



Political Culture among the Youth in Serbia: Interest, Participation, Satisfaction and Trust

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this paper has been to empirically examine the four aspects of political culture of the youth in Serbia by using the statistical analysis based on the data from the eleventh round of European Social Survey. The new theoretical explanation of political culture is introduced, followed by its new classification with four distinct types – passive, cynical, protest and participatory political culture. We propose a general hypothesis that the dominant type of political culture among the youth in Serbia is cynical. Four supporting hypotheses related to the different aspects of political culture are established: political interest, political participation, satisfaction and trust in institutions. We expected that sociodemographic factors and ideological positioning would influence these components. The results indicate that the interest in politics and overall political participation among the majority of youth is low. Although some forms of participation have relatively high percentages, most of the respondents participated in only one political activity. Next, overall satisfaction and trust in institutions are below the neutral midpoint, indicating a dissatisfaction with the state of the country, particularly regarding political institutions, and a general distrust in these institutions. In addition, we observe that certain sociodemographic variables, such as education, emerge as significant in specific instances. However, those results are inconsistent and the available evidence is insufficient to support definitive conclusions about the presence of another form of political culture in certain sociodemographic categories. Based on these results, we argue that in the analysed period the prevailing type of political culture among the youth in Serbia was cynical.

KEYWORDS

youth, political culture, political participation, political trust, European Social Survey

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1 INTRODUCTION

Global research indicates a general decline in trust in institutions among both the youth and the overall population (Stafford, Cole and Hainz 2022; UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs and Perry 2021; Valgarðsson et al. 2024). This has been particularly amplified since the neoliberal reforms of the 1980s, as the growth of real wages in the developed world, as well as in most of the developing world, no longer kept pace with the ongoing productivity growth (Milanović 2016; UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs and Perry 2021).

Value anomie and the crisis of faith in the liberal capitalist order, arising from deeper structural contradictions within the system, could thus be identified as the main causes of the crisis of political culture and democracy on a global scale. The state of democracy in Serbia as a semi-peripheral country is frailer than in the developed world due to the specific characteristics of Serbian society, and the precariousness of democratic institutions (Popadić, Pavlović and Mihailović 2019). Challenges of the Serbian political system undoubtedly project a strong influence on the political practices, values and sentiments of the population in Serbia, especially affecting more socially vulnerable groups such as the youth.

Various studies have examined youth political behaviours in Serbia, revealing issues such as low institutional trust, limited institutional political engagement, and rising political cynicism. For example, Tomanović and Stanojević (2015) have identified that the youth have a low level of political participation and trust in institutions, while Popadić, Pavlović and Mihailović (2019) have observed that youth in Serbia are dissatisfied with the state of the country. Milovanović and

Adam (2024) have found that Serbian young people demonstrate weak identification with traditional politics, and instead gravitate toward digital forms of expression. Hasanović et al. (2024), in a comparative regional study, have emphasized that Serbian youth are the least likely to engage in institutional politics, confirming that political apathy is linked to distrust. Moreover, Bur Gund-Isakov and Gajić (2025) have shown that while legal frameworks exist to promote children and youth inclusion in decision-making, their implementation remains limited. Despite this body of work, few studies have used the European Social Survey (ESS) to conduct statistical analyses focused specifically on Serbia, and this study seeks to fill that gap.

The primary objective has been to empirically examine the levels of political interest, participation, satisfaction and trust among the youth in Serbia using the eleventh round of European Social Survey (ESS11) (European Social Survey 2024). Based on the available variables, the study measures the proportion of youth exhibiting low political interest and participation, as well as the mean levels of their satisfaction and trust in institutions. By evaluating these four aspects of political culture, the study examines their correspondence with established types of political culture. Exploring whether and which sociodemographic factors (gender, region, education, age) influence the components of youth political culture has been the second aim of the research. It has also been examined whether these influences are mutually independent and whether they remain significant when controlling for ideological positioning.

The key finding of this study has been that the political culture among youth in Serbia is predominantly cynical. Results

also suggest both independent and interactive effects of certain sociodemographic factors, such as education. However, the influence of these factors has been inconsistent and more pronounced when they are considered collectively rather than independently. The contribution is therefore twofold: the study offers empirical insights into the political culture of youth and presents a new theoretical framework for understanding it. Unlike previous typologies, mostly described in modernization theory, our framework rooted in world-systems theory marks a conceptual shift. Furthermore, the study offers additional value by decentralizing the concept of low political engagement: rather than political passivity being interpreted as apathy or disinterest, it is approached as a distinct mode of political expression. This framework may also prove useful in analysing political culture in other post-socialist or semi-peripheral societies and, more generally, all societies undergoing democratic fatigue.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this study, the youth is defined as individuals between the age of 18 and 29 in accordance with the various previous definitions (Popadić, Pavlović and Mihailević 2019; Tomanović and Stanojević 2015), with the only exception being the exclusion of the minors. Political scientist Pye (1968: 218) defines political culture as “a set of attitudes, beliefs, and feelings that give order and meaning to the political process and provide the underlying assumptions and rules governing behaviour within a political system”. The key components of political culture include interest in politics, political participation, satisfaction with the state of the

country and political trust (Almond and Verba 1963; Inglehart and Welzel 2005; Putnam et al. 1993), defined and operationalized as the main dependent variables which the foundation of this research is formed upon.

Interest in politics represents the cognitive component of political orientation and the foundation of developed political awareness. In the broadest sense, it refers to citizens’ interest in political issues. In this study, interest in politics will be measured through the respondents’ self-assessment of their level of political interest.

Political participation encompasses voluntary actions undertaken by the public to influence policymakers (Uhlener 2015). The study will analyse various forms of non-institutional political participation (including online activism, signing petitions, boycotting products, wearing political symbols and engaging in public demonstration), as well as institutional political participation (contacting policymakers, donating money to political organizations, involvement in political organizations and voting) (Stanojević and Gvozdenović 2022).

Satisfaction with the state of the country is broadly defined as the satisfaction with the economic, political and social conditions in the country. This will be measured by the respondents’ satisfaction with the country’s health services, the performance of the government and the state of democracy, economy and education.

Political trust refers to how citizens evaluate the work of the state institutions and the government. Besides national institutions, citizens may also evaluate non-governmental and international institutions (Allegrezza, Langer and Johne 2025). This study will examine the level of trust that young people

display towards both domestic and international political institutions.

According to classical theories, 'primitive' political culture and absence of democracy are largely explained by the underdevelopment of social institutions, which stems from collectivist attitudes, a lack of developed value systems (e.g. such as the absence of Protestant work ethic, individualism), an authoritarian legacy, etc. (Inglehart and Welzel 2005; Pavlović 2021). However, in this paper we argue that the level of development of a country's political culture primarily depends on the successful reproduction of its democratic order. For a democratic order to sustain itself, a society must be both egalitarian and economically prosperous (Beinstman, Hense and Gangl 2023; Amri 2023). The degree of egalitarianism and economic success of a country depends on its position in the global capitalist system (Jo 2011) and whether capitalism in general meets the population's needs, i.e., whether it is in a phase of expansion or crisis (Castro 2023; Navarrete 2021). The degree of egalitarianism is also influenced by the dominant type of capitalism in a given country (neoliberal, social-democratic, statist) (Iversen 2005; Kurlantzick 2016; Merkel 2014). Hence, economic crises, neoliberal/statist¹ economic models and a peripheral/semi-peripheral position in the global system contribute to lower levels of political culture development and vice versa. With a theoretical reassessment of modernisation-based views on political culture, this paper also

proposes a new classification of different types of political culture (Table 1)²:

1. *Passive Political Culture* – A form of political culture characterised by economic underdevelopment or state control over the economy, which tends to limit citizens' autonomy and contributes to political passivity. It is typical of authoritarian/hybrid political systems and is characterized by low political interest and participation and high trust in institutions, while satisfaction with the state of the country may vary. It is common in non-central societies (e.g., China, Russia, Western Balkans, Armenia, Georgia).
2. *Cynical Political Culture* – A form of political culture where most citizens are unable to exercise their economic and political rights, leading to dissatisfaction with the state of the country, political disengagement, and distrust and cynicism toward dominant political institutions (silent resistance) (Rijkhoff 2018; Robinson 2014). This type of political culture is a characteristic of the societies experiencing a crisis of democracy and, due to contemporary socioeconomic instabilities, has become highly prevalent among young people in different societies, both in those with a developed democratic tradition and in the ones with non-democratic and semi-democratic political systems. Low interest in politics and political

¹ Imbalance of economic and political power, caused by the higher inequality in neoliberal states, can greatly endanger functioning of the democratic order. In statist systems, the economic and political power of the state and, therefore, of the high officials, is significantly concentrated, which could also lead to the power imbalance.

