

ЭМПИРИЧЕСКОЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ ЗАНЯТОСТИ И БЕЗРАБОТИЦЫ МОЛОДЕЖИ В БЕЛАРУСИ (РЕГИОНАЛЬНЫЙ АСПЕКТ)

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH OF YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT IN BELARUS (REGIONAL ASPECT)

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РЕФЕРАТ

РЫНОК ТРУДА МОЛОДЕЖИ, ЗАНЯТОСТЬ, БЕЗРАБОТИЦА, ТРУДОУСТРОЙСТВО

В статье анализируется состояние рынка труда и безработица молодежи (на примере одного из регионов Республики Беларусь). Результаты получены в рамках исследовательского проекта «Предупреждение молодежной безработицы приграничных территорий Латвии и Беларуси в условиях выхода из кризиса», выполненной при финансовой поддержке БРФФИ (2015–2017 гг.). Целью исследования является диагностика проблем занятости и безработицы молодежи в приграничных регионах; определение причин незанятости молодежи, намерений и готовности к трудоустройству, индивидуальных характеристик молодых людей, способствующих эффективному трудоустройству (мобильность, уровень образования, компетентность, способность к развитию и пр.), необходимых мер помощи в трудоустройстве молодежи со стороны институтов регионального рынка труда. В статье рассмотрены особенности молодежного рынка труда и определены методические различия между статистикой молодежной безработицы и занятости, применяемой в Республике Беларусь и подходом МОТ. Эмпирическая база исследования основана на комбинировании трех источников – статистических данных, репрезентативного опроса молодежи приграничных регионов Республики Беларусь (проведенного в 2017 г.) и экспертного опроса. Согласно исследованию, уровень занятости молодежи в Витебской области составил 36,8 %, а уровень безра-

ABSTRACT

LABOUR MARKET OF YOUTH, EMPLOYMENT, UNEMPLOYMENT, EMPLOYABILITY

This article analyzes labour situation for young people from the region of Belarus. The features of the youth labour market are examined. The research is focused on the methodological differences between Belarusian approach to labour market statistics and ILO's approach. The labour situation for young people in one of the Belarusian regions is described using analysis of the data obtained from empirical research. The article represents results of youth employment and unemployment level assessment, which were received during the survey of the group of 307 young people at the age of 15–29 years by means of questionnaire for households survey on employment issues developed according to ILO's methodology. According to the survey the youth employment level in Vitebsk Region accounted for 36.8 % with the unemployment level being 10.3 % i.e. the actual youth unemployment level is higher than a registered one in Belarus and it is comparable in value to the level in other countries. The research reveals a high number of young people who work while studying. The assessment of means of job seeking showed that individual search alongside with friends' and relatives' help dominates. Other elements of labour market infrastructure (state employment agencies, recruitment agencies) are not popular despite the fact that their efficiency among the registered unemployed is rather high. The research resulted in the development of additional database of the condition of youth labour market in the Republic of Belarus (at regional level) which allows to diagnose the situation in youth em-

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ботицы – 10,3 %, то есть фактический уровень безработицы среди молодежи выше, чем зарегистрированный в Беларуси, и сопоставим по значению с уровнем в других странах. Исследование выявило высокий уровень совмещения учебы и работы у молодых людей. Исследование подтвердило гипотезу о наличии информационной асимметрии на рынке труда молодежи, которая обусловлена неразвитостью инфраструктуры молодежного рынка труда. Очень незначительная часть молодых людей в приграничных регионах ищут работу и трудоустраиваются через органы государственной службы занятости и кадровые агентства. При оценке основных каналов поиска работы самостоятельный поиск и помощь родителей, родственников доминируют у молодежи, в то время как другие субъекты инфраструктуры рынка труда региона (органы государственной службы занятости, кадровые агентства) не пользуются популярностью. Гипотеза о том, что молодежь имеет невысокую конкурентоспособность на рынке труда, частично подтвердилась. Основными трудностями при поиске работы и трудоустройстве отмечены отсутствие стажа по профессии, отсутствие вакансий по месту жительства, возрастная дискриминация. Результатом исследования стала разработка дополнительной базы данных о состоянии молодежного рынка труда в Республике Беларусь (на региональном уровне), позволяющая диагностировать ситуацию с занятостью молодежи, которая находится за пределами видимости государственных служб занятости.

ployment which is beyond the vision of state employment agencies.

