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YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN KAZAKHSTAN: LABOR MARKET CHALLENGES AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTIONS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the research is to develop proposals for improving the measures implemented to ensure youth employment based on an analysis of the current state of youth employment and identification of challenges in the youth labor market.

Methodology – the research applied methods of analysis and synthesis, as well as the comparative method, which provided a comprehensive analysis of the problem of youth employment. The methods of analysis and synthesis made it possible to carry out a systematic study of statistical indicators, identify key trends and patterns in the development of the youth segment of the labor market of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The comparative method made it possible to identify both general patterns and specific features of the development of the youth labor market in the national context.

Originality / value of the research – origin / value – the significance of this study lies in a comprehensive analysis of youth employment in Kazakhstan through the prism of global trends, national characteristics and best international practices. The study integrates demographic forecasts, the economic complexity index and innovation potential into the context of youth employment, forming the basis for strategic decisions in the field of human capital and sustainable development.

Findings - based on the analysis of the state of youth employment and the factors influencing its level, the author offers recommendations on the introduction of innovative educational models for young people and the creation of conditions for retaining talents in the country.

Keywords: youth employment, unemployment, labor market, government programs, digital skills, education.

INTRODUCTION

Relevance of the research topic. There is a rapid growth of the young population in the modern world. According to UN forecasts, 1.3 billion young people will live on our planet by 2034 [1]. This fact poses serious challenges for countries in the field of providing employment for young people.

A special feature of the youth labor market is the entry of representatives of Generation Z, or zoomers, who possess knowledge of the latest technologies and digital literacy. According to the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 37% of the workforce is expected to be composed of farmers by 2030. In addition, sociologist Mark McCrindle predicts that 2025 will mark the beginning of the Beta Generation, which will be characterized by the widespread use of artificial intelligence and automation, not only in the workplace but also in daily life.

These changes require a transformation of the labor market to adapt to new conditions, where the development of soft and digital skills has become especially important. The report on digital skills prepared by the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee in the UK shows that 23% of adults in the country do not have basic digital skills. Experts estimate that this lack of skills costs the economy £63 billion per year in terms of lost GDP [2-4].

Literature review. The theoretical analysis of the labor market is based on the fundamental research of prominent economists. The works of John Maynard Keynes emphasize the role of government in managing unemployment [5]. Milton Friedman critiques the minimum wage, which impacts young people's employment opportunities [6].

Modern research in the field of youth employment is represented by the works of both foreign and domestic scientists. In particular, Lisa Kahn conducts an in-depth analysis of the long-term effects of youth unemployment, known as the "scarring effect," demonstrating its impact on the future professional trajectory [7].

Niall O'Higgins performs a comparative analysis of youth employment models, identifying key differences between the practices of developed and developing countries [8]. A significant contribution to understanding the regulatory impact on the labor market was made by Neumark, D. and Wascher, W., who proved the negative impact of raising the minimum wage on the employment of people aged 16-24, especially in low-skilled sectors of the economy [9].

Of particular interest is the study by Jennifer Shore and Jale Tosun, which examines the interaction between young job seekers and German public employment services, which makes it possible to assess the effectiveness of institutional support mechanisms [10].

The relationship between the demands of the labor market and education is explored in the work of S. Alimbayeva, who thoroughly analyzes the challenges faced by young professionals in finding employment, emphasizing the imbalance between education systems and labor market requirements [11]. This correlation is also examined in the research of G. Abdirayimova [12].

Modeling scenarios of the interrelation of various indicators of the vocational education system and their impact on the unemployment rate is a powerful tool for policy making. For example, Andrea G. Forster, Thijs Bol, Herman G. van de Werfhorst calculated these trends for European countries [13].

The works of leading Russian and foreign scholars have made a significant contribution to the development of theoretical and practical aspects of labor market research. However, the directions and mechanisms for regulating youth employment, including the extent and forms of government involvement in this process, remain debatable.

Challenges and trends are highly relevant for Kazakhstan, as young people (ages 15-34) make up 28.8% of the country's population. According to forecasts from the Center for Labor Resources Development, the influx of young workers into the labor market is expected to be around 300 thousand per year [14].

At the present stage, demographic changes accompanied by an increase in the number of young people require the government, business and society to solve a whole range of tasks in order to form effective solutions in social and economic policy to provide jobs for young people in the future. Thus, achieving the set research goal requires solving the following research problems:

- what challenges and structural imbalances characterize the youth labor market in Kazakhstan?
- to what extent do the current mechanisms of regulating the youth labor market solve the problems of youth employment?
- which areas of government policy can increase sustainable youth employment in the medium term?

THE MAIN PART OF THE STUDY

Research methods. Quantitative and qualitative methods and approaches of data analysis were used in the research. The analysis of the dynamics of changes in indicators in the youth labor market is based on data from the Bureau of National Statistics of the Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan, as well as information and data provided in national reports and reports. Additionally, data from reports of international organizations were used. The methodological approach was based on a sample survey of the population's employment, covering all regions of the country based on a sample observation method, followed by an extension of the results to the entire population. Additionally, information and data provided in national reports and reports, as well as reports from international organizations, were used.

Achieving the research goal and solving the set tasks.

