

Promoting the Social Inclusion of Youth and Access to Labour Markets

Experiences in Finland, Sweden, and Russia

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Introductory Note

This volume emerged from the project of the Nordic Council of Ministers 'Promoting the Social Inclusion of Youth in Northern Industrial Towns: Experiences in Finland, Sweden, and Russia', No. 18113, call 'Civil Society & Human Rights Initiative', Nordic-Russian co-operation. Åbo Akademi University (Turku, Finland) is conducting this project with the University of Gävle (Sweden) as a Nordic partner during 2018–2019. Our Russian partners are Saint Petersburg State University of Economics (Saint Petersburg), and Pskov State University (Pskov), under the leadership of Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University (Kaliningrad). The volume consists of the papers presented at the seminar 'Youth Support in the Labour Market: North-West Russia and Scandinavia Experience Analysis' at Saint Petersburg State University of Economics, 13 December 2018 and further discussed during the study course 'Legal Foundations for Promoting Social Inclusion of Youth: Balancing Education, Employment, and Social Life' at I. Kant Baltic Federal University, 13–15 March 2019, which were parts of the project.

The project began with a diagnostic survey of youth opinions, involving 140 students from our Russian partner universities. The survey revealed *inter alia* that Russian young people face specific problems in life, such as unemployment and establishing financial independence, receiving respect from the older generations, finding one's own path in life, as well as the loss of childhood beliefs as a result of confronting the realities of adult life. We also conducted a survey among the students of the universities in Turku, which revealed comparable concerns regarding the difficulties experienced by young people. Our respondents in Turku feel that young people are not taken seriously by adults and need support as they go through many different stages in their biological and mental development. Moreover, they consider that young people are not sufficiently included in decision-making, especially with regard to making decisions about their own future. These findings only confirmed our hypothesis that Northern towns in Finland, Sweden, and Russia go through comparable challenges regarding the transition from education to working life, from dependency to autonomy. In all the said locations, young people leave their homes for other regions in order to receive further vocational and professional training.

Young adults need to combine studies, work, social activities and establishing their own families. The main concern is, therefore, how to adequately reduce such risks as unemployment and social exclusion. This project attempted to promote knowledge and awareness of the significance of effective social inclusion of young people by exchanging experiences between the Nordic academic communities and the partners from Northwest Russia. It called together experts from the fields of public law, pedagogical studies, economics, and the social sciences. Our goal was to open a dialogue with all the stakeholders, i.e., the youth, the academic community, and public authorities. Our working methods comprised distributing information about the rights of youth and the most effective means of social inclusion via social media, university web-sites, and by virtue of sharing this information at our partner universities.

Our efforts were also directed at arranging an international seminar 'Youth Support in the Labour Market: North-West Russia and Scandinavia Experience Analysis' at the Saint Petersburg State University of Economics, 13 December 2018 and a tailor-made course 'Legal Foundations for

Promoting the Social Inclusion of Youth: Balancing Education, Employment, and Social Life' at I. Kant Baltic Federal University, 13-15 March 2019. During both events, an exchange of views and ideas on promoting the rights of youth between young people, academics, and public authorities was arranged. During the seminar in Saint Petersburg all participants, i.e., students and representatives of the Student Council of Saint Petersburg, representatives of partner universities, and public authorities, i.e., the Vsevolozhsk Multicentre of Social and Labour Integration and the Employment Office of Saint Petersburg, discussed the issue of ensuring youth access to labour markets — a topic related to social inclusion, which is especially relevant to the region of Saint Petersburg. Successful multi-stakeholder discussions were also conducted in the course on the social inclusion of the young in Kaliningrad, where the students actively expressed their views on how the rights of young people are implemented in the Kaliningrad Region. In addition, the participants put forward constructive suggestions to public authorities, i.e., the Directorate of Sport and Youth Policy, the Committee of Social Policy of Administration of Kaliningrad City District and the Agency for the Affairs of Youth in the Kaliningrad Region of the Government of the Kaliningrad Region. The representatives of all partner universities gave lectures on rights of the young and social inclusion during the event.

Our attempts to encompass the points-of-view of several stakeholders explain why the present contribution addresses a wider circle of readers, including the public in general, as it reflects the perspectives on social inclusion of young people, presented by academics, students, and public authorities. We are immensely grateful to Alexei Antipov, Kristina Kirillova, and Mariya Prokopchik, the students of the I. Kant Baltic Federal University, who accepted the challenge of presenting own views on ensuring the rights of the young to social inclusion in the Kaliningrad Region. That was the first opportunity of these young authors in publishing texts in English. Many thanks to Iulia Gorokhova representing the Employment Office of Saint Petersburg for investing time and effort to write the review on the access of young people to the labour market.

The contributions from various scholars have been invaluable for this volume. Dr. Liya Kalinnikova Magnusson shared the views on inclusion in higher education at the University of Gävle. Dr. Natalia Miuller, representing both the Centre for Education of Persons with Disabilities in Saint Petersburg and the scholars of the Saint Petersburg State University of Economics, commented on the efficacy of new approaches to inclusive professional education in Russia. Dr. George Varlamov, representing Pskov State University, deals with the social inclusion of the young persons in the Pskov region, focusing on education, employment and social life. Finally, Dr. Mariya Riekkinen of Åbo Akademi University discussed the issues of youth inclusion and participation in the legislation of Finland.

We thank all the contributors for finding the inspiration for producing this volume and hope that the knowledge and awareness of the rights of young people will support promoting social inclusion of youth.

On behalf of Åbo Akademi University, the coordinating body of the project,
Mariya Riekkinen

Social Inclusion, Empowerment, and Youth Rights: A Note on the Legislation of Finland

Mariya Riekkinen¹

1. Introduction

Acknowledging that the participation of persons belonging to vulnerable groups is crucial to formulating and implementing social inclusion policies, UN GA Resolution entitled ‘Promoting Social Integration through Social Inclusion’ calls on the member states *inter alia* “to ensure inclusive participatory and representative decision-making processes” in order to “promote a more equitable participation”.² In the broadest sense, the term “social inclusion exclusion” refers to “the barriers young people might face in pursuing their goals of self-realisation and full participation in society”.³ Promoting social inclusion, hence, goes together with enhancing participation for the purpose of empowerment, which is crucial for the effective integration of young persons into all spheres of life, including civic, social, economic, cultural and political activities, as well as participation in decision-making processes. This review examines the mechanisms of youth empowerment through participation, based on Finnish legislation. Youth participation is, thus, understood as taking part in both public affairs and economic, social and cultural life by virtue of officially guaranteed channels of exerting influence on the conduct of public affairs. This overview is a part of a project ‘Promoting the Social Inclusion of Youth in Northern Industrial Towns: Experiences in Finland, Sweden, and Russia’ by the Nordic Council of Ministers No. 18113.

2. Who Are the Young and Do They Have Special Rights?

There is no universally accepted legal definition of youth. Political and program documents, adopted at different regional levels of international legal regulation, introduce different age limitations when addressing young persons. For instance, the African Youth Charter (2006) considers young persons those individuals who are between 15 and 35 years of age,⁴ whereas the European Union and its Eurostat agency define young persons as those who are in the age group

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² UN GA Resolution A/RES/70/126, Promoting social integration through social inclusion, adopted 17 December 2015, UN Doc. A/RES/70/126, reproduced at: https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/126.

³ Adina Marina Călăfăteanu and Miguel Angel García López, *T-KIT 8 Social inclusion*, Strasbourg Cedex: Council of Europe Publishing, 2019 at 9.

⁴ African Union, African Youth Charter, adopted 2 July 2006, entered into force 8 August 2009, available at: https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/7789-treaty-0033_-_african_youth_charter_e.pdf.

between 16 and 29 years.⁵ The existence of these and other documents reveals that the young is internationally recognized as a special category not only in political, but also in legal terms.⁶

Although specific treaties targeted at young individuals are *per se* lacking at the level of the United Nations, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) covers the rights of minors. Moreover, those young persons who have reached maturity benefit from a general international human rights framework. Several UN Declarations deal with group-specific rights of youth, i.e. the 1965 Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideas of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples; the 2002 Youth Declaration to the Convention on Biological Diversity, etc. These declarations stress the value of the inclusion of young individuals in all spheres of life and the significance of promoting the participation of the young in decision-making. The only regional-specific treaty concerning young persons is the above-mentioned African Youth Charter at the level of the African Union, adopted on 2 July 2006.⁷ Focusing on youth empowerment, the African Youth Charter guarantees the right of every young person to participate in all areas of society (Article 11) as well as the right to socio-economic integration (Article 14).⁸

A transitional stage from education to work, from dependence to autonomy is a common denominator differentiating young persons as a distinct social group. At the European level of legal regulation, the EU and the Council of Europe have adopted a set of youth-specific documents. The Council of Europe's activities in the field of the youth rights have been guided by the action plan 'Building Cohesive Societies' and the Agenda 2020, underlying the Council of Europe Youth Policy Agenda. The Youth Department conducted training, capacity-building and consciousness-raising activities on social inclusion. These initiatives led to the adoption of several recommendations by the Committee of Ministers, such as Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 on the access of young persons from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights and Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)7 on young individuals' access to rights. Several youth-targeted initiatives have been undertaken at the level of the EU, i.e., the Europe 2020 Strategy and the Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion, Youth Employment Initiative, the EU Youth Guarantee, and the EU Youth Strategy 2010–2018 with the Work Plan for Youth 2016–2018. Legal documents related to young persons' rights, adopted at the European level, address both young persons in general and socially excluded young persons. Young persons, in general, are perceived as a group experiencing several typical transitions in their personal life and environment, e.g. finding work, living on their own,

⁵ Giulia Paolini, Anna Horváth, Akvilė Motiejūnaitė, Situation of Young People in the European Union. Commission Staff Working Document. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2018. Available at: <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/b6985c0c-743f-11e8-9483-01aa75ed71a1>.

⁶ William A. Angel (ed.), *The International Law of Youth Rights*, Brill/Nijhoff, 2015 at XIV.

⁷ Mourad Mahidi, The Young and the Rightless? The Protection of Youth Rights in Europe, European Youth Forum, 2010, available at: <https://www.youthforum.org/sites/default/files/publication-pdfs/Young%20and%20the%20Rightless.pdf> at 17.

⁸ African Union, African Youth Charter, adopted 2 July 2006, entered into force 8 August 2009, available at: https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/7789-treaty-0033_-_african_youth_charter_e.pdf.

forming relationships or starting a family.⁹ Socially excluded youth are defined as those young persons with fewer opportunities and “risking becoming marginalized based on potential sources of discrimination, such as their ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, religion, belief or political opinion”¹⁰ such as the young Roma, young refugees and young migrants.¹¹ In both cases, the issue of efficient public support for such transition becomes highly relevant.

Drawing attention to youth-specific rights at the level of the EU and the Council of Europe can be explained not only by the ‘specialisation’ of international law, which gradually differentiates between different vulnerable groups based on age, such as e.g., elderly law or child law. A paradigm shift occurred in the European states in the 1990s when the costs and pressure on public welfare systems led to the need for greater public reforms.¹² When these reforms were introduced, the urgency of rethinking the “place of youth and young people’s autonomy” became apparent as significant issues, which were “never clearly thought out in these systems”.¹³ The vulnerable status of youth owing to the transition from education to work and from dependence to autonomy revealed the limitations in the programs of the welfare states. Previously, families provided support for young individuals,¹⁴ which resulted in public measures of supporting young persons being “inadequately addressed by any state support schemes”.¹⁵ Nowadays, it is common for the European public welfare systems to assist in facilitating the independence of young persons.

Public support for youth also affirms the value of equality, as not all families can provide equal support for their children, both underaged and adult. This is why, e.g. a system of child benefits exists in welfare states. In his presentation on inequalities at the 2016 Symposium ‘(Un)Equal Europe? Responses from the youth sector’, Professor Richard Wilkinson highlighted that experiences of inequality have a significant impact on a person’s life. These experiences leave lifelong scarring effects and increase social polarisation in our communities.¹⁶ Counteracting inequality in the area of youth welfare is hence a crucial challenge today. The theme of equality is among priority goals of the European Youth Goals set up by the European Union Youth Strategy 2019–2027.¹⁷

⁹ Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on a framework for European cooperation with respect to young people: The European Union Youth Strategy 2019–2027 (2018/C 456/01), in: Official Journal of the European Union, C 456, 18 December 2018, available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:C:2018:456:FULL>, par. 1.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Adina Marina Călăfăteanu and Miguel Angel García López, *T-KIT 8 Social inclusion*, Strasbourg Cedex: Council of Europe Publishing, 2019 at 15.

¹² Ibid. at 9.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid. at 10.

¹⁵ Ibid. at 9.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting with the Council on a Framework for European Cooperation with respect to young people: The European Union Youth Strategy 2019–2027 (2018/C 456/01), in: Official Journal of the

3. Youth Inclusion in the Legislation of Finland: General Remarks

According to Finnish legislation, ‘youth’ are defined as those individuals who have not yet reached 29 years of age.¹⁸ The Acts of Parliament, however, do not mention the minimum age limitation for this group. Legal provisions focusing on youth have long been present in the legal system of Finland, which had specific legislation on youth work since the 1970s. In particular, the Act on Government Transfers for National Youth Work (1035/1973) came into force in 1974, establishing “the support system that had already been the practice based on appropriations allocated from the state budget every year”.¹⁹ Moreover, Finland provided a platform for youth activism well before the 1970s. For instance, the youth association *Nuorisoseuraliike* was founded in Finland in 1897, targeting at educating rural young persons.²⁰ In 1963, the Students’ United Nations Committee, i.e., *Ylioppilaiden YK-yhdistys*, was founded, providing opportunities for young individuals to promote foreign policy debates.²¹

The provisions regarding youth empowerment can be primarily found in general passages in Finnish legislation, i.e., in those passages that are not youth-specific. Based on Section 14.1 of the Constitution of Finland, those who have reached the age of 18 years can participate in elections. As for those who are under 18 years of age, an array of other avenues for expressing political opinions is available. To start with, Section 13 of the Constitution of Finland, guaranteeing the right to freedom of association, does not set up age limitations for implementing this freedom. True, Section 7 of the 1989 Associations Act of Finland/*Yhdistyslaki* (503/1989)²² presupposes that the founder of an association must turn 15 years of age. Yet no other minimum limitations are foreseen by this law, meaning that the association members can be younger than 15, if they meet the requirements set up for the members of an association and the respective association accepts their membership.²³ Formally speaking, the Finnish legislation does not set up minimum age limitations for membership in political parties. In accordance with Section 2 of the 1969 Act on Political Parties of Finland/*Puoluelaki* (10/1969),²⁴ a party must have at least 5,000 ‘eligible’ voters in Parliamentary elections, municipal elections, or European Parliament elections. The said implies that those who are not eligible due to not having yet obtained maturity can acquire membership

European Union, C 456, 18 December 2018, available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:C:2018:456:FULL>.

¹⁸ The 2016 Youth Act of Finland/*Nuorisolaki* (1285/2016), available at: <https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/2016/20161285?search%5Btype%5D=pika&search%5Bpika%5D=Nuorisolaki>, Section 3. NB! All the items of Finnish legislation can be found with the titles in Finnish accompanied by their adoption numbers and dates in the database of Finnish legislation Finlex, available at: <https://www.finlex.fi/fi/>

¹⁹ H. Helve, ‘The Finnish Perspective: Youth Work, Policy and Research’, in: Griet Veschelden et al (eds), *The History of Youth Work in Europe: Relevance for Youth Policy Today*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing, 2009 pp. 117–129, at 120.

²⁰ Ibid. at 118.

²¹ Ibid. at 119.

²² The 1989 Associations Act of Finland/*Yhdistyslaki* (503/1989), available at: <https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/1989/19890503?search%5Btype%5D=pika&search%5Bpika%5D=Yhdistyslaki%20>.

²³ M. Litmala & Mirva Lohiniva-Kerkelä (toim.), *Nuoren oikeudet*, Helsinki: Edita, 2005 at 33–34.

²⁴ The 1969 Act on Political Parties/*Puoluelaki* (10/1969), available at: <https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/1969/19690010?search%5Btype%5D=pika&search%5Bpika%5D=Puoluelaki>.

in a party.²⁵ This issue is decided by the constitutive documents of a concrete party. Some parties in Finland set up youth divisions under their aegis in order to prepare young generations for becoming party members after attaining maturity.²⁶

Moreover, according to studies conducted among Finnish youth, young individuals consider it important to implement the right to participate in demonstrations.²⁷ This opportunity is covered by the right to freedom of assembly guaranteed by Section 13 of the Finnish Constitution, which again does not set up age limitation for its implementation. Section 5 of the 1999 Assembly Act of Finland/*Kokoontumislaki* (530/1999)²⁸ sets up a minimum age limitation of 15 only for the organizers of public assemblies, due to the special responsibilities of the organizers in view of organizational safety. Yet this Section keeps the possibility open for a person younger than 15 years of age to co-organize the assembly, together with a person of full maturity.