Youth employment issues become priority tasks for employment policy because "Young people represent an important source of skills, creativity and dynamism and a better harnessing of these qualities could help Europe's economy grow and become more competitive" [Being young in Europe today]. Nevertheless, young people remain the most vulnerable segment in labour market. The youth unemployment rate has always been higher than the total unemployment rate (table 1), and the youth employment rate has always been lower than total employment rate. Young people who are 'Not in Education, Employment or Training'

(NEET) are numerous [12]. The situation can be explained by the fact that the youth labour market as a segment of the whole labour market has its special nature in terms of mechanisms of demand and supply generation on it and its institutional structure. Hence, the youth employment is a priority issue in the formation of the national employment policy. The Europe 2020 strategy dedicated two of its flagship initiatives to improving the employment situation for young people: Youth on the move, which promoted mobility as a means of learning and increasing employability, and agenda for new skills and jobs, which aimed at improving

employability and employment opportunities for young people. The "Youth Employment Initiative" funded by the EU, focuses on providing support to young people in getting education and job. The budget of the Initiative is €6 billion for 2014–2020. Additionally, the EU has developed Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan to help young people to get good education to match their jobs. Thus, much effort is put into solution of this problem.

The Republic of Belarus is no exception in this regard. Great attention is paid to issues of youth employment in the country. On the other hand, the data used to estimate the number of the unemployed provide smaller figures in comparison with actual values as only those registered by the employment service are considered. Taking into account the low level of registered unemployment in the country (0.5 % in 2017), we can conclude that the labour market is in steady state. However, the real practice of employing young people signals growing difficulties in this area. Therefore, it is relevant to study the youth labour market on the basis of the ILO methodology in order to obtain data which reflect the real level of youth employment and unemployment. The scientific novelty of the study is represented by the analysis of youth employment and unemployment in the Republic of Belarus on the empirical basis, formed according to the methodology of the ILO, which will allow for correct comparative analysis, identify the real scope, characteristics, and problems of the youth labour market and establish measures for its regulation.

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO RESEARCH: THE RESULTS ACHIEVED AND UNRESOLVED ISSUES

Theoretical background youth unemployment shows that there are many reasons for it as the youth labour market has its own features.

The youth labour market as a segment of the

whole labour market has its special nature in terms of mechanisms of demand and supply generation on it and its institutional structure. A lot of researchers point out this fact¹. The youth labour market is characterized by a high risk of information asymmetry in hiring a young employee. Experts from the ILO, the European Commission, and the UN are also concerned about this fact [14; 12; 17]. Sometimes it is caused by the graduate's self-overestimation of their professional and skill level which leads to unreasonably inflated demands to the level of wages, workplace [8, pp. 14–15]; sometimes this is due to lack of experience in self-determination on the labour market, lack of socialization and adaptation skills which makes entering the working collective more difficult and reduces the efficiency of employment. Because of labour market segmentation² young employees have mostly access to a secondary segment, which is represented by low quality jobs requiring low qualification and thus offering low protection and low level of wages [7, pp. 11–12, 28–29]. Therefore "the share of among the working youth employed in the informal sector is higher" than the national average [5, p. 15]. J. Stiglitz pointed out: "The "Strict austerity" policy of conservative governments aims to maximize the cost of labour for business. This leads to liberalization of labour laws, facilitating of layoffs and perpetual training, "public works" of slave model for young people" [11, 2015]. Thus, young people are often offered low quality jobs with low wages, poor working conditions, a modest social package, job security, temporary employment (in the absence of a permanent employee). Accordingly, the parameters of temporary, part-time employment among young people are growing [8, p. 53]. There is a constant presence of NEET-youth in the youth labour market.