² Our typology of political cultures draws inspiration from Almond and Verba's (1963: 3-43) classic distinction between parochial, subject and participant political cultures. However, it should be noted that we significantly depart from their modernization-oriented framework and its associated implications.

participation, distrust in political institutions and dissatisfaction with the state of the country are its basic features. While cynical and passive political cultures may appear similar at a superficial level, they are fundamentally distinct in both orientation and motivational background. In passive political culture, political disengagement stems from a deep trust in authority and a belief that the existing political order is natural, legitimate and essentially immutable. By contrast, in cynical political culture, political disengagement is a result of disappointment and disillusionment with the political system, accompanied by a loss of faith that change is achievable either through institutional or non-institutional means.³

3. *Protest Political Culture* – A form of political culture in which citizens, through non-institutional forms of political struggle (primarily by participating in non-institutional demonstrations) and by a complete rejection of official political institutions, seek to eliminate the systemic causes of their inadequate economic and political position. It is characterized by a high interest in politics, distrust in institutions, dissatisfaction with the state of the country

³ A typical example of passive political culture is the contemporary rural population in China, which is largely disengaged from political participation and perceives the rule of the Communist Party as legitimate – a source of stability and part of the natural order of things. In contrast, the political culture of youth in East Germany during the 1980s represents a prime example of cynical political culture. While East German youth formally accepted the official state ideology, they privately mocked it. The political order was perceived as alienating, repressive, and distant, yet stable, and most young people did not believe it could be meaningfully changed.

and strong political participation through non-institutional means. Similar to cynical political culture, it has been increasingly present in contemporary societies (e.g., Occupy Wall Street, Arab Spring, Podemos, student blockades in Serbia (2024–2025), etc.).⁴

4. *Participatory Political Culture* – A political culture in which citizens trust political institutions and believe they could achieve their political rights through institutional political participation. It is characterized by a high interest in politics and trust in institutions, satisfaction with the state of the country and a high level of institutional political participation (contacting policymakers and engaging in political organizations). It used to be dominant in most of the developed western countries, and today, being a minor form of political culture, is significantly present only in Scandinavian countries, Switzerland, Netherlands, Luxemburg, Ireland, New Zealand (countries which score over 9.00 in democracy index (Democracy Index 2024) and where the satisfaction with the democracy,

⁴ Protest culture tends to engage in extra-institutional methods in order to bring about substantial systemic transformation, but not to radically transcend the system itself. For instance, protest culture may seek to replace a hybrid system with a democratic one, to replace neoliberal capitalism with welfare capitalism, to compel the ruling elite to adhere to constitutional constraints if they have overstepped them, or even contribute to the change of the political regime. On the other hand, revolutionary political culture, which will not be examined in detail in this paper, aims to overhaul a country's constitutional order (e.g., the March of the Blackshirts on Rome in 1922), or to transform its foundational economic structure (such as replacing capitalism with socialism in a socialist revolution, or socialism with capitalism in a liberal revolution).

Table 1 Classification of different types of political culture

Type of political culture	Interest in politics	Political participation	Satisfaction with the state of country	Political trust
Passive	-	-	-/+	+
Cynical	-	-	-	-
Protest	+	+	-	-
Participatory	+	+	+	+

Source: Authors' elaboration

according to European Social Survey (2024), is above 5.00).⁵

Only participatory political culture qualifies as democratic political culture, while passive, cynical and protest political cultures are characteristic of authoritarian, hybrid and partially democratic societies, as well as the societies whose democratic orders are in crisis. Empirical political cultures are often a mixture of the four basic types of political culture. We presume that Serbia's characteristics as a semi-peripheral country (Mandić 2015), where a neoliberal economic model dominates (Dokmanović 2017), combined with the global context of numerous political and economic challenges (United Nations 2024), will significantly shape the political culture of the Serbian youth.⁶ It is expected to be cyn-

ical in nature (with elements of passive and protest culture) and characterized by a low interest in politics, low trust in both global and domestic institutions, as well as low political participation and satisfaction with the state of the country.

Those expectations are also drawn based on previous research findings that show similar tendencies. Namely, previous research led to the conclusion that young people in Serbia are largely uninterested in politics (Popadić, Pavlović and Mihailović 2019; Tomanović and Stanojević 2015, Hasanović et al. 2024). A similar trend is present in most of developed countries, where young people are also indifferent and cynical toward traditional forms of political life (Ellison, Pollock and Grimm 2020). The main reasons for low political interest include influence of new media, feeling of alienation from mainstream politics, exclusion from political decision-making and limited political knowledge (Belschner 2024; Oxford Analytica 2024; Stojanović 2025). When it comes to political participation, the available research indicates low political participation among the young people in Serbia (except election turnout) (Hasanović et al. 2024; Popadić, Pavlović and Mihailović 2019; Tomanović and Stanojević 2015). Regarding the levels of satisfaction, previous research

to those in core countries, whereas less educated youth from poorer regions exhibit patterns typical of the periphery.

⁵ Germany is the only Western power with a democracy index above 9.00 and democracy satisfaction of 5.50 (European Social Survey 2024). These scores are lower than scores of the aforementioned countries, but significantly higher than scores of other Western powers (United States of America, United Kingdom and France).

⁶ As a semi-peripheral country with a hybrid economy, Serbia is home to youth whose political culture reflects the country's position in the global capitalist system. While central regions tend to foster participatory, protest and cynical cultures, peripheral regions passive or revolutionary ones, the semi-periphery – like Serbia – often combines cynical, passive and protest orientations. Moreover, it could be argued that more educated youth from developed areas display political traits closer

indicates that the youth in Serbia have not been satisfied with the state of the country (Popadić, Pavlović and Mihailović 2019; Hasanović et al. 2024). Finally, based on previously conducted domestic and international research (Gundogan and Radulović 2024; Popadić, Pavlović and Mihailović 2019; Tomanović and Stanojević 2015; UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs and Perry 2021; Hasanović et al. 2024) we assumed that the youth in Serbia have low levels of trust both in domestic and international political institutions.

Besides examining the type of political culture present among youth, this study also explores the factors that shape it. Since the previous research has shown the growing influence of sociodemographic factors on differences in political behaviours and orientations (de Jong and Kamphorst 2024; Ferrín et al. 2020), the key characteristics of the analysis include gender, education, age and region of residence. The following arguments are used in favour of the mentioned decision. Firstly, international studies indicate that gender is increasingly determining forms of political behaviour, especially among young people, making it relevant to examine whether similar trends are present in Serbia (Abendschön and Steinmetz 2014; Pew Research Center 2018). Also, previous research in Serbia shows that young men tend to exhibit greater political interest and have higher levels of political participation than young women (Tomanović and Stanojević 2015; Popadić, Pavlović and Mihailović 2019). Secondly, it has already been empirically shown that education significantly influences the level of interest in politics and overall political participation (higher-educated individuals generally exhibit greater political participation and political interest and vice versa) (Bovens and

Wille 2010; Persson 2013; de Jong and Kamphorst 2024; Ferrín et al. 2020; Stanojević and Gvozdenović 2022).

Thirdly, political activism and political participation are more prevalent in developed regions with significant urban centres (Coufalová et al. 2024). In urban and developed areas, public policies related to distribution, transportation and environmental issues are considered to be more important, leading to higher levels of political interest. Additionally, in more developed regions values of self-expression and civic culture are common, which also leads to more political activity (Ahlberg 2000; Kibriš 2013). This hypothesis should be tested in Serbia, where in 2023, Belgrade region generated 43.3% of the GDP, Vojvodina 24.6%, Šumadija and Western Serbia 17%, and Southern and Eastern Serbia 15.1% (Republički Zavod za Statistiku 2024).

Furthermore, research (Marquis, Kuhn and Monsch 2022; Nyqvist et al. 2024) has shown that as the age increases, political interest grows, institutional political participation increases (while non-institutional participation decreases), satisfaction with the state of the country rises, and trust in domestic institutions grows (while trust in international institutions declines). Hence, it is heuristically fruitful to examine whether the age of respondents within the studied population influences political attitudes and behaviours in our research as well. Moreover, it is interesting to see whether sociodemographic predictors remain significant after controlling for ideological positioning. The reason for this is based on earlier research findings (Marien and Christensen 2013; Matijević, Ostojić and Jovanović 2022) that have shown higher levels of trust in institutions (especially domestic), greater satisfaction with the state of society,

as well as greater institutional participation and lower non-institutional participation among the right-wing oriented citizens.

2.1 HYPOTHESES

Based on theoretical elaboration and earlier research findings, the following hypotheses have been proposed:

H1a. We expect that a majority of youth in Serbia (>50%) expresses low political interest, operationalized as selecting either 'not at all interested' or 'hardly interested' in response to the question about political interest. *H1b.* We anticipate that men, older respondents, more educated respondents and those from more developed regions will express greater political interest compared to others.

H2a. We expect that a majority of youth in Serbia (>50%) falls into the low political participation category, operationalized as reporting engagement in no more than one political activity in the previous year. *H2b.* We anticipate that men, more educated respondents and those from more developed regions will exhibit higher levels of political participation compared to others. Additionally, we assume that increased institutional participation and decreased non-institutional participation will be associated with an increase in the respondents' age and the shift toward the right end of the left-right scale.

H3a. We expect the mean satisfaction score with the state of the country among youth in Serbia to fall below the midpoint (5). Satisfaction with the state of the country is defined by combining satisfaction levels for democracy, economy, education, government and health services. *H3b.* We assume that this dissatisfaction will be less pronounced

among the older and more right-wing oriented respondents.

H4a. We expect the mean trust score for both domestic and international institutions among youth in Serbia to fall below the midpoint (5). Trust in domestic institutions is defined by combining the trust levels for the legal system, police, politicians, country's parliament and political parties. Trust in international institutions is defined by combining the trust levels for the European Parliament and the United Nations. *H4b.* We expect that the more educated and those from more developed regions will have greater trust in international institutions, while the less educated and those from less developed regions would rather place trust in domestic institutions. We also anticipate older and more right-wing oriented respondents to have greater trust in domestic, and lower trust in international political institutions.

