



International Journal of Innovative Technologies in Social Science

e-ISSN: 2544-9435

Scholarly Publisher
RS Global Sp. z O.O.
ISNI: 0000 0004 8495 2390

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ARTICLE TITLE

KEY ASPECTS OF YOUTH POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN
INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE AND PROPOSED MODELS

ARTICLE INFO

Khalil Yusifli. (2025) Key Aspects of Youth Policy Implementation in
International Practice and Proposed Models. *International Journal of Innovative
Technologies in Social Science*. 1(45). doi: 10.31435/ijitss.1(45).2025.3218

DOI

[https://doi.org/10.31435/ijitss.1\(45\).2025.3218](https://doi.org/10.31435/ijitss.1(45).2025.3218)

RECEIVED

11 January 2025

ACCEPTED

14 March 2025

PUBLISHED

17 March 2025

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KEY ASPECTS OF YOUTH POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE AND PROPOSED MODELS

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ABSTRACT

As is known, youth policy has become one of the priority areas in the policies of foreign countries, especially in Western countries. The state youth policy of modern foreign countries is, in fact, a system of state priorities and measures that ensure the creation of conditions and opportunities for the successful integration of young people into society (socialization) and the effective implementation of their potential in the interests of the state. State youth policy is given much attention by both universal and regional international organizations. An important role in this area belongs to the United Nations. At the same time, this is reflected in the activities of specialized UN organizations in this area, especially UNESCO, ILO and WHO. At the regional level, the Council of Europe and the European Union pay serious attention to youth policy. The most important component of youth policy implemented by foreign countries is the legal regulation of this process. In this regard, the youth policy of individual foreign countries is implemented on the basis of program documents, legislation and legislative acts in this area. In world practice, the most common models for implementing youth policy are the American liberal (USA), European and mixed models. Each of them has both advantages and disadvantages, which makes it extremely important to take into account local specifics when applying them, as well as when preparing and implementing national programs and other documents.

KEYWORDS

Youth Policy, International and Regional Organizations, American Liberal, European and Mixed Models of Youth Policy

CITATION

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1. Introduction.

It is a well-known fact that, as in all spheres, youth policy has become one of the priority directions in the political agenda of foreign countries, particularly in Western states. This is closely linked to the complex set of global developmental processes and contemporary challenges that hinder the adaptation of the younger generation to adulthood. While globalization creates new opportunities for society and enriches national diversity, it simultaneously gives rise to certain challenges. In turn, these challenges have a profound impact on young people, compelling them to seek ways to adapt to new realities, integrate socially, and ensure a decent standard and quality of life. In several countries, demographic issues, high youth unemployment rates, the negative consequences of military conflicts, and the increasing radicalization of society contribute to confusion and uncertainty among young people. The response to these processes is often manifested in the formation of extremist youth groups, a rise in alcoholism, drug addiction, and other forms of criminal behavior among young people. Consequently, states are faced with the necessity of developing and implementing a system of measures aimed at mitigating these negative effects on youth and facilitating their optimal integration into social life. In this regard, as a priority direction of state policy, ensuring social integration, increasing employment opportunities, supporting young families, safeguarding youth health, and expanding opportunities for achievements in fields such as culture and sports take precedence. (Teoriya i praktika ustoychivogo tsennostno-pozitivnogo razvitiya molodezhi, 2016, p. 8)

The state youth policy of modern Western countries is essentially a system of state priorities and measures aimed at creating the necessary conditions and opportunities for young people to successfully integrate into society (socialization) and effectively utilize their potential in line with state interests. Such measures are designed to foster the country's socio-economic and cultural development, ensure social cohesion, enhance competitiveness, strengthen national security, and ultimately achieve a higher standard of well-being for the population as a whole. The stability of the state and its progressive development largely depend on the successful implementation of youth policy. The formulation and execution of youth policy principles is not only a national responsibility but also an international obligation, remaining a key focus of the activities of both national governments and international organizations.