Some authors have determined the following features of supply on the youth labour market:

¹ E.g. Razumova T.O. (2007), Rostchin S.Yu., Slesareva A.A. (2012). Rostchin S.Yu. admits: "It is certain characteristics of young people as a labour force that cause a high level of youth unemployment. They make the young be a category of employees undesirable for hiring and, among other things, exacerbate the problem of information asymmetry between employees and the employer, thereby reducing the demand for them" (Rostchin, Slesareva, 2012, p. 4).

² Segmentation of the labour market is the process of determining relatively isolated parts, which are influenced by specific features in the mechanisms of the formation of labour demand and supply.

1) uneven intersectoral and sectoral distribution of youth preferences in job placement. There is a decrease in the employment attractiveness in agriculture, industrial sector, while employment attractiveness grows (and, accordingly, labour supply) in the services sector, management, which affects the choice of the specialty of entrants and the formation of the vocational structure of graduates [2, p. 78; 5, pp. 10–11];

2) higher youth mobility is one of the reasons of high unemployment [7, 2012, p. 6].

3) desire to accumulate excessive education, which is accompanied by an increase in the number of students enrolled in higher education programs; expansion of study and work combination [8, 2007; 2, 2010, p. 78].

Thus, theoretical and methodological approaches to understanding the mechanism of formation of the youth labour market and explaining its main results (the level of youth employment and unemployment) have been developed in the economic literature, but they have not been verified for the economy of Belarus and therefore have a probabilistic character. This is due to the special nature of the statistical observation of the labour market in Belarus, the existing methodological features of statistical recording of youth unemployment in the country.

THE FEATURES OF YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT ASSESSMENT

In Belarus, an able-bodied person of active working age is considered unemployed (women aged 16–58 years, men aged 16–63 years) if they do not have work and earnings and are registered with employment agencies in order to find suitable work, searching for job and ready to proceed to it. Traditionally, international practice considers the actually unemployed according to the ILO resolution of 1982, these are people aged 15–74 years who do not have a job, actively search for it and are ready to start working within two weeks. Different approaches in the calculation methodology are the following: firstly, the demographic base is much broader in the ILO's approaches, and secondly, an additional criterion for recognition of the unemployed (registration in the national employment agencies) has been added to the Belarusian practice, which takes a part of the unemployed out of the recording.

This explains the incompatibility of the results of calculating the unemployment rate in the EU countries and in Belarus. Since 2012, a survey of the labour force on employment issues has been carried out in Belarus in accordance with the ILO methodology, but its results are not open and representative in the context of the regions. The key indicators of the ILO Decent Work Indicators system adopted in Belarus since 2016 consider the importance of the share of NEET youth in Belarus. In 2016, this share was 8.2 %, in 2017 – 7.3 % [www.belstat.gov.by], but this phenomenon in Belarus hasn't been analyzed.

The comparison of statistical data on the youth unemployment level in EU-28 and Belarus shows that the level of youth unemployment is much higher than the level of total unemployment in all countries. In some EU countries (Greece, Spain, Croatia, Italy, Portugal, Cyprus), the level of youth unemployment has reached a critical level. The share of NEET youth in the country does not depend on the level of youth unemployment (the correlation ratio is 0.08426), but it can be noted that in 13 out of 28 countries with a high level of youth unemployment, the level of NEET youth is lower (Belgium, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Latvia, Poland, Portugal, Luxemburg, Slovenia, Finland, Sweden) i.e. they replace each other to a certain extent.

Comparison of the European figures with the available data on youth unemployment in Belarus (based on the results of the household survey on employment problems) leads us to conclusions about the similarity of the pattern in the youth labour market. However, there is very little data on the youth labour market in Belarus. The statistical observation of the labour market in Belarus mostly uses data on registered unemployment, according to which the unemployment rate in the country was 0.8 % in 2016, among them 21.9 % at the age of 16–29 years [9, p. 101], there are no other figures for youth unemployment. It does not represent a complete picture, since it does not consider young people who do not have a job and are looking for it themselves. Thus, statistics used in the country do not fully characterize the real situation in the youth labour market and are not fully harmonized for the proper use in cross-country comparisons. In order to regulate the situation on the youth labour