Moreover, in 2016, Finland adopted a new youth-specific act that is analysed below. Prior to this, the 2006 Youth Act was in force, i.e., *Nuorisolaki* (72/2006).²⁹

4. The New Youth Act of Finland

The new 2016 Youth Act of Finland/*Nuorisolaki* (1285/2016) emphasises social integration and the participation of young persons. One of the primary purposes of this Act is “to promote the social inclusion of young persons and provide them with opportunities for exerting an influence and improve their skills and capabilities to function in society”.³⁰ The implementation of this Act is based on Governmental Decree No. 2011/2017 on youth work and policy.³¹

The Act and the governmental decree established a system of national authorities commissioned with implementing rights of young persons:

²⁵ M. Litmala & Mirva Lohiniva-Kerkelä (toim.), *Nuoren oikeudet*, Helsinki: Edita, 2005 at 34.

²⁶ L. Nieminen, *Lapsuudesta vanhuuteen: Perus- ja ihmisoikeuksien merkitys eri ikävaiheissa*, Helsinki: Edita, 2006 at 155.

²⁷ M. Litmala & Mirva Lohiniva-Kerkelä (toim.), *Nuoren oikeudet*, Helsinki: Edita, 2005 at 33.

²⁸ The 1999 Assembly Act of Finland/*Kokoontumislaki* (530/1999), available at: <https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/1999/19990530?search%5Btype%5D=pika&search%5Bpika%5D=Kokoontumislaki>.

²⁹ The 2016 Youth Act of Finland/*Nuorisolaki* (1285/2016), available at: <https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/2016/20161285?search%5Btype%5D=pika&search%5Bpika%5D=Nuorisolaki>.

³⁰ Ibid. Section 2.

³¹ Finland, Government Decree on Youth Work and Policy 211/2017, the unofficial translation of this Decree is reproduced at the web-page of the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture and is available at: <https://minedu.fi/documents/1410845/4276311/Government+Decree+on+youth+work+and+policy+2017.pdf/465c3d48-b35e-4842-ac53-01d45626362e/Government+Decree+on+youth+work+and+policy+2017.pdf.pdf>.

The Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for the overall administration, coordination and development of a national youth policy, as well as for the creation of favourable conditions for the implementation of this policy.³²

The State Youth Council assesses the impact of the measures taken by the central government, e.g., introduces initiatives and proposals to develop youth policy; generates up-to-date information on young persons and their living conditions; issues a statement to the Ministry of Education and Culture on the issues to be addressed in national youth work and policy program, and monitors international developments and cooperation in this field.³³ The Council operates under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Culture.

The Assessment and State Aid Commission assists the Ministry in matters relating to state aid for national youth work organisations.³⁴ It issues a statement to the Ministry on the eligibility for state aid of national youth work organisations and national youth work centres of expertise. In addition, it makes proposals to the Ministry on the distribution of state aid to national youth work organisations and national youth work centres of expertise and prepares assessments of the activities of state-subsidised organisations at the request of the Ministry.

Municipalities are responsible for actual implementation of youth work and policy and are obligated to create the necessary preconditions for local youth work and activities by providing services and premises for young individuals and supporting their civic engagement.³⁵

Based on Section 5 of the 2016 Youth Act of Finland, every fourth year the Government adopt a **national youth work and policy program**, specifying more detailed objectives for national youth work and policy. The youth program currently in force, i.e., the National Youth Work and Youth Policy Programme 2017–2019 was adopted on 12 October 2017, defining youth as “a multifaceted population group” with their “principal common factor belonging to a certain age group” and stressing that “young people’s paths to independence proceed from different social and economic backgrounds and from various family structures”.³⁶ The starting point and frame of reference of the national program is the Strategic Programme of Prime Minister Sipilä’s Government of 29 May 2015.³⁷ As part of implementing the Strategic Government Programme, the Government has initiated 26 key projects divided into five priority areas, many of which include objectives and measures concerning children and young persons:

1. All children and young persons will have a possibility of engaging in at least one free-time hobby of their choice;

³² The 2016 Youth Act of Finland/*Nuorisolaki* (1285/2016), available at: <https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/2016/20161285?search%5Btype%5D=pika&search%5Bpika%5D=Nuorisolaki>, Section 4.

³³ Ibid. Section 6.

³⁴ Ibid. Section 7.

³⁵ Ibid. Section 8.

³⁶ The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, National Youth Work and Youth Policy Programme 2017–2019, available at: <https://minedu.fi/documents/1410845/4274093/VANUPO+EN+2017+final.pdf/7d135bb5-7824-422c-b51f-c9d9fa4f6877/VANUPO+EN+2017+final.pdf> at 2-3.

³⁷ Ibid. at 2.

2. Young persons' employability skills will be reinforced;
3. More opportunities for participation and exerting influence will be created for young persons;
4. Fewer young persons will suffer from mental health problems, thanks to preventive work; and
5. Young persons will be provided with sufficient guidance and other support for independent living.

One can conclude from these objectives that enhancing opportunities for participation and exerting influence on the conduct of public and social affairs is among the top priorities.

Youth opinion regarding the contents of this program has been asked about in advance. In particular, the principal ministries or agencies dealing with youth rights were requested by the Ministry of Education and Culture to provide opinions on the draft program through the online consultation service Lausuntopalvelu.fi.³⁸ All in all 67 opinions were received. In addition, a portal for issuing comments was open to all on the Ministry's website in the form of a Webropol survey.³⁹ Young persons were also directly requested to provide their opinions on the draft program via the social media. The outreach of the draft program was also implemented with the assistance of NGOs. For instance, the Finnish umbrella organisation for development cooperation, *Kepa*, held an event on 13 June 2017, distributing information on the draft and the commentary options on its website. The Finnish Youth Co-operation, *Allianssi*, organised an event on 21 June 2017.⁴⁰

5. The Mechanisms for Youth Participation and Exerting Influence

a. Youth councils

Provisions on the opportunities for young individuals to participate and exert an influence in youth councils or similar youth advocacy groups are stated in Section 26 of the 2015 Local Government Act of Finland/*Kuntalaki* (410/2015).⁴¹ In accordance with Section 26, the local executive must set up a youth council or similar group representing young persons' views and ensure the operational prerequisites for it. Two or more municipalities can share such councils. Youth councils must be given the opportunity to influence the planning, preparation, execution and monitoring of the activities of the municipality's different areas of responsibility in matters of well-being, health, education, living conditions, housing for the municipality's residents, as well as in other matters that the youth council considers significant for children and young individuals. Youth councils must be involved in the municipality's efforts to develop children and young persons' participation as well as opportunities to express their views.

³⁸ Ibid. at 5.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid. at 5–6.

⁴¹ The 2015 Local Government Act of Finland/*Kuntalaki* (410/2015), available at: <https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/2015/20150410?search%5Btype%5D=pika&search%5Bpika%5D=kuntalaki>.

b. School student councils

Based on Section 47a of the 1998 Basic Education Act of Finland/*Perusopetuslaki* (628/1998),⁴² the schools may have a student association promoting joint action, influence and participation of the pupils in matters relating to pupils. Several schools or operational units may have a joint pupil association. Where the education provider does not organise such an association, it must take other action to see that the pupils have an opportunity to put forward their opinions about matters relating to the operation of their school, which concern the pupils collectively. Moreover, Section 33 of the 2018 High-School Act of Finland/*Lukiolaki* (714/2018)⁴³ reserves for the students in high schools the opportunity to influence the programs and activities of the educational institutions and its development, as well as to participate in the preparation of decisions affecting the status of students. For these purposes, a student representative body is set up.

c. Youth work centres of expertise

Youth work centres of expertise comprise a network supporting the implementation of the objectives set out in the national youth work and policy program by developing and promoting competence, expertise and communications in the youth sector in accordance with Section 19 of the 2016 Youth Act. The national budget includes annual appropriation for the activities of these centres, whose eligibility for state aid is approved by the Ministry of Education and Culture. On 11 December 2017, the following youth work centres of expertise were approved by the Ministry of Education and Culture as eligible for state aid in 2018–2019:⁴⁴

- Finnish Youth Co-operation Alliance and a consortium administered by the Youth Academy with the primary goal of promoting the participation of young persons;
- A consortium administered by the City of Espoo, a consortium administered by the National Workshop Association, Finnish Association for Substance Abuse Prevention (EHYT), and a consortium administered by the Finnish Association for Mental Health with a primary goal of ensuring the social empowerment of young persons;
- A consortium administered by *Föreningen Luckan rf*, City of Oulu and City of Helsinki with the primary goal of ensuring digital youth work and information and counselling services for young persons;
- The Finnish Youth Research Society, and Guides and Scouts of Finland, City of Lahti, with the primary goal of improving the quality and methods of youth work.

⁴² The 1998 Basic Education Act of Finland/*Perusopetuslaki* (628/1998), available at: <https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/1998/19980628?search%5Btype%5D=pika&search%5Bpika%5D=Perusopetuslaki>

⁴³ The 2018 High-School Act of Finland/*Lukiolaki* (714/2018), available at: <https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/2018/20180714?search%5Btype%5D=pika&search%5Bpika%5D=Lukiolaki>

⁴⁴ Finland, Ministry of Education and Culture, Youth work centres of expertise and National youth centres, available at: <https://minedu.fi/en/national-youth-centres>.

There are also national youth centres providing curriculum-supporting camp and nature packages for school groups, social youth work services, and diverse international activities. Municipalities, youth organisations, national youth centre organisations are engaged in youth work.⁴⁵

d. Online service Nuortenideat.fi

The Ministry of Education and Culture allocates resources to maintain the online service Nuortenideat.fi, which is a nation-wide dialogue platform encouraging young persons to come up with various suggestions on how to exert influence on public and social affairs via expressing new ideas. All one needs to do is sign in and to write the idea. Young individuals can also browse, comment, and sign up for other ideas submitted to the portal. The goals of the project are as follows: (a) to support interaction between youth and municipalities, educational institutions, organizations or other actors; (b) to collect young persons' opinions, discuss them and take them into account in decision-making; (c) to provide young individuals with accessible and equal opportunities to express ideas, to ask questions, and be heard; as well as (d) to give young persons the opportunity to follow up matters under consideration and to express opinions about them. This service is a part of the website Demokratia.fi, maintained by the Finnish Ministry of Justice.

e. Youth workshops

Youth workshops are part of the governmental policy of Youth Guarantee where every person who completed their basic education is guaranteed a place in an educational institution, based on the Public-Private-People-Partnership model, where young adults are themselves the actors, responsible for their own future vocational training, workshops, rehabilitation or similar programs.⁴⁶ The aim of youth workshop (activities programs) is to prevent young persons from experiencing social exclusion and to guide them in finding paths to education and working life. Youth workshop activities are developed by the Ministry of Education and Culture, assisted by *Aluehallintovirasto*, the Regional State Administrative Agencies promoting programs for young persons, organizing training and monitoring their implementation. The workshops offer the youth a possibility of tailor-made training programs. The Regional State Administrative Agency grants state subsidies to the workshops involving young individuals. The purpose of these grants is to reduce the number of the so-called NEET (No Education, Employment, nor Training) young persons who are in neither school nor working life and to promote inclusion and a sense of community.⁴⁷

f. Youth support in the labour market

Finally, the mechanisms of promoting integration of young persons in the labour market are also significant for our present discussion. In Finland, the legal regulation of counteracting youth

⁴⁵ Information on national youth centers in Finland, reproduced on the web-page of the Finnish Youth Centres and available at: www.suomennuorisokeskukset.fi.

⁴⁶ Finland, the Ministry of Education and Culture, The Youth Guarantee in Finland provides employment, training and customised service, available at: <https://minedu.fi/documents/1410845/4150027/The+Youth+Guarantee+in+Finland>.

⁴⁷ Finland, Aluehallintovirasto, Nuorten työpajatoiminta, available at: <https://www.avi.fi/web/avi/avustukset-nuorten-tyopajatoimintaan#.WGYm03ouUk>.

unemployment is a part of education and social policy legislation represented by the following Acts of Parliament, i.e., the 2014 Social Welfare Act of Finland/*Sosiaalihuoltolaki* (1301/2014); the 1994 Act on Financial Aid for Students of Finland/*Opintotukilaki* (65/1994); the 1993 Act on Labour Market Support of Finland/*Laki työmarkkinatuesta* (1524/1993); the 1960 Act on Professional Guidance of Finland/*Laki ammatinvalinnanohjauksesta* (43/1960).⁴⁸ Summing up the provisions of these acts, one can see that Finland emphasises the urgency of encouraging young persons to obtain an education in order to facilitate successful integration in the labour market. Research shows that those individuals who had not obtained an education by the age of 25 often find themselves in a period of long-term unemployment.⁴⁹ Under the 2005 Programme of Youth Employment Guarantees, the so-called ‘activating measures’ were undertaken with respect to those persons under 25 years of age, who had not yet obtained an education. These measures might cause decreases in welfare benefits in cases when a young person who is able to work does not demonstrate convincing evidence of attempting to enroll in a certain educational program. Again, the system of public support for youth in the labour market is based on the Public-Private-People-Partnership model where active participation of young persons is emphasised, together with the support of the state and private employers.⁵⁰ Special measures of public support will therefore come into play after a young person fails to find a study place due to social, physical, psychiatric or other problems preventing him or her from succeeding in finding educational opportunities.

The issue of support for education and access to the labour market for migrant youth has become a special issue, ignited by the so-called ‘migration crisis’ of 2015 when more than a million migrants and refugees arrived in Europe. Migrants arriving at a young age are in a more vulnerable position, compared with those who migrated to Finland in early childhood and could benefit from learning Finnish or Swedish language — both official languages in Finland. One more Act of Parliament, i.e., the 2010 Act on the Promotion of the Integration of Immigrants in Finland/*Laki kotoutumisen edistämisestä* (1386/2010)⁵¹ is relevant at this point, as it introduces provisions pertaining to such measures of integration as, e.g., completing courses in Finnish or Swedish, on the culture of Finland, and employment and educational opportunities in Finland. Interestingly

⁴⁸ The 2014 the Finnish Social Welfare Act/*Sosiaalihuoltolaki* (1301/2014); the 1994 Act on Financial Aid for Finnish Students/*Opintotukilaki* (65/1994); the 1993 Act on Finnish Labour Market Support/*Laki työmarkkinatuesta* (1524/1993); the 1960 Act on Finnish Professional Guidance/*Laki ammatinvalinnanohjauksesta* (43/1960) are reproduced in the database of Finnish legislation Finlex and available at: <https://www.finlex.fi/fi/>.

⁴⁹ See K. Hämäläinen, U. Hämäläinen, J. Tuomala, *The Labour Market Impacts of a Youth Guarantee: Lessons for Europe?*, VATT Working Papers, Helsinki: Government Institute for Economic Research, 2016, available at: <https://vatt.fi/documents/2956369/3012229/wp60.pdf> who found that there are no signs that youth guarantees, generally meant for those who are under 25, improved the labour market prospects of young uneducated people, at Abstract.

⁵⁰ K. Gauffin and E. Lyytinen, *Working for Integration: A Comparative Analysis of Policies Impacting Labour Market Access among Young Immigrants and Refugees in the Nordic Countries*, CAGE project report 1, Stockholm: Stockholm University, Center for Health Equity Studies, 2017 at 33.

⁵¹ The 2010 Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration of Finland/*Laki kotoutumisen edistämisestä* (1386/2010), available at: <https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/2010/20101386?search%5Btype%5D=pika&search%5Bpika%5D=Laki%20kotoutumisen%20edist%C3%A4misest%C3%A4%20>.

enough, children of migrant parents who completed these programs are more likely to meet the requirements for higher education, compared with children of those parents who refused such programs.⁵²

g. Youth barometers

The annual Youth Barometer, published since 1994, studies the values and attitudes of young persons aged 15–29 years, who live in Finland.⁵³ It is conducted by the State Youth Council and the Finnish Youth Research Network. These barometers allow young individuals to express their opinions about such issues as work and education, societal membership, the future and social life. For instance, the 2016 Youth Barometer processed the data from 1,901 telephone interviews. The State Youth Council produces summarized information based on these surveys, launches initiatives to develop youth policies, and evaluates the impact of governmental measures or programs on young individuals, as well as services targeted at youth.⁵⁴

6. Concluding Remarks

Hence, Finnish legislation sets up a legal foundation as well as concrete mechanisms for youth empowerment, accommodating the effective social inclusion of the latter. The rules regarding youth participation can be found in both youth-specific acts and act of general application not targeted at any concrete social group. The mechanisms for youth participation and inclusion supported by public authorities are diverse, varying from guarantees of participation rights to the right to be heard and the right to receive assistance in the labour market to more detailed avenues of influence, such as youth barometers and youth discussion forums. What is significant in Finland with respect to youth participation and youth work is characterised by a ‘tripod structure’, involving the Ministry of Education and Culture, youth centres of expertise and a youth research network.⁵⁵ This structure allows an effective promotion of the rights of the young, utilizing the skills, knowledge and expertise of different partners.⁵⁶

⁵² Ibid. at 33.