H5a. We expect the prevailing form of political culture among the youth in Serbia to be cynical political culture, characterized by a majority of the youth having low political interest (*H1a*) and low political participation (*H2a*), as well as the satisfaction (*H3a*) and trust (*H4a*) levels being below the neutral midpoint (5). *H5b.* We anticipate that high political interest and participation and low levels of satisfaction and trust (as defined in previous hypotheses), which are elements of the protest political culture, will be associated with male respondents, as well as the highly educated and the youth from more developed regions. Accordingly, we expect low political interest and participation, and high political trust (as defined in previous hypotheses), which are elements of the passive political culture, to be associated with the less educated youth and the youth from underdeveloped regions.

3 METHOD

3.1 DATA

The statistical analysis was focused on Serbia and conducted using the ESS11 database (European Social Survey 2024). The data collection period lasted from 2023 to 2024. All the data and detailed information about response rates, sampling procedures and modes of collection are available on the official portal (ESS Data Portal n.d.). The analysis was performed in the statistical package IBM SPSS Statistics 20.

While the ESS sample is representative of the national population as a whole, our study focuses exclusively on the subjects between the ages of 18 and 29. To improve representativeness within this cohort, all estimates were weighted by the post-stratification weight including design weight (*pspwght*) which had already been included in the data matrix.⁷ However, the youth subsample may still deviate slightly from the true structure, while the findings should be viewed with this limitation in mind.

The sample included 244 respondents with the mean age of 23.0 years (51.1% males and 48.9% females). The regional distribution was as follows: 22.0% from Belgrade region, 30.8% from Vojvodina, 28.5% from Šumadija and Western Serbia, and 18.8% from Southern and Eastern Serbia. Respondents with a low education level constituted 11.1% of the sample, those with a medium level of education level 70.8%, and those with a high level of education 18.1%. The left-right political positioning had a mean score of 5.15 (*N* = 159).

⁷ Post-stratification weight is based on gender, age, education and region and it is corrected for coverage, sampling and nonresponse errors.

3.2 DEPENDENT VARIABLES

The interest in politics was measured with the categorical variable 'How interested in politics would you say you are?', where the possible answers were 'very interested', 'quite interested', 'hardly interested' or 'not at all interested'. For the purposes of further analysis, we treated this variable as an ordinal, with value '1' meaning 'not at all interested' and value '4' meaning 'very interested'. Additionally, we created a binary variable coded as '1' (answers 'very' or 'quite interested') and '0' (answers 'hardly' or 'not at all interested').

Political participation was measured by using mainly the set of questions related to different forms of participation practiced in the previous year. The questions were: 'There are different ways of trying to improve things in [country] or help prevent things from going wrong. During the last 12 months, have you done any of the following? ...worn or displayed a campaign badge/sticker? ...boycotted certain products? ...contacted a politician, government or local government official?...taken part in a public demonstration? ...posted or shared anything about politics online, for example on blogs, via email or on social media such as Facebook or Twitter? ...signed a petition? ...worked in a political party or action group? ...donated to or participated in a political party or pressure group?' Possible answers were 'yes' and 'no'. Furthermore, the election turnout variable was included — 'Some people don't vote nowadays for one reason or another. Did you vote in the last [country] national election in [month/year]?' with possible answers 'yes', 'no' and 'not eligible to vote'. The questions related to election turnout, contacting politicians or working within political parties

were indicators of institutional forms of participation, while the remaining questions mentioned above were indicators of non-institutional forms of political participation. For the further analyses, two dichotomous variables were created – participation in institutional forms and participation in non-institutional forms of political participation. Each variable was coded ‘1’ when the respondent engaged in at least one activity within the respective category and ‘0’ when the respondent did not engage in any activity. Additionally, to test H2a, we created political participation index, ranging from 0 to 8. This index was calculated by summing up the number of forms of political participation in which each respondent reported engagement in previous years. Based on previous research (Bozogáňová and Výrost 2019), we established the following thresholds: a score of 0–1 indicates low political participation, a score of 2–3 indicates medium political participation, and a score of 4–8 indicates high political participation.

Four quantitative variables were used in order to measure the level of satisfaction with the social and economic state of the country. The following questions were posed: ‘And on the whole, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in [country]?’, ‘On the whole, how satisfied are you with the present state of the economy in [country]?’, ‘Now, using this card, please say what you think overall about the state of education in [country] nowadays?’, ‘Now, thinking about the [country]’s government, how satisfied are you with the way it is doing its job? Still using this card, please say what you think overall about the state of health services in [country] nowadays?’. Possible answers were numbers from 0 to 10 with ‘0’ meaning ‘extremely dissatisfied’ and ‘10’ meaning ‘extremely

satisfied’. For further analysis, via Factor Analysis, variables concerning satisfaction with the state of the country were grouped into factor named ‘The level of satisfaction with the social, political and economic situation’. Additionally, to enable the use of a One-sample t-test, we calculated a mean satisfaction score for each respondent, based on their reported satisfaction with the democracy, economy, education, government and health services.

Political trust was operationalised as trust toward domestic institutions and trust toward international institutions. The following questions were used to determine the level of trust towards domestic institutions: ‘Using this card, please tell me on the scale of 0–10 how much you personally trust each of the institutions I read out. 0 means you do not trust the institution at all, and 10 means you have complete trust. Firstly... [country]’s parliament? ...the legal system? ...the police? ...politicians? ...political parties?’. The questions which indicate the trust toward international political institutions were: ‘Using this card, please tell me on the scale of 0–10 how much you personally trust each of the institutions I read out. 0 means you do not trust the institution at all, and 10 means you have complete trust.’ ...the European Parliament? ...the United Nations?’. For further analyses, via the Factor Analysis, the variables concerning political trust were grouped into two factors named ‘Trust in domestic institutions’ and ‘Trust in international institutions’. Additionally, to enable the use of a One-sample t-test, we calculated the mean trust score for each respondent, based on their reported trust in the legal system, police, politicians, the country’s parliament, political parties (trust in domestic institutions), as well as the

separate mean trust score, based on the reported trust in the European Parliament and the United Nations (trust in international institutions).

3.3 INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Main independent variables utilized to explore differences which arise from sociodemographic differences of the respondents were gender, education, region and age.⁸ Age was operationalised as a numeric variable indicating each respondent's exact years of age. Education was measured using ES-ISCED classification (levels ranging from 1 to 7) provided in the European Social Survey (2024) database. It was used as numeric variable and it was mean-centred before being entered into all subsequent analyses in order to mitigate multicollinearity. To provide a clearer graphical representation of interactions, education was regrouped into the three following categories: low education level (ES-ISCED I & II), medium education level (ES-ISCED IIIb, IIIa, IV) and high education level (ES-ISCED V1 & V2). Dummy variables were created for the remaining categorical predictors. First, dummy variable for gender was coded '1' if respondents were male, and '0' if they were female (reference category). Second, the original four regional categories – Belgrade, Vojvodina, Šumadija and Western Serbia and Southern and Eastern Serbia – were collapsed into a dummy variable because of the small cell sizes. Respondents from Belgrade or Vojvodina, the regions which are more economically developed and have greater GDP, were grouped together and coded '1', and

those from the other two regions were coded '0' (reference category). Further, to test whether main effects depended on each other, the analyses also incorporated the interaction terms gender*region, gender*education and region*education. Each term was computed as the product of the relevant predictors. Finally, to assess the impact of ideological orientation, respondents' self-placement on the numeric left-right scale ('0' meaning 'left' and '10' meaning 'right') was employed. As with education, this variable was also mean-centred before being entered into the models to mitigate multicollinearity. Moreover, to create a clearer graphical display, this variable was re-categorized into three groups consisting of left (0–3), centre (4–6) and right-wing respondents (7–10).

3.4 METHODS OF ANALYSIS

Grouping respondents in two categories (low political interest marked as '0' and moderate or high political interest marked as '1') enabled the use of the Binomial test when testing H1a. Specifically, the Binomial test was conducted to examine whether the proportion of all the respondents classified as having low political interest exceeded 50% threshold. The threshold of >50% was applied, since majority requires more than a half of the population to share a given characteristic. Ordinal version of political interest variable was used when conducting descriptive statistics, and was justified by the ordered nature of the responses, reflecting increasing levels of political interest.

The political participation index was utilized when testing H2a. The respondents with index ranging from 0 to 1 were grouped in low political participation category (marked as '0'), while other

⁸ The initial intention to include variables indicating class differences was omitted from the analysis due to the lack of adequate variables for class comparison.

respondents were grouped in moderate or high political participation category (marked as '1'). The Binomial test was conducted to examine whether the proportion of all the respondents classified as having low participation exceeded 50% threshold, where exceeding the threshold signals that a phenomenon is not only present but dominant. Descriptive statistics were also analysed to gain a deeper understanding. Since studies (Theocharis and van Deth 2018; Koc 2021) suggest excluding election turnout from analyses, as it is normatively expected type of political participation and it may inflate participation index, which happened in our case, we repeated the analyses with the exclusion of this variable and presented both results comparatively.

To test H3a, One-sample t-tests were used to examine whether the satisfaction means were significantly lower than the scale midpoint (5). First, each variable was tested separately to get a general impression. Next, a composite satisfaction score was created by calculating the mean across all five satisfaction variables, and One-sample t-test was repeated using this score. This approach allowed us to capture general satisfaction with the state of the country, while still having insights in the specific aspects of satisfaction with different institutions. The analysis of descriptive statistics also contributed to this.