Trends in the development of the youth labor market in the Republic of Kazakhstan. According to the statistics, young people aged between 14 and 35 years make up the majority of the population in Kazakhstan [15]. At the beginning of 2024, there were 5,759,000 young people in the country, which is 28.8% of the total population. (Figure 1)

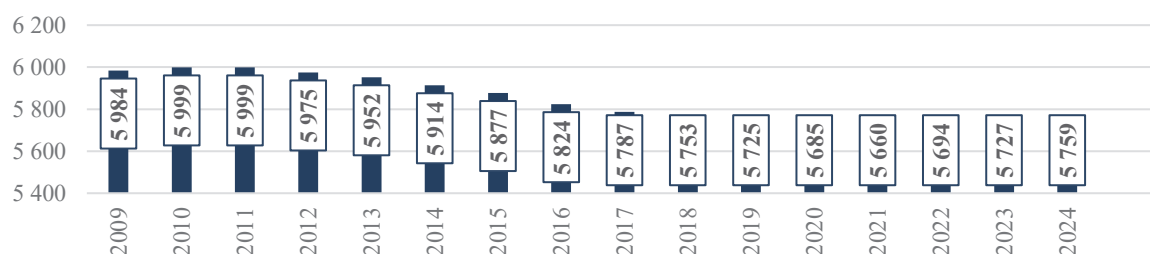


Figure 1 – The number of youth aged 14-35 years in the Republic of Kazakhstan, thousand people

Note – compiled by the author based on [16]

A decrease in the number of young people has been observed in the country from 2012 to 2022. This is correlated with the number of people born during this period. From 1987 to 1999, there was a decreasing trend in the birthrate, which led to a decrease in the number of young people from 2012 to 2021. However, starting from 2001, the number of births has increased, which will result in an increase in the population of young people in the future (see Figure 2).

At the beginning of 2025, a large proportion of young people are concentrated in the city of Astana, 8.3%, in the cities of Almaty and Shymkent – 12.2% and 6.8%, respectively. The largest proportion of young people live mainly in the southern regions (Turkistan, Zhambyl and Almaty regions) and account for 25.2% of the youth of Kazakhstan. The newly formed regions account for the smallest share of youth from the total number of youth in the republic: Ulytau – 1%, Abai – 2.6% and Zhetysay - 3.2%.

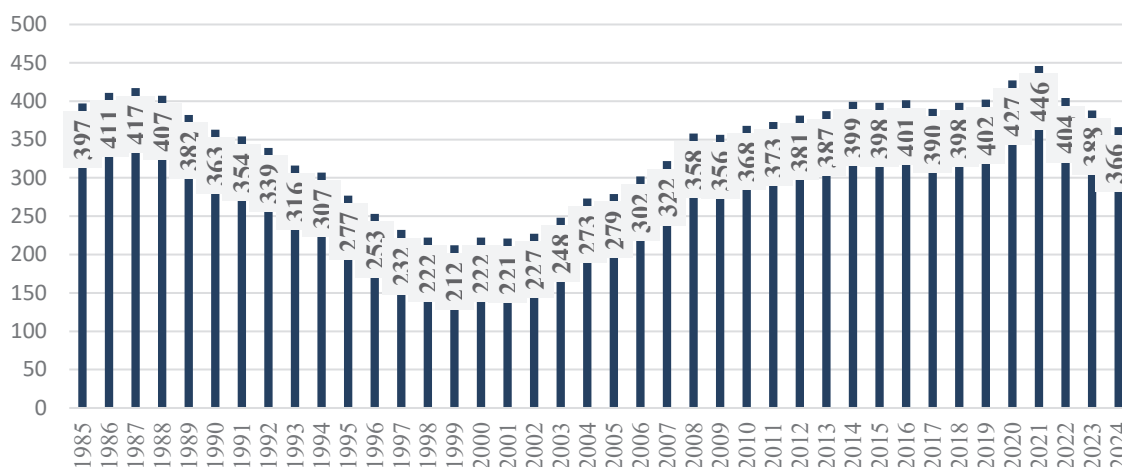


Figure 2 – The number of people born in the Republic of Kazakhstan, thousand people

Note – compiled by the author based on [17]

Of the total number of young people, 62% live in urban areas and 38% in rural areas. At the same time, this trend is moving steadily towards an increase in the number of young people in urban areas.

The share of young people in the region's population is also significantly higher than the national average (28.8%) in megacities, as at the beginning of 2025: Astana 31.5%, Shymkent 31.6% and Almaty (31.1%). The number of young people in the total population is higher than the national average in the southern regions.

Regions with a share of youth below the average in Kazakhstan include North Kazakhstan (24.5%), East Kazakhstan (23.6%), Abai (24.9%), Pavlodar (25.3%), Kostanay (25.8%) regions (Figure 3).