⁵³ Finnish Youth Research Society, Youth Barometer, available at: <https://www.youthresearch.fi/research/youth-barometer>.

⁵⁴ Finnish Youth Research Society, The Youth Barometer 2018 shows an increase in positive attitudes towards Europe and politics, available at: <https://www.youthresearch.fi/youthbarometer2018>.

⁵⁵ H. Helve, ‘The Finnish Perspective: Youth Work, Policy and Research’, in: Griet Veschelden et al (eds), *The History of Youth Work in Europe: Relevance for Youth Policy Today*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing, 2009 pp. 117–129, at 120.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

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UN GA Resolution A/RES/70/126 'Promoting social integration through social inclusion', adopted 17 December 2015, UN Doc. A/RES/70/126, reproduced at: https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/126.

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Experience of Inclusion in Higher Education in One of the Swedish Industrial Cities in the North¹ (the University of Gävle)

Liya Kalinnikova Magnusson²

1. Introduction

The inclusive process in higher education in the Nordic countries refers to the global cooperation on disability in higher education,³ European challenges in higher education, contained in the Bologna Declaration,⁴ and to Nordic⁵ traditions of promoting democratic values in higher education, and is important to mention.⁶

Following the Bologna trajectory, the dynamics of development of inclusive higher education (HE) remains a central issue of all major Bologna agreements among membership countries of the European Higher Education Area. One of the key statements of the Bologna documents with respect to inclusion is a statement of “the social dimension in education” in the sense of “strengthening social and gender inequalities, both at the national and at the European level”, initially introduced in the Prague Communiqué 2001 three years after the Sorbonne Declaration in 1998.⁷ The significance of this Communiqué for inclusion in HE was indicated by the recognition of a variety of conceptual positions and the appreciation of contributions from other European Actions, among which attention was paid to “new approaches to the education of learners with special needs”, framed by the Salamanca Declaration (1994).

¹ The publication was supported by the project of the Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM), REF: Nordic-Russian co-operation, Call: ‘Civil Society & Human Rights Initiative’, Project number: 18113. Materials from this publication were introduced in the working seminar (‘Youth Support in the Labour Market: North-West Russia and Scandinavia Experience Analysis’) at the Saint Petersburg State University of Economics on 13 December 2018; and were discussed in the master course (‘Legal Foundations for Promoting Social Inclusion of Youth: Balancing Education, Employment, and Social Life’) at the Immanuel Kant Baltic State University in Kaliningrad on 13–15 March 2019.

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³ CRPD, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006). United Nations <https://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf>.

⁴ M. Wende, ‘The Bologna Declaration: Enhancing the Transparency and Competitiveness of European Higher Education’, *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 25(3) (2000): 305–310.

⁵ Nordic countries’ network comprises: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, including their associated territories (Greenland, the Faroe Islands and the Åland Islands).

⁶ M. Montefusco, *Nordic Cooperation on Higher Education and Research on Disabilities and Human Rights*, Nordic Welfare Center, December 2016. <https://nordicwelfare.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Nordic20cooperation20on20higher20education20disability20and20rights.pdf>

⁷ Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, ‘Realizing the European Higher Education Area: Preamble to the Communiqué of the Conference of Ministers Responsible for Higher Education’. *European Education*, 36(3) (2004): 19–27.

Since 1998, each Bologna conference has refined the objective of “the social dimension in education”, deepening its meanings;⁸ formulating new questions of how “the student body entering, participating in and completing higher education at all levels should reflect the diversity of our populations”.⁹ Despite the designation of the importance of the social dimension of Bologna reforms in HE, numerous international studies show that inequality in the field of higher education still exists, the result of various factors, such as, socio-economic and gender origin, ethnicity and place of residence (rural/urban), education of parents and health/disability conditions, etc. Thus, overcoming inequality remains the central issue in European educational reforms.¹⁰ The adherence of the signatories to the main provisions of the Bologna agreement is seen as the prerequisite to achieving an inclusive HE.

Implementation of the Bologna statements entails fundamental changes in the organizational, institutional, and international development of HE.¹¹ With respect to realizing these fundamental changes in HE, a multitude of mutually intertwined issues were debated by academics, teachers, and public authorities: quality assurance, levels of HE, standards and ECTS, establishing ICTs platforms (information and communication technologies) for learning, etc. The researchers, drawing attention to the implementation of the Bologna provisions, emphasize the complexity and contradictory nature of these processes and refer to the importance of understanding cultural values and learning about ‘others’ for further development.¹² Various data stress that inclusion in HE is manifested rather in the context of learning than in orienting itself to academic achievement.

Signing the Bologna Accord in 1999 (Sweden was among the first signatories), ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2006 and incorporating the concept of inclusion in HE in cooperation with the Nordic countries, Sweden adopted a law to reform HE in February 2006. Scholars remark that in many ways, the implementation of the Bologna objectives in Sweden is similar to the experiences of other signatories: convergence at the

⁸ London Communiqué (2007), Towards the European Higher Education Area: Responding to challenges in a global world. Retrieved from http://www.ehea.info/Upload/document/ministerial_declarations/2007_London_Communique_English_588697.pdf 2019.05.04; Bucharest Communiqué (2012). <https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Bucharest-Communique-20121.pdf> (last accessed 4 May 2019) .

⁹ Education, Audio-visual and Culture Executive Agency, *Focus on Higher Education in Europe 2010: The Impact of the Bologna Process*. Brussels: Eurydice, 2010, at 27–28.

¹⁰ M. Tupan-Wenno, A. Camilleri, M. Fröhlich & S. King, *Effective Approaches to Enhancing the Social Dimension in Higher Education*. Malta: Knowledge Innovation Centre, 2016.

¹¹ L.J. Waks, ‘The Concept of Fundamental Educational Change’, *Educational Theory*, 57(3) (2007), 277–295. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-5446.2007.00257.x>.

¹² Ch. Teelken & M. Wihlborg, ‘Reflecting on the Bologna Outcome Space: Some Pitfalls to Avoid? Exploring Universities in Sweden and the Netherlands’, *European Educational Research Journal*, 9(1) (2010): 105–115.

macro level and diversity at the micro level,¹³ presenting “a highly complex cultural and social transformation”.¹⁴

Inclusion of students with special educational needs (SEN) in the Swedish HE conform to fundamental changes in respect of diversification during the 1960–70s and 2000s: from elite to mass universities, to recruiting/increasing new groups of students and the “resulting growth of the existing universities and establishment of new universities”.¹⁵ Formed by these changes, the Swedish HE system is based on the Against Discrimination Act in education, providing equal treatment for learners. In accordance with the Act 2001:1286¹⁶ universities are responsible for providing conditions for equal treatment of all students and if these objectives are not fulfilled, the university has “to pay damages to the discriminated person”. After the first introduction of this Law, several revisions have been undertaken: 2006:308; amendment from 2015 (lack of accessibility is a violation of the Act), etc.

Last but not least is one of the key statements of the Swedish Council for Higher Education (*Universitets- och högskolerådet*, UHR)¹⁷ to increase diversity, equal rights and widen participation in higher education. Quoting the UHR home page: “UHR supports the work of higher education institutions as regards increasing diversity, promoting equal rights and opportunities in higher education and combating discrimination. This is done through evaluations, analyses, conferences and education”.¹⁸

The *aim* of this paper is to give a short theoretical presentation of the Bologna-based platform for inclusive HE for students with SEN and to introduce the Swedish approach for supporting students with SEN in HE, as well as the newly built National administration and information system for coordinators, which supports students’ education in HEIs (NAIS)¹⁹. The *methodology* is based on studying European/Bologna/Nordic and national documents, formulating fundamental values and meanings of HE towards social inclusion and its operational functioning for students with SEN in Swedish HE institutions (HEIs). This study collected data from the Administration of Special

¹³ J. Huisman, ‘Institutional Diversification or Convergence?’, in B. Kehm, J. Huisman & B. Stensaker (eds), *The European Higher Education Area: Perspectives on a Moving Target*, Rotterdam: Sense, 2009; Ch. Teelken & M. Wihlborg, ‘Reflecting on the Bologna Outcome Space: Some Pitfalls to Avoid? Exploring Universities in Sweden and the Netherlands’, *European Educational Research Journal*, 9(1) (2010): 105–115.

¹⁴ Huisman *ibid.* at 5.

¹⁵ J.L. Nielsen & L. Birch Andreassen, ‘Higher Education in Scandinavia: A Case Study’, in P. Blessinger & J. P. Anchan (eds), *Democratizing Higher Education: International Comparative Perspectives*, New York: Routledge, 2015, pp. 92–110.

¹⁶ Sveriges Riksdag (2001), Om likabehandling av studenter i högskolan: Lagen (2001:1286). https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/lag-20011286-om-likabehandling-av-studenter-i_sfs-2001-1286 (last accessed 3 May 2019).

¹⁷ Universitets- och högskolerådet, UHR (2019a), Nationellt administrations- och informationssystem för samordnare (NAIS), <https://www.uhr.se/systemtjanster-for-larosaten/stodsystem-for-larosaten/nationellt-administrations--och-informationssystem-for-samordnare-nais/> (last accessed 6 May 2019).

¹⁸ Universitets- och högskolerådet, UHR (2019b), <https://www.uhr.se/en/start/about-the-council/what-uhr-does/> (last accessed 3 May 2019).

¹⁹ NAIS - *Nationellt administrations- och informationssystem för samordnare* (in Swedish), in English: National administration and information system for coordinators.

Education Schools (SPSM)²⁰; statistics and reports from Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR) and the NAIS program involving students with SEN at the University of Gävle (HiG). The theoretical platform of inclusive HE for students with SEN was introduced as a result of the content analysis of relevant scientific articles (collected from peer-reviewed journals), where special attention was paid to the experience of HE by students with SEN themselves. Semi-structured interviews with the coordinators of the Supporting Students Education Program at the University of Gävle (HiG) were conducted and analysed (content analysis) to monitor the implementation of the inclusive HE and NAIS program at the university.

2. Theoretical Platform for Inclusive Higher Education: Brief Introduction

Inclusion in HE is of a holistic nature within individual and societal expectations, where HEIs play a central role. A theoretical platform is based on these expectations and visions, constituting a major vision of university institutional, organizational and international changes. This paper does not aim to present a complete guide to the theoretical foundations of inclusive HE, but will clarify some of the key theoretical aspects, illuminating its development for students with SEN.

Theories of lifelong learning formed a theoretical platform for inclusion. Referring to Orr and Hovdhaugen,²¹ lifelong learning is an “endogenous issue” for the foundation of inclusive HE. This issue is illustrated by the writings of Derrida, Michel Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari, which focus on understanding the experience of disabled students and “making sense of the disabled student journey ..., demystifying” this journey.²² The studies by researchers with disabilities of their own “experiences” of HE, show that a set of theories related to lifelong learning supports “non-linearity” of life, in a common (with other students) and specific way, when “long standing presence at university” is a challenge to everyday life.²³ These studies emphasize that the assumption of “non-linearity” of disabled students’ university journey restricts barriers existing in a disablist society and supports the development of their autonomy, self-determination and freedom from the need to obtain social acceptance.²⁴

²⁰ SPSM – *Specialpedagogiska skolmyndigheten*.

²¹ D. Orr & E. Hovdhaugen, “‘Second Chance’ Routes into Higher Education: Sweden, Norway and Germany Compared”, *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 33(1) (2014): 45–61 at 48.

²² J. Harvey, ‘Contemporary Social Theory as a Tool to Understand the Experiences of Disabled Students in Higher Education’, *Social Inclusion*, 6(4) (2018): 107–115. DOI: 10.17645/si.v6i4.1602 at 112.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ D. Goodley, *Dis/ability studies: Theorising disablism and ableism*, London: Routledge, 2014; J. Harvey, ‘Contemporary Social Theory as a Tool to Understand the Experiences of Disabled Students in Higher Education’, *Social Inclusion*, 6(4) (2018): 107–115. DOI: 10.17645/si.v6i4.1602; J. Ineland, M. Molin & L. Sauer, ‘Discursive Tensions in Late Modern Society: On Education and Work for People with Intellectual Disabilities in Sweden’, *European Journal of Social Education*, 26/27 (2015): 118–136; M. Madriaga, K. Hanson, C. Heaton, H. Kay, S. Newitt & A. Walker, ‘Confronting Similar Challenges? Disabled and Non-disabled Students’ Learning and Assessment Experiences’, *Studies in Higher Education*, 35(6) (2019): 647–658, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075070903222633>; E. Nixon, R. Scullion & R. Hearn, ‘Her Majesty the Student: Marketised Higher Education and the Narcissistic (dis)Satisfactions of the Student-consumer’, *Studies in Higher Education*, 43(6) (2018): 927–943; B. Watermeyer & L. Swartz, ‘Disablism, Identity and

The other influence in the formation of a theoretical platform for inclusive higher education is framed by theories, conceptualizing organizational university issues, both substantively and in numbers, focusing also on university curricula. This set of theories clarifies alternative/supportive opportunities for students with SEN to follow the university study program in accordance with the chosen curriculum.²⁵

3. The University of Gävle and Inclusion in Higher Education as a Platform of Strategy 2020 (Institutional Level)

The University of Gävle (*Högskolan i Gävle*, HiG) is one of the Northern Swedish Universities, established in 1977 and comprising about 17,000 students (2018–2019), 650 of whom are international (36 countries from every continent). HiG is certified environmentally by the ISO 'Intertek' and is one of the five certified Universities in Sweden today. Although HiG is a Regional University, the number of students from other regions of Sweden is increasing annually. A survey of the students pursuing a Bachelor's degree during the last three years after the candidate exam shows that about 30% of teachers, social workers and 46% of engineers remain in the region. A joint educational approach consisting of HiG, local communities, the region and the market is one of the strongest HiG's strategies of implementing its university mission.

Gävle Platform Strategy in 2020 strengthens goal-oriented work with respect to sustainable development from an ecological perspective,²⁶ linking its social and economic dimensions. Inclusion is one of the basic concepts, constituting this Platform and concretizing the Action Plan and Annual Reports. Recognizing under-represented students as a part of inclusive education in HiG under the Platform Strategy Vision is part of the implementation of the Bologna process. Some of the activities promoting diversity are part of the main HiG profile, i.e., regional significance of the rural territories. For example, HiG has been working with the unemployed and persons with intellectual disabilities locally. Furthermore, HiG is developing distance education courses and programs and implementing a digitalized ICT learning and teaching environment (Learning Center); in addition, it has established educational programs for undergraduate students (BA), postgraduate students (MA, PhD), as well as other programs and courses as part of LLL (Lifelong Learning). Moreover, HiG is applying new educational strategies in response to requests from the market and finally internationalizing education and research, etc. The infrastructure of

Self: Discrimination as a Traumatic Assault on Subjectivity', *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 26(3) (2016), 268–276. <https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.2266>.

²⁵ M. Adamas & S. Brown, *Towards Inclusive Learning in Higher Education: Developing Curricula for Disabled Students*, London: Routledge, 2006; H. Morgan & A-M. Houghton, 'Inclusive Curricula Design in Higher Education: Considerations for Effective Practice across and within Subject Areas', The Higher Education Academy, May 2011; B. U. Järkestig, D. Rowan, E. Bergbäck & B. Blomberg, 'Disabled Students' Experiences of Higher Education in Sweden, the Czech Republic, and the United States: A Comparative Institutional Analysis', *Disability & Society*, 31(3) (2016): 339–356.

²⁶ Högskolan i Gävle (2019), Platform for Strategy 2020. https://www.hig.se/download/18.7a9ae27e1591eb42ef73a78/1482352427418/Plattform+f%C3%B6r+Strategi+2020_.pdf (last assessed 4 May 2019).

the University is responding to disability and learning problems through a center of educational support (a well-functioning coordinator network in special support [*specialpedagogiskt stöd*] of students with SEN in Sweden, NAIS program) and formal HiG regulations. In accordance with European agreements in HE, HiG's Mission is centred on developing knowledge of sustainable human living environments by creating accessibility to university education through flexible solutions in space and time and attractive-stimulating working and learning conditions.

4. Special Pedagogical Support and NAIS in Its Operational Functioning on National and Local (University of Gävle) Levels

Referring to the above-mentioned, inclusion of students with SEN has approximately a 50-year history, and the foundation of the University of Gävle is the result of the diversification of Swedish HE in the 1960–70s. A systematic special education support service for students with SEN has developed during the last two decades. During this period, educational support for students' service of the University of Gävle has become an integral part of the well-functioning network among several Swedish national actors: special education services of HEIs, UHR, SPSM²⁷ and Stockholm University. Remaining autonomous in carrying out their functions, coordinators of the educational support service at the University of Gävle cooperate with other Swedish universities and develop their high-quality professionalism.

This paper focuses on a discussion of NAIS, a recently developed Swedish national program of support of students with SEN in HEIs.²⁸ The formation of NAIS belongs to the UHR, aiming at systematising and standardizing the work of specialists (*samordnare*) across the country working with students with SEN in Swedish higher education institutions.