Similarly, using the same reasoning, and in order to test H4a, One-sample t-tests were used to examine whether the trust means were significantly lower than the scale midpoint (5). First, each variable was tested separately in order to get a general impression. Next, One-sample t-tests were repeated separately using two composite trust scores created by calculating the means across

the variables related to trust in domestic and international institutions. Again, we relied on descriptive statistics to provide additional insight.

In order to test the hypotheses relating to sociodemographic differences (H1b, H2b, H3b, H4b) either Multiple Linear Regressions (MLR) or Multiple Binary Logistic Regressions (MBLR) were conducted. The MLR was used during the analyses of the numeric dependent variables (satisfaction and trust), while the MBLR was used during the analyses of the dichotomous dependent variables (interest in politics and political participation). The regression analyses were conducted using a hierarchical approach, consisting of three models/blocks. The first model (Model 1) included sociodemographic variables (dummy variables for gender and region and numeric variables for education and age). This allowed us to assess the independent contributions of these characteristics. The second model (Model 2) included interaction terms in addition to initial variables (gender*region, gender*education, region*education). Including the interaction terms enabled testing whether the effect of one predictor depended on another, thereby revealing moderation effects and improving the model's explanatory power. The final model (Model 3) included the left-right ideological orientation of the respondents, which enabled an assessment of whether the observed effects remain once ideological orientation is taken into account. To obtain adequate dependent variables for MLR analysis, two Factor Analyses were performed. As a result, variables that concerned satisfaction were grouped together as one factor named 'The level of satisfaction with the social, political and economic situation'. In the same way, via the Factor Analysis, the

variables concerning political trust were grouped into two factors named ‘Trust in domestic institutions’ and ‘Trust in international institutions’. Those new variables were later entered into regression models as independent variables.

The acceptance of H5a is contingent upon the results of the four supporting hypotheses. Specifically, H5a can only be supported if H1a, H2a, H3a and H4a are confirmed. In this sense, it is a higher-order hypothesis which derives its validity from the results of the four core aspects of political culture. To confirm H5b, it is necessary that the expected sociodemographic variables emerge as significant predictors in the expected direction across all the examined aspects of the assumed type of political culture. The conclusions about H5b are based on the synthesis of the supporting hypotheses (H1b, H2b, H3b, H4b).

4 RESULTS

4.1 INTEREST IN POLITICS

As can be seen in Table 2, 84.3% of the respondents were not at all interested, or were hardly interested in politics according to their own reflection. Only

3.3% of them expressed very high political interest.

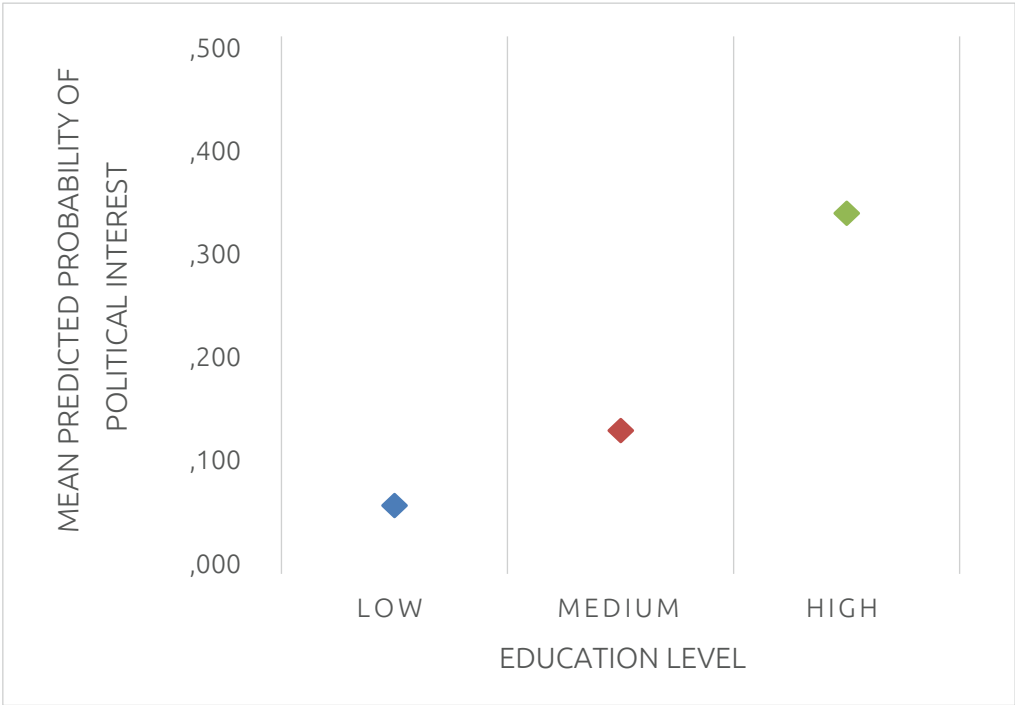
By treating the variable of political interest as an ordinal variable, we calculated descriptive statistics and examined its percentile distribution. As shown in Table A 1, the mean, mode and the median all had a value of 2 or less. The distribution was positively skewed, with the 80th percentile also at a value of 2. Taken together, these results indicate a low level of political interest among the majority of youth. To further validate these descriptive findings, we performed a Binomial test. The results confirmed that the proportion of youth (85%) with a low political interest was significantly higher than the 50% threshold (Table A 2), which aligns with H1a.

When conducting the MBLR, only Model 1 achieved statistical significance (Table A 3). In this case, education was the only significant predictor of political interest. With each one-unit increase in education, the respondents had 96.2% higher odds of being interested in politics (Graph 1). These findings only partially align with H1b – while the effect of education was confirmed, the expected effects of gender, region and age were not.

Table 2 Political interest

		How interested in politics			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	(1) Not at all interested	101	41.2	41.6	41.6
	(2) Hardly interested	103	42.2	42.7	84.3
	(3) Quite interested	30	12.3	12.4	96.7
	(4) Very interested	8	3.2	3.3	100.0
	Total	242	99.0	100.0	
Missing	Refusal	2	1.0		
Total		244	100.0		

Source: Authors' calculation, European Social Survey 2024



Graph 1 Effect of education on political interest
Source: Authors' calculation, European Social Survey 2024

4.2 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

As presented in Table 3, the highest level of political participation is observed in election turnout, which is considered to be the main form of institutional participation. Other institutional types of participation were barely present – around 6% of the respondents donated or worked in political parties, while a similar percentage of the respondents contacted a politician, government or local government office. The most common forms of non-institutional participation were signing petitions, posting or sharing political posts online and taking part in public demonstrations.

When considering all forms of participation, 57.5% of the respondents reported low participation (engagement in

none or only one form of political participation in the previous year), leaving the distribution positively skewed (Table A 1). When excluding election turnout, 72.2% of the respondents reported low participation, once more leaving the distribution positively skewed with most of the respondents (51.9%) not participating in any activity (Table A 1). To further validate these descriptive findings, a Binomial test was performed both with and without election turnout. As shown in Table A 2, the results were marginally significant when election turnout was included ($p < .100$), and highly significant when it was excluded ($p < .000$). This suggests that youth's political participation remains generally low, despite the fact that overall levels of political participation are strongly influenced by election

Table 3 Political participation

Valid percentage of the respondents that participated in specific form of political participation		
Institutional forms of participation	...voted in the last national elections?	72.6
	...contacted a politician, government or local government official?	6.6
	...donated to, or participated in a political party or pressure group?	6.0
	...worn or displayed a campaign badge/sticker?	8.4
Non-institutional forms of participation	...boycotted certain products?	11.2
	...taken part in a public demonstration?	16.8
	...posted or shared anything about politics online, for example on blogs, via email or on social media such as Facebook or Twitter?	18.4
	...signed a petition?	31.5

Source: Authors' calculation, European Social Survey 2024

turnout. Therefore, there was sufficient evidence in favour of H2a.