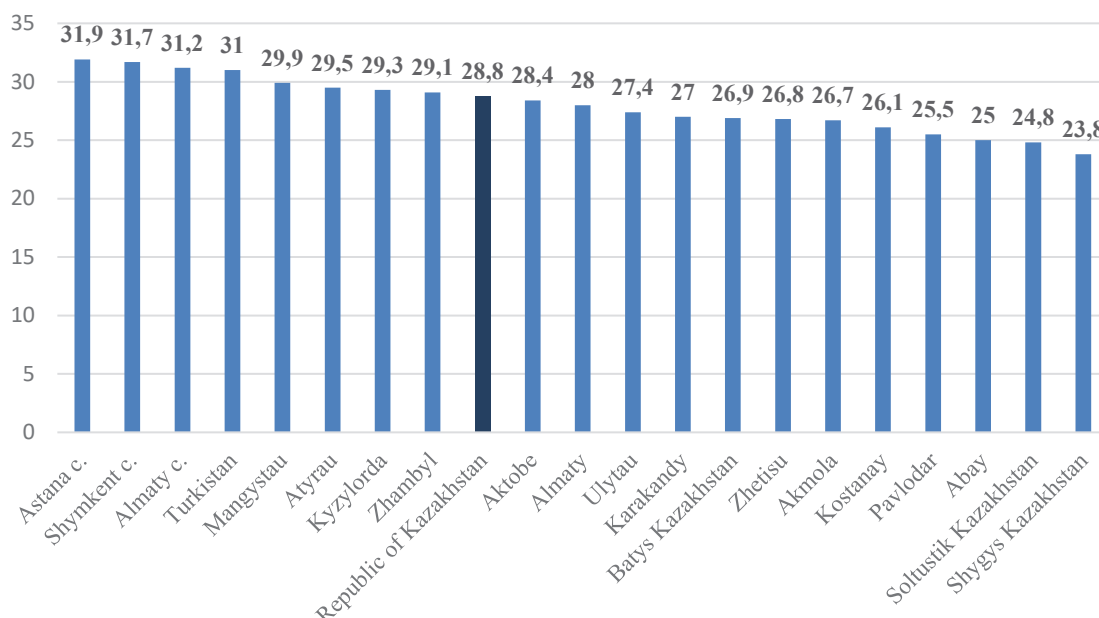


Figure 3 – The share of youth in the population of the regions in 2024, percentage

Note – compiled by the author based on [18]

According to the forecast of the Center for the Development of Labor Resources in Kazakhstan by 2035, the largest proportion of young people in 2030 will be recorded in the Turkestan region – 30.1% or 683 thousand people. In the northern, central, and eastern parts of Kazakhstan, in Aktobe, West Kazakhstan, Almaty, and Zhetysu regions, the proportion of young people is expected to be below the national average [15].

In addition, the regions are characterized by an imbalance of young and mature labor. For example, the Mangystau region has the youngest economically active population in the country, with young people accounting for just over half of the region's total workforce. In general, as they move from north to south, young people and older age groups in the economically active population in the regions tend to achieve parity.

The total number of economically active people aged 15-34 increased from 2,099.9 thousand in 2020 to 3,747.4 thousand in 2024. In the structure of the economically active population, 53.2% of men predominate in the labor force, while 46.8% are women.

Young people are most often employed (more than 70% of those employed by the end of 2024).

There is a dynamic decrease in youth employment: 3.8% in 2020, 3.8% in 2021, 3.8% in 2022, 3.5% in 2023, and 3.1% in 2024. Despite the migration of young people to megacities, the cities of Almaty and Astana have high unemployment rates among the young population of 4.4% and 3.9%, respectively (Figure 4).

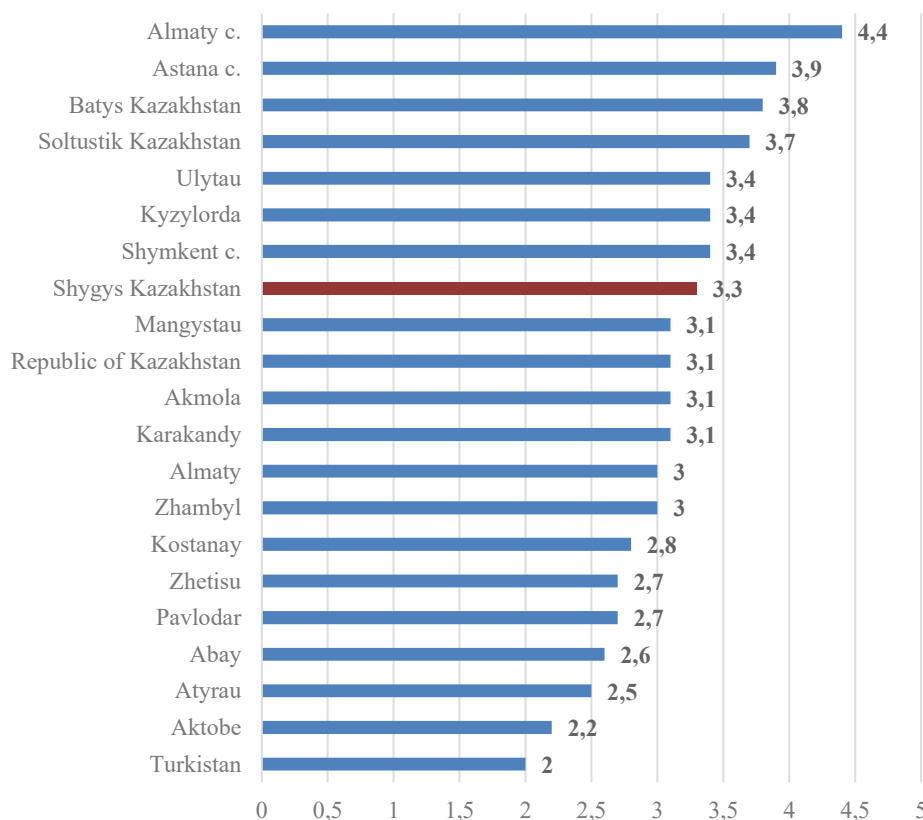


Figure 4 – Youth unemployment rate in the regions in 2024, percentage

Note – compiled by the author based on [19]

The largest proportion of young people work in low-productivity trade sectors, 17.7% (by the end of 2024), dependent on domestic demand and the real sector (Figure 5).



