

# Youth Policy: Russian Experience



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**Abstract:** *The relevance of this article is due to the growing role of young people in the political life of Russia and in the transformation of the social, political and economic spheres. Young people are the moving force behind all major processes in any country. Concerning Russia, it should be noted that young people make up a third of the population. The way the problems of Russian youth will be solved will determine the current vitality and future of the country. The practice of the last decades convincingly proves that in the rapidly changing world, those countries that can effectively form and productively use the innovative development potential, the main carrier of which is young people, will have strategic advantages.*

**Keywords:** *Youth, Youth Policy, Russian Experience, Forms of Participation, Political Consciousness.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Effective implementation of state youth policy should be based on sustainable growth of young people who are motivated by positive actions, share national and universal spiritual values, are physically healthy and engaged in physical culture and sports, have no bad habits, are ready to share the values of family culture and the image of a successful young family, work on their personal and professional development, love their country and are ready to defend their interests and make effort for the dynamic development of strong and independent Russia [1].

Youth is a special social and age group with different age limits and status in society and is associated with the transition from childhood and youth to social responsibility [2]. Some scholars understand youth as a group of young people to whom society provides opportunities for social development, providing them with benefits but limiting their possibility of active participation in certain areas of society's life [3, 4]. Youth policy is a policy aimed at creating real conditions, incentives and specific mechanisms for the implementation of the vital interests and aspirations of young citizens,

meeting their needs and helping them to take a worthy place in society.

State youth policy is carried out in relation to:

- citizens of Russia, including persons with dual citizenship, aged 14 to 30 years;
- foreign citizens and stateless persons aged 14 to 30 years – to the extent that their stay in Russia entails the relevant duties of federal public authorities;
- young families – families in the first three years after marriage (in case of children – without limitation to the duration of marriage), provided that one of the spouses has not reached the age of 30 years, as well as single-parent families with children, in which the mother or father has not reached the age of 30 years;

- youth organizations.

State youth policy is implemented by:

- state bodies and their officials;
- youth associations and their associations;
- young citizens [5].

Youth policy objectives include:

1. Involving young people in social practice and informing them about potential opportunities for self-development, providing support for scientific, creative and entrepreneurial activities of young people;
2. Forming an integrated support system for young people with leadership qualities, initiative and talent;
3. Civic and patriotic education of youth, as well as promotion of legal, cultural and moral values among young people [6].

The government of Russia has determined the priorities of the state youth policy until 2025 [6]. The document was developed by the Ministry of Education and Science of Russia taking into account the provisions of the Strategy of the State National Policy of Russia for the Period until 2025 in matters of civil, patriotic, spiritual and moral education of children and youth [7].

Today, there are problems associated with youth in Russia, which have not yet been successfully solved: unemployment, spread of antisocial manifestations, health and marriage problems, as well as family conflicts [5].

## II. PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

### A. General description

The study uses methods of qualitative analysis of interviews, as well as analysis of Russian program documents related to the implementation of youth policy. Statistical data collected by analytical centers on the basis of surveys conducted among young people from different regions of the country were also studied.

Revised Manuscript Received on December 30, 2019.

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The analysis of modern scientific discussions, opinions of representatives of youth organizations and legislative initiatives in the field of youth policy showed that opinions on youth activities are very exaggerated. Several European scholars note that young people do not use their energy enough for social and political purposes, which indicates a lack of activity both at the municipal and state levels.

### B. Role of Russian youth in the political life of the country

The problem of political participation was considered in Ancient Greece. Aristotle, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Montesquieu, Rousseau and other thinkers mentioned it in their writings. According to M.R. Kholmskaya, "political participation" is considered as one of the main elements that make up the content of the category of "political behavior" [8].

Youth is the most important social and electoral resource of society, which can be used by various parties, political leaders and forces to their advantage [9].

**Fig. 1:** Forms of youth participation in the political life of the country include:

- voting;
- participation of young people in representative bodies of state power and local self-government;
- creation of youth organizations and movements;
- participation in political parties;
- participation in acts of spontaneous expression of political rights and freedoms (rallies, strikes and other forms of social protest) [10].

In the typology of M. Kaase and A. March, depending on the type of activity, as well as on conditionality or non-traditionality, the prevailing forms of participation are divided into five groups:

- "inactive", not involved in politics;
- "conformists", taking part in conventional forms;
- "reformists", taking part mainly in conventional forms;
- "activists", actively using both traditional and non-traditional forms of participation;
- "protesters", actively participating in non-traditional forms [11].

