

# The Practice of Implementing Youth Policy in the Constituent Entities of the Russian Federation in the Context of Increasing the Level of Youth Self-realization

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**Abstract**—One of the directions of modern state policy is activities aimed at solving complex tasks for the implementation of youth policy in various areas. The key issue here is the problem of self-realization of youth, the provision of which is viewed as a factor in achieving sustainable socio-economic development of regions and the country. The article compares the ideas of youth about self-realization, life aspirations and attitudes with those program decisions that are laid down in the documents of the regional level in the field of youth policy. The work is based on the author’s applied research, including a sociological survey and a qualitative analysis of program documents in the field of youth policy for their compliance with the expectations of young people. The survey was conducted among persons aged 18 to 29 years old, living in the Pskov region. State programs in the field of youth policy at the regional level were considered as program documents. The results of the study are fully reflected in the conclusions and in the conclusion and are of interest for further sociological research of other groups of young people that are not reflected in this article.

**Keywords**—self-realization, youth, youth policy, state programs

## I. INTRODUCTION

For a long time, issues of youth policy have remained extremely complex, relevant, and large-scale, since they affect almost all aspects of the socio-economic interests of young people. The unfavorable demographic situation, as well as the difficult socio-economic situation in most regions of Russia, gives acuteness to the issues of youth policy, which affects the formation of an idea of the limited opportunities for self-realization of young people. Moreover, the coronavirus pandemic has become a serious challenge for the younger generation, which has marked a new reality for young people,

while revealing new aspects in the interaction of state and public institutions with youth. According to a study by the International Labor Organization in the framework of the report “Youth and the Covid-19 pandemic: impact on jobs, education and psychological well-being” [1], the pandemic has had a significant negative impact on young people, exacerbating problems of their social and economic integration. More than 73% of young people surveyed, those who received education or vocational training, were affected the closure of schools, universities, and training centers. Every sixth young person has stopped working since the beginning of the pandemic, and more often people aged 18–24 stopped working. About 42% of working youth reported a drop in income. The pandemic has also affected young people’s perceptions of the future. Students’ perceptions of their career prospects are as follows: 40% look to the future with uncertainty, and 14% with fear. The results of the online expert panel on the all-Russian poll by Russian Public Opinion Research Center also demonstrate several problems in the youth environment caused by the pandemic crisis [2]. Among them: economic difficulties, problems with employment, the expectation of a decrease in wages, delays in social payments, difficulties in learning in a distance format. One of the key problems, according to the study, is the unjustified expectations of young people from federal and regional authorities, which, according to the authors of the study, fits into the paternalistic model.

A review of scientific research allows us to conclude that the youth policy implemented by the state in the Russian Federation at the present stage does not always contribute to self-realization of young people in various spheres of public life.

So, analyzing the state youth policy, some authors [3, 4, 5] note that, despite the efforts made by the state authorities, young people do not see an opportunity to realize themselves in the field of public policy, and experience difficulties in the sphere of professional self-realization [6, 7].

In this regard, research devoted to assessing the existing youth policy in the regional context, its role in ensuring self-realization of youth seems timely and relevant.

## II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

According to the Russian Public Opinion Research Center poll in measuring relations with the state, the key complaints of young people against the authorities were “mistrust, mutual misunderstanding, and the lack of a clear concept of dialogue”. The experts’ recommendations noted the need for systematic changes in work with youth in the framework of youth policy.

The theme of “self-realization of youth” is one of the key topics in the social and humanitarian sciences and Russian socio-political discourse. The theory of personality self-realization, the foundations of which were laid in humanistic psychology, were developed in the works of E.F. Novgorodova (Talash), A.V. Bakina and others [8]; S.A. Bogomaz, V.E. Klochko, O.M. Krasnoryadtseva, M.A. Podoinitsina [9]. Comprehension of the phenomenon of self-realization can be found in ancient Greek philosophy, in German classical philosophy [10], in the works of S.L. Frank [11] and others.