Table 1 – Youth unemployment and NEET-youth in the EU and Belarus (2016)

		Unemployment rate, % (total, 15–74 years old)	Youth unemployment rate, % (15–24 years old)	NEET-youth, % (15–24 years old)
1	Belgium	7.8	20.1	5.2
2	Bulgaria	7.6	17.2	14.8
3	Czech Republic	4.0	10.5	6.5
4	Denmark	6.2	12.0	5.0
5	Germany	4.1	7.1	5.5
6	Estonia	6.8	13.4	9.0
7	Ireland	8.4	17.0	6.9
8	Greece	23.6	47.3	6.5
9	Spain	19.6	44.4	5.8
10	France	10.1	24.6	6.1
11	Croatia	13.4	31.8	5.5
12	Italy	11.7	37.8	11.7
13	Cyprus	13.0	29.1	8.0
14	Latvia	9.6	17.3	6.2
15	Lithuania	7.9	14.5	5.9
16	Luxemburg	6.3	19.1	2.8
17	Hungary	5.1	12.9	10.1
18	Malta	4.7	11.0	6.3
19	Netherlands	6.0	10.8	2.9
20	Austria	6.0	11.2	4.2
21	Poland	6.2	17.7	7.3
22	Portugal	11.2	28.2	4.2
23	Romania	5.9	20.6	16.4
24	Slovenia	8.0	15.2	3.7
25	Slovakia	9.7	22.2	7.5
26	Finland	8.8	20.1	6.0
27	Sweden	6.9	18.9	4.0
28	United Kingdom	4.8	13.0	7.9
	EU-28	8.6	18.5	7.3
	Belarus	5.8* 0.8 % – registered	7.8* (16–30 years)	8.2

Source: [12].

Note: * – economically active population, employment and unemployment, in the Republic of Belarus in 2016 (based on a selective survey) [9, 2017, p. 12].

Table 2 – Education and employment patterns of youth in EU-28, 2016

	15–19 years old	15–19 years old	15–19 years old
Exclusively in education	78.1 %	32.6 %	8.0 %
Both in education and employment	11.9 %	17.2 %	13.6 %
Exclusively in employment	3.25 %	33.4 %	59.5 %
Neither in employment nor in education or training	10.0 %	16.7 %	18.8 %

Source: *Being young in Europe today – labour market – access and participation*// Eurostat.europa.eu.

Table 3 – Ranking of EU-28 countries by levels of youth unemployment and NEET youth, 2016

	The youth unemployment level is above 15 %	The youth unemployment level is below 15 %
The NEET youth level is above the EU-28 average	Bulgaria, Cyprus, Italy, Romania, Slovakia – 5 countries	Estonia, Hungary, the United Kingdom – 3 countries
The NEET youth level is below the EU-28 average (7.3 % or lower)	Belgium, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Latvia, Poland, Portugal, Luxemburg, Slovenia, Finland, Sweden – 13 countries	Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria – 7 countries

market and minimize its negative consequences, it is necessary to have a clear idea of the size of youth unemployment, the reasons for youth unemployment, complications, intentions and readiness for employment.

THE RESULTS OF YOUTH SURVEY ON THE REGIONAL LEVEL

To obtain data on the real situation of youth employment and unemployment in the region, information about the reasons for youth unemployment, intentions and readiness for employment, the authors conducted a survey of young people aged 15–29 years³ who live in

the Vitebsk region of Belarus (the survey was conducted in 2016). The questionnaire is based on the ILO methodology of the household survey and the methodology of the Russian monitoring of the economy and public health⁴.

The total population is represented by people aged 15–29 years who live in the Vitebsk region of Belarus. The number of the total population is 226,700 people. (Sex and age structure of the population ..., 2015), the sampling population, numbering 307 respondents, was formed by random sampling⁵. Sex, age and residence structure of the sampling population (separately for city and

³ In accordance with the adopted classification of the International Labour Organization and the list of Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM 10 – Youth unemployment), young people are aged 15–24, and young adults are aged 25–29 (*Being young in Europe today*, 2015).