One of the main subjects is public organizations associated with the youth policy of Russia, which are a system of interactions between state structures, society and youth, which includes any citizen aged 14 to 30 years.

### C. Algorithm

Stages of formation of youth public organizations include:

1. From 1991 to 1996 – the emergence of independent youth organizations, the hallmark of which was independence (the party system at the time was characterized by immaturity and, therefore, the creation of public organizations in the interests of any party did not correspond to the interests of the creators).

2. From 1996 to 2004 – the creation of party youth organizations, due to the copying of the foreign system, where each party had its youth organizations.

3. Since 2004, there has been a crisis for opposition parties, as well as a shortage of staff (politics has become

public and youth structures have become an indispensable tool in the hands of party members who use their vast experience in street activities).

## III. RESULT ANALYSIS

### A. Activities and causes

The main activities of such public organizations are primarily related to the protection of the rights and freedoms of young citizens. Their social and legal status is determined in accordance with many legal acts, which, first of all, indicate the seriousness of the activities of such organizations and the presence of a high degree of responsibility. Nevertheless, public organizations currently have a wide range of rights to implement their programs in all spheres of Russian society. Decision-making on state youth policy with the participation of youth public organizations is carried out through their interaction with executive authorities and local self-government, as well as through involvement in the development and discussion of draft decisions on state youth policy.

The reasons why young people join public organizations are very different. All activists can be divided into three groups:

1. Those who came voluntarily, interested in a new field of activity (as a source: information from friends and acquaintances or young people themselves becoming witnesses of actions or meetings organized by a public organization);

2. Representatives who, based on their political and social situation, purposefully choose an organization, for which the solution of certain problems of young people is a priority;

3. For representatives of the third group, joining a public organization is the next stage in their social and political life (this may be due to the collapse of the previous organization or when one organization ceases to exist and another is formed in its place).

The number of youth movements and associations has grown rapidly over the past few years, as it has become fashionable among the younger generation to engage in social activities and express political views. Becoming a real part of political life, youth organizations are faced with growing competition, which is a consequence of the formation of large movements that affect most of the socialization of youth [12].

The practice of recent decades shows that Russian youth policy has difficulties in certain areas, such as living standards, education, employment, social security, etc.

### B. Methods of forming the political consciousness of youth

Mature political consciousness is one of the main factors affecting the involvement of young people in the political life of their country. Today, the formation of political views among young people is experiencing a crisis. This is due to the transformation of political, economic and cultural values. "The role of youth in modern society should also be noted: this is the most important social and electronic resource of society, which can be used by various parties, movements and leaders in their interests" [13].

"Political consciousness (primarily group and mass) is a set of attitudes formed outside this consciousness (in the sphere of ideological and political activity) and the conclusions obtained as a result of independent analysis of political practice. The acquired attitudes act as political stereotypes, i.e. simplified, emotionally colored universal images of political objects and phenomena" [14].

Political consciousness is a system formation with different levels including:

1. The state level, at which the development and justification of official policy are carried out. The state of consciousness regulates political relations through a variety of laws, programs, constitutions, etc. The existing political orders and principles of governance are most effective at this level of political consciousness.

2. The theoretical level is represented by various concepts, ideas and views of a political nature. Policy awareness at the theoretical level allows:

a) setting and solving the most important political goals and objectives – both fundamental (strategic) and current (tactical);

b) determining the means and methods to achieve them;

c) determining directions and methods of organizational and political support of the solution of actual problems;

d) developing conceptual approaches to social control over the implementation of political decisions and target programs;

e) adjusting policy based on practical experience.

3. The empirical level is based on the direct practice of participation in the political processes of various social communities. This level reflects the political reality in the form of sensations, illusions, experiences and perceptions.

4. The everyday level is closely related to the empirical level but, at the same time, there are some differences with it. Thus, the empirical level characterizes the practical experience of the subject. The everyday level describes a set of ideas arising directly from everyday life, views on a social class, social stratum or group of people. The everyday level of political consciousness differs from the empirical level in the presence of ideological and theoretical elements. This level is characterized by pronounced socio-psychological characteristics: moods, feelings, emotions. This gives it a special dynamism, the ability to respond sensitively to changes in the political situation [15].

Factors influencing the formation of political consciousness include:

1. Involvement of young people in volunteering at the international level;

2. Conduct of political business games for high school students;

3. Participation of students in conferences held at the initiative of public authorities.

The structure of government at the state level often relies on youth volunteering activities. As a rule, the activities of young volunteers are closely connected with real-life situations that somehow intersect with the interests or education of volunteers.