Sociological science is showing considerable interest in the problem of personality self-realization. The issues of the connection between self-realization and life success are investigated by N.V. Latova [12], E.V. Reutov, M.N. Reutova, I.V. Shavyrina [13]. The analysis of self-realization in the context of socio-cultural orientations and life meanings of young people is presented in the works of V.T. Lisovsky [14], Yu.A. Zubok, V.I. Chuprov [15] and others. The study of the authors V.R. Tsylev, E.N. Sharova [16] analyzes the socio-economic conditions of socialization and self-realization of youth at the regional level (on the example of the Murmansk region). The issues of professional self-realization and the difficulties of Russian youth in the labor market are studied by E.A. Varshavskaya. [17], A.V. Mozgovaya, A.Yu. Yaishnikov [18]. The political self-realization of Russian youth is studied by L.V. Vlasenko [19] and others.

The scientific community has developed various approaches to the content of youth policy models, including based on the goals, objectives and activities that are laid down in the program documents of the regional level. We are talking about the so-called “program dimension” of youth policy [20]. So, analyzing the cases of the US state youth policy, N.A. Samokhvalov [21] notes that most American programs in different states consider youth as an object for protection or a subject of problems that require resolution. The approach of V.A. Smirnov [20] in this issue is based on discourse – the predominance of a problem or resource-oriented attitude towards youth. In the context of this discourse, various concepts of the concepts of “problem” and “resource” are distinguished in relation to youth: “youth problems”, “youth as a problem”, “youth as a resource”, “youth as a strategic value”. On this basis, the following models of youth policy have been identified: youth social policy, youth policy of

social control, mobilization youth policy, model of social education.

Proceeding from the target orientation of the policy, as well as the content of the activities of the subjects implementing it, such authors as A. Kibanov, M. Lovcheva, T. Lukyanova [22] determine the models of the state’s youth policy, which also fit into the framework of the problem or resource-oriented approaches. At the same time, the first type of models includes such models of youth policy as social-protective, adaptation-socializing, vocational-educational, and the second – socio-political and moral-ideological models. Cultural-educational and information-integration models are also highlighted.

Within the framework of the above models, the priorities, goals, objectives and system of measures of youth policy, indicated in the program documents, reflect the activity approach, the position of the state regarding the managerial influence on the young generation, including the creation of certain conditions, the use of motivational mechanisms, the definition of intermediary structures and institutions of influence, with taking into account the peculiarities of territorial development and the presence of specific problems. In this regard, the key question will be about the dominants of state policy regarding the directions of self-realization of youth.

## III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question in this work is to what extent the state policy, within which the goal of ensuring self-realization of the young generation is declared, corresponds to the ideas of young people about self-realization:

1. Do young people have opportunities for self-realization and in what areas of activity?
2. What is needed for self-realization, are the aspirations of young people connected with the education they receive?
3. What institutions and/or organizations contribute to self-realization?
4. What measures of support do the young people expect from the state?

The questions posed made it possible to put forward a hypothesis of the study that there is a certain imbalance between the ideas of young people about self-realization and the policy of the state, which is aimed at ensuring self-realization of the younger generation.

## IV. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to determine how modern regional youth policy meets the needs of its target audience in the context of ensuring self-realization of youth.

## V. RESEARCH METHODS

The main research methods were the following: sociological survey (questionnaire survey), comparison, generalization, and system analysis.

## VI. FINDINGS

An empirical analysis of the problems of self-realization of youth was carried out through a questionnaire survey, which was carried out through a Google-form among students and

graduates of the FSBEI HE “Pskov State University”, in which 166 people took part. Among the respondents who took part in the survey, most young people are 18–22 years old, and the respondents aged 18–20 made up 46.4%, at the age of 20–22–34.9%.