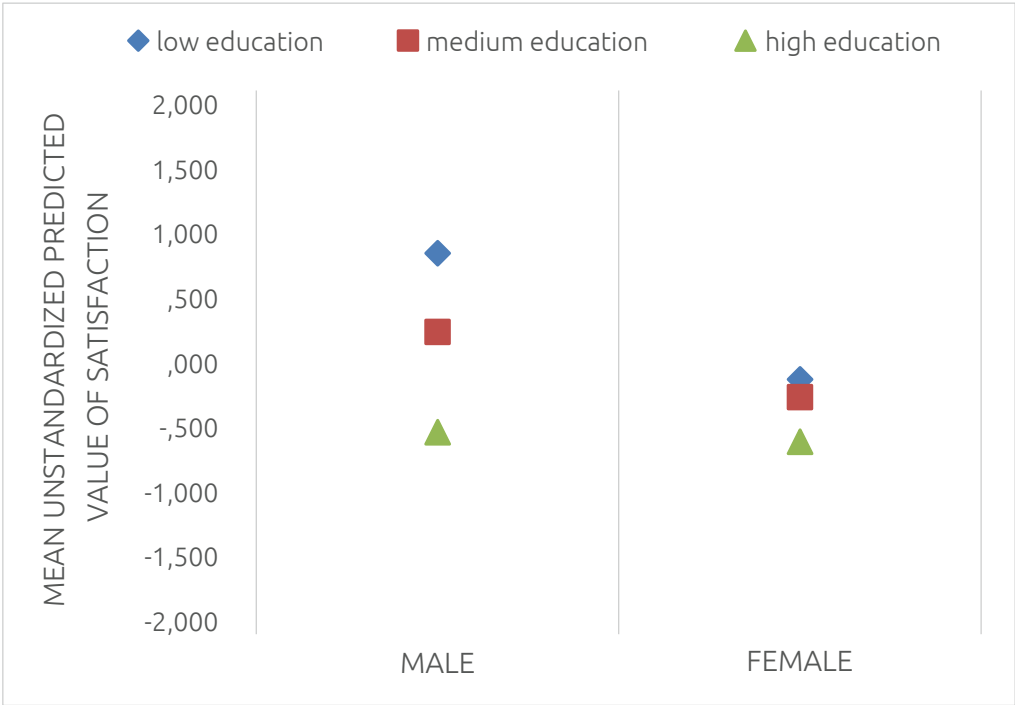
When conducting the MBLR, all three analysed models proved to be significant regarding the institutional participation, but none regarding the non-institutional participation (Table A 4). Considering the institutional participation, the only significant effect was noted with age of the respondents. With each increase in age by one year, the respondents had around 20% higher chances of engaging in some type of institutional political participation. Therefore, we rejected most parts of H2b, and found almost no significant sociodemographic effects on political participation.

4.3 SATISFACTION WITH THE STATE OF THE COUNTRY

The levels of satisfaction with the state of the country remained below the scale midpoint (5) for nearly all analysed variables (Table A 5). One-sample t-tests indicated that satisfaction means were significantly below the neutral midpoint for all the variables except education, where the youth reported a neutral position (Table A 6). To gain a deeper insight,

we checked the percentile distribution. As can be seen in Table A 5, more than 50% of the respondents rated their satisfaction levels as 5 or lower for all variables. Higher dissatisfaction is noted in areas such as democracy, economy and government, where 70% of the respondents rated their satisfaction levels as 5 or lower. Taken together, these results suggest that it may be meaningful to make a distinction between political satisfaction (democracy, economy, government) and public services satisfaction (education, health), which was moderate. Next, One-sample t-test using the composite satisfaction mean score indicated that the tested mean was significantly lower than the midpoint, reinforcing our previous findings (Table A 6). Therefore, we can argue that there is enough reason to accept H3a, especially regarding the aspects that can be considered as political satisfaction.

Regarding H3b, all three models tested with MLR analysis using calculated factor scores of satisfaction (Table A 7) proved to be significant, with Model 3 explaining the highest percentage of variance (Table A 8). In the first model, significant effects were noted for



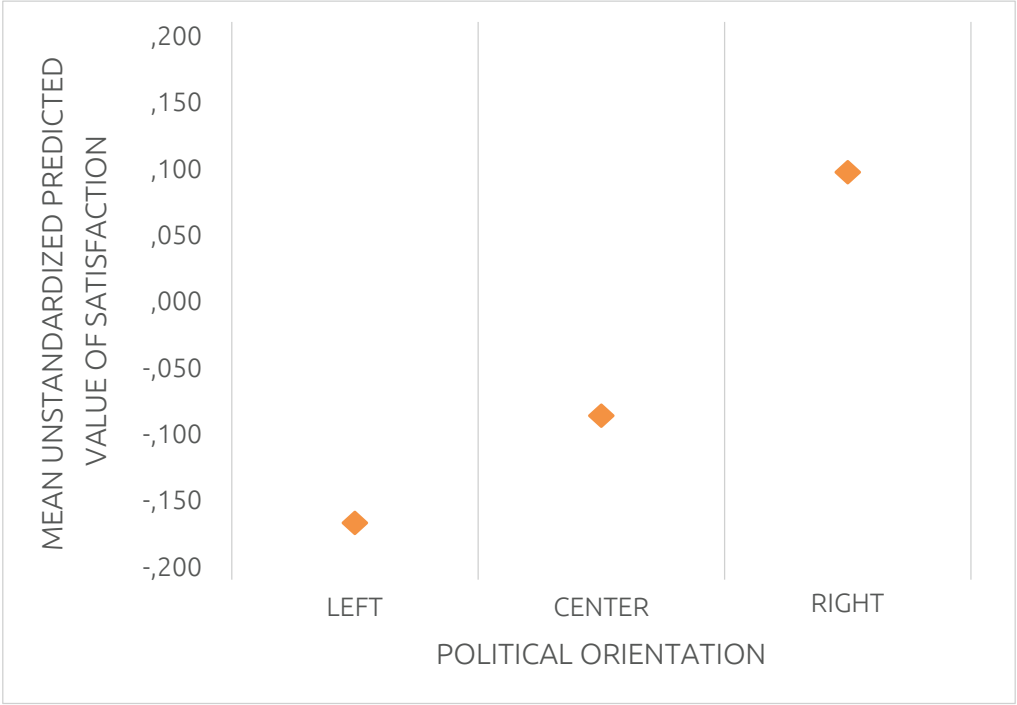
Graph 2 Interaction effect of gender and education level on satisfaction
Source: Authors' calculations, European Social Survey 2024

gender, age and education. With the addition of interaction terms in the second model, significant effects were noted for age and interaction between gender and education. Finally, in the third model, the interaction between gender and education remained significant, and additionally, the effect of left-right orientation emerged. These findings illustrate the importance of controlling for effects of independent variables and interaction terms in analyses. We can see that the effects of gender and education are interrelated. As can be seen in Graph 2, the lower the education level, the greater the gender difference in satisfaction (with men being more satisfied). With the increase in education level, the influence of gender diminishes. When it comes to political positioning,

the right-wing oriented respondents had higher satisfaction levels (Graph 3). Therefore, we can only partially confirm H3b – the effect of age was absent in more complex models, while the effect of political positioning was as expected.

4.4 POLITICAL TRUST

The youth demonstrated low levels of trust in all the types of political institutions examined (Table A 9). For almost all variables, the mean level of trust was significantly lower than the neutral midpoint of the scale (Table A 6). The only exception was trust in the police, where the youth took a neutral to moderate position. When using both composite scores of trust in domestic and trust in international institutions, the mean was



Graph 3 Effect of political orientation on satisfaction
Source: Authors' calculations, European Social Survey 2024

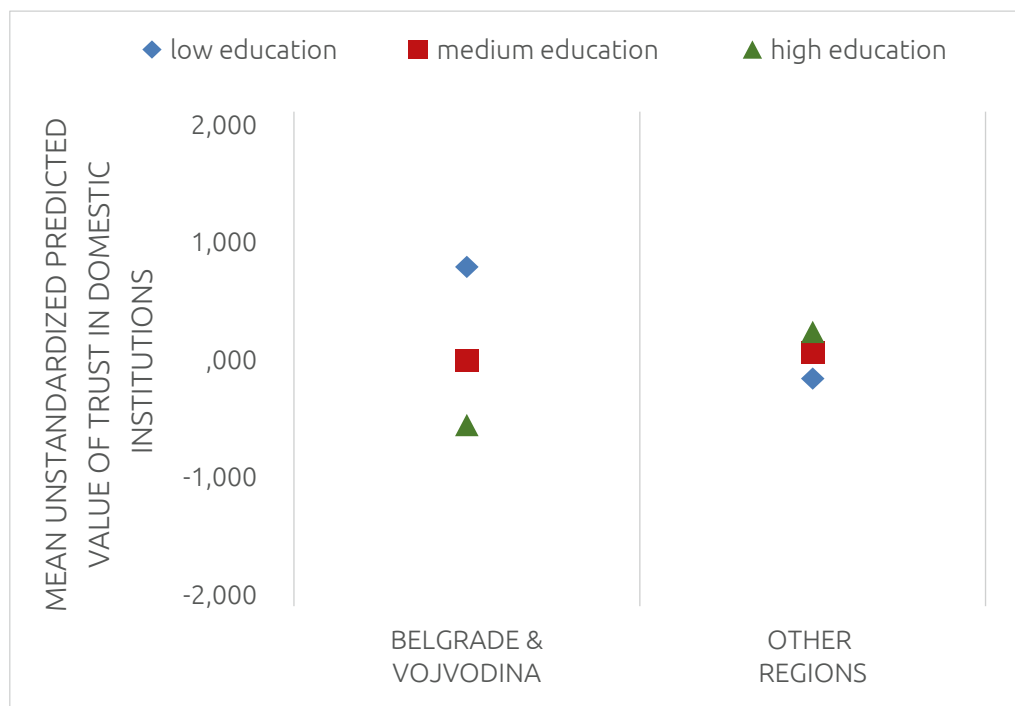
also significantly lower than the tested midpoint of the scale (Table A 6). Therefore, we argue that there is sufficient evidence in support of H4a. This is also supported by the result that more than 50% of the youth rated their trust in institutions 5 or below. Notably, 90% of the youth rated their trust in politicians 5 or below (Table A 9).

Next, separate MLR analyses were conducted to examine the trust in domestic and international institutions (Table A 10). For domestic institutions, all three models proved to be significant, while none reached significance for international institutions. Model 3 had the highest percentage of explained variance and the significant effect was noted with political orientation, as well as with the interaction between region

and education. The low-educated youth exhibited the highest trust in domestic institutions, but only in more developed regions (Graph 4). Moreover, right political orientation was associated with the highest level of trust in political institutions (Graph 5). Based on these results, we can only partially confirm H4b – the effect of age was not present at all, while political orientation demonstrated the anticipated effect.