2. Results and Discussion

At the modern stage, active interstate cooperation and experience exchange in the formation and implementation methods of state youth policy are being developed. Both universal and regional international organizations pay significant attention to state youth policy. In this regard, the United Nations (UN) plays a particularly important role. Since the early 1960s, the UN has adopted several key documents that define new principles for youth-related policies and has declared that ensuring the well-being of the younger generation is a central focus of its activities. At the same time, youth-related issues are not only within the scope of the UN itself but also reflected in the activities of its specialized agencies, particularly UNESCO, the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the World Health Organization (WHO). On a regional level, both the Council of Europe and the European Union place significant emphasis on youth policy.

Since the 1990s, many Western countries have shifted from protective approaches to solving youth problems to positive development approaches that focus on increasing the abilities and competencies of young people. In this context, the idea of young people becoming stronger and more capable individuals, reflected in their behavior and mentality, emerged as a key focus. Participation in social life activities was seen as an effective tool for the emotional, cognitive, civil, social, and cultural development of young individuals. In terms of positive youth development, attention began to focus on five key areas: competence, self-confidence, character, relationships, and helpfulness. It was accepted that the strengthening and skill development of youth in society would broaden their social participation, which in turn would positively affect their development (United Nations, 2016, 16-18).

One of the most significant documents of the Council of Europe related to this topic is the European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life, adopted in 1992. This document specifically emphasized the necessity of greater youth involvement in constitutional rights, constitutional judicial processes, municipal legislation, as well as the activities of local governance and self-governing bodies. This area of youth policy has since undergone active development and has now become one of the leading fields of action in many European countries.

It is well known that one of the most pressing issues for European youth is employment. In 2013, the Council of the European Union approved the Youth Guarantee Scheme, which was developed by the European Commission. Under this initiative, EU member states committed to introducing guarantee programs within their national legislation starting from 2014, ensuring that all young people under the age of 25 have the opportunity to secure a place in the labor market. (Leshchenkov, 2015, p. 14)

A key component of the youth policy implemented by Western countries is its normative-legal regulation. In this regard, the youth policies of various foreign countries are carried out based on program documents, legislation, and legal acts in the mentioned field. These documents define the main directions, forms, and methods of policy implementation, as well as the necessary information, financial resources, and organizational support criteria essential for the effective execution of youth policy.

By summarizing the provisions of strategies, programs, development plans, and other fundamental documents related to youth policy in Western countries, we can identify the strategic vectors of modern youth policy as follows:

- Raising awareness of youth regarding their rights and responsibilities and promoting their integration into society;
- Ensuring necessary conditions for the comprehensive development of young people by the state;
- Fostering youth civic engagement and supporting youth organizations and initiatives;
- Protecting youth from negative political, economic, social, and moral factors. (Zelenkova, 2012, p. 47)

These vectors also define the main directions of the legislative regulation of youth policy and the protection of youth rights in Western countries. This includes:

- Personal rights: Protection of the life, dignity, personal inviolability, and safety of children and youth;
- Political rights: Protection from any form of discrimination, creating conditions for the exercise of political rights personally or through youth political and other public associations;
- Social-economic rights: Ensuring appropriate wages, equal working conditions, and the right to equal pay for equal work, adherence to age restrictions regarding the length of working hours and the nature of work, guaranteeing medical care and rehabilitation for children and adolescents from disadvantaged families, during illness, accidents, etc., the right to free basic education and further education, the right to leisure, and the right to use cultural and sports facilities. (Sotsial'no-molodezhnaya rabota, 1997, p. 14)

Fundamental principles regarding the protection of youth rights are enshrined, to varying degrees, in the constitutions of western countries (Italy, Spain, Portugal, Croatia, Slovakia, Germany,). For instance, the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany, adopted in 1949, guarantees the protection of youth interests in the information environment. Article 11 establishes restrictions on freedom of movement to protect youth from homelessness. Exceptions to the constitutional inviolability of the home are allowed when the interests of children and youth require it (Zelenkova, 2012, p. 12)

There are various approaches to the legislative regulation of youth policy in Western countries. For instance, some states have adopted laws for the protection and support of youth, which define the main directions of youth policy (Netherlands, Finland). At the same time, certain aspects of youth rights protection are regulated by other legislative acts as well.