Figure 5 – Percentage of employed youth by industry in 2019 and 2024, percentage

Note – compiled by the author based on [19]

The youth labor market is also influenced by population migration among the regions. The results of a sociological study by the Scientific Research Center "Youth" demonstrate that 45% of young people migrate in search of work [20]. There is an influx of young people into urban areas, as the migration balance has remained positive for five years, from 25,278 people in 2019 to 47,210 people in 2023. Mostly young people tend to megacities, so in Astana the migration balance in 2023 is 23,296 people, in Almaty 21,806 people, in Shymkent 2,349 people. Accordingly, the migration balance in rural areas remains negative and has been increasing for five years from 35,801 people in 2019 to 39,916 people in 2023.

Considering internal migration, it should be noted that the negative balance of migration is typical for the southern regions. In 2023, there were 1,469 people in Zhambyl region, 1,355 people in Kyzylorda region, and 1,329 people in Turkestan region. In addition, a negative balance is observed in three educated regions of Zhetysay – 1161 people, Ulytau – 425 people and Abai - 426 people.

There is a place for NEET youth (Not in Education, Employment or Training – do not study or work), which accounts for about 6.5% in Kazakhstan and has remained virtually unchanged over the past five years, with the exception of 2023, when the figure increased to 7.3%. However, in 2024, the indicator dropped to the previous level. According to the results of 2024, the share of NEET youth is higher than the national average in Karaganda 8.9%, Mangystau 11.6%, Ulytau 10.5%, Zhetysay 7.8% regions. The smallest proportion of NEET youth is in East Kazakhstan - 4.1%, Kostanay – 5.2%, Pavlodar – 5.3% and Abai region – 4.4%.

Features of the youth labor market in Kazakhstan. The study of the youth labor market in Kazakhstan requires an analysis of not only statistical data, but also the specifics of cultural, social and economic factors.

There has been an increase in employment opportunities on platforms in Kazakhstan, which has led to a trend of personnel leaving the country for other countries. Experts say that employees, after reaching a certain level of success in the domestic market, often seek more promising opportunities abroad [21].

Today, the ability to work with digital technologies and digital literacy are an integral part of the employer's package of requirements.

In 2022, the United Nations Development Program in Kazakhstan conducted a survey among enterprises in Kazakhstan. According to a survey of enterprises, 42.4% of enterprises faced a lack of knowledge and skills in digital technologies among employees. Almost every second enterprise in the fields of construction, trade, and agriculture needed to improve the digital literacy of its employees in one way or another [21, P. 63]. For example, in agriculture, machine operators and combine harvesters with knowledge of CNC and English are already in demand. Information and communication companies require knowledge of certain programs (for example, Qlick sense, Power BI, Pentaho) and programming languages (Php, MySQL, Python).

In addition, according to the survey, 39% of respondents noted that there is an oversupply of labor in the regions, but its qualifications make it uncompetitive.

If the necessary specialists are present on the labor market, employers cannot provide them with the required salary level (36% fully agree with this, 47% partially agree with this).

One of the main problems of the labor market in Kazakhstan lies in the specifics of the economy itself. Kazakhstan has an insufficiently "complex" economic structure that produces "uncomplicated" products, which leads to an insufficient number of qualified jobs.

The Economic Complexity Index is used to assess the level of "complexity of the economy" in the world. Information on international trade is taken into account, taking into account those goods that a country exports in larger volumes than average countries of a similar size.

According to the results of 2023, Kazakhstan ranks 84th in the Economic Complexity Index published in 2025, having dropped by 5 positions compared to 2022. The increase in the Complexity Index to 55th place was one of the indicators of the State Program of Industrial and Innovative Development until 2025 [22]. The low complexity of the economy is one of the factors hindering the creation of high-quality jobs.

Kazakhstan's position in the Global Innovation Index increased in 2024 from 81st to 78th place compared to 2023. However, this is not a high enough position among 133 countries.

The state policy on youth employment in Kazakhstan

Today, the institutional framework for managing the youth sector is well established. The Ministry of Information and Social Development has a Committee for Youth and Family Affairs. There is also an advisory body, the Council for Youth Policy, which operates under the supervision of the President of Kazakhstan. Additionally, there are youth committees at enterprises, universities, and colleges.

Kazakhstan has established a legal framework governing youth policy:

- The Law on State Youth Policy [15];
- The concept of the State youth policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2023-2029 [23];
- Concepts of the labor market development of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2024-2029 [24];
- The Social Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan [25].