5 DISCUSSION

There is sufficient evidence in support of the assumptions made regarding H1a, H2a, H3a and H4a. In the analysed period, the majority of the youth in Serbia had low political interest and participation, and overall satisfaction and



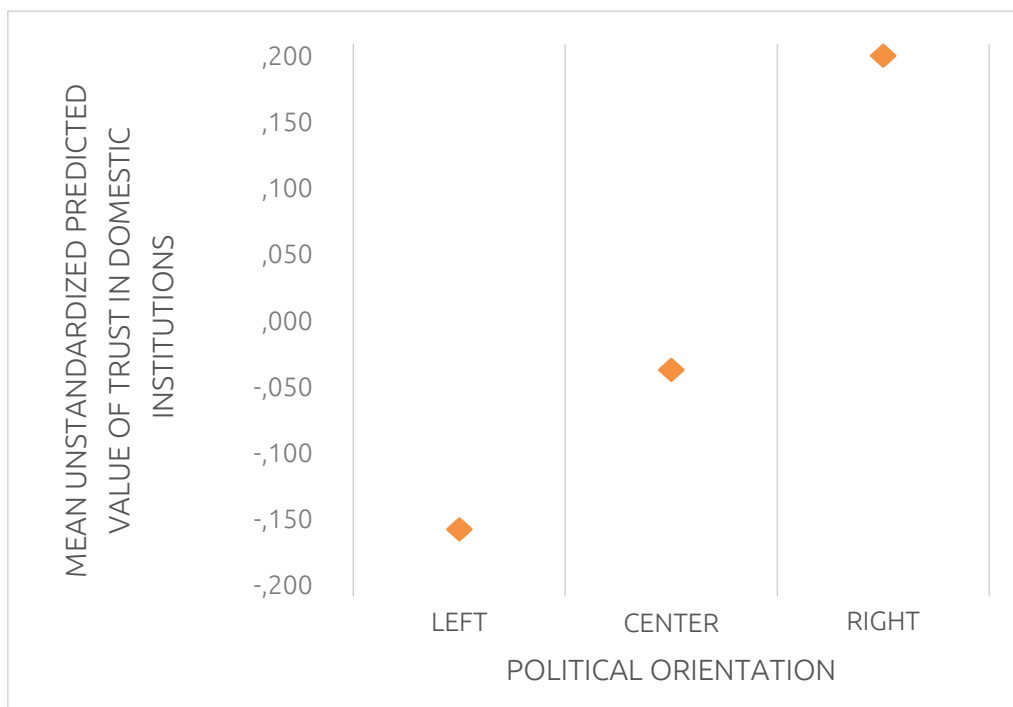
Graph 4 Interaction effect of education level and region on the trust in domestic institutions

Source: Authors' calculations, European Social Survey 2024

trust levels were below the neutral midpoint, indicating distrust and dissatisfaction with the institutions. These findings align with the earlier studies of youth in Serbia (Tomanović and Stanojević 2015; Popadić, Pavlović and Mihailović 2019; Hasanović et al. 2024). Besides, we noted high election turnout and its influence on the overall participation levels, which was also expected given that earlier research (Popadić, Pavlović and Mihailović 2019) showed that, despite the low self-expression of interest in politics, most of the youth still participate in the elections. We agree with other authors (Denny and Doyle 2008; Hruška 2023) that such high turnout should be understood rather as a result of social obligation which is not political in nature. After election turnout, the most frequent

forms of participation are signing petitions, posting or sharing posts related to political topics and taking part in demonstrations (non-institutional forms of political participation). Also, the results regarding satisfaction suggest that in the future research it may be meaningful to make a distinction between political satisfaction (democracy, economy, government) which was quite low, and public services satisfaction (education, health) which was moderate.

Considering the influence of socio-demographic variables on the aspects of political culture, mixed results were obtained and we could only partially support the assumptions made. First, results indicated a significant effect of education on political interest, while the expected effects of gender, region and age



Graph 5 Effect of political orientation on the trust in domestic institutions

Source: Authors' calculations, European Social Survey 2024

were absent (so, we rejected most parts of H1b). Second, the only significant predictor of participation was age (but only considering institutional participation), while other sociodemographic predictors had no significant effect. Therefore, we rejected most parts of H2b. Third, we could only partially confirm H3b and H4b – while the effect of political orientation was as expected, the effect of age was absent in more complex models, or not present at all. On the other hand, we found some significant interaction effects between gender and education regarding the satisfaction, and between region and education regarding the trust in domestic institutions. Given the statistical significance of the most models and solid levels of explained variance, it is evident that these factors do play a role

in shaping youth's political culture, but their influence appears to be complex and intertwined. Previous studies (Tomanović and Stanojević 2015; Popadić, Pavlović and Mihailović 2019) on which our assumptions were based largely examined sociodemographic characteristics separately, whereas our research advanced this approach by assessing the independent effects of predictors, as well as interactions between them. This perspective provides a more comprehensive understanding of both the joint and the unique contributions of independent variables.

To draw a conclusion regarding the H5a, we combined and analysed the results of the hypotheses regarding different aspects of political culture (H1a, H2a, H3a, H4a). Since all four indications

of cynical political culture (low political interest, participation, satisfaction and trust) were present among the youth in Serbia, we found no sufficient reasons to reject H5a. Therefore, we claim that, in the analysed period, the political culture among the youth in Serbia was predominantly cynical. Further, our findings suggest that the respondents' socio-demographic characteristics influence their political culture, but those effects are best understood as interconnected rather than independent. In many aspects of political culture, age, gender, region and education were found to be significant, but they accounted for only a small percentage of the overall variance. When additional variables were included, the independent significance of some of the sociodemographic factors diminished, but the models' explanatory power increased.

Regarding the H5b, our findings indicate some aspects of protest culture being present among the more educated youth, but those results were inconsistent and, more often than not, dependent on other factors as well. There was also not enough evidence in support of the assumption that protest culture was more present among male respondents and respondents from more developed regions. Those factors almost never had significant effect when controlling for other variables in more complex models. The same can be said about the findings indicating passive political culture among the less-educated and respondents from less developed regions, hence we rejected H5b.

The observed characteristics of cynical political culture among youth indicate the necessity of developing a wide range of public policies aimed at enhancing political culture among the youth. Young people could be politically

activated through the creation of local youth forums within municipalities, where they would be consulted on issues related to urban planning, culture and education. Comprehensive political education can be achieved via organization of political schools, with the potential involvement of universities in their implementation. Furthermore, local media and online platforms should contain spaces for young people to express their views. In order to restore youth's trust in institutions, we recommend the active construction of institutional credibility through youth-oriented institutional reports, open days in key institutions (e.g. parliament, city administrations, ministries) and the introduction of participatory budgeting processes that allow youth to vote on the allocation of specific public funds. In addition, digitally active young people could be encouraged to participate more directly in public processes through the use of memes and short-form videos for political education, as well as through partnerships between government bodies and social media influencers who promote civic responsibility.

5.1 LIMITATIONS

Several methodological limitations should be acknowledged. Firstly, despite our efforts to improve the representativeness of the youth subsample by including data weights, broad generalizations should be made with caution. Future research would benefit from a larger, demographically balanced sample, directly representative of the 18–29 age group. Additionally, as all the findings of this research are based on the latest ESS data, which were collected during 2023 and 2024, yet it is possible that they may have already been outdated

given the current situation in Serbia with the widespread student protests against corruption. However, as we limited ourselves to the available ESS data, at this point we can only speculate about that. This further underscores that all the conclusions can be applied only to the analysed period.

When it comes to the numeric variables used, an assumption of equal intervals between values was applied, which is a common practice in social sciences, but this still has to be kept in mind. Also, the interpretation of mean differences from the scale midpoint may mask heterogeneity within the data. To reduce this concern, the medians, percentiles and other descriptive statistics were also presented. Finally, when calculating the participation index, as well as the satisfaction and trust composite mean scores, all items were weighted equally, despite some of them showing different factor loadings in the factor analysis. Future research could use weighted scores to further improve this measurement. However, since this was not implemented in this research, the results for both composite scores and individual means were presented.

6 CONCLUSION

Our findings are mostly consistent with previous research and indicate that the predominant type of political culture

among youth in Serbia was cynical. Moreover, the results indicate the relevance of certain sociodemographic characteristics, such as education. However, their impact is best considered in combination. This finding offers new insights compared to earlier studies that mainly examined separate rather than independent and interaction effects of these variables. Furthermore, the key theoretical contribution of this study lies in its integration of youth political behaviour patterns into a newly developed typology of political culture. This framework allows for a more precise and context-sensitive empirical examination of political culture and it is particularly effective for analysing political culture in societies experiencing democratic fatigue.

For future research, it would be of a great value to conduct in-depth interviews with young people from various sociodemographic groups in order to achieve more comprehensive insights. In addition, it would be of substantial importance to analyse the current student protests in Serbia, as we assume that the data from the ongoing ESS round would show even greater engagement of the youth in different forms of political participation connected with the contemporary student movement. Since this research relied solely on the data from the latest ESS round, a thorough analysis of the current student protests was unfortunately not possible.

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Data Availability Statement

The data are available from the authors upon request.

