

СЕКЦІЯ 1 СПЕЦІАЛЬНІ ТА ГАЛУЗЕВІ СОЦІОЛОГІЇ

YOUTH POLITICS IN THE CONTEXT OF CONTEMPORARY GLOBAL EXPERIENCE

МОЛОДІЖНА ПОЛІТИКА В КОНТЕКСТІ СУЧАСНОГО СВІТОВОГО ДОСВІДУ

Youth, as a social demographic group, constitutes a significant focus of social politics. In this regard, the activities of young individuals in various dimensions (cultural, economic, social, political, and others) within any nation, both present and future, create conditions conducive to the implementation of innovations, fostering development, cultivating an interest in global competitiveness, and fostering a substantial pool of human capital enriched with valuable experience. Whether within our domestic context or abroad, political objectives have been formulated with the aim of nurturing youth with a sense of patriotism, civic duty, global awareness, and universal values. This article presents insights derived from the outcomes of survey inquiries conducted in other countries as part of research into the social issues affecting young people. The available opportunities for our domestic youth, the methodologies employed by institutions serving youth in developed foreign nations, and their corresponding structures have been explored. It becomes evident within this discourse that youth policy within the social and political sphere of developed and developing countries places youth at the center of attention.

The implementation of youth policy is exemplified predominantly through foreign countries such as Denmark, the United Kingdom, Turkey, and Germany, which are regarded as developed nations. Notably, the recognition of youth policy within these countries is attributed to several pivotal factors, one of which revolves around the prosperous conditions of the youth population. Moreover, the selection of these countries is based on their geographical proximity to Azerbaijan.

The article addresses distinct categories of youth, such as those from underprivileged families, individuals with disabilities, and students. These specific social groups assume a particular significance within youth policy as priority target groups aligned with the state policy's overarching objectives. Notably, the social protection of youth with disabilities is constructed within the framework of international conventions and legal provisions. Concurrently, social support measures for underprivileged youth are implemented through internal legislations and programs, or alternatively, as a means of bolstering the educational pursuits of talented youth.

Key words: *youth, youth policy, youth as a social-demographic group, and youth as the object of social youth policy.*

У статті досліджується молодь як соціальна демографічна група, яка є суттєвим центром соціальної політики. У зв'язку з цим

діяльність молодих людей у різних вимірах (культурному, економічному, соціальному, політичному та інших) у межах будь-якої нації, як сьогодення, так і майбутнього, створює умови, що сприяють впровадженню інновацій, сприяють розвитку, виховують інтерес до глобального. конкурентоспроможності та розвитку значного людського капіталу, збагаченого цінним досвідом. У нашому національному контексті чи за кордоном політичні цілі були сформульовані з метою виховання молоді з почуттям патріотизму, громадянського обов'язку, глобальної обізнаності та універсальних цінностей. У цій статті представлені висновки, отримані за результатами опитувань, проведених в інших країнах у рамках дослідження соціальних проблем, що стосуються молоді. Були досліджені доступні можливості для нашої вітчизняної молоді, методології, що використовуються установами, що обслуговують молодь у розвинутих іноземних країнах, та їхні відповідні структури. У цьому дискурсі стає очевидним, що молодіжна політика в соціальній і політичній сфері розвинених країн і країн, що розвиваються, ставить молодь у центр уваги.

Прикладом реалізації молодіжної політики є переважно зарубіжні країни, такі як Данія, Велика Британія, Туреччина та Німеччина, які вважаються розвиненими державами. Примітно, що визнання молодіжної політики в цих країнах пояснюється декількома основними факторами, один з яких обертається навколо благополучних умов молоді. Крім того, вибір цих країн базується на їх географічній близькості до Азербайджану.

Стаття стосується окремих категорій молоді, таких як вихідці з малозабезпечених сімей, особи з обмеженими можливостями та студенти. Ці специфічні соціальні групи набувають особливого значення в молодіжній політиці як пріоритетні цільові групи, що відповідають основним завданням державної політики. Слід зазначити, що соціальний захист молоді з інвалідністю будується в рамках міжнародних конвенцій та правових норм. Водночас заходи соціальної підтримки малозабезпеченої молоді впроваджуються через внутрішні закони та програми або, альтернативно, як засіб сприяння навчанню талановитої молоді.