Stockholm University developed this program and the work of NAIS continued throughout 2013–2014, having been introduced to the Swedish HE community in 2015. On January 2016, NAIS was put into the national HE operational system. Since autumn 2017, 32 higher education institutions joined this program, the University of Gävle being among them. The Swedish Council for Higher Education (*Universitets- och högskolerådet*, UHR) was responsible for national management and the software of this program. Stockholm University, having joined the program collects the NAIS data from all the universities. With respect to NAIS, each student with SEN has the right to receive individual learning support with the university being mandated to create appropriate conditions to achieve this goal. Structurally, the work of NAIS is implemented through the regular management groups (Stockholm University and UHR), reference groups (coordinators from some universities on a national level) and specialists representing special education support resources (*samordnare* on

²⁷ Specialpedagogiska skolmyndigheten, Mentor handbook in English, 2014, <https://webbutiken.spsm.se/mentor-handbook-in-english/>

²⁸ Universitets- och högskolerådet, UHR (2019a), Nationellt administrations- och informationssystem för samordnare (NAIS). <https://www.uhr.se/systemtjanster-for-larosaten/stodsystem-for-larosaten/nationellt-administrations--och-informationssystem-for-samordnare-nais/> (last accessed 6 May 2019).

the local higher education institutional level).²⁹ Local coordinators, providing the conditions for inclusion, work not only with students, but also arrange regular educational meetings and consultations with other university staff.

The University of Gävle (HiG), akin to any other university in Sweden, networks systematically with the national actors (via special education services of HEIs, UHR, SPSM), using the NAIS program for developing unified structures of work with students in need of special education support. The educational support process starts when a student applies for such support, formally presenting his/her document identifying the disability (*funktionsnedsättning*). Then, the students contact the pedagogical support coordinator, who indicates how the student's educational needs will be described, understood/measured and discussed for further procedural solutions and recommendations.

Implementation of NAIS on the national level creates a knowledge platform based on including students with SEN in HE. Table 1 below presents generalized statistics of students with SEN from all Swedish HEIs, linked to the NAIS program.³⁰ Some students with SEN do not apply for study support and cannot be identified statistically or are otherwise not visible among this number of registered students. This can be explained in many ways. NAIS, as mentioned above, is a new program. One reason may be that some students would like to avoid the stigma of being recognized as 'disabled'³¹ when they enter HEIs. Responding to this possible problem, NAIS secured its registration system, enhancing its confidentiality and anonymity. Still, understanding NAIS' inputs in the quality of educational support of students with SEN requires more systematic monitoring and research, involving students with SEN in this process.

Table 1. *The number of students with special education needs in the study, applying for, and receiving support during 2017 calendar year*³²

| Students' impairments | female | male | total |
|---|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| Students with dyslexia/specific reading and writing impairment | 5010 | 2 588 | 7 598 |
| Students with various neuropsychiatric impairments | 2 055 | 1 613 | 3 668 |
| Students with mental health impairments | 1 091 | 356 | 1 447 |
| Students with physical and movement impairments | 434 | 202 | 636 |
| Students with visual impairments | 171 | 114 | 285 |
| Students with hearing impairments (without disorders of speech expression) | 181 | 79 | 260 |
| Students with vocal impairment, using sign language and/or written language for study | 78 | 30 | 108 |
| Students with other permanent impairments of their functional abilities | 911 | 324 | 1 235 |
| Total number of students: | 9 931 | 5 306 | 15 237 |

²⁹ Personal communication with the NAIS coordinators at HiG: Sofia Lagerberg Alfredsson & Christina Edin, 24 April 2019.

³⁰ Stockholms universitet (2017). Årsredovisning: Dnr SU FV-1.1.8-3030-17.

³¹ Personal communication with the NAIS coordinators at HiG: Sofia Lagerberg Alfredsson & Christina Edin, 24 April 2019.

³² Data from the NAIS Annual report 2018, derived from personal communication with the NAIS coordinators at HiG: Sofia Lagerberg Alfredsson & Christina Edin, 24 April 2019.

Identification of students with SEN by the NAIS program on local HE institutional level clarifies their preferences in professional areas they chose to study. Table 2 below presents data, introduced by the pedagogical support group (local coordinators of NAIS) at the University of Gävle. Students with SEN prefer social disciplines (pedagogy and social care), as well as economics and communicative technologies. New questions emerge from this data: are these interests identifiable in other Swedish HEIs? How stable are these interests or preferences on local and national levels and what are the underlying reasons? How can this data contribute to the knowledge concerning students with SEN at HE and how can this knowledge be applied?

Table 2. Number of students with SEN, applied pedagogical support (per department and academy).³³ Data from October 2018, University of Gävle (HiG)

| Faculty of Health and Occupational Studies | Stud numb | Faculty of Engineering and Sustainable Development | Stud numb | Faculty of Education and Business Studies | Stud numb |
|---|------------------|---|------------------|--|------------------|
| Avdelningen för arbets- och folkhälsovetenskap | 21 | Avdelningen för bygg-, energi- och miljöteknik | 14 | Avdelningen för ekonomi | 74 |
| Avdelningen för socialt arbete och psykologi | 37 | Avdelningen för elektronik, matematik och naturvetenskap | 20 | Avdelningen för humaniora | 17 |
| Avdelningen för hälso- och vårdvetenskap | 45 | Avdelningen för ind. utveckling, IT och samhällsbyggnad | 38 | Avdelningen för utbildningsvetenskap | 84 |
| Totalt: | 103 | Totalt: | 72 | Totalt: | 175 |

Implementation of NAIS as a whole, connects disability to diversity, widening a perspective on apprehending both of these concepts. This issue needs to receive attention through analysis provided by NAIS. Figures 1 and 2 below support this train of thought, and provide some ideas for further studies. The data in these figures introduce quantity representation of students with SEN at the University of Gävle (HiG).

³³ The educational programs at the University of Gävle (HiG) are managed by three Academies: Academy of Health and Work Life (AHA), Academy of Technologies and Environment (ATM); Academy of Education and Business Studies (AUE).

Figure 1. Quantity representation of students with SEN at the University of Gävle, 2017³⁴

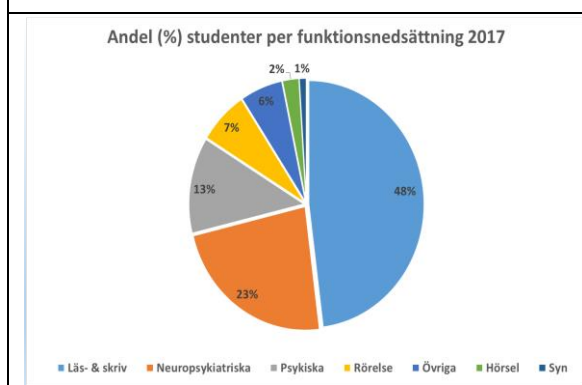
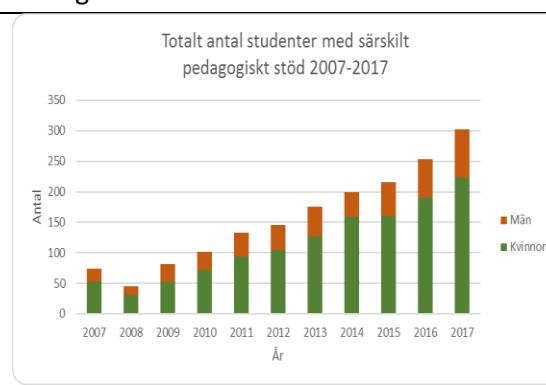


Figure 2. Dynamics of quantity representation of students with SEN in total and gender aspect, during 2007-2017³⁵



5. Conclusion

This paper focuses on understanding the Nordic, Bologna-based platform for inclusive higher education of students with SEN and the implementation of this platform according to the Swedish program of NAIS on national and local (University of Gävle) operational levels. The analysis of Bologna documents shows that expansion of inclusive processes in European HE represents a ‘social dimension in education’ and is essential to the implementation of the Bologna Declaration. Examining the theoretical foundation engendered conceptual approaches to understanding inclusion in HEIs from both individual and institutional perspectives. Responding to the expansion and belief in the fundamental value of inclusion for European HE, the Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR) initiated the development of a new program for standardizing different aspects of the inclusion of students with SEN in HEIs, creating NAIS and started its cross-country university functional network implementation in 2017, linking it with 32 HEIs all over Sweden.

Introduction to this study data, collected by the NAIS program, is of great interest for the further development of university and societal knowledge about the inclusion of young people with special educational needs in HEIs. The questions discussed and formulated in this paper reveal that understanding inclusion in HE requires further investigation.

Acknowledgment. The author of this article would like to express her personal gratitude to Christina Edin and Sofia Lagerberg Alfredsson, the NAIS program coordinators at the University of Gävle (HiG) for the materials used in this article.

³⁴ Data provided by the group of pedagogical support (coordinators of NAIS) at the University of Gävle (HiG).

³⁵ Data provided by the group of pedagogical support (coordinators of NAIS) at the University of Gävle (HiG).

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Inclusive Professional Education: Assessing the Efficiency of New Approaches

*Natalia Miuller*¹

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities entered into force in May 2008. In September 2008, it was signed by the Russian Federation. By 2012, Russia ratified this Convention.

Soon after the ratification and by the end of 2018, the Government of the Russian Federation as well as the federal ministries adopted around 40 regulations. In the subjects of the Russian Federation, almost 700 legislative acts were adopted in order to amend the existing regional legal regulation on providing welfare services for the population. These legislative changes served to enable the operation of legal mechanisms providing persons with disabilities with equal opportunities in many areas of human activity. That was the start of creating an accessible barrier-free environment, including the field of education.² New legislation also set up the requirement of control and supervision over compliance with new legal regulations. At the federal level, *Rosobrnadzor* or the Federal Service for Supervision in Education and Science under the aegis of the RF Ministry of Education and Science is in charge of regulating the compliance with accessibility requirements for persons with disabilities in educational institutions.

New legislation has also touched upon the requirements for teachers. In 2017 a decree issued by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection came into force, introducing new standard requirements for teachers of professional and vocational education.³ That document stipulates, in particular, that the teacher's competence should include, in particular, knowledge regarding "features of psychological and physical development and individual capacities of persons with disabilities". Another requirement, introduced by the said documents, is the skill to assess, choose

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² *Prikaz* of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation 09.11.2015 № 1309 "Ob utverzhdenii Poriadka obespecheniia uslovii dostupnosti dlia invalidov ob''ektov i predostavliaemykh uslug v sfere obrazovaniia, a takzhe okazaniia im pri etom neobkhodimoi pomoshchi», in: *Biulleten' normativnykh aktov federal'nykh organov ispolnitel'noi vlasti*, 25 January 2016, No. 4; 2) "Trebovaniia k organizatsii obrazovatel'nogo protsessa dlia obucheniia invalidov i lits s ogranichennymi vozmozhnostiami zdorov'ia v professional'nykh obrazovatel'nykh organizatsiakh, v tom chisle osnashhennosti obrazovatel'nogo protsessa", approved by the *Pis'mo* of the RF Ministry of Education and Science of 26 December 2013 No. 06–2412vn.

³ *Prikaz* of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of 8 September 2015 No. 608n "Ob utverzhdenii professional'nogo standarta "Pedagog professional'nogo obucheniia, profesional'nogo obrazovaniia i dopolnitel'nogo professional'nogo obrazovaniia," reproduced at the official web-portal of legal information www.pravo.gov.ru on 28 September 2015.

and renew various teaching materials, including electronic ones, taking into account age and other individual features of persons with disabilities.⁴

Concerning the human rights of persons with disabilities in education, the analysis of newly adopted federal subordinate legislation⁵ classifies these rights in several groups:

Rights relevant to the process of applying for admission to educational institutions:

- The right to reserved quota for free of charge university education at the expense of the public budget;
- The right to use a special window for accepting admission documents from persons with disabilities;
- The right to benefit from special technical means of education.

Rights relevant to the study process in educational institutions:

- Undertaking (assisting in undertaking) measures, stipulated by the individual program on rehabilitation and adaptation of individuals with disability;
- The right to individual support during the study process;
- The right to study in accordance with an individual syllabus;
- The right to study, based on a specially adapted curriculum for professional education;
- The right to extend the study period;
- Opportunity for distant or home learning and passing the mid-term performance assessment;
- The right to choose the place for internship accessible for the individual students and taking into consideration their disability;
- The right to a special program in taking physical education classes;
- The right to accessible study materials (e.g. in Braille script);

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ *Prikaz* of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation 09.11.2015 № 1309 "Ob utverzhdenii Poriadka obespecheniia uslovii dostupnosti dlia invalidov ob''ektov i predostavliaemykh uslug v sfere obrazovaniia, a takzhe okazaniia im pri etom neobkhodimoi pomoshchi», in: *Biulleten' normativnykh aktov federal'nykh organov ispolnitel'noi vlasti*, 25 January 2016, No. 4; "Trebovaniia k organizatsii obrazovatel'nogo protsessa dlia obuchenii invalidov i lits s ogranichennymi vozmozhnostiami zdorov'ia v professional'nykh obrazovatel'nykh organizatsiyakh, v tom chisle osnashhennosti obrazovatel'nogo protsessa", approved by the *Pis'mo* of the RF Ministry of Education and Science of 26 December 2013 No. 06–2412vn; *Prikaz* of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of 8 September 2015 No. 608n "Ob utverzhdenii professional'nogo standarta "Pedagog professional'nogo obuchenii, profesional'nogo obrazovaniia i dopolnitel'nogo professional'nogo obrazovaniia," reproduced at the official web-portal of legal information www.pravo.gov.ru on 28 September 2015; *Prikaz* of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of 5 April 2017 No. 301 "Ob utverzhdenii Poriadka organizatsii i osushchestvlenii obrazovatel'noi deiatel'nosti po obrazovatel'nym programmam vysshego obrazovaniia - programmam bakalavriata, programmam spetsialiteta, programmam magistratury"; *Prikaz* of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of 29 June 2015 No. 636 (with subsequent amendments, the most recent amendment of 28 April 2016) "Ob utverzhdenii Poriadka provedeniia gosudarstvennoi itogovoi attestatsii po obrazovatel'nym programmam vysshego obrazovaniia - programmam bakalavriata, programmam spetsialiteta i programmam magistratury".

- The right to extend the periods for final certification examinations;
- The right to special assistance inside the premises of an educational institution, including its campus and its entrances/;
- The right to use a guide dog;
- The right to the services of a sign language interpreter;

Socio-economic rights:

- The right to assistance for students with the disability category of 1 and 2, studying on an intramural basis at the expense of the public budget;

Rights relevant to the completion of studies:

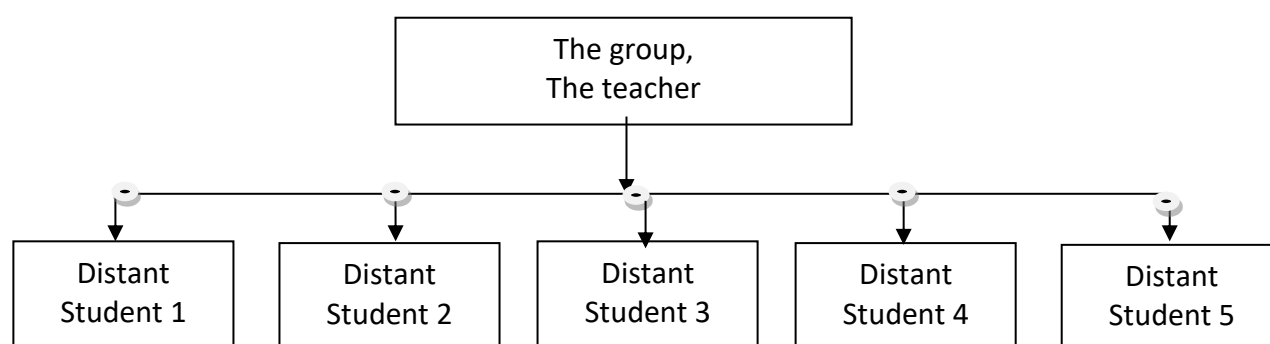
- The right to promotion of employment;
- The opportunity to special monitoring within the next several years after graduation with the aim of following up the employment situation.

Moreover, in accordance with the Federal law of 24 November 1995 No. 181-FZ 'On the Social Protection of Persons with Disabilities', persons with disabilities must be provided with the opportunity to obtain public services at the place of residence or in a distant venue, if the existing social infrastructure cannot be made accessible.⁶

For instance, in the Saint Petersburg State University of Economics (UNECON) the following scheme of educating persons with disabilities has been already used for several years. This model is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

This figure shows how the presence of students with disabilities during the classes is organized in such a way enabling the teacher to follow up on how the student receives the material to answer the questions and to assess the mid-term learning progress.

Figure 1. *The scheme of interaction between the student on distant learning with the group and the teacher in UNECON*



⁶ Federal Law on Social Protection of Persons with Disabilities: *Federal'nyi zakon* of 24 November 1995 N 181-FZ "O sotsial'noi zashchite invalidov v Rossiiskoi Federatsii", in: *Sobranie zakonodatel'stva Rossiiskoi Federatsii*.