⁴ Respondents were offered a structured questionnaire, which included 7 blocks of open-ended and closed questions: Block 1 – information about the respondent, Blocks 2–5 – employment and unemployment (employment status, job search, skills and qualifications, distance employment), Block 6 – cross-border region and employment, Block 7 – attitude towards mobility abroad. Within the topic of this article, the results of Blocks 2–5 of the questionnaire are analyzed.

⁵ The confidence factor of calculations is 95 %, the error is ± 5 %.

village) corresponds to that of the total population (table 4).

The survey showed that the level of youth employment in the Vitebsk region was at 36.8 %⁶, and the unemployment rate was 10.3 %⁷, with 6.3 % among young people aged 15–24, (according to the ILO definition). According to statistics, the level of youth employment in the Vitebsk region of Belarus is 39.45 %, and the level of registered unemployment is 0.97 %. Thus, the actual level of unemployment among young people in Belarus is higher than its registered level and is comparable to the level in other countries (table 2). In the sample of 307 people, the economically active population is 43.4 %, comprising 37.5 % of the employed and 5.9 % of the actually unemployed. The share of the economically inactive population aged 16–29 is 48.6 %, comprising 43.3 % of students at all levels of education, 4.6 % of people engaged in housekeeping and childcare, 0.7% of temporarily unemployed and unwilling to work. Some of the respondents are only students who take correspondence courses and do not work.

In accordance with the classification of the employment status they can not be attributed to the economically inactive population (this category includes full-time students), but also do not have the employment status.

According to the respondents' employment status the answers were distributed as follows: 34.2 % of respondents work in organizations; 2.3 % of respondents are entrepreneurs; 1 % of respondents work without registration of entrepreneurial activity; 0.3 % of respondents are engaged in personal farming. 6.2 % of respondents neither work nor study, comprising: 5.5 % of respondents do not work temporarily, search for a job and are ready to proceed to it within 2 weeks; 0.7 % of respondents do not look for a job and do not want to work.

In terms of types of economic activity, the following industries dominate: trade (26.2 % of employees), manufacturing (12.6 %), construction, education, and provision of services, which confirms the hypothesis that young people have industry preferences in employment. Young people

Table 4 – Structure of the total and sampling populations (in %)

	Number of young people in Vitebsk region, 2015 (N = 226,700 people)	Number of sampling population (n = 307 people), the average age is 22.3 years
Men	51.1 %	157 (51.1 %)
Women	48.9 %	150 (48.9 %)
Residence	82.98 % – city, 17.02 % – village	89.5 % – city, 10.5 % – village
Education	university degree – 14.9 % specialized (advanced) secondary – 22.5 % vocational education – 10.7 % secondary – 31.4 % primary – 18.9 %	university degree – 14.9 % specialized (advanced) secondary – 24.1 % vocational education – 10.7 % secondary – 31.4 % primary – 18.9 %

Source: [6, p. 183].

⁶ The employment rate is calculated as the ratio of the number of the employed aged 15–29 to the population aged 15–29.

⁷ The unemployment rate is calculated as the number of people aged 15–29 who do not have a job, searching for it and ready to proceed to it immediately, to the number of economically active population aged 15–29 in the region.

work preferably in the following professions: shop assistants (cashier) – 14 %, specialists in economics (accountants, marketing specialists, sales managers, sales agents, economists, etc.) – 24.9 %, PC operators, programming engineers – 12.9 %, labourers – 12.9 %, office staff – 4.3 %.

According to the ILO definition and taking both education (formal and non-formal) and employment situations into consideration, young people were divided into four broad categories: exclusively in education; both in education and in employment; exclusively in employment; and not in education, employment or training (NEET) (table 5).

Comparison of the data in Tables 3 and 5 shows that there are some differences in the youth employment status in the EU and in Belarus:

- among the youth of the 15–19 age group, only two statuses were determined in Belarus: 'Exclusively in education' (98.29 %) and 'Both in education and employment' (1.71 %), while in EU-28 the share of 'Exclusively in education' at the age of 15–19 was 78.1 %, and the NEET-youth – 10 %;

- there are also differences in the distribution of young people aged 20–24 and 25–29. The proportion of young people 'Exclusively in education' or 'Both in education and employment' is higher in Belarus, and the the proportion of 'Exclusively in employment' and NEET youth is lower.

