

Modern problems of youth employment and their entrepreneurial solution

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Abstract. The analysis of youth employment and unemployment in Russia and the North Caucasus Federal District is carried out according to statistical data. The specificity of youth employment in different age periods is revealed: 15-19, 20-24 and 25-29 years. The problem of youth unemployment is especially acute in the South of the Russian Federation. It is shown that for the timely solution of the problem of unemployment, it is necessary to develop youth entrepreneurship. The COVID-19 pandemic has complicated this task, but has also opened up new forms of entrepreneurship and employment in general, which is revealed in the article.

Keywords: youth, employment, unemployment, entrepreneurship, COVID-19, digitalization

The current economic turbulence caused by the restrictions of the pandemic period, sanctions and other reasons, inevitably affects the labor market and youth employment.

Analyzing the employment of young people, namely young people of working age from 15 to 30 years old, it is possible to clearly distinguish three periods of maturity of young people and the corresponding specificity of employment, determined by the share of students in various educational institutions, which, in accordance with the "methodology of the ILO, are classified as persons outside into the labor force".

According to statistics, the share of students aged 15 to 19 is the most significant (from 85 to 90 percent in different regions) (The number and composition ..., 2020).

In the age period from 20 to 24 years old, this share is less: from 40 to 44%, and the issue of employment of graduates is actualized. During this period, the number of employed (35-40%)

and unemployed (20% and more) will grow. Crossing the 25-year mark, young people 'move from the category of persons outside the labor force to the category of employed people", the share of students is less than 2%, and the share of the employed increases to 70% and more.

According to the data of the Office of the Federal State Statistics Service for the North Caucasus Federal District, in 2018, enterprises of various forms of ownership dominate in the employment of employed youth (62.4%) in the region (Policy brief "Youth in the labor market of the Stavropol Territory", 2020).

Less than 2% of young people are engaged in entrepreneurial activity without forming a legal entity (IE).

Among young people, the share of unemployed is high, especially among the working-age population under the age of 24 (in 2019, the average for the Russian Federation was 4.6%, for youth groups 15-19 years old - 24.7%, 20-24 years old - 14.4 %). For the 25-29 age group, the unemployment rate is approaching the average (figure 1).

In the Russian Federation, the most unfavorable situation with unemployment is in the North Caucasus Federal District, where it is more than 2.5 times higher than the national average. This also determines significant differences in the scale of youth unemployment, primarily among graduates, which in the North Caucasus Federal District is almost 3 times higher than the national average (Labor force, employment and unemployment in Russia, 2020).

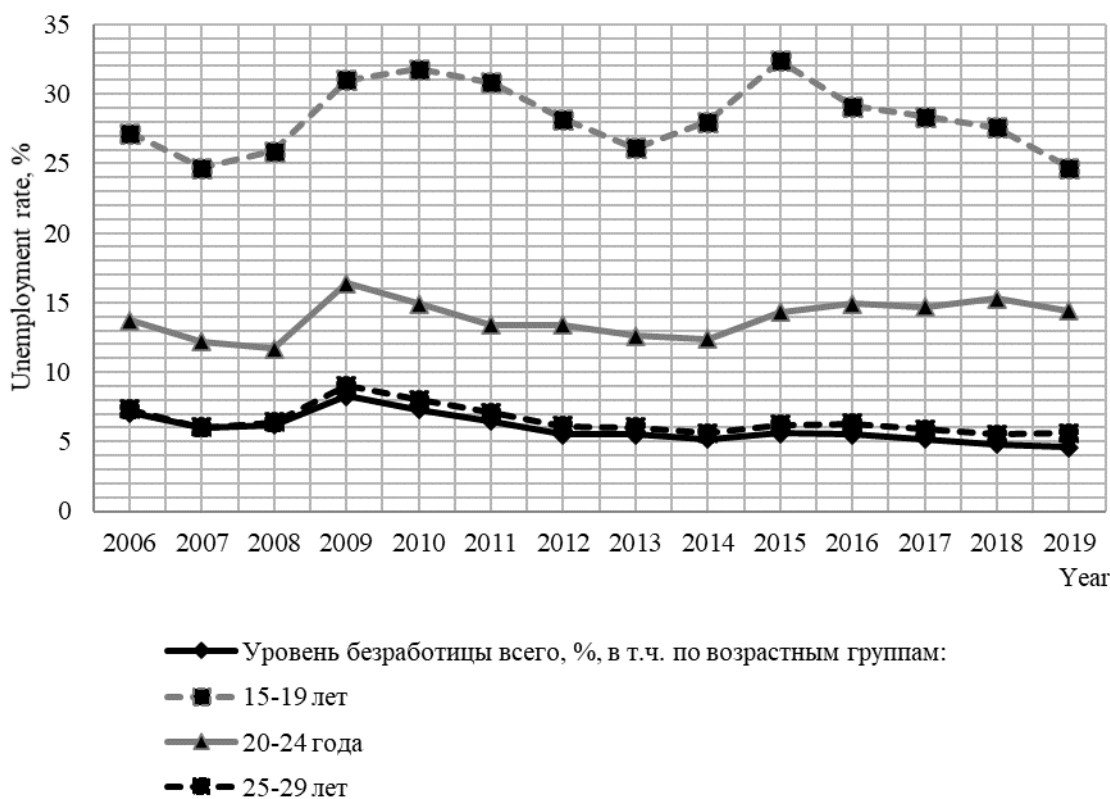


Figure 1 - Dynamics of the youth unemployment rate in Russia

The problem is of global concern, especially for developing countries and countries with economies in transition, where there are more than 200 million unemployed or underemployed young people. These economies are not creating new paid jobs fast enough to absorb the growing labor force (Flegontov, 2020; Ivashina, Kaznina, & Kalinina, 2020).