Concerning the official statistical data on the education of persons with disabilities in institutions for professional and higher education, the numbers are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1⁷. *The numbers of students with disabilities in professional and higher education* (in thousands of individuals as of the beginning of the academic year)¹

| | 2008/ 2009 ²⁾ | 2009/ 2010 ²⁾ | 2010/ 2011 | 2011/ 2012 | 2012/ 2013 | 2013/ 2014 | 2014/ 2015 | 2015/ 2016 | 2016/ 2017 | 2017/ 2018 | 2018/ 2019 |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Programmes of professional education ³⁾ | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Accepted as students | 4,5 | 6,1 | 5,4 | 5,0 | 5,2 | 4,5 | 4,3 | 5,3 | 8,2 | 8,3 | 8,9 |
| Enrolled students | 14,9 | 15,9 | 14,4 | 13,5 | 14,3 | 12,4 | 12,4 | 14,8 | 21,5 | 22,9 | 25,0 |
| Graduated as specialists | 3,0 | 4,0 | 3,4 | 3,3 | 3,1 | 2,5 | 2,5 | 2,9 | 4,7 | 4,8 | 5,0 |
| Percentage of completion by the time of the end of study period, % | 65,3 | 65,8 | 61,9 | 65,4 | 59,8 | 56,8 | 57,5 | 55,0 | 57,1 | 57,8 | 55,7 |
| Programmes of higher education | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Accepted as students | 5,8 | 7,2 | 6,7 | 5,6 | 5,5 | 5,2 | 5,2 | 6,0 | 6,1 | 6,9 | 7,5 |
| Enrolled students | 25,0 | 23,2 | 22,9 | 20,1 | 18,9 | 16,8 | 16,8 | 18,0 | 19,5 | 21,8 | 22,9 |
| Graduated as specialists | 2,5 | 3,0 | 3,1 | 2,8 | 2,7 | 2,5 | 2,6 | 4,1 | 3,1 | 3,2 | 3,5 |
| Percentage of completion by the time of the end of study period, % | 42,7 | 42,2 | 46,2 | 49,7 | 49,0 | 48,1 | 49,4 | 69,1 | 51,6 | 46,7 | 47,1 |

¹⁾ Starting from 2013/2014 academic year, according to the data of the RF Ministry of Enlightenment and the RF Ministry of Education and Science, since the 2016/2017 academic year, including the programmes for qualified employees and public servants.

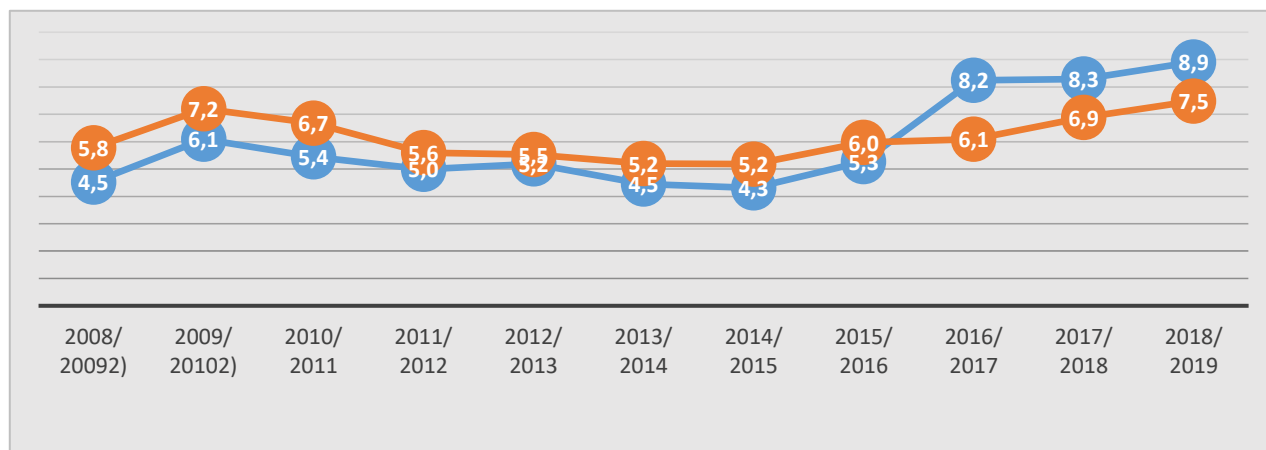
²⁾ The data concerns only public educational institutions.

³⁾ Starting from 2016/2017 academic year, not counting the programmes of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia and other specialized professional institutions.

The data showed in Table 1 is further detailed in Figures 2–4.

⁷ *Federalnaia sluzhba gosudarstvennoi statistiki*: http://www.gks.ru/wps/wcm/connect/rosstat_main/rosstat/ru/statistics/population/disabilities/# (last retrieved 7 February 2019).

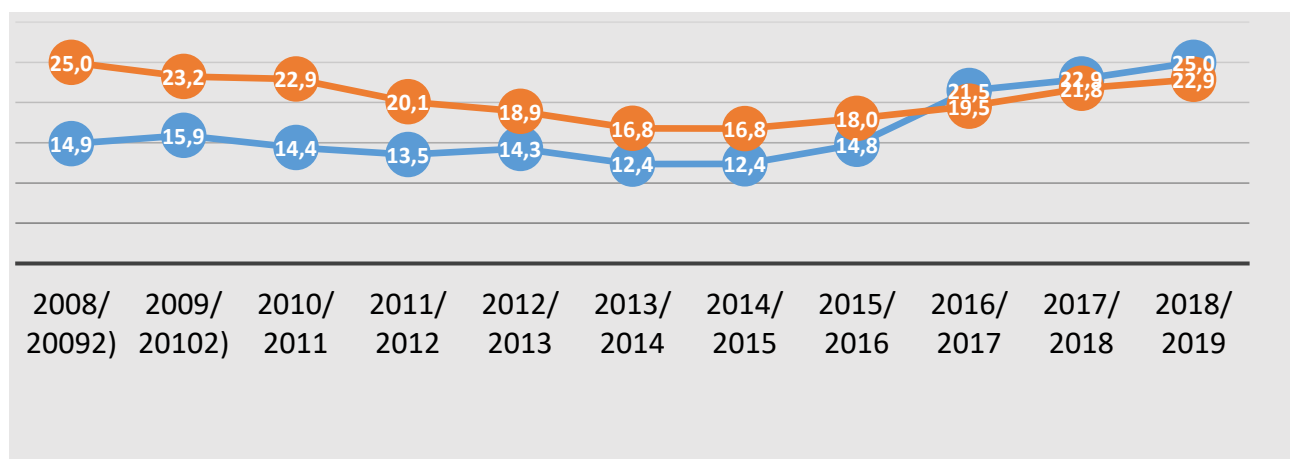
Figure 2. *The number of students in professional and higher education 2008–2018*



The data in red colour refers to higher education. The data in blue colour refers to professional education.

Figure 2 reveals that the number of students who entered in institutions for professional and higher education is gradually increasing in Russia. At the same time, before 2015 the number of students enrolled in the programs of higher education was exceeding the number of the students enrolled in the programs of professional education.

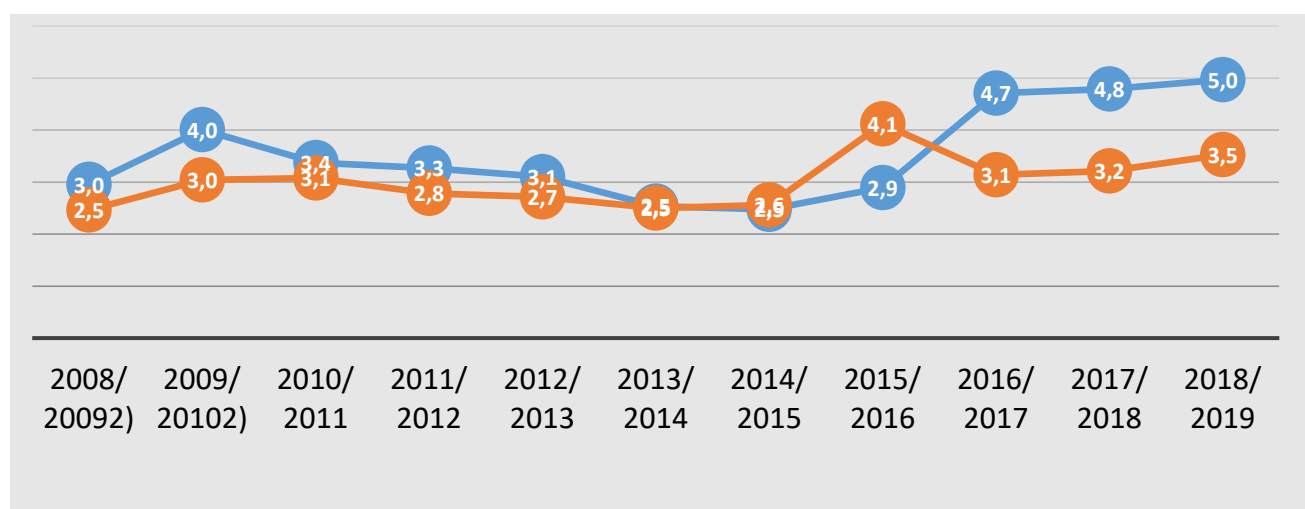
Figure 3. *Number of persons with disabilities engaged in study programs of professional and higher education in 2008–2018*



The data in red refers to higher education. The data in blue refers to professional education.

Figure 3 illustrates the number of persons with disabilities enrolled in the programs of professional and higher education in 2008–2018. It again reveals the same tendencies as Figure 2 dealing with the general number of students. Until 2015, the number of students with disabilities enrolled in the programs of higher education exceeded the number of students with disabilities enrolled in the programs of professional education. Only during the last three years has the number of students in professional education begun to exceed the number of students in higher education.

Figure 4. The numbers of persons with disabilities, having completed the programmes of professional and higher education in 2008–2018



The data in red refers to higher education. The data in blue refers to professional education.

The situation where the number of those preferring higher education over professional education can be explained by the fact that in Russia there is a tendency to strive towards obtaining higher education, which causes a certain imbalance when it comes to the total number of graduate students. The number of all the students from the system of professional education amounts to 2,3 million individuals, whereas the number of those engaged in obtaining higher education is 4,7 million individuals.⁸ The said imbalance appears not to be well justified, especially in the light of modern labour market requirements related to the development of new information technologies. In particular, the institutions for professional education teach qualified IT specialists. In the opinion of the author, the fact that a situation exists in which the prestige of higher education is preferred over the objective societal needs in new professions needs to be seriously reconsidered.

Thus, Russia's ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities resulted in the increase in the number of persons with disabilities who entered institutions for professional and higher education. The periods of decrease in the said numbers in 2011–2014, which one can see in diagrams nos. 2, 3 and 4, can, however, be explained by lower birth rates in Russia during the economic and political crisis of the 1990s.⁹

Yet there are certain factors that are sufficiently potent to prevent the full implementation of the right of persons with disabilities to enjoy professional education. These factors are not directly relevant for the process of education, but to the general architecture of the system of education in Russia. The following are among the said restraining factors.

⁸ *Statistika Rossiiskogo Obrazovaniia*: <http://stat.edu.ru/stat/sred.shtml> (last retrieved 7 February 2019).

⁹ *Federal'naia sluzhba gosudarstvennoi statistiki. Ofitsial'naia statistika. Naselenie. Demografiia*: http://www.gks.ru/wps/wcm/connect/rosstat_main/rosstat/ru/statistics/population/demography/# (last retrieved 7 February 2019).

As mentioned earlier, a quota of seats is reserved for persons with disabilities in the university, which is 10% of all available free-of-charge study places. The Federal law of 29 December 2012 No. 273-FZ 'On Education in the Russian Federation' stipulates these quotas.¹⁰ In 2017, the total number of individuals who took the said study places defrayed by the public budget comprised 499,062 individuals. At the same time, the number of persons with disabilities among the above-mentioned total number amounted to only 6,881 individuals or 1,37%. This can be explained by the fact that persons with disabilities in Russia often get lower grades in school-leaving certificates, which are decisive when distributing study places defrayed by the public budget. Since financing their education is unrealistic for many persons with disabilities due to their financial vulnerability, a lack of adequate support to such persons in primary and high school puts them in an ever more vulnerable position when it comes to accessing higher education.

True, persons with disabilities who had not entered the university could use the opportunity to enrol in professional education. Yet the imbalance towards strong preferences of higher education mentioned in the beginning of this review reveals itself also in this context. No less considerable is the fact that the system of professional education lacks reserved quotas for persons with disabilities, which puts such candidates in unfavourable positions. The said testifies, in the opinion of the author, to the necessity to introduce reserved quotas for persons with disabilities with respect to the most popular on the labour market programs of professional education. Such quotas could be ensured with funds from federal budget or the budget of the subjects of the Russian Federation, or even local budgets.

Another worrying factor, which can potentially exert a detrimental effect on the education of persons with disabilities in Russia is the gradual rejection of extramural type of education when the students are not permanently enrolled in educational institutions but take self-study courses and appear twice per academic year in the university to complete the intensive pre-examination instruction and pass the exams.¹¹ Although this mode of education used to be popular, nowadays many Russian universities have given it up. Already in 2009, 48% of all the students preferred extramural education. Currently, the scheme of providing education for persons with disabilities is changing. In 2015 out of a total of 5,966 persons with disabilities who enrolled in higher education, almost one half, i.e., 2,474 individuals, preferred extramural education. In 2017 this number dropped down to 15%, indicating that only 1,044 individuals out of 6,881 persons with disabilities who were enrolled in higher education preferred this mode of education.

The author of this review believes that the decreasing number of students with disabilities enrolled in extramural education is the result of the creation of an effective accessible environment for educating persons with disabilities in Russia and through the improvement of

¹⁰ Federal Law on Education in the Russian Federation: *Federalnyi zakon* of 29 December 2012 No. 273-FZ (with subsequent amendments, the most recent amendment of 25 December 2018) "*Ob obra-zovanii v Rossiiskoi Federatsii*," in: *Sobranie zakonodatel'stva Rossiiskoi Federatsii*, 31.12.2012, No. 53 (part 1) item 7598.

¹¹ Since 1 September 2019, it is planned to exclude extramural form of university education as applied to such traditionally popular areas of training as economics, law, management, state and municipal government.

opportunities for full-time intramural studies. On the other hand, there are also reasons to believe that in such a large country as Russia, dispensing with extramural forms of education is sufficient to cause harm for those who are willing to study by complicating the implementation of the right to receive professional education. The said is relevant not only to persons with disabilities, but also to a considerable number of other young individuals residing in remote areas and unable to move to cities to study due to an array of reasons.

Probably, the policy-makers trust that it will be distance learning which will replace extramural form of education. The central problem, however, is that it is almost impossible to complete distance learning programs free of charge and to obtain a degree certified by a diploma. The reason for this is an insufficient number of study places where students can study free of charge, defrayed by the public budget. It would be a much more beneficial idea not to give up extramural education but, instead, to optimize it, retaining the positive moments and overcoming the problematic ones. At the same time, in the opinion of the author, distance learning should be granted the status of an autonomous form of education with its own financial support.

Optimizing distance learning and its wider entrenchment is also necessary because there is a great number of persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities who study at home. For example, during the 2015/2016 academic year, 52,526 persons with disabilities and 75,172 children with disabilities have been studying individually at homes.¹² Not surprisingly, the learning results of such children are lower in comparison with those who study at educational institutions or distantly under the supervision of a teacher.

In absence of due instruction, it is not difficult to get lost amidst the existing study materials, which are found in shops and on the internet in order to assist persons with disabilities. This is because one requires special skills to look for information and because not all study materials available in the public domain are of acceptable quality and conform to the requirements of study programs at recognized educational institutions. Russia currently lacks a unified official web-portal for distance learning, which would be accessible to every student, teacher and parent. Such a portal should include, together with the schedules for classes, such information as thematic plans for each class, materials prepared in various forms for various disciplines, such as, e.g., textual materials and manuals, videos, presentations, or evaluation tools monitoring the degree of learning of the material at any stage of its study. Such a portal could serve as an all-Russian distance school platform and could help teachers and students studying individually at home or in a regular or evening school. The portal could be especially useful for children with disabilities.

A positive development, in recent years shows that home-schooling has ceased to be perceived as something extraordinary or special by individuals in Russia. Introducing inclusion in primary and secondary schools, and now even in higher education, allows children with disabilities to feel like a full participant in the educational process, i.e., they are enrolled in the lists of students, can receive teacher feedback or other assistance and they are provided with all the necessary study

¹² Federal Law on Social Protection of Persons with Disabilities: *Federal'nyi zakon* of 24 November 1995 N 181-FZ "O sotsial'noi zashchite invalidov v Rossiiskoi Federatsii", in: *Sobranie zakonodatel'stva Rossiiskoi Federatsii*.

and reference materials and can pass intermediate and final examinations. It is significant that home schooling can be continued at any stage in any other educational institution. In other words, home education has become a recognized learning tool. However, this tool needs to be improved, so that children studying at home can obtain knowledge and skills of acceptable quality. At the same time, the existence of the above-mentioned educational portal could also play a positive role in education by optimizing the workload of teachers, who could act to a greater degree as a tutor or advisor.