Ключові слова: *молодь, молодіжна політика, молодь як соціально-демографічна група, молодь як об'єкт соціальної молодіжної політики.*

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Problem statement. While youth policy holds particular significance as an object of social policy in each developed and developing country, its specification encounters a range of social and literary issues. Namely, legislative directions concerning youths with disabilities and those from underprivileged families possess both general and specific attributes. This pertains to discussions concerning either a general notion of underprivilege or a focus on disability. Activities oriented towards student youth, on the other hand, exhibit a more targeted approach based on the regulations predominantly set forth by universities.

Moreover, it is imperative to acknowledge that literary examples encompassing youth are limited within our country. The foundational role for literature is largely anchored in state programs, laws, decrees, and similar official documents.

Methods. The research employed comparative-analysis, synthesis, and analytical methods. The results of survey questionnaires conducted in foreign countries have been utilized.

Purpose and objectives of the article. The aim of the article is to examine the application of youth policy in the contemporary era, both within our country and in foreign nations, with the goal of investigating the situation and identifying optimal approaches to addressing the pertinent issues. The objectives are as follows:

- 1) to explore the position of youth within society;
- 2) to investigate state support for youth;
- 3) to determine the most crucial needs of youth;
- 4) to ascertain the role of youth in the international political arena.

The predicaments of the article: youth, youth policy, position of youth.

Theoretical and methodological framework of the article. The article draws upon Turkish, Azerbaijani, and English literature as well as internet resources. Within Azerbaijani literature, relevant information is sourced from documents such as the Law and Ministry Decree on Professional-Labor Rehabilitation for Persons with Disabilities, encompassing the Disabled Persons' Employment and Vocational Rehabilitation Center, alongside regulations pertinent to the Youth Foundation and Student Loans. Additionally, the study also references survey results from Turkey, further enriching the analysis.

Youth as an object of social policy in world literature. The literature and internet resources related to youth in world literature are notably extensive. Moreover, while the teaching of youth sociology as a discipline is relatively nascent in our country, it has long been a subject of instruction in foreign countries. As a consequence, the publication of textbooks addressing the position

of youth in social relations has opened up avenues for discourse.

Diverse social-demographic groups emerge within society as a result of factors such as age, gender, social status, place of residence, and various determinants, each exerting a distinct impact on society. Within these social-demographic groups lies the formulation of the future societal structure. Furthermore, the prioritization of youth policy serves as a political imperative, pivotal not only in the advancement of socio-economic, cultural-educational, and educational domains but also in the quest for global competitiveness and progress, both in developed and developing nations.

To explicate the comprehensive categorization of youth from a social-demographic perspective, the diverse range of interrelations between youth and social-demographic variations can be delineated as follows:

- youth and gender diversity;
- youth and education;
- youth and place of residence;
- youth and role allocation;
- youth and employment;
- youth and religion;
- youth and health.

Youth and employment concurrently bear a problematic character for contemporary youth. According to data provided by the International Labor Organization in 2017, one out of every four young individuals is engaged in informal labor relations. [2, p. 223].

In terms of youth and health from a social-demographic perspective, based on information from the World Health Organization, the emerging and salient causes of mortality during the youth phase encompass:

- gender-based factors;
- non-communicable diseases;
- suicide;
- substance abuse;
- global-scale illnesses, among others

[3, pp. 54–55].

When examining the historical development of youth care, it is essential to draw attention to the link between the establishment of the first educational institutions in the 10th century, known as madrasas, and the creation of the University of Bologna in the 11th century in Europe. The formulation of the concept of studentship and particularly the composition of student bodies primarily composed of youth has significantly contributed to the shaping of youth interest. Notably, when discussing youth interest in our country, it is imperative to highlight the support provided by the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, where 100 young students were sponsored to study at prestigious foreign universities. The particular emphasis on women's education, reflected in the fact that the number of young girls

studying at the Ganja Gymnasium increased from 4 to 296, can be regarded within the historical context of youth interest.

The particular importance of youth care can be better discerned through the political activities of the National Leader Heydar Aliyev. The implementation of youth policy, initiated by the establishment of the Ministry of Youth and Sports on July 26, 1994, the declaration of 'Azerbaijan Youth Day' on February 2 since 1997, and the adoption of state documents and programs in this realm from 1996 to 2022, have all been closely associated with the name of the National Leader. These programs encompass the following initiatives:

- establishment of special scholarships for young talents;
- regarding physical education and sports;
- resolution on state care for azerbaijan's young talents;
- young family program.