For example, in Germany, based on the Youth Protection Act adopted in 1951, the regulation of the following issues was envisaged:

- Protection of youth from negative influences in society (restrictions on access to certain areas and places, prohibition of the sale of tobacco and alcoholic products to youth, etc.);
- Protection of youth in the information space (age restrictions for certain content on television or other media sources);
- The status and powers of specialized institutions working with youth, such as the Federal Committee on Potentially Dangerous Information for Youth;
- The authority of the German Federal Government to issue regulations on the restriction of potentially dangerous information for youth.

At the same time, certain aspects of youth rights protection were also reflected in other legal acts. For example, the Social Code of Germany included a special section dedicated to the social protection of youth (Leshchenkov, 2015, p. 23).

In this section, the following issues were regulated:

- Social protection and support for youth, including discounts and privileges for children and young people;
- Guardianship and custodianship, as well as the protection of personal information related to foster families, family members, and others;
- Powers of state social protection bodies;
- State funding and expenditure issues;
- Forms of mutual cooperation between state bodies and organizations in the area of social support for youth;
- Voluntary activity in the social sphere.

The legislation of most countries is characterized by the abundance of acts in the relevant field. The objectives of legal regulation are achieved through the adoption of various sectoral and cross-sectoral acts aimed at forming and implementing certain aspects of youth policy, as well as protecting youth rights in specific areas (Australia, the United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand, France). (Leshchenkov, 2015, p. 12)

In countries with a federal governance structure, youth-related legislation is enacted at both the federal level and the level of federal subjects, or in some cases, exclusively at the level of federal subjects (Leshchenkov, 2015, p. 13).

It should also be noted that the regulation of youth policy issues and the forms of its implementation at the local level have become more widespread in several Western countries. Particular attention is given to the efforts of municipal authorities, which are the closest to the direct beneficiaries of youth policy. These authorities take into account the demographic, socio-economic, ethnic, and other characteristics of the population in the areas where youth policy is formulated and implemented. Increasing focus has been placed on the development of specialized programs and projects aimed at supporting youth in various sectors and ensuring the practical implementation of key youth policy directions.

For instance, in France, both the state and public organizations implement a comprehensive package of youth programs aimed at supporting youth initiatives that promote active participation in local communities, ensure social stability, and enhance educational opportunities for young people. Special attention is also given to employment rights, particularly in addressing crucial issues such as providing permanent jobs for young people without prior work experience and creating opportunities for career development.

A national program aimed at supporting young people aged 11 to 30 promotes entrepreneurial initiatives, the establishment of new enterprises, as well as cultural and scientific creativity. Several targeted projects are also implemented. For instance, in the cultural sector, projects focus on creating favorable conditions for sports participation, establishing specialized information and advisory centers, and supporting youth leisure centers and sports institutions to enhance recreational opportunities. (Lafitskiy & Timoshenko, 2015, p. 23)

The "Striving for Excellence" program in the United Kingdom (2007–2017) was designed to provide comprehensive support to young people, especially those from disadvantaged families, in developing positive, socially beneficial activities and practical skills. This program aimed to establish special organizational and legal mechanisms, which included:

This program focused on the development of active citizenship and social interaction skills among young people through their engagement in various activities. It also aimed to:

- Encourage youth participation in activities that foster social responsibility and civic engagement.
- Consider young people's opinions in improving and funding youth services.
- Establish recreational and sports facilities, as well as support charitable, cultural, and environmental initiatives (Petrishchev, Grass, & Alekseenko, 2009, p. 26).

The "Helping Youth Realize Their Potential" program, adopted in 2013 and covering the following decade, introduced a systematic approach to addressing youth issues. The program focused on:

- Improving the education system by enhancing the quality of teaching and training in public schools.
- Expanding the number of private schools to increase educational opportunities.
- Paying special attention to students with special needs and ensuring inclusive education.
- Monitoring the targeted use of funds allocated to schools to enhance efficiency.
- Increasing access to general secondary and vocational education for young people.
- Developing local youth councils, which now exceed 600 across the country.
- Reducing youth crime and improving work with juvenile offenders to promote rehabilitation.
- Creating favorable conditions for youth employment and well-being to support economic stability.
- Enhancing healthcare services while promoting sports and leisure activities for young people (Petrishchev, Grass, & Alekseenko, 2009, p. 27).