The development of the youth labor market required the introduction of new concepts regulating relations in the labor market, so in 2022, the Law on State Youth Policy introduced concepts such as:

- Youth Development Index;
- Specialist in youth work;
- youth labor groups;
- youth who are temporarily unemployed (NEET categories).

Youth employment remains the main task of the state.

Government measures to promote youth employment in Kazakhstan include: permanent employment; creation of social jobs; youth practice; referral to community service; provision of grants for the implementation of new business ideas; vocational training; social professional orientation; skills training on the Electronic Labor Exchange; training in the basics of entrepreneurship in Bastau Business.

A number of digital platforms are operating in the country for the convenience of users and the maximum coverage of young people with information. Enbek electronic labor exchange.kz is a single digital employment platform, as well as an online learning platform on the skills.enbek portal.kz, where training in 848 specialties is available. In addition, there are a number of other information support platforms for young people.:

- Career.enbek – digital professional qualifications platform;
- Business.enbek – portal for supporting entrepreneurial initiatives;

- HR.enbek – portal for human resources.

Youth resource centers have been set up in all regions on behalf of the Head of State to work with young people. 231 youth resource centers across the country.

A unified information website, www.eljastry.kz, is dedicated to the implementation of state youth policy and also accumulates relevant information. Despite the development of an information system aimed at promoting youth development, a recent sociological study found that 76.7% of young people are not aware of the effectiveness of programs aimed at implementing youth policy in our country, which is crucial for the socio-political, economic, cultural, and educational development of today's youth [26].

Foreign experience in providing youth employment.

The US experience

In the United States, there is no clear framework for classifying the population as youth, as states independently determine which group they classify as youth.

Youth unemployment in the United States in 2023 was 7.5% (in 2022 – 8%, in 2021 – 9.6%, in 2020 – 14.9%, in 2019 – 8.4%) [27].

In the United States, the youth employment and vocational training support system is based on a wide range of federal, regional, and local programs aimed primarily at vulnerable and low-income groups. For example, in Texas, the focus is on oil and gas internships, and in California – on IT.

The main focus is on preparing young people for the labor market through training, internships and financial support for education, as well as on involving employers in solving the problem of youth unemployment.

One of the key initiatives is the Labor Innovation and Opportunity Act, aimed at helping young people who do not have access to colleges or are experiencing difficulties finding employment. WIOA implements YouthBuild programs, where young people receive secondary education and simultaneously master construction professions, and Job Corps - free educational and professional courses for young people from low-income families. There is also no guarantee of providing jobs for young people in the United States. Many programs (for example, LinkedIn's Pathways) prepare young people for freelancing rather than stable employment.

In the USA, there is a low minimum wage of \$7.25/hour (since 2009), which is critical for young people in their first jobs [28].

During the summer, young people can take advantage of temporary employment programs such as Summer Jobs USA. An example of successful implementation is the New York Youth Summer Employment Program (SYEP), which annually provides over 70,000 jobs for teenagers, primarily from socially vulnerable groups.

A lot of attention in the USA is paid to training through internships. On the federal Apprenticeship platform.gov young people can find paid internships in various industries, from medicine to engineering.

To receive professional education, young people can use Pell Grants, which cover the cost of studying at community colleges. These educational institutions offer short-term applied programs, especially in demand in the fields of information technology, healthcare and services.

Encouraging employers also plays an important role. Under the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program, companies receive tax benefits for hiring young people from at-risk groups, such as foster care graduates or recipients of government assistance. The program has been in effect since 1996 and is extended by the Congress. Currently valid until December 31, 2025 [29]. Work Opportunity Tax Credit is the world's largest system of tax credits up to \$9,600 per person. In addition, the Youth Jobs+ initiative, launched under the Obama administration, has encouraged the active participation of the private sector in creating jobs for young people.

Special attention is paid to the support of NEET youth. Programs such as Reconnecting Youth are aimed at their socialization and return to education or the world of work. Initiatives like Youth Reentry are being implemented for young people with criminal records to help them adapt to life after their release and find work.

Along with federal initiatives, local programs play an important role. In Los Angeles operates LA:RISE youth employment program through partnership with NGOs and social enterprises. In Chicago, the One Summer Chicago program provides more than 30,000 temporary jobs for young people each year. In the state of Tennessee (the Tennessee Promise program), young people can receive professional education without debt.

Despite the variety of programs, the United States faces a number of challenges. First of all, the skills do not meet the requirements of employers: many jobs require experience that young people simply do not have. In addition, there is a racial and gender imbalance: the unemployment rate among African-American and Latino youth is 1.5-2 times higher than among their white peers. The proportion of young people employed in the gig economy is also growing rapidly - delivery, freelancing, and short-term projects - while such forms of employment do not provide stable income and lack social guarantees.

Thus, the American model is a multi-level system combining education, financial support, internships, and private sector participation, but at the same time requires adaptation to changing market realities and the elimination of social imbalances.

The experience of South Korea.

Youth employment in South Korea is a comprehensive system of measures that includes government programs, corporate initiatives, and educational reforms.

The experience of South Korea is interesting because between 2018 and 2023, the country increased its position in the Youth Employment Index from 22nd place to 17th place. The youth unemployment rate in South Korea was 5.6% (in 2022 – 6%, in 2021 – 7.3) [30].