As for Russian volunteers, participation in games is not only a unique experience of working with foreign delegations but also an opportunity to learn how the whole world lives and works [16]. Acquaintance with volunteers from different

countries allows them to learn about the political orientation of foreign youth, change their attitude to other countries, as well as show Russia to foreigners from the best side, refuting the world discredit of the country.

Given the second factor of influence on the political consciousness, special attention should be paid to the World Festival of Youth and Students, which was first held in Prague in 1947 and went down in history as the longest one in the history of the festival movement. The first festival lasted about six weeks; 17 thousand people from 71 countries took part in it.

The 19th World Festival of Youth and Students was opened in Russia on October 15, 2017; therefore, given the domestic experience of the festival movement, special attention should be paid to this event. Ksenia Razuvaeva, the person in charge of the preparation for the festival, noted that "the idea of holding a festival came from below". Young Russians, who are involved in politics and see what is happening on the international stage every day, express concern about the political image of their country.

It is important to note that one of the indicators of political education of Russian youth is its initiative and desire to increase the level of popularity of their country in the international arena, because in connection with the events taking place in the world in recent years (the Ukrainian crisis, the unification of the Republic of Crimea, the armed conflict in Syria), Russia is regularly under assault by foreign states and often appears in foreign media as an aggressor, not to mention anti-Russian discussions on the Internet. As a rule, all this not only discredits the image of the country but also reduces its attractiveness for both student exchange and tourist trips.

Students who have visited the forums often change their attitude to foreign countries and world politics. Due to open public-but-political forums, the Polish authorities have gained the trust not only of young people in their country but also of many foreigners, helping them to form a correct understanding of the country and its domestic and foreign policy.

In order to create a certain level of confidence in the government among students, encourage them to show active citizenship, give them an understanding of what democracy is and how it functions and generally develop an interest in the problems of modern society, it is necessary to use various tools for the formation of political consciousness in Russia, one of which is a business game.

A business game is a process that allows participants to model a specific situation and apply various decision-making mechanisms using mathematical and organizational models.

We must also focus on the form of the business game, which is based on the model of international organizations that regulate international relations. This format of games is most often used in the professional training of foreign students. These games include Model United Nations, EurAsEC Model, Climate Conference Model, Globalization and the Arab Community, etc.



### Purposes:

- to teach participants how to correctly interpret professionally significant information and refer to the main international instruments;
- to influence the formation of participants' positions on the most important international issues;
- to comprehensively study the phenomenon of international politics to determine the possible consequences for Russia;
- to form the basic conditions for the consideration of international issues, guided by the norms of international law, common sense and interests of Russia;
- to teach participants to analyze the possible consequences of the activities of different states and, consequently, to take subsequent decisions on a diplomatic basis [17].

### IV. CONCLUSION

The role of international forums in shaping the political consciousness of youth forums cannot be understated. This is demonstrated by attractive support for young people (including foreigners), which led to an increase in the entry not only of students into the country but also young people. Professional staff.

Special attention was paid to such an important instrument of influence on the younger generation as business game. The study showed that this is one of the most effective ways of active training of schoolchildren and students, during which, organizers have the opportunity to teach participants to analyze various foreign sources and form their position on the simulated situation during the game, without relying only on the national media.

The study showed that the most effective business game today is the international youth model United Nations, which was originally aimed at attracting young people to the political life of the country.

The number of organizations, which occupy young people in various spheres of public life, is steadily growing in Russia. This is due to the growing need of young people to adapt to changing socio-economic and political conditions, which are sometimes not supported by the state. Thus, the question arises: are these organizations the objects of youth policy or can they be taken into account in the system of its subjects? The youth policy strategy of Russia largely depends on the answer to this question.

However, it should be noted that there is a positive trend of involving young people in politics. However, a manifestation of interest in politics should encourage people to participate in political activities, namely to participate in political life through the most common generally accepted forms (participation in elections, activities of political parties and movements, appeal to politicians, etc.) and protests (rallies, industrial protests, industrial actions, collection of signatures, etc.).

Returning to the topic of youth policy in Russia, it should be said that it is necessary to consider the experience of European countries, where a lot of attention is paid to this institution. A key moment in shaping youth policy in the European Union is the availability of a more complete legislative framework that provides young people with the

protection of their rights and interests.

The development of youth policy today will allow forming a strong state in the future, as such actions have increased the level of confidence in the government on the part of young people. The formation of the right political consciousness will help Russia to create a qualitatively new political elite that will meet the requirements of the modern world.

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