Thus, Western countries employ both approaches: they not only limit the role of the state in the implementation of youth policy by delegating these functions to the public and commercial sectors but also strictly regulate the state's responsibility in ensuring the integration of young people into the socio-political and social spheres

In Western countries, youth policy is planned and implemented in various forms, including general and specialized state programs, strategic plans, national projects, as well as regional and local, general, and sector-specific initiatives.

The forms and methods of working with youth in different Western countries depend on the historical, national-cultural development, and mentality of the populations, as well as the economic and social capacities of the respective states. Despite the diversity of approaches to implementing youth policy, all countries recognize the necessity and importance of engaging youth and ensuring their conflict-free integration into society. It is evident that in each Western country, there are various state institutions and organizations responsible for implementing youth policy. The activities of these institutions, as well as the organizational aspects of youth policy in Western states, ultimately depend on the state's overall approach to the social sector. This, in turn, has led to the emergence of different perspectives and models regarding the issue.

Among the known models of youth policy implementation worldwide, two principal models attract particular attention. The first is the American liberal model (United States), where direct state intervention in the social sphere is minimal and primarily indirect. The second is the European model, which constitutionally enshrines the idea of the welfare state, ensuring active state participation in addressing social issues, including youth policy.

Some countries adopt a hybrid approach that incorporates elements of both models. This approach is characterized by the state's prioritized involvement in defining and implementing youth policy, while the resolution of youth-related issues follows a decentralized structure. In this framework, responsibilities are

delegated to sectoral ministries within their respective competencies, leading to a fragmented yet structured approach to policy execution. (Petrishchev, Grass, & Alekseenko, 2009, p. 45)

2.1 American Model

Historically, youth policy in the United States has been based on minimal involvement of state institutions in its implementation. It was not until 1978 that the task of formulating a federal-level youth policy concept was introduced, leading to the establishment of the U.S. Youth Policy Institute (YPI). The institute primarily focused on monitoring the implementation of federal government programs related to youth policy.

The primary objectives of the YPI included supporting youth development, analyzing youth-related programs and legislative initiatives, and contributing to policy recommendations. Initially, the institute was established as a national nonprofit organization dedicated to combating poverty and addressing issues affecting young people. Subsequently, it played a key role in designing and implementing the first nationwide anti-poverty programs, which enabled local organizations to execute federally funded initiatives.

Between 1995 and 2000, the Youth Policy Institute (YPI) became one of the leading organizations providing legal assistance to low-income individuals. Among its various areas of activity, YPI played a crucial role in implementing several programs aimed at education, social welfare, and youth employment in multiple U.S. cities through grant allocations.

At the state level, youth policy is formulated by the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). Within the framework of this conference, a special program was developed to reduce youth homelessness, reflecting a targeted approach to addressing pressing social challenges.

In the United States, social work with youth is carried out within the framework of both governmental and non-governmental youth support programs. Social services include various forms of assistance, such as one-time or temporary financial aid for students and teachers, depending on their circumstances. Specifically, social support may be provided in cases of illness or injury, when counseling and career guidance are needed, in response to poor academic performance, academic leaves, conflicts with teachers, family members, or peers, as well as for addressing personal issues. The establishment of self-governing bodies within educational institutions in the U.S. aims to empower young people by allowing them to influence decisions that directly affect their lives. Additionally, it seeks to provide access to essential social, cultural, communication, and administrative opportunities.

Additionally, the United States has active mechanisms for involving the commercial sector, including private charitable organizations, in the implementation of youth policy programs and projects. The primary focus of these efforts is to identify the interests of each party and utilize possible forms and methods of cooperation effectively.

2.2 European Model

In Germany, the development and overall coordination of youth policy are carried out by the Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women, and Youth. At the same time, certain aspects of state youth policy require the involvement of other ministries and government bodies. Many issues related to youth policy are resolved at the regional level. The implementation of state youth policy is undertaken by both governmental and non-governmental bodies and organizations.