President Ilham Aliyev's activities in the field of youth policy have been marked by the implementation of distinctive programs. These programs encompass the following:

- 'State Program on Azerbaijani Youth for 2011–2015';
- 'State Program on Azerbaijani Youth for 2017–2021';
- 'Development Strategy on Azerbaijani Youth for 2015–2025';
- 'Program on Azerbaijani Youth's Education Abroad for 2007–2015';
- 'State Program on Enhancing the International Competitiveness of Higher Education System in the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2019–2023.

In the Republic of Azerbaijan, the determination of youth's status, responsibilities, and the age category of youth is established based on the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on 'Youth Policy.' In our country, the youth age range is legally defined as 14–29 years. The youth age range recognized by UNESCO spans from 14 to 25 years [6, p. 161], while according to the United Nations, it encompasses the interval of 12–24 years [5, p. 9].

Among the social-demographic group, the segment of youth that holds particular significance both societally and in terms of importance is encompassed by students. Students, hailing from underprivileged families, in need of social protection, possessing talents, and demonstrating high academic performance, constitute a focal point of attention in the context of social safeguarding. The provision of Student Loans, with the purpose of social protection for aforementioned youth, is indicative of the extent of concern directed towards them. A Student Loan (hereinafter referred to as SL) is a financial resource provided to students, in accordance

with a contractual agreement entered into with the client bank, funded from the Fund's resources, to cover tuition fees at educational institutions within the Republic of Azerbaijan, subject to specified terms and conditions, including a defined repayment period and interest rates [1, pp. 1–2].

In the context of the formulation, assessment, and implementation of youth policy in our country, which ensures the active engagement and participation of youth, the sphere finds its subjectivity embodied by the Youth Foundation's activities. Specifically, the Youth Foundation provides support to youth in three main directions:

1. Facilitating the employment of young individuals who have completed their education, offering assistance to applicants for periods not exceeding one year.

2. Supporting academically accomplished student youth in their educational expenses through two forms: addressing domestic or international tuition fees. The specialization level of the applicants is taken into account during the process.

3. Ensuring youth participation in experiential programs of international organizations, where young individuals apply for the program three months in advance, thereby providing information. The supportive measures encompass transportation, sustenance, program fees, as well as accommodation expenses [10].

In our country, the Vocational Rehabilitation Center operates to support the integration of young individuals with disabilities into society, ensuring their preservation as contributing members, their continuous development as independent and responsible individuals, and facilitating the fulfillment of their needs through self-sufficiency. The Center sets the age standard for admission within the interval of 15–29 years. The following vocational activities are taught at the center:

- carpet weaving;
- weaving;
- knitting;
- leatherworking;
- barbering;
- and other vocational activities [11].

The Vocational Rehabilitation Center holds positive implications for young individuals with disabilities from both social and psychological perspectives. These implications encompass the following aspects:

1) engaging with the Center instills a sense of hope in the aspiring youth concerning their future prospects;

2) transformation of disability into capability counteracts self-imposed limitations and self-discrimination in societal interactions. The Center's activities mitigate such negative predispositions;

3) embarking on a new profession enhances self-esteem;

- 4) facilitates income generation;
- 5) elevates levels of participation in societal life;
- 6) counteracts differential treatment and feelings of 'pity' towards individuals with disabilities in society;
- 7) and engenders various other positive effects.

According to the Global Youth Development Index and its corresponding report by the European Union, the results of a conducted survey among individuals aged 15 to 29 have revealed the selection of 10 countries where young people perceive themselves to be in more prosperous conditions. Among the top three countries in this ranking are Germany, Denmark, and the United Kingdom.

In Germany, mechanisms for youth policy have been established through the Law on 'Youth Protection' adopted in 2011, the Federal Child and Youth Plan, the Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women, and Youth, the Directorate for Children and Youth, Non-Governmental Organizations, and the German Youth Council. These entities play a distinctive role in the network of youth organizations in the country. Various measures are implemented with the aim of supporting youth, including:

- youth centers, art schools, and leisure activity centers contribute to enhancing young people's civic responsibility and assisting in shaping their future trajectories;
- conferences, events, and projects are organized within youth programs;
- organization of social work activities in schools and other educational institutions;
- educational initiatives for raising awareness.

In Germany, young individuals with specific needs, particularly those with disabilities, concurrently fall within the country's vulnerable groups. Currently, a program is being developed to enhance the well-being of the youth falling within this category [7, p. 3].