South Korea is developing the integration of education and practice through Meister Schools and "Work & Study" type programs. Meister Schools were founded in 2010 at the initiative of the South Korean government in response to an oversupply of university graduates and a shortage of technical specialists, high youth unemployment (about 10% in 2009), and business demand for personnel with practical skills. Unique features of Meister Schools:

- free training (funded by the government and partner companies);
- narrow specialization for industry requirements: semiconductors and IT (Korea Meister High School of Semiconductor); automotive industry (Hyundai-Kia Meister High School); shipbuilding, robotics, energy.

The educational process in such institutions is based on the priority of practice.: Students spend 70% of their time on production sites, in laboratories and on internships, while only 30% is devoted to theoretical studies. Education takes place on the basis of modern laboratories equipped with equipment similar to that used in enterprises. Students complete internships at leading companies in the country, such as Samsung, LG, Hyundai and others, which provides them not only with practical experience, but also with employment opportunities in these corporations.

At the same time, partner companies provide scholarships, and students receive a deferral from military service. Additionally, the system offers international internships, particularly in Germany, the birthplace of the dual education system. This allows students to gain experience in foreign companies and expand their professional horizons.

However, participation in them is limited: only 3% of high school students are involved, and large companies are inactive - 95% of participants represent small and medium-sized businesses.

It should be noted that the main factor in youth employment is precisely "innovative SMEs" (firms certified by the government as venture capital and/or Inno-Biz companies). In 2014-2017, a quarter of the employees employed by innovative SMEs were young people.

In 2015, the government introduced a tax break of 5 million Korean won (4,135 US dollars) for small and medium-sized enterprises for each young person hired as a permanent employee. In addition, SMEs receive tax deductions of 150% for salary increases paid to young people who are permanent employees. In 2017, an additional subsidy of 20 million Korean won per year was introduced for up to three years for small and medium-sized enterprises that hire three young people as permanent employees. In 2022, it was replaced by a new program that offers up to 9.6 million Korean currency won per year to small and medium-sized enterprises that hire young people who find it difficult to hold down a permanent job.

There is a risk that these policies could lead companies to replace older workers with younger ones. This could have a limited impact on overall employment, as it would only affect a small number of workers. However, the subsidy program also requires that the total number of employees for subsidized small and medium-

sized enterprises (SMEs) increase. This could potentially have a positive impact on employment, as more people would be hired.

In addition, the government uses quotas to encourage youth employment. Since 2014, it has required that unemployed young people make up 3% of the workforce in government organizations and local state-owned enterprises.

Employment measures also include income tax exemption, cash benefits, and workplace benefits. In 2018, the exemption rate increased from 70% to 90%, the age limit was raised from 29 to 34 years, and the duration was extended from three to five years. This resulted in a more than fourfold increase in the amount of tax-exempt income between 2018 and 2021. Additionally, transportation cards for young people put into circulation, aimed at helping young employees save money.

The South Korean system demonstrates a multi-layered approach to youth employment based on stimulating business, developing digital skills, and supporting entrepreneurship.

The experience of the EU countries

The European Youth Guarantee is a key EU initiative aimed at addressing youth unemployment. Under this program, all EU member States commit themselves to ensuring that every young person under the age of 25 has access to quality employment, continuing education, or professional internship within four months of graduation or job loss.

Financial support for the program is provided through the European Social Fund, which has allocated over 100 billion euros for this purpose since 2013 [31].

The implementation of the Youth Guarantee has led to significant positive results. The youth unemployment rate in the EU has decreased from 24% in 2013 to 14% in 2023 [32]. In countries such as Finland and Sweden, the effectiveness of the program is particularly high – more than 80% of the participants are employed here.

The dual education system has proven itself in Germany, Austria and Denmark. The results of the dual system implementation: 83% of graduates find employment immediately after graduation [33]; the youth unemployment rate in Germany remains one of the lowest in the EU - only 5-6%.

This model has proven its effectiveness in training qualified personnel who fully meet the requirements of the modern labor market.

The "Flexicurity" model, which combines the flexibility of the labor market with reliable social protection, is being successfully implemented in the Nordic countries and the Netherlands. This system includes temporary contracts and part-time employment, unemployment benefits, which can reach 90% of the previous salary, retraining programs for the unemployed, offering individual employment plans, which contributes to their successful integration into the labor market.

As a result of the implementation of the model in Denmark, 70% of young professionals find work within 3 months after graduation. In the Netherlands, the youth unemployment rate is only 7.5%, which indicates a high level of youth employment. 85% of dismissed employees undergo retraining at the expense of the state, which contributes to their further employment.

The regional differences in the European Union countries are reflected below in table 1.

Table 1– Regional differences in the European Union countries

Country	Model	Youth unemployment rate (2023)
Germany	Dual training + guarantees	5.8%
Sweden	Flexicurity + government subsidies	8.1%
Spain	Active government programs	29.2%
Poland	Tax cuts for employers	12.4%
Note - compiled by the authors based on data from Eurostat		

As the above experience shows, countries with dual education and a flexible labor market have the best results in terms of youth employment.