The first category includes government institutions such as the German Parliament (the Bundestag of the Federal Republic of Germany), executive authorities, state agencies, and local self-government bodies, all of which implement youth policy within their respective competencies. These entities may be granted specific powers, which are enshrined in legislation.

Non-governmental bodies involved in youth policy include the Federal Youth Council and various youth organizations. The Federal Youth Council unites youth organizations to collectively address current issues and represent the interests of young people. Youth organizations play a crucial role in safeguarding the interests of both specific youth categories (such as working youth and students) and young people as a whole.

Youth organizations actively cooperate with government bodies, local self-government authorities, international organizations, individual officials, and citizens in their activities. They receive targeted financial support primarily from regional budgets, with comparatively less funding coming from the federal budget.

In France, the development of youth policy is implemented by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, with the participation of the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Employment and Solidarity, and the Ministry of Culture and Communication.

The responsibility for implementing youth policy in France is distributed among different levels of government: provinces, regions, departments, and municipalities. The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports is responsible for formulating and executing state policies related to youth, sports, and the development of public life. This ministry is also in charge of interdepartmental coordination of projects implemented in these areas. To fulfill its mission, the central administration of the Ministry of Youth and Sports is divided into three main sectors: the Department of Sports; the Department of Youth and Popular Education; and the Department of Social Life, Employment, and Training.

The activities of the Ministry of Youth and Sports are carried out in collaboration with other government bodies, regional authorities, and socio-economic organizations, all contributing to the strengthening and implementation of policies related to youth, sports, and associative life. Additionally, in France, there is the National Youth Council, which operates under the Ministry of Youth. This body conducts consultations with youth and provides recommendations. It is also authorized to carry out research and offer suggestions on any issues related to the economy, society, and culture.

The Council's responsibility is to present an annual report on its activities to both chambers of parliament. The composition of the council and the conditions for the appointment of its members are determined by a decree from the French State Council. The National Youth Council, headed by the Minister of Youth and Sports, brings together representatives of political, civil, and trade union youth structures. This council is authorized to propose initiatives regarding current issues faced by youth. Youth councils operate both at the administrative level and in many municipalities.

The organizations responsible for youth policy, as mentioned above, primarily address the most pressing issues faced by this demographic category of the country's population. Non-governmental organizations play a crucial role in ensuring youth policy due to their close cooperation with young people. Voluntary public organizations registered with the Ministry of Youth and Sports in France are considered potential partners and have the right to apply for financial assistance to implement specific projects.

In the Netherlands, the Ministry of Youth and Family Affairs was established for the first time in 2007. Its primary task is to coordinate the efforts of all state and non-state entities (agencies, organizations, associations, and other associations) in order to address issues related to creating a favorable environment for youth. This Ministry independently resolves a number of issues without directly involving other bodies, although it constantly consults with them.

It is also important to note that before the establishment of this Ministry, youth policy in the Netherlands was primarily regulated by the "Youth Operation" program, which was developed by the government and implemented between 2004 and 2006. Many provisions of the old program formed the basis for the activities of the Ministry.

In addition to the Ministry of Youth and Family Affairs, other state institutions such as the Ministry of Health, Social Security, and Sports, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science, and the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of Citizens also participate in the development and implementation of national youth policy. They all carry out their activities within their respective competencies under the support and overall guidance of the Ministry of Youth and Family Affairs, developing and implementing specific aspects of youth policy.

Overall, the framework of youth policy in the Netherlands is determined by the national parliament. Additionally, provincial and municipal authorities play an important role in the development and implementation of youth policy. The responsibility for developing and implementing youth policy to protect the rights and interests of children and adolescents primarily lies with the provincial authorities, while municipalities are responsible for the general management of youth policy.

2.3 Mixed Model

Several countries around the world implement youth policies that combine elements from both the American and European models. For example, in New Zealand, the system of agencies responsible for implementing youth policy in the last few decades aligns with the characteristics of institutions created in both Europe and America. Due to the multifaceted commitments the government has taken on regarding youth, it would be difficult to entrust the implementation to a single state organization. The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health have undertaken responsibilities for providing services in their respective areas. The Children, Youth, and Families Agency is currently responsible for protecting young people who are victims of violence and at risk.

