years - 68%).

More representatives of ethnic minorities believe that their rights are protected (82%) than ethnic Georgians (70%). The amount of respondents in the group of ethnic minorities believing that their right to education is not protected or partially protected is 41%. Just two in ten respondents evaluated their rights as not protected or partially protected for the following cases: labor rights (20%), equality rights (20%) and freedom of expression (19%).

Nine out of ten respondents in the region as well as in Gardabani and Tetrtskaro municipalities reported experiencing no discrimination on any grounds.

Among young people in Kvemo Kartli, 81% have no intention/no intention at this point to migrate within the country. The same was reported by 74% of respondents in Gardabani municipality and 91% in Tetrtskaro municipality. A small portion of respondents have an intention to migrate internationally. The share of such respondents is 19% in the region, and main reasons are related to better living conditions, better employment opportunities, and improvement of existing living conditions.

Considering every factor, the majority of young people are satisfied with their life at this point. This assessment is 4.8 points in Kvemo Kartli, which is similar to Gardabani municipality and the rest of the region. The satisfaction rate is lower in Tetrtskaro municipality, where it is rated with 4.3 points out of 7.

Based on these and other results of the study, it can be concluded that for the effective implementation of youth policy, some issues are particularly important. Namely:

- If we take into consideration that there is no separate department in the Tetrtskaro municipality Mayor's office with relevant specialists and a budget that will be oriented to youth affairs specifically, it is important to assign at least one employee who will concentrate exclusively on youth-related topics;
- It is necessary to create spaces for gatherings not only in the municipal center, but in rural settlements -type settlements, too. Several adjoining rural settlements can share one common space, where young people will have a chance to gather, organize discussions, events, etc.
- It is recommended to plan activities in a way that will make them available for young people from rural areas as well as for ethnic minorities. To this end, it is important to consider barriers related to literacy in the Georgian language.
- It is highly recommended to organize Georgian language courses for ethnic minorities. It is suggested to engage young people in the learning process and let them teach their peers the Georgian language in youth centers;
- It is important to promote a healthy lifestyle and ensure the availability of sports infrastructure for those who are not professionally involved in sports;
- It is important to train young people in professional skills and offer different courses to older age groups;
- It is critically important to raise awareness and inform young people on not only the importance of civil activism, but its forms and mechanisms.

Conclusion

Study results confirm that there are a set of particular barriers hindering the effective implementation of a youth policy in all four regions. One problem is a lack of financial resources allocated for youth affairs by the local municipalities, combined with challenges related to human resources. In some cases, the latter is related to a lack of available specialists (e.g. Adigeni municipality) and in other cases, their competences. Namely, those assigned to work on youth issues do not have the relevant knowledge to work with young people. They admit this and have high expectations with regard to support from the youth agency.

One more barrier hindering the effective implementation of youth policy is the absence or lack of organizations that will be concentrated solely on youth affairs. While there is some level of activism in Batumi municipality and in Tetrtskaro municipality, the absence or passive functioning of youth organizations is a serious challenge everywhere else. In every location, it is important to support and empower youth organizations and independent activists, which ultimately means sharing relevant knowledge and experiences. It is also notable that expectations towards the support of youth agency are high.

Even though the majority of respondents in every region believe that civil activity, engagement in processes or decision-making processes is important, there are serious challenges everywhere. In all target municipalities or regions, the practice of volunteering or participating in other civil activities is rarely reported. Activism is especially low in Kvemo Kartli, where seven out of ten (71%) respondents have not participated in any volunteer activity, and almost nine out of ten (88%) in different civil activities.

Similar to Kvemo Kartli, it turns out that there is a small group of active young people in every region or target municipality, and it is particularly important to support them as well as to motivate other young people to become more active. The main reason for low engagement is believed to be a lack of awareness on the importance of activism. Thus, it is crucially important to work on this direction. To this end, it is even more recommended to increase the availability of gathering spaces and services of informal education, which will become a kind of youth center for local youth. Currently, the availability of such spaces is very low in every region (Adjara – 5%, Mtskheta-Mtianeti – 12%, Samtskhe-Javakheti – 12%, Kvemo Kartli - 7%). It is crucially important to make such centers and informal education available not only in municipal centers, but also for young people from rural areas.