CONCLUSION

Thus, the analysis of the current state of youth employment in Kazakhstan allows us to draw the following conclusions:

- in the near future, Kazakhstan has a chance to use the "demographic window" to stimulate economic growth, since in the next 10-15 years the share of young people in the population structure will increase.;
- most of the youth live in megacities, as well as in the southern regions of the country;
- Young people make up a significant part of the workforce in various regions of Kazakhstan, ranging on average from 30 to 40%;
- the majority of young people are employed (over 76%), with an increasing number of those who choose flexible working conditions;
- The youth unemployment rate in Kazakhstan is decreasing, reaching 3.1% in 2024, which is a positive sign for the economy, but there is still a group of young people who are not involved in work or education.;
- the development of platform employment is becoming a key driver of employment for young people;
- young specialists (IT, engineers, scientists) are leaving the country en masse due to low salaries, lack of career growth and weak scientific infrastructure;
- the low level of complexity of the economy does not allow the creation of decent jobs.

Kazakhstan, like other countries of the world, uses a variety of mechanisms to support youth in the labor market, by analogy with world practice, which include vocational training using on-the-job training and at the request of the employer, mechanisms of subsidized workplace and youth entrepreneurship development. The following measures are proposed as recommendations for the development of the youth labor market.

Stimulating the development of economic sectors and the transition to new technological transformations. This will open up opportunities for young people, especially those with modern skills, and reduce dependence on traditional industries where employment is often limited.

Over the past twenty years, the state has consistently implemented major industrial programs - the Industrial and Innovative Development Strategy 2003-2015, the State Program for Accelerated Industrial and Innovative Development 2010-2014, the State Program for Industrial and Innovative Development 2014-2019 and the current State Program of Industrial and Innovative Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2020-2025. The combination of these initiatives, as well as the approval of the Concept for the development of the manufacturing industry for 2023-2029, made it possible to form the basic industrial framework of the country: today, the industrial sector provides 26.1% of GDP and produces over 51.5 trillion tenge of products.

At the same time, the manufacturing industry demonstrates several key structural barriers limiting the expansion of production. These include a high level of depreciation of fixed assets (more than 41.4%), low robotization (9 robots per 10,000 workers versus 1012 in developed countries), and a high share of imports in almost all product groups of the manufacturing industry (USD 55 billion in 2024), including in mechanical engineering, chemical and light industries.. Import dependence reaches 78-90% for certain types of machinery and equipment, 70-80% for chemical products and over 85% for light industry goods, which creates significant potential for expanding the production of medium-sized enterprises already present in the processing sectors.

Government support measures play an important role in these conditions. In order to expand and modernize production facilities, the measure "reimbursement of costs for improving technological processes" plays an important role, which is currently the most in-demand tool in the manufacturing industry, providing compensation for up to 40% of the cost of equipment, but not more than 60 million tenge.

It is advisable to increase the threshold of compensation for this measure. For example, by redistributing part of the limits by adjusting (excluding) the measure "Reimbursement of costs for improving employee competencies." In practice, when purchasing modern equipment from foreign manufacturers, the contract price already includes staff training, installation supervision and commissioning services, which reduces the need for parallel financing of these costs through a separate tool.

Kazakhstan can create an analogue of Meister Schools based on existing vocational schools with the creation of pilots.

In 2019-2025, the state program "Zhas Maman" was implemented in the country, within the framework of which more than 180 colleges were modernized. The program was aimed at training specialists who meet the

requirements of industry 4.0, including skills in working with automated systems and robotics. According to the World Bank, in 2023, about 60% of graduates of Kazakhstani colleges find work within the first year after graduation. However, challenges remain: the lack of teachers with practical experience and outdated methods in some institutions, stereotypes about the "lack of prestige" of working professions among young people. In this regard, it is proposed to continue this program to improve training in vocational organizations based on the experience of "Meister Schools".

Priority areas for Kazakhstani "Meister Schools" are: oil and gas and energy; IT and digital technologies; mechanical engineering and logistics; agro-industrial complex (processing, smart-farming); services sector (tourism, hotel business). Integration with the existing education system:

- create "flexible" curricula (quick adaptation to market changes);
- involve Korean experts to train teachers;
- the ratio of study and practice is 70% practice and 30% study;
- employment at enterprises where internships are held, the opportunity to study abroad.

Automation and robotization of production require new skills from workers. For example, operators of CNC machines must understand programming, and welders must work with robotic welding systems. Experts predict that by 2030, the demand for specialists combining manual labor and digital skills will grow by 20-30%. The proposed measure will increase the demand for college graduates beyond the current 60% level.

In order to strengthen the role of youth in Kazakh society, it seems advisable to build systematic work in such areas as: attracting university graduates to representative government bodies, increasing the participation of young people in decision-making at various levels in the executive and legislative branches, involving young people in discussing draft laws, etc.

Solving problems with brain drain through talent management strategies. Solving the problem of brain drain is closely related to talent management strategy, especially in large enterprises. To do this, it is important to create attractive conditions for professional growth, including career development programs, competitive working conditions, and opportunities for training and advanced training. The key point is to create a corporate culture that values employee contributions and provides them with real growth prospects.