Coauthor Contributions

Stefan Mandić: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – Original Draft, Writing – Review & Editing;
Milana Vinokić: Methodology, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, Visualization, Writing – Original Draft, Writing – Review & Editing.

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APPENDIX

Table A 1 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics						
	Political interest	Political participation score		Satisfaction score	Political trust score	
		(1)	(2)		(D)	(I)
N	242	218	234	244	239	223
Mean	1.77	1.73	.99	4.07	3.51	3.63
Std. Error of Mean	.051	.104	.086	.144	.143	.175
Median	2.00	1.00	.00	4.00	3.20	4.00
Mode	2	1	0	3	5	0
Std. Deviation	.789	1.539	1.314	2.256	2.211	2.607
Variance	.623	2.368	1.727	5.091	4.889	6.794
Skewness	.830	.999	1.380	.379	.493	.184
Std. Error of Skewness	.156	.165	.159	.156	.157	.163
Kurtosis	.240	.512	1.414	-.489	-.119	-.942
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.312	.328	.317	.310	.314	.325
Percentiles	10	1.00	.00	1.00	.60	.00
	20	1.00	.00	1.97	1.40	1.00
	25	1.00	1.00	2.37	1.80	1.00
	30	1.00	1.00	2.60	2.00	1.50
	40	1.00	1.00	3.20	2.80	2.99
	50	2.00	1.00	4.00	3.20	4.00
	60	2.00	2.00	4.80	3.80	5.00
	70	2.00	2.00	5.40	4.80	5.00
	75	2.00	3.00	5.60	5.00	5.50
	80	2.00	3.00	6.00	5.40	6.00
	90	3.00	4.00	7.00	6.75	7.00

Note: (1) With election turnout, (2) Without election turnout, (D) Domestic institutions, (I) International institutions
Source: Authors' calculation, European Social Survey 2024

Table A 2 Results of Binomial tests

Binomial tests						
		Category	N	Observed Proportion	Test Proportion	Exact Sig. (2-tailed)
Political interest	Group 1	<= 0	204	.85	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 0	37	.15		
	Total		241	1.00		
(1)	Group 1	<= 0	122	.57	.50	.056
	Group 2	> 0	93	.43		
	Total		215	1.00		
	Group 1	<= 0	167	.72	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 0	65	.28		
	Total		232	1.00		

Note: (1) With election turnout, (2) Without election turnout
Source: Authors' calculation, European Social Survey 2024

Table A 3 Results of Multiple Binary Logistic Regression – Political interest

Hierarchical blocks	Model Summary			Hosmer and Lemeshow Test		
	-2 LL	Cox & Snell R ²	Nagelkerke R ²	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Model 1	147.062	.092	.143	12.932	8	.114
Model 2	139.024	.136	.213	18.131	8	.020
Model 3	135.643	.155	.242	19.443	8	.013
Predictors	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Sig.	Exp(B)	Sig.	Exp(B)	Sig.	Exp(B)
gender	.509	1.320	.329	.502	.306	.480
region	.229	1.685	.917	.938	.886	1.095
age	.425	.932	.377	.923	.456	.934
education	.004	1.962	.646	1.189	.742	1.133
gender*region			.217	3.043	.250	2.860
gender*education			.021	2.311	.011	2.593
region*education			.768	1.115	.948	1.025
lrscale					.071	.840

Note: Hosmer and Lemeshow Test $p < .050$ indicates lack of fit

Source: Authors' calculation, European Social Survey 2024

Table A 4 Results of Multiple Binary Logistic Regression – Political participation

INSTITUTIONAL POLITICAL PARTICIPATION						
Hierarchical blocks	Model Summary			Hosmer and Lemeshow Test		
	-2 LL	Cox & Snell R ²	Nagelkerke R ²	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Model 1	164.634	.086	.127	3.213	8	.920
Model 2	161.949	.101	.150	5.817	8	.668
Model 3	161.735	.103	.152	6.218	8	.623
Predictors	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Sig.	Exp(B)	Sig.	Exp(B)	Sig.	Exp(B)
gender	.358	.694	.495	.632	.500	.635
region	.452	.744	.403	.573	.438	.595
age	.021	1.201	.017	1.217	.016	1.216
education	.482	1.163	.903	.953	.903	.953
gender*region			.684	1.417	.718	1.363
gender*education			.176	1.656	.163	1.691
region*education			.535	.789	.499	.769
lrscale					.644	.960

NON-INSTITUTIONAL POLITICAL PARTICIPATION						
Hierarchical blocks	Model Summary			Hosmer and Lemeshow Test		
	-2 LL	Cox & Snell R ²	Nagelkerke R ²	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Model 1	200.959	.117	.155	21.829	8	.005
Model 2	199.709	.123	.165	20.340	8	.009
Model 3	196.474	.141	.188	15.803	8	.045
Predictors	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Sig.	Exp(B)	Sig.	Exp(B)	Sig.	Exp(B)
gender	.088	.560	.122	.461	.112	.446
region	.029	2.119	.259	1.775	.178	2.009
age	.432	.951	.375	.944	.416	.948
education	.012	1.574	.255	1.413	.292	1.378
gender*region			.587	1.453	.664	1.352
gender*education			.860	.945	.984	1.007
region*education			.321	1.353	.401	1.296
lrscale					.075	.874

Note: Hosmer and Lemeshow Test p < .050 indicates lack of fit

Source: Authors' calculation, European Social Survey 2024

Table A 5 Different aspects of satisfaction

Descriptive statistics						
	DEMOCRACY	ECONOMY	EDUCATION	GOVERNMENT	HEALTH	
N	218	233	243	227	233	
Mean	3.34	3.63	5.06	3.36	4.20	
Std. Error of Mean	.183	.159	.165	.194	.183	
Median	3.00	4.00	5.00	3.00	4.00	
Mode	0	5	4	0	5	
Std. Deviation	2.701	2.421	2.570	2.927	2.798	
Variance	7.293	5.861	6.603	8.565	7.829	
Skewness	.484	.251	-.066	.550	.075	
Std. Error of Skewness	.165	.159	.156	.161	.159	
Kurtosis	-.565	-.432	-.492	-.655	-.849	
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.328	.318	.311	.322	.317	
Percentiles	10	.00	.00	2.00	.00	.00
	20	.00	1.00	3.00	.00	1.67
	25	1.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	2.00
	30	1.00	2.00	4.00	1.00	2.00
	40	2.00	3.00	4.00	2.00	3.00
	50	3.00	4.00	5.00	3.00	4.00
	60	4.00	5.00	6.00	4.00	5.00
	70	5.00	5.00	6.00	5.00	6.00
	75	5.00	5.00	7.00	5.41	6.00
	80	6.00	5.70	7.00	6.00	7.00
	90	7.00	6.84	9.00	7.00	8.00

Source: Authors' calculation, European Social Survey 2024

Table A 6 Results of One-sample t-tests – Satisfaction and Trust

SATISFACTION (Test Value = 5)									
	N	Mean	Std. Devia- tion	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
democracy	218	3.34	2.701	-9.103	217	.000	-1.664	-2.02	-1.30
economy	233	3.63	2.421	-8.606	232	.000	-1.365	-1.68	-1.05
education	243	5.06	2.570	.381	242	.704	.063	-.26	.39
government	227	3.36	2.927	-8.423	226	.000	-1.635	-2.02	-1.25
health	233	4.20	2.798	-4.353	232	.000	-.797	-1.16	-.44
satisfaction score	244	4.07	2.256	-6.457	243	.000	-.932	-1.22	-.65
POLITICAL TRUST (Test Value = 5)									
	N	Mean	Std. Devia- tion	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
legal system	225	4.44	2.954	-2.863	224	.005	-.564	-.95	-.18
police	235	5.33	3.039	1.660	234	.098	.329	-.06	.72
politicians	229	2.00	2.266	-20.037	228	.000	-3.002	-3.30	-2.71
parliament	222	3.67	2.577	-7.715	221	.000	-1.334	-1.67	-.99
political parties	232	2.20	2.382	-17.932	231	.000	-2.803	-3.11	-2.49
European Parliament	217	3.67	2.789	-7.042	216	.000	-1.333	-1.71	-.96
UN	210	3.53	2.782	-7.656	209	.000	-1.468	-1.85	-1.09
domestic inst. trust score	239	3.51	2.211	-10.386	238	.000	-1.485	-1.77	-1.20
internation- al inst. trust score	223	3.63	2.607	-7.847	222	.000	-1.370	-1.71	-1.03

Source: Authors' calculation, European Social Survey 2024

Table A 7 Results of Factor Analyses

SATISFACTION WITH THE STATE OF THE COUNTRY		
Correlation Matrix		
Determinant	.068	
Factor matrix		
Variables	Factor 1	
How satisfied with the way democracy works in the country	.833	
How satisfied with present state of economy in the country	.754	
State of education in the country nowadays	.594	
How satisfied with the national government	.815	
State of health services in the country nowadays	.757	
KMO and Barlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	.788	
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	x² (10) = 549.900, p = .000	
Total Variance Explained		
Factor	% of Variance	
Factor 1	57.051	
POLITICAL TRUST		
Correlation Matrix		
Determinant	.014	
Rotated Factor matrix		
Variables	Factor 1	Factor 2
Trust in the European Parliament	.272	.662
Trust in the legal system	.766	.299
Trust in the police	.637	.268
Trust in politicians	.825	.155
Trust in the country's parliament	.793	.127
Trust in political parties	.764	.272
Trust in the United Nations	.172	.984
KMO and Barlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	.794	
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	x²(21) = 803.940, p = .000	
Total Variance Explained		
Factor	% of Variance	Cumulative %
Factor 1	52.671	52.671
Factor 2	14.030	66.701