As a result, young people develop a passive and expectant (all of a sudden, everything will change for the better) position as in work and forcing them to look for work in the shadow sector (Merkulov, 2017).

In order to reduce employment problems, it is important that young people have a pool of self-management skills during the period of study: self-esteem, self-presentation, self-motivation, self-development, etc. (Parakhina et al, 2012).

At the same time, young people have a high level of activity and a high (often overestimated) level of expectations. This can create an "explosive social situation".

To solve the problem of unemployment in a timely manner (so as not to bring young people to the level of "desperate to find a job"), it is necessary to develop a system of youth entrepreneurship. It is necessary to begin to create an entrepreneurial spirit and a corresponding "pool" of those wishing to have their own business in the student environment, for which purpose, in educational organizations, practice-oriented entrepreneurship training should be formed on the basis of their own university or regional innovation infrastructure (technoparks, incubators).

The COVID-19 pandemic has made this task more difficult, but at the same time has opened up an opportunity to rethink the forms of entrepreneurship and forms of employment in general. As the McKinsey group researchers note, "a dramatic change that happens less than once a generation and can change society in countless ways is happening." It is noted that managers and employees are trying to learn new experiences, but now we need to "admit that no one has the answers to all the questions" (Kartajaya, 2021).

There is a transformation of human activities based on digitalization. Experts mention at least "four benefits of digitalization: lower costs, increased accuracy, increased speed and efficiency" (Fitzgerald, et al, 2013; Kaur & Bath, 2019). At the same time, the positive results of digitalization, which were realized by organizations long before the coronavirus pandemic, did not lead to their mass development by all employees and widespread use in technological processes (This also applies to the field of higher education, in which the authors of the article work.

The outbreak of COVID-19 has forced people to quickly master new communication technologies and digitally transform business processes. A 2020 survey by McKinsey & Company found that digitalization took a quantum leap during the COVID-19 pandemic in both organizational and sectoral levels (LaBerge et al., 2020; Kartajaya, 2021). At the same time, "digital transformation" concerns transformations in goods, interaction with customers, business management models, including the creation of a new business, as well as structural and functional structures.

It is based on human transformation, which affects organizational culture, systems thinking of employees and a model of work behavior (Parakhina, 2009; Schwertner, 2017).

These changes relate to expectations of post-pandemic worker behavior. So, at the end of the pandemic, employers want to return workers to their workplaces in the office, and employees want to work more remotely. There is a need to develop a hybrid work model that includes teleworking from home and direct work in the office.

Research from more than 500 senior executives across eight industries has helped McKinsey identify the key positions companies must take to shape and operate a hybrid business model. Having analyzed these positions and compared them with the Russian experience (LaBerge, 2020; Parakhina, Boris, & Timoshenko, 2017), we consider it necessary to propose the following principles for the formation of a hybrid model of work in new conditions: 1) set clear goals and clarify the relationship with the strategies and priority values of the company; 2) delegate decision-making authority to the localities, especially with regard to the implementation of innovations, in order to accelerate their implementation; 3) expand the use of mentoring and recognition of achievements, supporting employee initiative; 4) use new communication technologies for collaboration and mutual understanding, taking care of the mental health of workers; 5) automate work operations, without accompanying it with staff reductions, directing the time and energy of employees to the tasks of business development.

Most of these recommendations are especially important in relation to new, young employees, since they have not yet developed a relationship of mutual understanding and support in the team, and remote work contributes to this weakly.

Conclusions.

So, the problems of youth employment are of global importance and are being addressed, both by enhancing the participation of young people in entrepreneurship, and by attracting easily trained young people to new areas of business.

Digitalization and restrictions in the communication of people in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic led to a reduction in the number of jobs in many sectors of the economy,

especially in the service sector (tourism, hospitality, retail), but contributed to the development of e-commerce, delivery, transportation, logistics and warehousing.

At the same time, the current conditions of pandemic restrictions and the development of digitalization create the need and opportunity for the development and widespread use of a hybrid model of work, which will partially solve the problem of conflicting priorities in the actions of government and business: to limit communication between citizens in order to protect them from a life-threatening infection, and to save the economy.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

The reported study was funded by a grant from the President of the Russian Federation, project number MD-2787.2021.2 "Transformation of the regional system of youth entrepreneurship into an innovative model functioning effectively in the conditions of digitalization (based on the materials of the North Caucasus Federal District)"

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