This Agency is a functional division of the Ministry of Social Welfare. The agency's task is to monitor the situation of children at risk. If there are serious grounds to believe that a young person requires special attention, the Agency is obligated to take necessary measures to protect them. The Agency maintains constant contact with police and judicial authorities. Furthermore, the Agency collaborates with local government bodies to provide various services to young people in need of protection from their parents, as well as offering financial support. In its activities, the Agency keeps ongoing communication with various municipal authorities.

In 2006, structural changes were made within the system of authorities responsible for the implementation of the 1989 Child, Youth, and Family Law. The department and divisions of the Ministry of Social Services dealing with youth issues were merged. The involvement of young people in the activities of individual communities is currently carried out by the Ministry of Youth Affairs. It assists young citizens in gaining knowledge and experience to actively participate in the political and economic life of the municipality.

One of the responsibilities of the Ministry is to inform the competent authorities about the problems faced by young people and to assist in their resolution. Additionally, the establishment of youth development centers has been entrusted to this Ministry. The Ministry develops and ensures the implementation of various programs in which young people participate. The Ombudsman for Child Issues is also responsible for protecting the interests of young people.

The duties of the Ombudsman include the following:

- Conducting investigations related to decisions made or recommended concerning children;
 - Monitoring the implementation of the provisions of the "Child, Youth, and Family Act" of 1989;
 - Providing recommendations to the minister responsible for the implementation of the provisions of the aforementioned Act;
 - Monitoring the implementation of the provisions of the 1984 Convention Against Torture;
 - Encouraging the continuous involvement of competent authorities in addressing issues related to the protection of the interests of children and young people;
 - Bringing the opinions of young people on various matters to the attention of competent authorities;
 - Ensuring the operation of a direct communication line between various departments and young people;
 - Ensuring research on improving young people's working conditions and increasing wages.
- (Sotsial'no-molodezhnaya rabota, 1997, p. 45)

A lot of work is being done to involve young people in the decision-making processes in the country, particularly at the local level, through organizations such as municipal youth councils. These bodies engage young people in various community activities and assist them in developing leadership skills. The activities of youth councils are coordinated by the Ministry of Youth Affairs. Ministry staff maintain constant communication with the local branches of the youth councils, provide information on national events related to youth policy, and highlight the positive experiences of various youth organizations.

In the United Kingdom, the national body responsible for implementing youth policy is overseen by the Cabinet Office. Since 2013, the coordination of activities related to youth policy across all government structures, as well as non-governmental organizations, local self-government bodies, business structures, and the private sector, has been entrusted to this office. The role of formulating and implementing youth policy is headed by the Minister for Civil Society, who is one of several ministers working within the Cabinet Office. The Cabinet Office also supervises the most important national programs and projects related to youth, including strengthening the cooperation between public organizations and government agencies, particularly through parliamentary plans developed with consideration for the state youth sector. This is a government-funded, broad strategic partnership program.

In the implementation of youth policy, the Education Department, Health Department, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice, Employment and Pensions Department, and the Departments of Business, Innovation, and Training also participate in the execution within their respective authorities. The regulatory body responsible for overseeing the implementation of youth policy is the Education Department.

This department has been functioning since 2010, following the organizational reforms that resulted in the dissolution of the Children, Schools, and Families Department (2007-2010). The department's annual budget is £57.6 billion. Its responsibilities include the implementation of policies concerning children and youth up to the age of 19, covering areas such as child protection and education. Under the overall leadership of the Secretary of State, the department is responsible for youth financial support, strategies to eradicate child poverty, vocational training, and the employment of individuals aged 16 to 19. Additionally, the Department for Vocational Education and

Production, under the auspices of the Secretary of State for Schools, handles issues related to school admissions, achievements, school reports, monitoring, modernization, and funding of schools.