In general, it can be concluded that there are more young people in education in Belarus, compared to the average in the EU countries, i.e.

the education system takes young people out of unemployment and economic inactivity.

Among the full-time students 44.3 % of the respondents had a permanent job (comparing to 30.9 % in 2016) [2, p. 94], 7.8 % of the respondents had odd jobs, and 8.5 % – worked only during vacation. 30.3 % of the respondents did not work during their studies (42.26 % in survey 2009) [Vankevich, 2010, p. 95]. Hence, the conclusion is correct that the real entry of young people into the labour market begins before their graduation, and this indicator has been growing recently. The expanding practice of combining study and work facilitates the entry of young people into the labour market. This is quite consistent with the results of similar studies in other countries – from 40 % to 50 % of students have a job during their studies [3, p. 40].

In total, 47.6 % of the respondents (146 people) positively answered to the question of whether they have a job (or occupation) that generates income, including 15.96 % having both a primary and an additional job. The distribution of working youth by types of employment showed that 78.78 % of the respondents in the primary job are hired employees (work in organizations or for individual entrepreneurs), 9.6 % of the respondents are hired by individual entrepreneurs.

94.7 % of the employed at a primary job are officially hired and only 20 % are officially hired at an additional job. The occasionality of the work was mainly indicated as the main reason for not formalizing the employment relationship.

Table 5 – Education and employment patterns of youth in Belarus (based on the results of the survey), 2016

	Total	15–19 years old	20–24 years old	25–29 years old
Exclusively in education	56.68 %	98.29 %	38.64 %	24.51 %
Both in education and employment	17.59 %	1.71 %	26.14 %	28.44 %
Exclusively in employment	19.87 %	–	26.14 %	37.26 %
Not in education, employment or training	5.87 %	–	9.09 %	9.81 %

The respondents indicated the following main channels of employment for young people: personal efforts (direct contact with a company, the Internet, personal business) – 35.62 %; work assignment by educational institution after graduation – 17.81 %⁸; help of relatives and friends – 26.03 %. Only 2.06 % of working youth found a job with the help of national employment service, and 0 % with the help of private employment agencies (table 6).

The low percentage of young people who consider national employment service as an effective channel for promoting employment is noteworthy. In general, this is still evidence of the insufficient level of development of the institutional structure of the labour market in Belarus [1, 2009].

When answering the question "Would you like to find another job" 27.04 % of respondents answered negatively, while 65.8 % would like to change their jobs, and 59.61 % answered that they were ready to start work immediately if they had been offered a more suitable job. This indicates a high potential mobility of young people in the labour market. 10.1 % of respondents answered

that they were currently looking for another job, the average search time being 7.92 months. In comparison, according to the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Republic of Belarus, the average duration of unemployment was 4.2 months nationwide in 2016. (Annual Statistics of Belarus, 2017, p. 104), and 1.9 months among young people (data of the national employment service). On the one hand, this suggests that when applying to the national employment service, the chances of finding a job for young people are significantly increased, but on the other hand, it's possible to assume that the national employment service sees only a part of this problem.

Among the main difficulties in finding a job young people pointed out the following: lack of work experience in profession – 30.6 %; absence of vacancies in profession in the place of residence – 17.9 %; gender and age discrimination – 11.7 %. Employers' reluctance to guarantee the rights of a graduate of an educational institution with the status of a young specialist (4.9 %), employers' unwillingness to invest in a young specialist to form the necessary competencies (4.6%), inconsistency in knowledge and skills to the

Table 6 – The main channels of employment (in % of the total number of respondents who have an occupation that generates income)

	As a percentage of the total number of answers (n = 146 people)
Work assignment by educational institutions	17.81
Help of relatives, friends	26.03
Personal efforts (the Internet, launching own business, direct contact with the personnel department of a company)	35.62
Invitation of management or employees of a company	8.22
Assistance of national employment service or employment office	2.06
Assistance to private employment agencies	0

⁸ In accordance with Laws of the Republic of Belarus, graduates of educational institutions whose study is financed from republican and/or local budgets are given the first job by work assignment and which is compulsory to be done for minimum two years. The National Statistical Committee of Belarus provides the following statistics: 84.9 % of graduates of vocational training institutions, 49.5 % of graduates of institutions of secondary specialized (advanced) education and 27.06 % of graduates of institutions of higher education were subject to work assignment in 2015 (Labour and Employment, 2016, p. 145, 148, 149).

real employers' requirements (5.2 %) were also indicated as significant obstacles.