Among developed nations and in terms of social care for youth, Denmark stands out as a considerably experienced country, adopting an interesting and distinct approach. In Denmark, the youth sector operates within each institution. The Ministry of Social Affairs, Children, and Integration provides services to young people from vulnerable population groups. Denmark allocates up to 10% of the state budget to youth policy based on government recommendations. Youth organizations operating in the country are affiliated with the Youth Council, which functions as a network. The Council, encompassing an average of 70 organizations, particularly focuses on addressing the social issues faced by young people. According to survey results involving over 140,000 respondents from 38 countries among student youth, Denmark has been identified as

a nation that notably supports democratic initiatives and endeavors in the field of education, thus being acknowledged for its democratic approach [8, p. 2–3].

In the United Kingdom, an overarching 'Youth Strategy' has been established to unite the efforts of the constituent countries. The approval of this Strategy occurred in Wales from 2014 to 2018, and in Scotland from 2014 to 2019. Playing a pivotal role, the Youth Council, which serves as a coordinating body, operates within the framework [9, p. 2–3].

The European Union's 2019–2027 Support Strategy for Youth sets forth targeted goals in support of young people. These goals include the following:

- socialization, ensuring active participation of youth in social relationships;
- engagement, fostering involvement in various sectors of society;
- empowerment, reinforcing other objectives through meaningful social experiences [13].

In the context of the European Union Youth Strategy, a survey was conducted to investigate the social problems of youth, with the participation of 3000 respondents from 81 cities in Turkey, which are member states of the European Union. The survey was carried out during the month of August in the year 2021. Some of the findings of the research are as follows:

1. It has been revealed that 36 percent of participants identified financial conflicts as the source of their distress, and among this 36 percent, 13 percent of the youth indicated the presence of domestic tensions within their families.

2. The research results indicate that as the educational level of young people increases, their areas of interest broaden.

3. A logical relationship exists between financial constraints and the pessimism arising from expectations [4, pp. 60–65].

A survey conducted among 1052 individuals aged 18 and above from 18 cities in Turkey revealed that the greatest concern of young people is unemployment and the social problems resulting from it [12].

This prompts the question of why the social problems of young people are rigorously investigated and why states are interested in supporting youth. Several factors contribute to this phenomenon:

1. Young people represent a relatively small but crucial social-demographic group within societies.

2. Providing support to youth is an investment in the future.

3. They constitute the most suitable group for shaping existing trends.

4. Young people play a pivotal role in both the economic and social aspects of countries' lives.

Factors contributing to the breakdown of social relationships among youth and the inequality in

society can be identified. Youth who carry these factors are categorized as being part of the at-risk group. The following are associated with these youth:

- 1) deprivation of parental care;
- 2) substance abuse, alcoholism, addiction to alcoholic beverages;
- 3) proneness to suicide;
- 4) involvement in correctional institutions;
- 5) affiliation with radical religious groups;
- 6) individuals with disabilities and other factors.

The demonstration of social care measures towards youth at risk is predominantly facilitated by the activities of social workers, especially in developed and developing countries. The process is orchestrated in a phased manner, initially affording the possibility of addressing issues of assessment of processes, events, and individuals with comprehensive measures.

Significantly, voluntary engagement in youth's multifaceted development plays an instrumental role. The voluntary activities pursued by the youth, particularly in our country and other nations, are highly relevant. The execution of volunteer activities in our country is regulated according to the 'Volunteerism' Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The law encompasses the definition of volunteer activities, the roles and rights of participants and volunteers, and the requirements for a volunteer contract.

These thematic articles can exert a certain degree of impact on the lives of young individuals. These impacts can manifest in the following ways:

- exploration of the role of youth in society and their potentials, thereby influencing the development of youth policy;
- research and socialization of youth's social problems;
- evaluation of international policies and programs, fostering the formation of novel ideas in the field;
- choosing youth as a research topic not only motivates them but also stimulates their interest and engagement, enabling them to feel recognized.
- recognizing the conflicting and non-conflicting aspects of institutions that play a subjective role in the youth domain fosters responsibility and accountability.

Conclusions. The concept of youth occupying a position as an object of social policy finds affirmation in the article through the delineation

of political activities. The goals directed towards youth in terms of social policy encompass ensuring their engagement, fostering the activities of youth organizations, creating opportunities for equitable rights for youth with disabilities and those from disadvantaged families, and supporting the provision of rights and responsibilities for youth as equal members of society. These identified issues serve as foundational considerations.

Furthermore, the article highlights the implementation of political activities within the country and, in conjunction, the youth policy in countries where the youth express greater contentment in terms of their well-being.

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