Implementation of mentoring programs. During interviews in focus groups among young people conducted in 2023 as part of the project on localization of Sustainable Development Goals between the Institute for Economic Research and the United Nations Development Program, it was revealed that the main problem among young people is the lack of information on educational programs. As practice shows, mentoring programs in Kazakhstan are implemented as mentoring in schools. It is possible to implement the 500 Mentors program among successful individuals and school graduates, at whose meetings mentors will talk about the opportunity to study at good universities in the world, what needs to be done for this, what conditions should be met, the experience of becoming individuals, etc. In addition, it is necessary to conduct research analyzing the results and impact of these programs on project participants.

In order to ensure the sustainable development of the youth employment market in Kazakhstan, it is necessary to implement measures that will diversify the economy, promote innovative educational models, and create favorable conditions for retaining talented individuals.

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ҚАЗАҚСТАНДАҒЫ ЖАСТАРДЫҢ ЖҰМЫСПЕН ҚАМТЫЛУЫ: ЕҢБЕК НАРЫҒЫНЫҢ СЫН-ҚАТЕРЛЕРІ ЖӘНЕ ДАМУ БАҒЫТТАРЫ

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АНДАТПА

Зерттеу мақсаты – жастарды жұмыспен қамтудың ағымдағы жай-күйін талдау және жастар еңбек нарығындағы сын-қатерлерді анықтау негізінде жастарды жұмыспен қамтуды қамтамасыз етудің іске асырылып жатқан шараларын жетілдіру бойынша ұсыныстар әзірлеу.

Әдіснамасы – зерттеу аясында жастарды жұмыспен қамту мәселесін жан-жақты зерделеуді қамтамасыз ететін талдау және синтез әдістері, сондай-ақ салыстырмалы-салғастырмалы әдіс қолданылды. Талдау және синтез әдістері статистикалық көрсеткіштерді жүйелі зерделеуді жүзеге асыруға, Қазақстан Республикасының Еңбек нарығының жастар сегментінің дамуының негізгі үрдістері мен заңдылықтарын анықтауға мүмкіндік берді. Салыстырмалы-салғастырмалы әдіс ұлттық контексте жастар еңбек нарығын дамытудың жалпы заңдылықтарымен қатар, өзіндік ерекшеліктерін де анықтауға мүмкіндік берді.

Зерттеудің бірегейлігі / құндылығы – бұл зерттеудің маңыздылығы жаһандық трендтер, ұлттық ерекшеліктер және үздік халықаралық тәжірибелер призмасы арқылы Қазақстандағы жастардың

жұмыспен қамтылу мәселесін кешенді түрде талдауда жатыр. Зерттеу демографиялық болжамдарды, экономикалық күрделілік индексі және инновациялық әлеуетті адами капитал мен тұрақты даму саласындағы стратегиялық шешімдердің негізін құрай отырып, жастарды жұмыспен қамту контекстіне интеграциялайды.

Зерттеу нәтижелері – Қазақстанның жастар еңбек нарығын талдау 2024 жылы жұмыссыздық деңгейінің 3,1% - ға дейін төмендеуіне қарамастан, жастардың біліктілігі мен нарық қажеттіліктері арасындағы теңгерімсіздікті, экономиканың күрделілігінің төмендігін және жоғары технологиялық секторлардағы "зияткерлік әлеуеттің сыртқа кетуін" (brain drain) қоса алғанда, құрылымдық проблемаларың әлі де өзектілігін айқындап көрсетті.

Түйін сөздер: жастардың жұмыспен қамтылуы, жұмыссыздық, еңбек нарығы, мемлекеттік бағдарламалар, цифрлық дағдылар, білім.

МОЛОДЕЖНАЯ ЗАНЯТОСТЬ В КАЗАХСТАНЕ: ВЫЗОВЫ РЫНКА ТРУДА И НАПРАВЛЕНИЯ РАЗВИТИЯ

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АННОТАЦИЯ

Цель исследования – разработка предложений по совершенствованию реализуемых мер обеспечения молодежной занятости на основе проведенного анализа текущего состояния молодежной занятости и выявления вызовов на молодежном рынке труда.

Методы исследования – в рамках исследования были применены методы анализа и синтеза, также сравнительно-сопоставительный метод, обеспечившие всесторонний анализ проблемы молодежной занятости. Методы анализа и синтеза позволили осуществить системное изучение статистических показателей, выявить ключевые тенденции и закономерности развития молодежного сегмента рынка труда Республики Казахстан. Сравнительно-сопоставительный метод позволил выявить как общие закономерности, так и специфические особенности развития молодежного рынка труда в национальном контексте.

Оригинальность / ценность исследования – значимость данного исследования заключается в комплексном анализе молодежной занятости в Казахстане через призму глобальных трендов, национальных особенностей и лучших международных практик. Исследование интегрирует демографические прогнозы, индекс экономической сложности и инновационный потенциал в контекст молодежной занятости, формируя основу для стратегических решений в области человеческого капитала и устойчивого развития.

Результаты исследования – анализ молодежного рынка труда Казахстана показал, что, несмотря на снижение уровня безработицы до 3,1% в 2024 году, сохраняются структурные проблемы, включая дисбаланс между квалификацией молодежи и потребностями рынка, низкую сложность экономики и «утечку мозгов» в высокотехнологичных секторах.

Ключевые слова: молодежная занятость, безработица, рынок труда, государственные программы, цифровые навыки, образование.

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