It is worth mentioning that the interest of young people in politics is important to a large portion of respondents in all target regions, however, at the same time, Political Participation was identified as the least important value in each region. Thus, regardless of the assessment that it is important for young people to be involved in politics, it is less presumable that their involvement is reflected in their actions. To verify this assumption, even though respondents in Gardabani municipality showed highest interest in politics, there is where the largest portion of young respondents did not participate in the most recent elections (Parliamentary elections 2020), regardless of eligibility (27%).

According to survey results, employment was identified as the most severe issue facing young people in all target regions. As age increases, the assessment of the severity of this problem also increases. In addition to making jobs available, it is important to support young people in acquiring and improving professional skills everywhere. Regardless of the survey results, young people in every region believe that their right to education is protected; only those inquired in Dusheti municipality reported that their right to education is limited/partially protected. In addition to support in acquiring and improving professional skills, young people believe that it is

important for them to have access to internship programs. Thus, we can conclude that it is important to start working on mechanisms of cooperation with the private sector. One thing that is substantial for supporting employment is related to foreign languages. Namely, support in learning and improving English language skills was deemed important in every region. It is also worth mentioning that it is highly important to ensure that there are Georgian language courses in Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti regions, where there are high concentrations of ethnic minorities. However, it is noteworthy that it's important not only for entire regions, but also for municipalities inhabited by ethnic minorities. Support for learning/improving the Georgian language seems totally insignificant for young people in Adigeni municipality, less important for young people in Tetrtskaro municipality (11%), and important for Gardabani municipality (28%).

Even though employment and lack of jobs are severely problematic for every region, the reality is different in Dusheti municipality and in general, in Mtskheta-Mtianeti. Here, the most severe problem is a lack of the availability of entertainment and leisure places.

Even though involvement in sports/physical activity is assessed as important by young people in every region, a large portion of youth do not actually engage in these activities. The share of such respondents is the highest in Kvemo Kartli (Adjara – 75%, Mtskheta-Mtianeti – 67%, Samtskhe-Javakheti – 68%, Kvemo Kartli – 81%).

It is worth mentioning that the availability of sports classes or infrastructure is one of the main needs youth have. This is particularly important for rural areas. In addition to increasing availability, it is also necessary to promote sports/physical activity and a generally healthy lifestyle. It is also crucial for coping with different risk behaviors, the most prevalent of them being addiction to modern technologies in all regions, which mostly implies spending too much time on gadgets.

Regardless of the many challenges that were identified by the study, it is important to note that a large portion of young people have no intention to migrate domestically or internationally. An assessment of the socio-economic condition of the country and the municipality for the next 10 years is more positive than negative. Evaluations of a respondent's own socio-economic condition are even more optimistic in every region. Most of all, young people from Adjara believe that their socio-economic condition will be better in 10 years than it is now (81%), while respondents in Samtskhe-Javakheti feel the least optimistic (49%). In addition, satisfaction with a respondent's life is assessed with higher than average points in every region or municipality. This index is the highest in Adjara and Batumi municipality.

Research results clarify that a lack of awareness and lack of information of young people on their rights is a challenge. There is a group of young people in every region who have not heard of any of their rights, and this index is particularly high in Adjara and Samtskhe-Javakheti, where one-fourth of all respondents have not heard of any of their rights. Regardless, six out of ten respondents and more in every region believe that their rights are protected, which brings the need for raising awareness back to the agenda once again.

These and other results of the study identified that it is important to work actively with young people on raising awareness on a variety of topics. In addition to the importance of informing young people on youth municipal programs and services, it is crucial to raise awareness on the importance of civil activism and engagement, engagement in the process of decision-making on youth issues, various rights and a healthy lifestyle.



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