

Youth Engagement in Decision-Making: European Approaches to Inclusive Participation and Albanian Perspective

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Abstract

Integration in the European Union remains one of the key objectives of the Western Balkans countries. The institutions of the European Union are giving greater importance to the opportunities for greater involvement of young people in democratic life, influencing the strengthening of the sense of citizenship for the countries that are part of the European Union and, on the other hand, to develop a European perspective for countries that aspire to become part of the union. In this paper we explore the perceptions of young people in Albania, aged 18-31, regarding their engagement in democratic life and more specifically their involvement in political decision-making processes. To explore this issues we use a mixed research methods, combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches. For this purpose, is conducted an evaluation of documents and political initiatives, in the level of European Union and also Albanian state. It was also conducted a survey in a national context, with the participation of 186 youth people, mainly young activists, to explore their perception regarding these issues. According to the main findings, the level of engagement of young people in these processes is low, regardless of their desire and willingness to engage.

Keywords: Albania; decision-making; inclusion; perceptions; negotiation process