To conclude, inclusive education serves the special needs of persons with disabilities in education work, enhancing the opportunities of the said person for successful socialisation and integration into society. Russian universities and colleges for professional education are expanding their experiences in the area of educating students with disabilities. Yet, as this review tried to explicate, there are still deficiencies related to the whole system of education, which might prevent the full and effective inclusion of students with disabilities.

Inclusive education still requires much attention on the side of educational institutions, public authorities and society, since there are negative factors attenuating its quality as well as a lack of effective financial investments and administrative efforts in this area. The following are among such factors:

- insufficient use of the potential of professional education;
- giving up extramural forms of education and distant learning in disciplines which are traditionally in great demand by persons with disabilities;
- underdeveloped system of distance learning;
- disadvantages of individual learning modes for persons with disabilities studying at home.

The effect of the above-mentioned factors can be tempered by further developing the system of professional education, improving and developing distance forms of education, providing distance form of education with an autonomous status and finally creating a unified portal for distance education.

Hence, these goals that need to be addressed in order to enable persons with disabilities to implement their rights in the field of education are ambitious. Therefore, they should be discussed not only by researchers and specialists working with persons with disabilities. It is primarily the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Russian Federation (through its representatives at all levels of government) to work to realise these goals, since the said Ministry is an executive body charged with developing and implementing state policy and legal regulations in the field of social protection.

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Federal'naia sluzhba gosudarstvennoi statistiki. Ofitsial'naia statistika. Naselenie. Demografiia: http://www.gks.ru/wps/wcm/connect/rosstat_main/rosstat/ru/statistics/population/demography/#

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Prikaz of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of 29 June 2015 No. 636 (with subsequent amendments, the most recent amendment of 28 April 2016) "*Ob utverzhdenii Poriadka provedeniia gosudarstvennoi itogovoi attestatsii po obrazovatel'nym programmam vysshego obrazovaniia - programmam bakalavriata, programmam spetsialiteta i programmam magistratury*"

Prikaz of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of 8 September 2015 No. 608n "*Ob utverzhdenii professional'nogo standarta "Pedagog professional'nogo obucheniia, profesional'nogo obrazovaniia i dopolnitel'nogo professional'nogo obrazovaniia,*" reproduced at the official web-portal of legal information www.pravo.gov.ru on 28 September 2015

Statistika Rossiiskogo Obrazovaniia: <http://stat.edu.ru/stat/sred.shtml>

"*Trebovaniia k organizatsii obrazovatel'nogo protsessa dlia obucheniia invalidov i lits s ogranichennymi vozmozhnostiami zdorov'ia v professional'nykh obrazovatel'nykh organizatsiyakh, v tom chisle osnashhennosti obrazovatel'nogo protsessa*", approved by the *Pis'mo* of the RF Ministry of Education and Science of 26 December 2013 No. 06–2412vn

Social Inclusion of Youth with a Focus on Education, Employment and Social Life: The Pskov Region Case

*George Varlamov*¹

According to the integral socio-economic development rating of the regions in Russia (based on the results of 2017), the Pskov Region is in the 75th position out of 85 (the 76th position in 2016, the 74th position in 2015). It is far behind the regions with a similar socio-economic development potential.

It should also be mentioned that the Pskov Region is a unique region bordering on Belarus as well as two European Union states – Latvia and Estonia. The geographic proximity of Moscow (700 km) and Saint Petersburg (270 km) influence the outflow of the youth from the region. Therefore, special measures to support young people in the Pskov Region should be introduced.

We would like to approach this issue from the following perspectives: providing young people with a possibility of obtaining a qualitative education, assisting them in finding jobs and providing opportunities for self-realization.

To stop the outflow of young people intending to study in Moscow, Saint Petersburg and abroad, Pskov State University (PskovSU) was established in 2011 by merging the five leading institutions of professional education – Pskov State Pedagogical University, Pskov Polytechnic Institute and three colleges. Nowadays PskovSU is the center of educational, cultural and scientific life in the region. In total, around 15,000 students study at PskovSU. The structure of the university includes ten faculties, and PskovSU College, a branch of Velikiye Luki, Life Long Learning Institute and Open University of the Russian Language and Culture. It is one out of 33 flagship universities in Russia that attracts students not only from other regions in Russia, but also from abroad. In the academic year 2018/2019, around 1,300 students from 46 countries of the world study more than 190 programs at different levels at the university.

To support the employment of graduates, PskovSU established a Resource centre for training personnel for industry and social services in the Pskov Region whose main activities include:

- involving local and regional companies in employing graduates, internships at companies, career days, presentations of companies, study visits to companies, etc.;
- giving seminars, workshops, master classes for graduates;
- employment monitoring and informing graduates about vacant positions at local and regional companies;
- vocational education (professional training and re-training, short-term programs, seminars etc.);

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- composing CVs and job banks for students and graduates.

The Ministry of Science and Higher Education launched a monitoring system that helps to obtain information about the place of employment and the employment rates of university graduates (see figure 1 and table 1).

Figure 1. *Employment geography of PskovSU graduates 2015–2016*

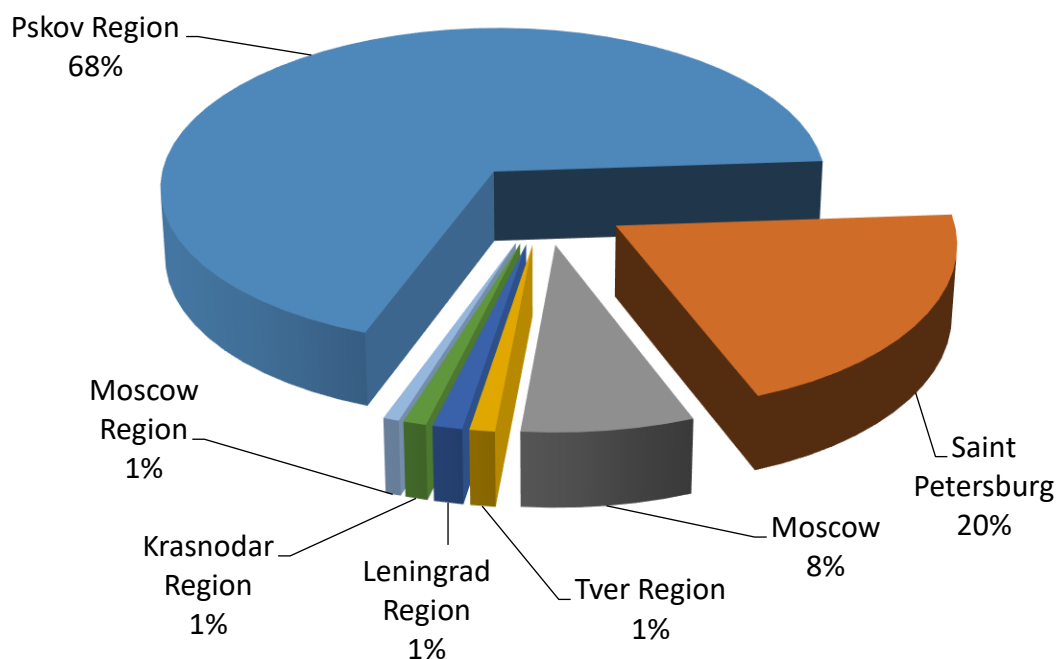


Table 1. *Employment of PskovSU graduates 2015-2016 (according to a specialty group)*

| Specialty group | Number of graduates (persons) | Average age (years) | Average salary (RUR) | Share of the graduates employed (%) |
|---|-------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Computer and IT | 2 | 22 | 21 225 | 100 |
| Political Sciences and Region Studies | 3 | 22 | 8 658 | 100 |
| Culture Studies and Socio-Cultural Projects | 9 | 37 | 19 667 | 89 |
| Sociology and Social Work | 22 | 27 | 14 676 | 86 |
| Language Studies and Literature Studies | 28 | 22 | 14 323 | 82 |
| Engineering and Construction Technologies | 98 | 27 | 27 497 | 79 |
| Education and Pedagogical Sciences | 249 | 26 | 18 706 | 79 |
| Psychological Sciences | 24 | 30 | 18 089 | 79 |
| Economics and Management | 470 | 25 | 20 119 | 78 |
| Electrical and Heat Power Engineering | 93 | 27 | 30 166 | 72 |
| Biological Sciences | 28 | 23 | 16 057 | 71 |
| Management in Technical Systems | 15 | 23 | 19 078 | 71 |
| History and Archeology | 19 | 23 | 15 220 | 68 |
| Life Sciences | 3 | 23 | 14 427 | 67 |
| Machine Building | 51 | 26 | 28 500 | 65 |

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|----|--------|----|
| Mass-Media and Library | 58 | 25 | 14 997 | 64 |
| Arts | 13 | 23 | 14 264 | 62 |
| Transport Technics and Technologies | 56 | 27 | 26 575 | 60 |
| IT and Computer Technologies | 84 | 25 | 25 707 | 60 |
| Environmental Engineering and Safety | 17 | 26 | 26 346 | 59 |
| Law | 124 | 27 | 26 899 | 58 |

The information of the monitoring system shows that most of the graduates experience no problems with finding jobs, the majority of which are in the Pskov Region. At the same time the graduates leaving the Pskov Region go either to Saint Petersburg or Moscow where they have more opportunities to find jobs compatible with their qualifications, as well as better working conditions and higher salaries. Currently the situation remains approximately the same.

PskovSU is actively cooperating with Employment Services (the Committee for Labour and Employment in the Pskov Region, employment centres, etc.) to assist graduates in the labour market.

The main activities of Employment Services aimed at graduates of educational institutions in the Pskov Region include:

- organizing job fairs, career days, open door days, etc.;
- assisting in job searches for graduates;
- organizing training for graduates, who wish to obtain professional experience;
- employment monitoring, etc.

At the same time, it is necessary to mention that Employment Services face the following problems dealing with finding employment graduates:

- a lack of vacancies in a profession desired by a graduate;
- a lack of professional experience and as a result, a reluctance to employ a graduate by a company;
- a refusal of a graduate to accept employment because of working conditions;
- unattractive location, i.e. geographical remoteness of the vacancies offered to graduates, etc.

One of the joint activities implemented by the university and the Employment Services is a regional survey of educational institutions' graduates Career 2017, participated in by 553 graduates from colleges and higher educational institutions (see figures 2 and 3 below).

Figure 2. *Plans of the educational institutions’ graduates*

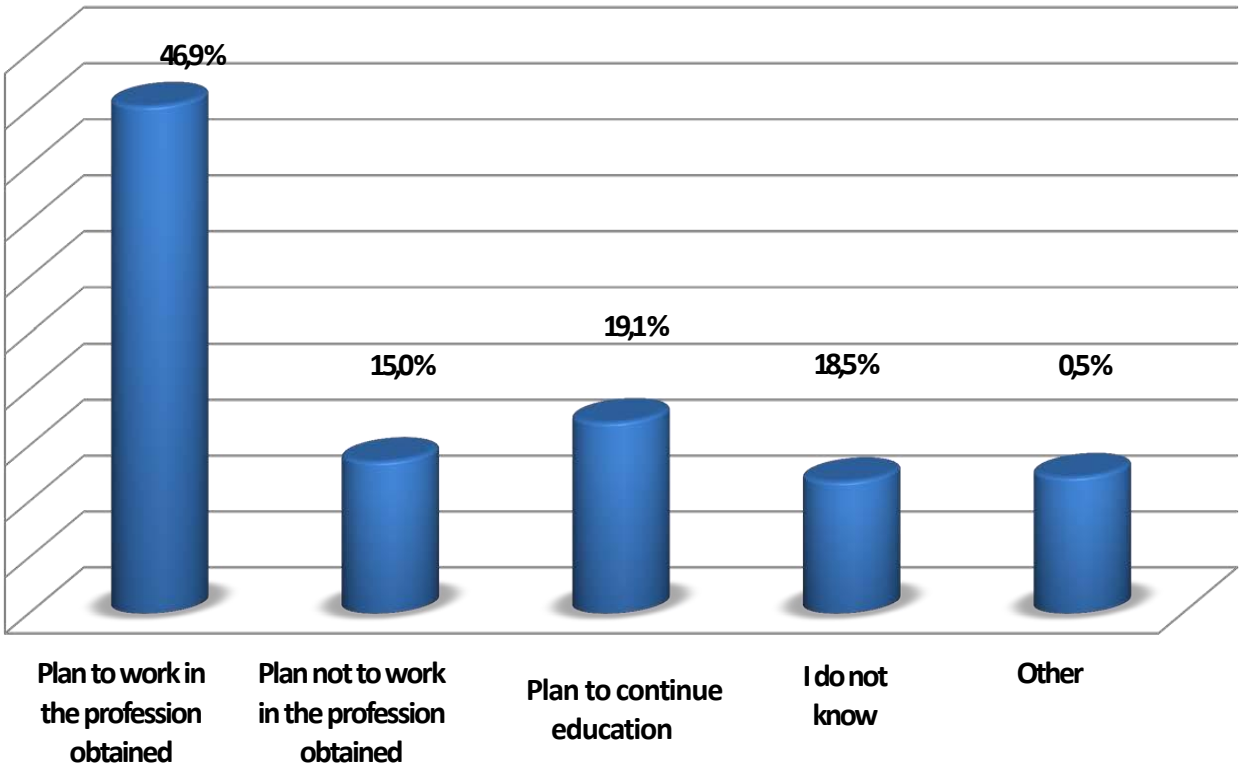
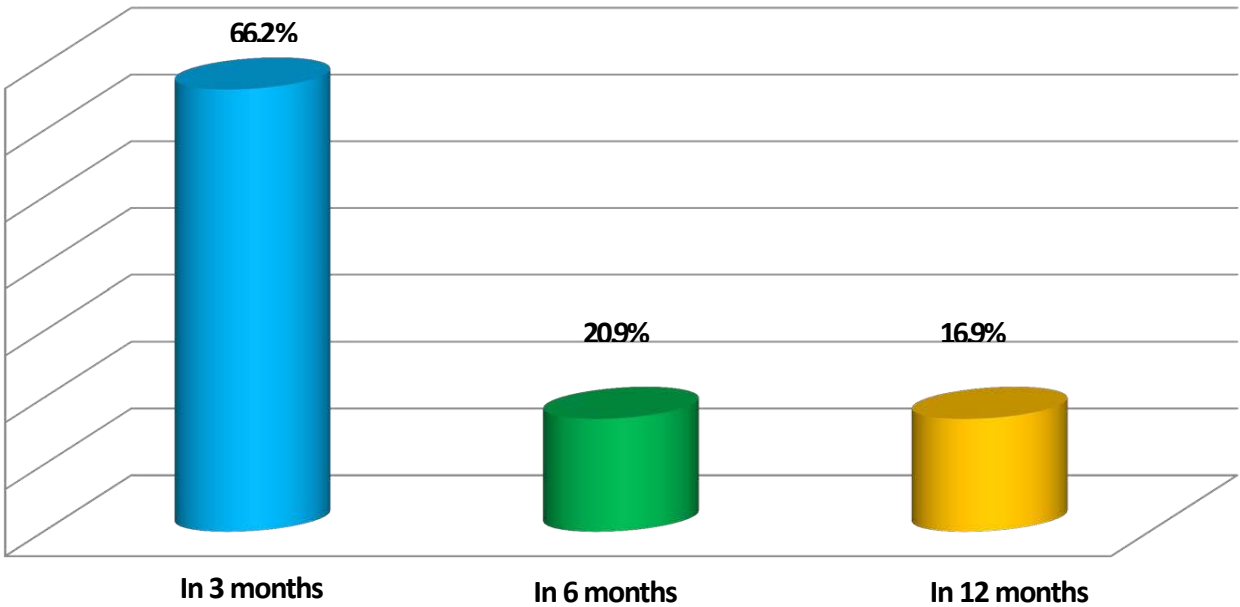


Figure 3. *Employment plans of the educational institutions’ graduates*



The results of the survey show that 100% of its participants are planning to find a job. Almost half of the respondents are going to work according to the profession obtained. Some 72,3% know the

peculiarities of the regional labour market and are competent in writing CVs, as well as conducting interviews with employers and job searches. There are plans to carry out the survey in 2019 again.

As a centre not of education but of cultural and youth life of the Pskov Region, PskovSU provides various opportunities for the self-realization of students. A choir, a folklore ensemble Pleskava, a folk instrument ensemble Lad, a theatre NOSTOS, PskovSU TV, dance groups Allegory, EXCLUSIVE, 3FStep, as well as many other opportunities are given to students to become acquainted with the arts, singing, sports, etc. Student self-government also functions well, whose main functions include coordinating the following areas: youth science, arts, international (tutors helping international students during the period of adjustment), social support of students, volunteering, etc.

Youth policy is coordinated on the regional level by the Administration of the Pskov Region. To facilitate the collaboration of youth and social organizations, NGOs and other active participants of the youth policy, the Department of Social Projects and Youth Policy of the Administration of the Pskov Region was established in 2018.