The actions of all participants in the labour market infrastructure were rated by respondents as significant. In Belarus, the National Program "Education and Youth Policy for 2016–2020" is currently implemented, which provides for a number of measures for the employment of graduates in terms of ensuring their quality training in accordance with the requirements of organizations that are potential employers. The Law "On employment of the people of the Republic of Belarus" provides for state guarantees of employment for young people (booking jobs for young people under the age of 21 who are looking for a job for the first time, guaranteeing the first job for graduates whose study is financed from the national budget, employment at subsidized jobs for getting practical skills, implementation of the program "Youth Practice"). There is also a system to provide information and advisory services for young people and organize temporary employment for students in education (in accordance with the Law "On the Principles of National Youth Policy" 2009). However, respondents assess these measures as insufficient, since they are implemented mainly by government bodies, without sufficient activity of other participants in the labour market (educational institutions, employers who participate in this process rather formally, as well as young people themselves). It is expected that educational institutions will assist in facilitating practical training and establishing contacts with employers, employers will show more interest in students during practical training and internship, the state employment service will organize non-standard forms of employment for young people, and government bodies are expected to consolidate all participants of labour market (table 7). Regarding the role and services of the national employment service and government, young people suggested they should develop medium-term forecasts of the demand for specialists in the vocational qualification and territorial context, and their broadcasting to all interested parties. In every country this function is

performed by so-called Labour market information and skills anticipation system (LMIS) [18; 15]. The development of this system began in Belarus. It is also necessary to adopt the program documents regulating youth employment.

The survey results regarding the compliance assessment of the received qualifications and the work of graduates of educational institutions were quite informative. Thus, 40.6 % of the respondents who had a job answered that their work corresponds to their qualifications, 29 % of the respondents did not have a job related to the qualification they received, others had jobs above or below their qualifications (30.4 %)⁹.

The variety of answers about the missing skills for obtaining the desired work was grouped into several groups, their ranking gave the following result: 1st place – professional skills (45 %); 2nd place – knowledge of languages (21.2 %); 3rd place – advanced PC-user (15 %); 4th place – communication skills (7.5 %). Among the most important qualities for effective employment respondents noted pointed out the following (table 8): personal business qualities; knowledge of profession; sociability; speaking foreign languages.

The research enabled to determine the following features of youth employment and unemployment in Belarus:

- low employment and rather high unemployment levels among young people in the region, exceeding the level of registered unemployment by several times;
- a sufficiently high level of combining studies and work: 60.6 % of students in the Vitebsk region have a regular job or do odd job during their studies (or during vacation);
- the presence of a significant cohort of NEET youth, which structure and reasons for appearance in Belarus has not been studied yet.

The research enables to draw conclusions that young people are not necessarily offered jobs of poor quality, a significant proportion of working youth are employed on a permanent employment basis, but hiring in state-owned companies prevails. This is not entirely consistent with the

⁹ Not all respondents answered this question.