The priority areas of self-realization of young people, according to the survey, were the following: professional development and interesting work – 72.3%, starting a family – 53%, creativity (music, painting, theater, etc.) – 45.8%, own business – 42.2%, sports, physical training – 39.2%. Young people quite clearly see the spheres of their implementation, since none of the respondents expressed difficulty in answering.

Against the background of a clear definition of the directions for their implementation, only 43.4% of the respondents are confident about their future; 33.1% have doubts about their successful future; 12.7% are not sure about the future; 10.8% of respondents did not think about this question or find it difficult to answer.

According to the results of the survey, the fact that 42.2% of respondents want to leave the region after graduating from a university is alarming, and 23.5% say that they are likely to leave the region, i.e., overall, 65.7% of young people have the potential to leave. Moreover, the desire to leave is expressed by the respondents, regardless of the age group.

Most respondents assign the main role in realizing the potential of young people to educational organizations – 72.3%.

According to the respondents, for successful self-realization, first, it is necessary to have talent, as indicated by 53.6%, good education – 49.4%, also a favorable socio-economic situation in the region is important (47.6%). The material well-being of the family (40.4%), the presence of the necessary “connections” (35.5%), the presence of hobbies (35.5%) is of lesser importance. It should be noted that too much discrepancy in the importance of conditions for self-realization has not been revealed, so they can be regarded as equivalent.

Among the activities that are most interesting for young people, one can single out those where one can establish personal contacts, exchange experiences, find like-minded people – 77.7%. Then the focus is on professional development – 71.8%.

What does the youth expect from the state within the framework of youth policy? First, social protection and support during the period of study and employment and protection of young families (65.7%), ensuring employment among young people, increasing their professional level and competitiveness in the modern labor market (49.4%). To a lesser extent, the younger generation feels the need to support innovative project activities, create independent business structures (31.3%); development of educational projects and cultural and educational structures in the youth environment (29.5%); create and expand the boundaries of the information youth community, international projects, the development of communications and information links (28.9%). At the same time, the main directions of youth policy in the Pskov region are such as the development of volunteerism, civil-patriotic education, and the development of youth entrepreneurship.

The next stage of the study was a qualitative analysis of program documents for the implementation of models of youth policy at the regional level.

When choosing regions for comparative analysis, we were faced with the task of considering the regions of the entire territory of the Russian Federation and trying to operate with any indicators of regional “well-being” in terms of indicators related to youth. Russian legislation gives a fairly broad interpretation of the term “youth” - these are persons aged 14 to 30 years. Many federal programs, including those included in national projects, focus on this particular category of the population. Therefore, as a basis for the selection of regions, it was decided to operate with the indicator of the share of youth in the total population by regions of the Russian Federation, using the data of official statistics.

The sample included regions of three categories:

- regions in which the indicator of the proportion of young people is equal or the least different from the same indicator for the federal district (Kaluga, Yaroslavl, Leningrad, Pskov, Volgograd, Chelyabinsk, Novosibirsk regions, Krasnodar Territory, Kabardino-Balkar Republic, Altai Republic, Mari El, Buryatia);

- regions in which the indicator of the proportion of youth has the largest positive deviation from the same indicator in the federal district (Voronezh, Kaliningrad regions, Tyumen region (except for the Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug-Yugra and Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug), the Republic of Kalmykia, Tatarstan, Tyva, Sakha (Yakutia), Chechen Republic);

- regions in which the indicator of the proportion of youth has the largest negative deviation from the same indicator in the federal district (Tula, Novgorod, Kirov, Kurgan, Magadan regions, Stavropol, Altai Territories, the Republic of Crimea).

At the same time, the presence of existing state programs in the field of youth policy was taken into account.

Based on the classification of youth policy models described above, according to the results of the study, the following conclusions can be drawn.