The strategic documents of the Pskov Region (i.e., Strategy of Socio-Economic Development of the Pskov Region up to 2020, Federal Programme on Development of the Pskov Region 'Development of Education and Increase in Effectiveness of Youth Policy in 2014–2020') make youth policy one of the priorities of regional development. Thus, the sub-program, 'Young Generation of the Pskov Region', aims at the active involvement of young people in the socio-economic, socio-political and cultural processes of regional development. Its main activities include: development of leadership competencies of talented young people, civil education, shaping cultural and moral values of youth, entrepreneurship development among young people, etc.

One of the successful cases helping to support young people and involve them in policy-making on the regional level is the Youth Parliament of the Pskov regional meeting of deputies, which is a collegial advisory and consultative board on the youth policy of the Pskov Region. It is a regularly functioning board, whose members are elected for the period of two years.

In 2018 the Governor of the Pskov Region launched an initiative Team 2018 targeted at recruiting young people willing to improve the quality of life in the region. The projects supported on a competitive basis receive administrative assistance, federal and regional expertise, access to regional mass-media, etc.

On the municipal level there are also initiatives supporting young people. For example, in 2016 a Council for youth policy was established by the Head of the City of Pskov. It is a consultative and advisory board that prepares proposals and provide feedbacks on various issues concerning youth policy.

A very popular Pskov municipal centre among young Pskovites was established in 2010. The principal activities of the centre include:

- employment of young people (assistance in searching for employment, consultations, seminars, workshops, meetings with employers, etc.);

- organization of youth forums, festivals, study visits, etc.;
- organizing summer camps and youth meetings;
- volunteering;
- information and analytical support of youth policy (web page, publication in the local mass-media, etc.).

Taking into account that the city of Pskov is going to host the XXXIX International Hanseatic Days of the Modern Period in June 2019, Youth Hansa has already attracted hundreds of young people interested in the history of the event, volunteering projects, intent on participating in an array of unique activities. PskovSU's students are planning to assist guests from all over the world coming to Pskov for the festival, in preparing individual excursions and providing language assistance, especially with respect to some of the activities of the festival.

To conclude, it is possible to state that youth policy is one of the priorities of the development of the Pskov Region on all levels — regional, municipal, and organizational — where Pskov State University as one of the educational, cultural and scientific centres of the region plays a very important role.

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Youth Support Programs in Kaliningrad Region: Overview and Future Challenges

Alexey Antipov, Kristina Kirillova, Mariya Prokopchik¹

1. Introduction

This paper reviews the most significant issues of social integration of youth (persons between the ages of 14 and 30) in the Russian Federation and in the Kaliningrad Region from the perspective of the students. A review and analysis of youth-support programs and youth policy implementation in the Kaliningrad Region is conducted by the law students of the Baltic Federal University named after I. Kant (Kaliningrad). The review provides for the reader a historical overview of the legal regulation of youth policy in the USSR and in the Russian Federation. The present state of youth policy at the federal as well as at the regional level is analyzed, based on the example of the Kaliningrad Region. The most acute problems in regulating and implementing youth policy are highlighted and methods for solving youth issues are proposed.

At present, particular attention is paid in the Russian Federation to the issue of the social integration of young people and to optimizing youth policy. The underlying reason for this is the growing awareness of the social importance of young citizens and of their potential contribution to the development of the country in the future.

In accordance with Russian legislation, citizens aged 14 to 30 years fall under the category of 'youth'.² According to the 2018 official data, collected by the *Rosstat*, the Russian Federal State Statistics Service 2018, young people make up 18,3% of the total population of the Russian Federation.³ In the Kaliningrad Region, according to the data in the beginning of 2018, the percentage of young people is slightly higher than the national average – 18,6%, representing 183,000 citizens aged 15 to 29 years.⁴ Apparently, the real number of youth, as it is understood by the legislation, can be slightly higher, since in the Russia Federation 'youth' is defined as individuals 14 to 30 years of age.⁵ Therefore, a number of young people in the age group from 14 to 30 is not reflected in the official statistical data.

¹ M.A. students in law, Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University.

² *Rasporiazhenie* of the Government of the Russian Federation of 29 November 2014 No. 2403-r "Ob utverzhdenii Osnov gosudarstvennoi molodezhnoi politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii na period do 2025 goda"/On the Approval of the Fundamentals of State Youth Policy of the Russian Federation for the Period up to 2025, reproduced in the database of Russian legislation 'Consultant Plus', available at: <http://www.consultant.ru/>.

³ Official website of the Russian Federal State Statistics Service, available at: <http://www.gks.ru> (last retrieved 30 March 2019).

⁴ The territorial body of the Federal State Statistics Service in the Kaliningrad Region, in: the Kaliningrad Region in numbers 2018. A brief statistical compilation. The official publication, p. 25.

⁵ O.N. Liubina, *Gosudarstvennaia molodezhnaia politika: osobennosti realizatsii i otrazhenie v gosudarstvennykh programmakh Rossiiskoi Federatsii i goroda Moskvy*/ State youth policy: features of

Nowadays the Kaliningrad Region is a rapidly developing area in the Russian Federation. In this regard, Kaliningrad is becoming one of the main hubs of internal Russian migration. A favorable ecology, rich cultural heritage, mild climate, proximity to EU countries are the main factors attracting residents from other regions of Russia. In connection with the above-mentioned facts, building a competent youth policy is a key task for the further sustainable development of the Kaliningrad Region.

2. Programs and Activities Supporting Youth in the Kaliningrad Region

2.1 General Remarks

At the regional level, the implementation of the state youth policy is conducted by the Agency for Youth Affairs of the Kaliningrad Region, which is a part of the government of the Kaliningrad Region. Under the auspices of this agency, a variety of activities supporting young people has been implemented:

- Supporting youth initiatives; implementing various projects and programs, such as 'We are Russians' and 'The Train of Memory', etc.;
- Providing support for youth, i.e. by granting awards and scholarships to youth (the scholarship of the Governor of the Kaliningrad Region for gifted children and talented young people) or supporting young families;
- Supporting non-profit organizations for young people;
- The sessions of advisory bodies include young people, such as the Council of Young Scientists and Specialists of Kaliningrad; supporting the activities of the youth government of the Kaliningrad Region.⁶

2.2 Youth-targeted Programs

2.2.1 Educational and cultural programs

The International Youth Forum 'Baltic Artek' is the main educational event for young people in the Kaliningrad Region. This forum is conducted for young people between 16 and 30 years of age. The main objectives of the Forum are to enhance youth initiatives and involve youth in public life. During the Forum, training, conferences, round tables, and lectures are held.

The main projects for familiarizing children and youth of the Kaliningrad Region with the history and culture of Russia are 'We are Russians' and 'Train of Memory'. Schoolchildren and youth travel to other regions of Russia along thematic routes, e.g. the cities of the Golden Ring, Moscow, Saint Petersburg, the 'hero-cities' of the Great Patriotic War.

2.2.2 International programs

Due to its favorable geographical position, the Kaliningrad Region has ample opportunities for developing cooperation with its neighboring countries, i.e., Poland and Lithuania. This co-

implementation and reflection in the state programs of the Russian Federation and the city of Moscow, in: *Upravlenie*. 2017. No. 1 (15). P. 55.

⁶ Official website of the Agency for Youth Affairs of the Kaliningrad Region, available at: <http://molod39.ru> (last retrieved 1 April 2019).

operation also includes youth policy. At present, the following programs are conducted at the international level:

- The cross-border cooperation program Lithuania–Russia for the period 2014–2020 is jointly funded by the European Union and the Russian Federation. The program was developed within the framework of the European Neighborhood Instrument and the national legislation of Lithuania and Russia. As students of the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University, the authors, regard it as a positive development that our university won a grant in the Cross-Border Cooperation Program ‘Lithuania-Russia 2014–2020’ within this framework. The activities covered by this grant aim at organizing interactive tourist workshops on the construction of ancient fishing vessels, music festivals, typical of the Curonian Lagoon region. Moreover, within the framework of this program, a delegation from the Kaliningrad Region participated in a partner conference on youth policy within the framework of the international project CaSYPoT. These activities provide opportunities for students for implementing their own ideas and realizing their potential.
- The Poland-Russia Cross-Border Cooperation Program 2014–2020. The purpose of this program is to support cross-border cooperation in the social, environmental, economic and institutional fields. Thus, within the framework of this program, young people from the Kaliningrad Region from the age of 16 to 18 can participate in the annual competition, organized by *Województwo warmińsko-mazurskie*, the Warminsko-Mazursky territory of Poland. The Festival of Polish Culture is also held in the Kaliningrad Region, the main goal of which is to promote Polish culture, tourism and education.

2.3 Programs for the Social Support of Young Families

In addition, the program ‘Young Family’ operates in the Kaliningrad Region. According to this program, young families who require housing can receive a social subsidy in the amount of 30% of the average cost of housing (for families without children) or 35% for families or single-parent families with at least one child. Moreover, this program may involve families where the age of both spouses does not exceed 35.⁷

2.4 Advisory Bodies Comprised of Youth

Formally, young people can practice participation in decision-making via such channels as youth councils, youth parliaments, or youth chambers. For instance, the main aim of the Youth Parliament under the aegis of the State Duma of the Russian Federation is to promote the activities of the State Duma in the field of legislative regulation of the rights and legitimate

⁷ *Postanovlenie* of the Government of the Russian Federation of 17 December 2010 No. 1050 ““O realizatsii otchel'nykh meropriyatii gosudarstvennoi programmy Rossiiskoi Federatsii "Obespechenie dostupnym i komfortnym zhil'em i kommunal'nymi uslugami grazhdan Rossiiskoi Federatsii"”/On the implementation of individual measures of the state program of the Russian Federation ‘Providing affordable and comfortable housing and utilities services to citizens of the Russian Federation’, reproduced in the database of Russian legislation ‘Consultant Plus’, available at: <http://www.consultant.ru/>.

interests of young people.⁸ Interestingly, similar goals are provided by the youth parliaments of the Republic of Kazakhstan⁹ and a number of other CIS countries, since Russia's model of youth work, having originated in the Soviet Union, is used in the post-Soviet era. Yet there are no working mechanisms of addressing youth opinion expressed within the framework of the said advisory bodies during the actual decision-making process. Moreover, the nature of these bodies is intermediate or 'state-public' in the sense that these organs are set up in a top-down system that does represent the grass-roots channels for participation. Finally, one of the problems related to such bodies is that in most cases, they duplicate the functions of other corresponding bodies found in state and local government.¹⁰

2.5 Supporting Youth NGOs

Nevertheless, the main purposes of the state youth policy center on the following: promoting the social, cultural, spiritual and physical development of youth; eliminating age discrimination of young citizens; creating conditions for a more complete inclusion of young people in socio-economic, political and cultural life. The Charter of the All-Russian public organization 'The Russian Union of Youth' (RUY) establishes that the purpose of this organization is to achieve a comprehensive development of young people and the protection of the legitimate interests and rights of youth.¹¹ However, youth associations that exist in the states of the European Union, while cooperating with the state, still retain a solid level of independence, their position not being intermediately 'state-public' in nature.¹² For instance, the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life provides that "local and regional authorities should develop the Council of Europe co-management principle and system of decision-making in partnership with young people and youth organisations in policy areas of relevance to young people. It is important that where such co-management structures are put in place, young people and youth organisations are respected as full partners and also have the choice not to participate if they so wish" (Section II.7, par. 53).

3. Problems of Normative Regulation of Youth Policy

The process of official rethinking of the fundamental principles of youth policy began in the 1990s. This period, following the collapse of the USSR, witnessed the adoption of the principal federal legal acts in the area of state youth policy, which are still valid today.

⁸ Official website of the World Youth Foundation, available at: <http://www.mprf.ru/parliament> (last retrieved 14 April 2019).

⁹ Official website of the Kazakhstan Youth Congress, available at: <https://www.zhascongress.kz> (last retrieved 14 April 2019).

¹⁰ N. Liubutov, *Gosudarstvenno-obshchestvennye ob'edineniia: problemy pravovogo statusa*/Public enterprises: problems of legal status, in: *Sovremennoe parvo*. 2010. No 12.

¹¹ Official website of the Russian Union of Youth, available at: <http://www.ruy.ru/organization/charter> (last retrieved 14 April 2019).

¹² A.V. Sokolov, *Sovremennye instituty molodezhnoi politiki v Evrope: istoriia stanovleniia i razvitiia*/Modern institutions of youth policy in Europe: history of formation and development, in: *Biulleten' mezhdunarodnykh organizatsii: obrazovanie, nauka, novaia ekonomika*. 2009. N 1 (23).

Nowadays, youth policy in Russia is a set of targeted programs and projects addressed to youth as a special group amidst the processes of strengthening the regulatory role of the modern state. Yet all major priorities of these programs and policy vectors should be followed not only at the federal, but also at the regional level. Otherwise, youth policy risks becoming ineffective, since it will not affect all spheres of life of the young generation.

Hence, in the Russian Federation, there are two levels of implementing youth policy, i.e., federal and regional levels. At the federal level, the rules are mainly concentrated in a system of subordinate legislation, coupled with their implementation by federal and regional governmental bodies.¹³ The system of subordinate legislation on youth policy is rooted in the provisions of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, federal laws, and secondary legislation.

The Constitution of the Russian Federation defines the types and main directions of state policy, including those of youth policy. On the basis of clause (e) of Article 71 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the competence of the Russian Federation includes establishing the foundations of federal policy and federal programs in the fields of state, economic, environmental, social, cultural and national development of the Russian Federation.¹⁴

Particular attention should be paid to the fact that the Federal legislation does not contain any federal law on youth, which would standardize the norms regarding youth policy. Yet several other federal laws, such as, e.g., as the Federal Law of 28 June 1995 No. 98-FZ 'On State Support of Youth and Children's Public Associations', the Federal Law of 24 July 1998 No. 124-FZ 'On Basic Guarantees of the Rights of the Child in the Russian Federation' include provisions on the rights of young people. In addition to these laws, youth policy is regulated by separate provisions in the federal laws 'On Non-Profit Organizations', 'On Employment in the Russian Federation', 'On Education in the Russian Federation', 'On Public Associations', 'On Advertising', 'On Mass Media'.

The adoption of federal law on youth issues would, in our opinion, help to mainstream this area in the realm of public policy. Safina R. Suleymanova, a Russian researcher, quotes in her article the statement by an authoritative Russian constitutionalist Oleg E. Kutafin, who writes: "The essential areas of the life of society should not remain untouched by law, where other acts could intrude, grow there and replace these laws".¹⁵ Therefore, the absence of basic definitions, such as 'young citizens', 'youth work', or 'state youth policy' in federal legislation creates serious difficulties in implementing youth policy by the Government of the Russian Federation and public authorities of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation. This observation is also relevant for local authorities, who also implement programs and activities targeting youth.

The said issues in legal regulation lead to inconsistencies in subordinate legislation regulating the bulk of the youth policy of the Russian Federation. Thus, in the Russian Federation, there are two

¹³ T.V. Sheludiakova, *Urovni realizatsii gosudarstvennoi molodezhnoi politiki v Rossii: problemy razgranicheniia polnomochii*/Levels of implementation of the state youth policy in Russia: problems of delimitation of powers, in: *Gosudarstvennaia valst' i mestnoe samoupravlenie*. 2017. No 8.

¹⁴ Constitution of the Russian Federation, adopted on 12 December 1993, with subsequent amendments, the most recent amendment of 21 July 2014, reproduced in the database of Russian legislation 'Consultant Plus', available at: <http://www.consultant.ru>.

¹⁵ S.R. Suleymanova, *Problema sootnosheniia federal'nogo i regional'nogo zakonodatel'stva Rossiiskoi Federatsii v sfere gosudarstvennoi molodezhnoi politiki*/The Problem of Correlation of Federal and Regional Legislation of the Russian Federation in the Area of state Youth Policy, in: *Iurist*, 2016, No 8.

parallel acts of subordinate legislation on youth policy, i.e., the Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of 29 November 2014 No. 2403-p 'On the Approval of the Fundamentals of State Youth Policy of the Russian Federation for the Period up to 2025',¹⁶ and the Resolution of the Supreme Council of the Russian Federation of 3 June 1993 No. 5090-1 'On the Main Directions of the State Youth Policy in the Russian Federation', which is still in force.¹⁷ The conflict between these acts centers on using different scope for similar terms, e.g., youth or young family and establishing different principles and even goals of youth policy, as well as the mechanisms of its implementation.