Table 7 – Assessment of necessary forms of employment assistance

Subjects of the institutional infrastructure of the youth labour market	The average score of the respondents' assessment	Forms of employment assistance, ranked highest in respondents' answers
Educational institutions	3.04	1. Organization of courses for qualifications improvement and retraining (3.64 points) 2. Career and professional counseling (3.46 points) 3. Organization of meetings with potential employers (3.25 points)
Companies	3.56	1. Advertising of the company in mass media, the Internet, creation of vacancies database on the Internet (4.09 points) 2. Interest in students during practical training (3.73 points) 3. Individual selection of specialists for certain positions (3.62 points) 4. Cooperation with universities, openness for students (3.59 points)
National employment service	3.41	1. Creation of vacancies database (3.7 points) 2. Organization of temporary, seasonal employment for young people, flexible forms of employment (home work, telecommuting work, etc.) (3.54 points) 3. Improvement of the legal framework for the employment of graduates (3.51 points) 4. Consolidation of efforts of all participants of the labour market for the effective employment of graduates (3.2 points); Collection and broadcasting of information on the labour market and the situation of graduates on it (3.2 points)
Government bodies	3.41	1. Monitoring compliance with labour laws (3.97 points) 2. Organization of joint projects of companies and universities in the specialists selection process (3.48 points) 3. Development of medium-term forecasts of the demand for specialists in the vocational qualification and territorial context, and their broadcasting to all interested parties (3.97 points)

Note: The evaluation was carried out using a five-point scale, where 1 – the least significant form of employment assistance, 5 – the most significant.

labour interests of young people, since youth labour preferences are dominated by the desire to have their own business and find a job abroad.

Also, the research confirmed the hypothesis of the presence of information asymmetry in the youth labour market, which is due to the underdevelopment of the infrastructure of the youth labor market. A very small percentage of young people are looking for a job and are

employed through the national employment services and recruitment agencies. Assessment of the main channels of job search showed that personal search and assistance of parents and relatives were dominant among young people, while other subjects of the labour market infrastructure (public employment agencies, recruitment agencies) were not popular.

Table 8 – Respondents' assessment of the most important qualities and missing skills for effective employment (in %)

	The qualities necessary for effective employment (n = 307 people, several options were allowed)	Missing skills (n = 307 people, several options were allowed)
Personal business qualities (industriousness, persistence, diligence, responsibility, desire to work, etc.)	23.5	3,6* (other)
Speaking foreign languages	9.3	21.2
Sociability	24	7.5
Knowledge of profession, professionalism, good knowledge, experience, education	22.1	45
Advanced PC user	6.2	15

The hypothesis that young people have low competitiveness in the labour market is also partially confirmed. The main difficulties in finding a job and employment are the lack of experience in profession, absence of vacancies in the place of residence, and age discrimination. In significance ranking the respondents gave the following reasons a fourth place: employers' reluctance to assume obligations when employing young people, the discrepancy between the knowledge and skills received in educational institutions and the requirements of employers.

CONCLUSION

The research contributed to development of an additional database on the condition of the youth labour market in Belarus (at the regional level), which allows to estimate the actual level of employment and unemployment among young people, to determine the most effective ways and channels of job search, the intentions and readiness of young people to find a job. The database can be considered as a supplement to the existing ones, since it allows to diagnose the situation in the field of youth employment, which is beyond consideration of the national employment service. Qualitative and complete diagnosis of the labour market (including youth labour market) is the basis for development of

information and analytical labour market systems and skills anticipation in all countries, since it helps to design reliable trends and increase the validity of decisions made.

The research also helped to identify the qualities that contribute to effective employment (mobility, level of education, competence, ability to develop, etc.), and the necessary measures to help young people find jobs through the institutions of the regional labour market.

The research allowed to make important conclusions about the actual condition of the youth labour market in the Vitebsk region: the actual unemployment rate among young people aged 15–29 is 10.3 %, which is much higher than the level of registered unemployment; a high level of combining education and employment, a fairly active position of young people in the labour market in finding jobs and employment. Meanwhile, the study also allows to draw a conclusion about the lack of assistance in the issues of job search and employment from various institutions in the labour market – public employment agencies, recruitment agencies, vacancy fairs and the work assignment system of educational institutions.

It is discovered that young people often face a number of problems in finding a job: lack of conformity of the education received with the

needs of the labour market, lack of opportunities for gaining experience, employers' reluctance to recruit young professionals, nonadherence to working conditions, which is often accompanied by youth unemployment, informal employment or to labour migration, including illegal migration.

Therefore, to promote youth employment it is necessary to develop the institutional structure of the youth labour market in the region, to increase the activity of the national employment services, educational institutions, employers, and consolidate their efforts in these matters.

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