When implementing state youth policy at the regional level, a resource-oriented approach prevails, which is expressed in the dominance of the directions of the mobilization model of youth policy, or, according to the classification, socio-political and moral-ideological models. Within the framework of these models, such areas as the involvement of youth in the development of civil society are being implemented; attracting young people as an active subject of state policy; support for socially significant youth initiatives and projects; activation of the activities of youth and children's public associations; involvement of young people in social practice, including volunteerism (except for the Republic of Tatarstan and the Tyumen region). A special direction is activities to promote the formation of leadership and organizational qualities among young people. The moral and ideological model in program documents is implemented through such areas as civil-patriotic education, the formation of a system of values and national-state identity, education of respect for the historical and cultural heritage, the formation of culture, traditions and ethics of behavior, the formation of

value attitudes towards a healthy lifestyle, family culture, readiness to consciously fulfill constitutional obligations, civil and military duty. At the same time, an average of 40 to 80% of funds in the total amount of financing of state programs of youth policy are allocated to finance these activities.

We agree with the opinion of Yu.A. Zubok, T.K. Rostovskaya, N.L. Smakotina [23] regarding the patriotic education of young people in the fact that “instilling the need for a patriotic attitude in the young generation” to the detriment of the desire to solve numerous social problems, providing social guarantees and creating conditions for self-development, has the opposite effect and serves as an obstacle to the formation of truly patriotic feelings among young people and approval of socio-economic and socio-political processes in the country and regions.

The study showed that about 65% of the regions fully implement the vocational and educational model, within which such areas as the popularization of entrepreneurial activity among young people, the development and support of youth entrepreneurial initiatives, the involvement of young people in innovative activities, and the promotion of youth employment, promoting the competitiveness of young people in the labor market, etc. are identified. This model prevails in the regions of the second analyzed group.

Just over one third of the studied regions implement social youth policy and the policy of social control (adaptive-socializing and social-protective models), including such areas as support and socialization of young people in difficult life situations, prevention of asocial and destructive behavior of adolescents and youth, support for a young family and young professionals, assistance in temporary and permanent employment of students and graduates of educational institutions, etc. These models are mostly used by the regions of the second and third groups. Among the regions most actively implementing these models, the Republic of Tatarstan should be highlighted. A marker of a pronounced social orientation of youth policy is its goal, which is to provide optimal conditions for improving the quality of life of the younger generation.

One of the areas of youth policy, which is actively implemented in almost all the regions under study, is the identification, support of talented youth in various fields through competitive events. It should be noted that the organization and holding of youth forums, gatherings, festivals, competitions, and other youth mass events is the most common tool in the implementation of youth policy in the constituent entities, which, according to the survey, fully meets the interests of young people.

Educational organizations of higher and professional education are designated as the key subject - the conductor of youth policy in the program documents of a number of regions, which, according to the survey, also corresponds to the ideas of young people about the priority role of educational organizations as the main institution in realizing the potential of youth.

## VII. CONCLUSION

Based on the content of the considered program documents, we believe that youth as an object of state policy is considered as a strategic resource, the development and use

of the potential of which will ensure socio-economic, socio-political, cultural development, increase the competitiveness of regions and the country.

It can be stated that the state policy towards youth through the implementation of state programs implements mixed models of youth policy, however, socio-political and moral-ideological models dominate, which indicates the presence of a certain imbalance in the interests of youth and the state.

The younger generation is a certain segment of the public services market, ensuring loyalty of which requires, first, identifying the preferences of this segment, and on this basis building a systematic work to maximize its involvement in the socio-economic and socio-political spheres. The desire of young people to provide a “social foundation” for self-realization necessitates more flexible approaches to determining the directions of youth policy in accordance with existing needs and the current socio-economic situation in each specific region. With the undoubted importance of the socio-political and moral-ideological orientation of youth policy in the regions, it is important to ensure its balance from the standpoint of all subjects of its implementation.

At the same time, the key task is seen in building a system for monitoring the socio-economic situation of youth, systematic verification of program solutions in the field of youth policy, systematic work on interaction with public institutions, especially educational organizations. Educational organizations are places where the most active representatives of the younger generation are concentrated and have enormous potential to influence young people.

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