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring

Source: Authors' calculation, European Social Survey 2024

Table A 8 Results of Multiple Linear Regression – Satisfaction with the state of the country

Model	Model Summary					ANOVA			
	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate	ΔR ²	df	F	Sig.	
1	.471	.222	.201	.78418593	.222	4	10.306	.000	
2	.507	.257	.220	.77443592	.035	7	6.989	.000	
3	.524	.275	.233	.76793125	.018	8	6.645	.000	
Coefficients									
Predictors	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	β	Sig.	VIF	β	Sig.	VIF	β	Sig.	VIF
gender	.229	.002	1.013	.165	.127	2.189	.169	.114	2.190
region	-.045	.553	1.050	-.118	.290	2.333	-.134	.225	2.348
age	.151	.097	1.514	.157	.083	1.542	.140	.121	1.559
education	-.445	.000	1.523	-.136	.375	4.438	-.115	.449	4.462
gender*region				.093	.476	3.254	.100	.441	3.256
gender*education				-.219	.075	2.846	-.255	.040	2.918
region*education				-.182	.101	2.304	-.153	.166	2.349
lrscale							.137	.067	1.061

Source: Authors' calculation, European Social Survey 2024

Table A 9 Different aspects of trust

Descriptive statistics								
DOMESTIC INSTITUTIONS						INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS		
	legal system	police	politicians	parliament	political parties	European Parliament	United Nations	
N	225	235	229	222	232	217	210	
Mean	4.44	5.33	2.00	3.67	2.20	3.67	3.53	
Std. Error of Mean	.197	.198	.150	.173	.156	.189	.192	
Median	5.00	5.00	1.00	3.00	2.00	3.16	3.00	
Mode	0	5	0	5	0	0	0	
Std. Deviation	2.954	3.039	2.266	2.577	2.382	2.789	2.782	
Variance	8.725	9.234	5.134	6.639	5.675	7.778	7.739	
Skewness	.011	-.186	1.141	.303	1.056	.241	.320	
Std. Error of Skewness	.162	.159	.161	.163	.160	.165	.168	
Kurtosis	-.930	-.908	1.080	-.521	.705	-.951	-.944	
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.323	.316	.320	.325	.318	.329	.334	
Percentiles	10	.00	1.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
	20	1.00	2.00	.00	1.00	.00	.52	.27
	25	2.00	3.00	.00	2.00	.00	1.00	1.00
	30	3.00	4.00	.00	2.00	.00	2.00	1.00
	40	4.00	5.00	.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	2.00
	50	5.00	5.00	1.00	3.00	2.00	3.16	3.00
	60	5.00	6.00	2.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	5.00

Percentiles	70	6.00	7.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	5.00
	75	7.00	7.00	3.00	5.00	4.00	6.00	6.00
	80	7.00	8.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	6.00	6.00
	90	8.00	10.00	5.00	7.14	5.00	7.00	7.00

Source: Authors' calculation, European Social Survey 2024

Table A 10 Results of Multiple Linear Regressions – Political trust

TRUST IN DOMESTIC POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS									
Model	Model Summary					ANOVA			
	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate	ΔR ²	df	F	Sig.	
1	.308	.095	.069	.83742104	.095	4	3.599	.008	
2	.411	.169	.125	.81161891	.074	7	3.882	.001	
3	.438	.192	.143	.80316521	.023	8	3.948	.000	
Coefficients									
Predictors	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	β	Sig.	VIF	β	Sig.	VIF	β	Sig.	VIF
gender	.199	.017	1.022	.139	.248	2.297	.134	.258	2.298
region	-.014	.866	1.032	-.081	.512	2.417	-.107	.384	2.446
age	.101	.315	1.531	.126	.203	1.552	.112	.253	1.560
education	-.252	.014	1.552	.116	.497	4.666	.134	.428	4.681
gender*region				.084	.564	3.417	.099	.493	3.427
gender*education				-.088	.503	2.758	-.123	.350	2.810
region*education				-.404	.001	2.471	-.375	.003	2.506
lrscale							.156	.052	1.047
TRUST IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS									
Model	Model Summary					ANOVA			
	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate	ΔR ²	df	F	Sig.	
1	.121	.015	-.014	.97734521	.015	4	.511	.728	
2	.164	.027	-.024	.98205600	.012	7	.530	.810	
3	.233	.054	-.003	.97189448	.027	8	.951	.477	
Coefficients									
Predictors	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	β	Sig.	VIF	β	Sig.	VIF	β	Sig.	VIF
gender	.095	.270	1.022	-.002	.989	2.297	.003	.981	2.298
region	.082	.341	1.032	-.014	.913	2.417	.014	.918	2.446
age	-.019	.856	1.531	-.021	.845	1.552	-.006	.957	1.560
education	.021	.842	1.552	-.095	.608	4.666	-.114	.532	4.681
gender*region				.160	.312	3.417	.144	.359	3.427
gender*education				.069	.628	2.758	.106	.453	2.810
region*education				.085	.528	2.471	.054	.688	2.506
lrscale							-.169	.053	1.047

Source: Authors' calculation, European Social Survey 2024

Politička kultura među mladima u Srbiji: interesovanje, participacija, zadovoljstvo, i poverenje

PROŠIRENI SAŽETAK

Osnovni cilj ovog rada bilo je empirijsko ispitivanje četiri aspekta političke kulture mladih u Srbiji korišćenjem statističke analize zasnovane na podacima iz jedanaeste runde Evropskog društvenog istraživanja. Ponudili smo novo teorijsko objašnjenje političke kulture, različito od onoga obuhvaćenog teorijom modernizacije, a zatim ga potkrepili klasifikacijom na četiri osnovne vrste: pasivna, cinična, protestna i participativna politička kultura. Određena je opšta hipoteza da je među mladima u Srbiji zastupljena cinična politička kultura. U cilju potvrđivanja prethodno pomenutog, postavili smo četiri potporne hipoteze koje se odnose na različite aspekte političke kulture: interesovanje za politiku, politička participacija, zadovoljstvo trenutnim stanjem u zemlji i političko poverenje. Pretpostavili smo da će na ove komponente uticati socio-demografske karakteristike (pol, region, obrazovanje, starost) kao i ideološko pozicioniranje ispitanika (pozicija na ideološkoj skali levo-desno). Rezultati su pokazali da većina mladih iskazuje nisko interesovanje za politiku (preko 80%), kao i nisku političku participaciju (preko 70% ako izuzmemo glasanje na izborima). Pojedini oblici participacije bili su zastupljeni u nešto većem procentu, ali sveukupno gledano većina mladih učestvuje u nijednom ili u svega jednom obliku političke participacije godišnje. Takođe, uprkos umerenom zadovoljstvu obrazovnim sistemom i umerenim poverenjem u policiju, prosečan opšti nivo zadovoljstva i poverenja u institucije bio je statistički značajno ispod neutralne pozicije. Rezultati regresionih analiza pokazali su nezavisan uticaj obrazovanja na političko interesovanje. Povećanje obrazovnog nivoa praćeno je povećanjem šanse za 96,2% da će mladi biti u kategoriji zainteresovanih za politiku. Takođe, primetna je povezanost starosti i političke participacije gde svako povećanje starosti za jednu godinu znači i oko 20% veće šanse za učešće u nekom obliku institucionalne političke participacije. Kada je u pitanju zadovoljstvo stanjem u zemlji, kao značajna izdvojila se interakcija pola i obrazovanja pri čemu se porastom obrazovnog nivoa smanjuju razlike među polovima u nivou zadovoljstva. Takođe, primetan je uticaj političke orijentacije na zadovoljstvo. Ispitanici koji su se pozicionirali kao desnica iskazali su najveće zadovoljstvo stanjem u zemlji. Identičan nalaz primećen je i kod poverenja u domaće institucije – ponovo su ispitanici koji se pozicioniraju kao desnica imali najviši nivo poverenja. Naposljetku, kad je u pitanju poverenje prema domaćim institucijama, kao značajna izdvojila se i interakcija između regiona i obrazovanja, pri čemu razlike prema obrazovnom nivou variraju u zavisnosti od regiona. Pokazalo se da je u razvijenijim regionima porast obrazovnog nivoa praćen opadanjem poverenja. Na temelju prethodno navedenih rezultata tvrdimo da je u analiziranom periodu cinična politička kultura bila preovlađujući oblik političke kulture mladima u Srbiji. Primećena su sva četiri aspekta koja su potrebna za njeno određenje – nisko političko interesovanje, niska politička participacija, nisko zadovoljstvo stanjem u zemlji i nisko poverenje u institucije. Nalazi o značaju pojedinih socio-demografskih karakteristika pokazuju najčešće isticanje obrazovanja kao važnog prediktora, ali je taj uticaj bio inkonzistentan i često povezan sa drugim faktorima. Sveukupno, dobijeni nalazi nisu bili dovoljni za donošenje jasnih zaključaka o zastupljenosti nekog drugog tipa političke kulture u pojedinim socio-demografskim kategorijama.

KLJUČNE REČI

mladi, politička kultura, politička participacija, političko poverenje, Evropsko društveno istraživanje