In addition to the aforementioned, there are other departments that implement specific aspects of youth policy. For instance, the Health Department, in response to increasing concerns about the health of young people, including mental health, has adopted both preventive and therapeutic strategies to develop healthcare services. As a result of specialized youth programs, medical institutions have begun to offer better services to help young people recover from drug addiction and alcoholism. Organizational and educational efforts are being made regarding the use of contraceptive methods. Stricter restrictions have been imposed on the sale of tobacco and alcoholic products. Initiatives carried out in the last decade have contributed to the development of youth-related work agencies and services, increased funding, and greater access to training opportunities in youth work. Nearly 30 universities offer professional development courses for those seeking to specialize in youth work (specialization in youth work was introduced in 2010). Additionally, numerous part-time specialists work with young people, and nearly half a million volunteers are engaged in this field.

At the federal level in Australia, support for families and children through services, benefits, and payments is provided by the Australian Department of Social Services. Support is given to families through grants and other financial forms from organizations that provide social welfare services. The Australian Institute of Family Studies, funded by the Department of Social Services, conducts research aimed at the development of various forms of social support for children, young people, and families. One of the objectives of the National Youth Australians Strategy 2009-2020, adopted by the Australian Governments Council in 2009, includes the creation of Child and Youth Commissioners. The duties of these officials include ensuring the protection of children's and young people's rights to increase their role in society. The primary responsibilities of such officials are to study and analyze the characteristics of youth policy in each Australian state, investigate and analyze legislation related to the protection and social welfare of children and young people, and promote its key provisions within the broader community. The establishment of such independent positions in all states and territories has legally enabled individuals who are authorized to defend children's rights to advocate on their behalf.

In Poland, no ministry has been created at the national level to comprehensively address the issues of the younger generation. However, the rights of young people are clearly outlined in the country's legislation concerning education, health, labor, sports, physical education, etc. As a rule, each relevant ministry has a department (division, bureau) whose scope is to identify and protect the interests of the younger generation. Specialized state bodies are envisaged to assist in the implementation of young people's rights and interests in specific areas. An example of this can be the effective operation of voluntary labor groups. The law defines them as one of the labor market institutions aimed at protecting the interests of young people aged 15-25.

Until 1991, the Scientific Research Institute for Youth Issues operated in the country, and after its closure, the Center for Youth Studies was established at Warsaw University in July 1991, combining scientific research with the worldview and social participation of young people. The main activities of this center involve carrying out specific projects in the field of youth policy at the request of government administration, local self-government bodies, non-governmental organizations, schools, parents, and other entities interested in the creation of necessary conditions for the formation and upbringing of young people in Poland.

At the regional level, a different picture emerges. Local self-government bodies actively work to utilize the potential of young people and apply various institutional forms of youth work. For example, in 2005, the Voivodeship Secretariat for Youth Affairs was established in the West Pomeranian Voivodeship. Its responsibilities include implementing tasks derived from the decisions of the voivodeship sejmik and its council regarding youth-related matters. (Timoshenko, 2015, p. 43)

In some countries, the ombudsman defends the interests of young people. Such an institution has been established in the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic of Germany, Finland, Poland, New Zealand, and Australia. As a rule, youth ombudsmen not only oversee the implementation of youth-related legislation but also ensure direct communication between various departments dealing with youth issues. In recent years, there has been a trend toward the establishment of ombudsman services at the local level.

3. Conclusions

Thus, considering all these factors, it can confidently be said that in the modern era, the role of local and regional governing bodies in the regulation and implementation of youth policy in foreign countries has significantly increased. This shift is related to the strengthening of decision-making processes at the local level, as countries seek more flexible and closer solutions to youth issues. Local and regional authorities are able to

implement more effective and targeted measures based on the social, educational, employment, and other needs of young people. This approach also allows for decisions concerning young people to be made in a more transparent and close manner, which leads to better outcomes. As a result, the increased involvement of local and regional authorities in many countries has led to quicker and more purpose-driven progress in the implementation of youth policies, which has played a key role in improving the role of young people in society and their living conditions. The application of this approach has allowed for more rapid and effective responses to local needs and the contemporary challenges faced by youth.

Funding details

The research was supported by the Ganja State University

Disclosure statement

The authors report that there are no competing interests to declare

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