4. Legal Regulation of Youth Policy in Kaliningrad Region

The youth policy in the Kaliningrad Region is implemented on the basis of the Law of the Kaliningrad Region of 28 January 2000 No. 169 'On State Youth Policy in the Kaliningrad Region' and the Resolution of the Government of the Kaliningrad Region of 24 January 2014 No. 22 'The State Program of the Kaliningrad Region "Youth"'. The 2000 Law 'On State Youth Policy in the Kaliningrad Region' establishes the following priorities of implementing youth policy in the region:

- Supporting social initiatives of youth and the activities of youth public associations;
- Restoration of facilities and development of the infrastructure of the youth activities;
- Providing support for talented youth;
- Creating conditions for providing housing for young families;
- Pursuing educational and recreational activities in the summer;
- Supporting the goals and activities of youth labour groups;
- Promoting the development of volunteer activities among young people¹⁸

According to the authors of this review, these priority areas cannot fully contribute to effective support of young people becoming independent adults since the major problem of youth as a social group, as we see it, is the initial confrontation with working life and the need to support oneself.

Young people, according to the definition of the 2000 Law of the Kaliningrad Region, are persons between 14 and 30 years of age, who appear to be less interested in participating in the

¹⁶ *Rasporiazhenie* of the Government of the Russian Federation of 29 November 2014 No. 2403-r "Ob utverzhdenii Osnov gosudarstvennoi molodezhnoi politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii na period do 2025 goda"/On the Approval of the Fundamentals of State Youth Policy of the Russian Federation for the Period up to 2025, reproduced in the database of Russian legislation 'Consultant Plus', available at: <http://www.consultant.ru>.

¹⁷ *Postanovlenie* of the Supreme Council of the Russian Federation of 3 June 1993 No. 5090-1 "Ob Osnovnykh napravleniiakh gosudarstvennoi molodezhnoi politiki v Rossiiskoi Federatsii"/On the Main Directions of the State Youth Policy in the Russian Federation, reproduced in the database of Russian legislation 'Consultant Plus', available at: <http://www.consultant.ru>.

¹⁸ *Zakon* of Kaliningrad Region of 28 January 2000 No. 169 "O gosudarstvennoi molodezhnoi politike v Kaliningradskoi oblasti"/On State Youth Policy in the Kaliningrad Region, reproduced in the database of Russian legislation 'Consultant Plus', available at: <http://www.consultant.ru>, information bank 'Kaliningrad Region'.

movement of youth labour groups in order to start their professional life or careers. In the opinion of the authors, more attention should be paid to vocational guidance and training, which could help the youth in both making the choice of a future career path and being successful in the labour market. At the same time, the problem of obtaining employment and becoming independent is dealt with in state-targeted programs implemented in the territory of the Kaliningrad Region.

One of the important mechanisms for implementing youth policy is foreseen in the Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of 7 December 2001 No. 866 'On the Federal Target Program for the Development of the Kaliningrad Region for the Period up to 2020'. Ensuring an integrated and sustainable socio-economic development of the Kaliningrad Region is the goal of the Program. Yet this document mentions only a small part of those youth policy objectives set forth by the above-mentioned Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of 29 November 2014 'On the Approval of the Fundamentals of State Youth Policy of the Russian Federation for the Period up to 2025'. The Kaliningrad program provides for the necessity of implementing activities related to youth policy, including the organization of excursions and educational trips for children and youth of the Kaliningrad Region to other subjects of the Russian Federation. Among the anticipated results of the program are:

- ensuring access of children and youth to high-quality modern educational and cultural services;
- development of youth tourism;
- familiarizing children and youth of the Kaliningrad Region with Russian cultural and historical values and providing opportunities to visit historical and cultural centers as well as memorials¹⁹

Similar problems can be observed in the State program of the Kaliningrad Region 'Youth', approved by the Decree of the Government of the Kaliningrad Region of 24 January 2014 No. 22. The objectives of the said program are:

- ensuring effective management of implementing state youth policy;
- creating mechanisms to promote enterprising and talented youth, as well as involving young people in social activities ;
- improving the system of civil-patriotic education, formation of legal, cultural, moral and family values among young people in the Kaliningrad Region.²⁰

In general, one can say that the state programs operating in the Kaliningrad Region have, to a great extent, an educational and patriotic orientation while at the same time stimulating youth tourism, volunteering, and social activity. On the other hand, they pay less attention to real-life problems occurring when young people enter adulthood.

¹⁹ *Postanovlenie* of the Government of the Russian Federation of 7 December 2001 No. 866 "O Federal'noi tselevoi programme razvitiia Kaliningradskoi oblasti na period do 2020 goda"/On the Federal Target Program of Development of the Kaliningrad Region for the Period up to 2020, reproduced in the database of Russian legislation 'Consultant Plus', available at: <http://www.consultant.ru>.

²⁰ *Postanovlenie* of the Government of the Kaliningrad Region of 4 January 2014 No 22 "O Gosudarstvennoi programme Kaliningradskoi oblasti "Molodezh"/On the State Program of the Kaliningrad Region 'Youth', reproduced in the database of Russian legislation 'Consultant Plus', available at: <http://www.consultant.ru>, information bank 'Kaliningrad Region'.

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The Status of Youth in the Labour Market in Saint Petersburg: Measures of Public Support and Their Implementation

*Iulia Gorokhova*¹

The Employment Service of Saint Petersburg has been in operation since 1991. Nowadays it includes 18 district agencies. All services are available free of charge at any of these agencies.

The Employment Service of Saint Petersburg remains among the key actors in the labour market relationships. Mediation between potential employers and job seekers remains the principal, yet not the only purpose of this Service. Students, graduates, young mothers, parents with many children, retirees, persons with disabilities and other individuals belonging to vulnerable groups are among the many clients who receive special support in job seeking. Moreover, the Employment Service provides support for young specialists. Finally, the most active and enterprising individuals with ambitious ideas obtain assistance with starting up their own businesses.

As for the statistical data, the following numbers show how many graduates of the institutions for higher and secondary education approached the Centers of Employment Services during 2016–2018:

1. in 2016, 1,353 individuals contacted the Employment Service, of which 25% were employed (or 338 individuals).
2. in 2017, the number of job seekers diminished to 1,251 individuals, yet 33% of the applicants still found employment (or 412 individuals).
3. in 2018, the number decreased still to 1,075 individuals, of which 37.9% found employment (or 408 individuals). 72 individuals opted for obtaining additional competences via training to acquire a new profession (80%) and training to improve the skills (20%).

Touching upon the issue of education of those applicants who were looking for jobs through the Employment Service in 2018, the job seekers were mostly those graduates with both professional and higher education. Those who obtained professional education belonged to the following fields: car-technicians, specialists in computer systems and programming, nurses, specialists in economics and accounting, service engineers and equipment operators, and specialists in construction and operation of buildings and structures. Applicants with higher education received degrees in the following areas: management, economics, pedagogical education, state and municipal management, advertising and public relations, law, landscape architecture, psychology, ecology and environmental management.

¹ The Employment Office of Saint Petersburg, Director.

Traditionally in Saint Petersburg, experts from such areas as industry, transport, IT, medicine and pharmaceuticals, education, service industry, and construction are in great demand. City organizations are continually in need of programmers, economists, quality inspectors, doctors, nurses, welding engineers, design engineers, teachers, craftsmen, CNC machine operators (computer numerical control), electricians for repair and maintenance of electrical equipment. The said implies that graduates who obtained education in these fields have greater opportunities for quick employment after graduation.

Moreover, employers in Saint Petersburg often impose additional qualification requirements on jobseekers, depending on the field. Such requirements are, for instance, knowledge of Chinese, Thai, Portuguese, or Latvian languages. The employers give preference to specialists with a high-profile engineering background and to those who are competent users of such computer programs as AutoCAD, AutoCAD Civil 3D.

The Employment Service is active in working with young people. Since young people tend to seek jobs via the internet, the Service places great emphasis on developing the portal r21.spb.ru. The following are among the key advantages of the said portal r21.spb.ru:

- simple procedure of registering one's personal account vial the SNILS, which is used in Russia as a personal identification number or via entry to the portal through the all-Russia portal of public services;
- possibility of posting one's own CV;
- simple procedure of responding to job vacancies;
- possibility of direct communication with the employer;
- all employers are officially verified;
- great number of vacancies published monthly, around 8,500 vacancies;
- great number of registered employers, totalling 2,230;
- around 130 views of the CVs daily.

Moreover, the portal allows the users to find information on temporary employment, e.g. the procedure for employment and the information about the required package of documents). The portal also hosts video excursion tours around the enterprises in the city as well as virtual interactive layouts of workplaces.

When visiting the Saint Petersburg portal specializing in vocational and professional orientation for citizens (<http://pkp.r21.spb.ru/>), one can undergo electronic testing, which helps to determine one's own direction for pursuing a career and education.

Since many persons become employed after internships or with the help of the university employment services and policies, the clients of the Employment Services are often those who experience difficulties in finding jobs themselves. The Service, hence, offers professional guidance, advice on social and psychological adaptation or vocational training for graduates. In order to use such services, one has to obtain the official status of an unemployed person. The popularity of services on social adaptation to the labour market is due to the fact that many graduates lack skills

in self-presentation and cannot compose convincing CVs. The latter aspects often suffice to outweigh the lack of work experience. In 2016, 391 young citizens benefited from this service on social adaptation, and in 2017, this number increased to 468. Service on social adaptation focuses primarily on the following: increasing self-confidence, assisting career-planning, adequate assessment of skills and qualifications, taking into account the existing requirements of the labour market, and shaping one's business image.

Yet training can be completed without registering as unemployed. In 2018, the following training themes were offered: 'Increasing Motivation to Work for Previously Unemployed Individuals', 'Reasons to Work', 'Techniques of Planning and Implementing a Professional Career', 'Development of Skills in Constructive Communication', 'How to Achieve Goals', 'Planning a Professional Career', 'The Techniques of Success during a Job Interview', 'How to Gain Inspiration to Find a Job', 'Methods of Art Therapy', 'The Art of Being Yourself', and 'Strategy of Finding a Job'.

Within the framework of vocational training programs, one can find an opportunity to improve or even to change one's qualifications. In 2016, 711 young citizens used this service, and in 2018 491 individuals. Changing one's qualification is more popular. In 2018, this service was provided for 328 individuals.

Table 1. *Information on working with young people from 18 to 30 years of age*

| Young people 18 to 30 years of age | 2016 | | 2017 | | 2018 (as of 11.12.2018) | |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | Number of persons | Percentage of youth seeking a job | Number of persons | Percentage of youth seeking a job | Number of persons | Percentage of youth seeking a job |
| Used job seeking services | 21516 | - | 19655 | - | 18543 | - |
| Registered as unemployed | 5630 | 26,2% | 4729 | 24,1% | 4106 | 22,1% |
| Became employed | 9439 | 43,9% | 8752 | 44,5% | 9138 | 49,3% |
| Sent to obtain further training | 722 | 3,4% | 578 | 2,9% | 518 | 2,8% |
| Sent to training for changing one's profession | 82 | 0,4% | 78 | 0,4% | 85 | 0,5% |
| Completed training for changing profession | 515 | 2,4% | 386 | 2,0% | 328 | 1,8% |
| Completed training on enhancing one's qualification | 114 | 0,5% | 108 | 0,5% | 78 | 0,4% |

| | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Found employment after training | 305 | 1,4% | 341 | 1,7% | 249 | 1,3% |
| Started community service | 400 | 1,9% | 463 | 2,4% | 659 | 3,6% |
| Started temporary employment for individuals experiencing difficulties in finding job | 81 | 0,4% | 85 | 0,4% | 106 | 0,6% |
| Obtained services: on professional orientation | 8142 | 37,8% | 7530 | 38,3% | 7443 | 40,1% |
| Obtained services: on psychological support | 347 | 1,6% | 436 | 2,2% | 395 | 2,1% |
| Obtained services on social adaptation | 391 | 1,8% | 475 | 2,4% | 468 | 2,5% |
| Obtained training in self-employment | 144 | 0,7% | 123 | 0,6% | 174 | 0,9% |
| Obtained information services | 19754 | 91,8% | 16696 | 84,9% | 15592 | 84,1% |

Event-organizing is another youth work channel used by the Employment Service. Every autumn a 'Fair of Professions' is organized for teenagers. This is a unique event for secondary and high school students, as well as for first-year students of colleges and universities, where existing educational programs are presented and discussion of career choices are held. This allows young people to better understand their abilities and choose a suitable way for future development. This interactive program includes group counselling by psychologists on career issues and presentations by speakers who are popular among young people, both helping to elucidate communicative and leadership qualities. This event tells young individuals how to approach the process of choosing profession, what one should pay attention to when making a decision on applying to specific educational institutions, and what professions are expected to be in demand in the labour market. In a separate premise, the visitors can take part in business games and intellectual quizzes, allowing them to gain experience in new situations. Finally, at the 'Fair of Professions', the school children have a chance to ask questions to the representatives of universities and colleges on, e.g., how to prepare oneself for entering a particular educational institution, what are the entrance requirements and when do the universities open their doors for visitors in order to familiarize the latter with the respective institutions.

Moreover, on 2 June 2018 at the Peter and Paul Fortress in Saint Petersburg, a special job fair for young people was held for the second time in a new format. This was the Youth Career Forum. More than 60 educational institutions and employers in Saint Petersburg from various industries and fields presented internship programs and programs for university students during the Forum. That five-hour long event attracted about 5,000 visitors, who received information from employers in order to gain new knowledge and take part in master classes and quizzes. Enterprises and institutions from various sectors sent their representatives to the Forum, e.g. the finance sector, the production of household appliances, transportation, information technology, trade, etc. In total, the prospective employers received 900 application forms for internships and jobs. Moreover, 151 individuals of those who were seeking jobs used the so-called express-selection service and received 1,832 consultations on vacancies. During the Forum, eight interactive working zones were organized where various seminars, training sessions, employers' presentations, and master classes took place. In short, about 200 individuals used the professional testing service devised by psychologists in the zone entitled 'Professional Orientation'. In this zone, the seminars organized by the Employment Service and their psychologists enjoyed great success among the youth. About 350 people visited these seminars.

Working with persons with disabilities is another prioritized area of the Employment Service. Since 2016, 158 graduates completed special internships for persons with disabilities under the aegis of the Service. Such internship programs have been implemented since 2016, helping to refine the skills acquired at the college or university, the result of which significantly increased the opportunities of persons with disabilities to remain employed after their internship. The percentage of such persons who remain employed after their internship varies annually: in 2017 42% of those who participated in an internship remained employed, in 2016 this number reached 38%, and in 2015 this number dropped down to 22%.

Table 2. *Information on working with young persons with disabilities, aged 18 to 30 years*

| Young persons with disabilities 18 to 30 years of age | 2016 | | 2017 | | 2018 (as of 11.12.2018) | |
|---|-------------------|--|-------------------|--|----------------------------|--|
| | Number of persons | Percentage of total number of young persons using job-seeking services | Number of persons | Percentage of total number of young persons using job-seeking services | Number of persons | Percentage of total number of young persons using job - seeking services |
| Used job-seeking services | 783 | - | 838 | - | 915 | - |
| Registered as unemployed | 552 | 70,5% | 552 | 65,9% | 553 | 60,4% |
| Became employed | 309 | 39,5% | 415 | 49,5% | 532 | 58,1% |
| Sent to training sessions for changing one's profession | 27 | 3,4% | 25 | 3,0% | 25 | 2,7% |
| Completed vocational training | 1 | 0,1% | 2 | 0,2% | 6 | 0,7% |
| Completed training for changing one's profession | 18 | 2,3% | 16 | 1,9% | 17 | 1,9% |

| | | | | | | |
|--|-----|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|
| Passed training on rising qualification | 7 | 0,9% | 5 | 0,6% | 2 | 0,2% |
| Got employed after vocational training | 4 | 0,5% | 7 | 0,8% | 4 | 0,4% |
| Started community services | 69 | 8,8% | 158 | 18,9% | 206 | 22,5% |
| Started temporary employment for individuals experiencing difficulties in finding jobs | 78 | 10,0% | 82 | 9,8% | 105 | 11,5% |
| Obtained services (assistance) in professional orientation | 263 | 33,6% | 311 | 37,1% | 366 | 40,0% |
| Obtained services (assistance) in psychological support | 51 | 6,5% | 80 | 9,5% | 69 | 7,5% |
| Obtained services (assistance) in social adaptation | 52 | 6,6% | 85 | 10,1% | 73 | 8,0% |
| Obtained services (assistance) in self-employment | 2 | 0,3% | 3 | 0,4% | 5 | 0,5% |
| Obtained information services | 625 | 79,8% | 758 | 90,5% | 892 | 97,5% |

Establishing ties with institutions for professional education is among the strategic objectives of the Employment Service. When working with youth, the Service pursues similar goals as those of the Career Services at educational institutions, i.e., to help individuals to find employment. The Service works with young people who had reached 14 years of age. For instance, after the program entitled 'Temporary Employment of Minors between 14 to 18 Years of Age during their Time Free from Studies', 12,477 underage individuals acquired more knowledge about working life and modern professions. We also help young professionals to find internships via the portal r21.spb.ru.

As for the areas of employment offering jobs for young people, whose work experience is less than three years, the leaders among such areas are the health care sector, the administrative sector, and the manufacturing sector. In addition, the employees of the Employment Services regularly attend educational institutions in order to conduct training for students, in order to help potential jobseekers draft a CV, learn more about the channels of finding work, and, in general, increase confidence in one's own skills and knowledge.