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Vocational Education in the System of Determinants of Reducing Youth Unemployment: Interregional Comparisons

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Abstract

The purpose of our research is to perform an empirical analysis of the factors affecting the reduction of youth unemployment in Russian regions and to assess the role of education. For statistical estimations we used regression models. The results of our study show that the rate of youth unemployment is influenced by the rate and structure of employment, the level of economic development of the region and the demographic structure of the region. We also found that vocational education reduces the risks of youth unemployment in Russian regions.

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1. Introduction

The high rate of youth unemployment in the regions of Russia, caused by both endogenous and exogenous factors, is one of the challenges of today hindering the modernization of the economy. Leading to greater social tension, the high rate of youth unemployment is a feature of not only Russian regions, but is observed in European countries as well. In a number of papers authors investigate the causes and factors of high unemployment rate and its duration across countries (Blanchard & Diamond, 1994; Machin & Manning, 1999). Some authors (Bean, 1994;

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Layard, Nickell & Jackman, 1991; Boeri & Terrell, 2002) believe that the qualifications and skills of people who stay out of job for a long time do not meet the requirements of new jobs.

It is important to take into account the factors on both the demand side and the supply side. On the one hand, the rate and structure of youth unemployment in Russian regions reflect the problems existing in the economy, its poor diversification limiting employment opportunities for graduates of universities and colleges. On the other hand, young people often have no opportunity to get vocational education because of the low income or lack of an adequate educational infrastructure in their region, and this also produces a considerable impact on the youth labor market. In the regions of Russia a significant part of the unemployed (44%) are those who do not have professional education, of which 32.8% have secondary (complete) general education, 10.1% - basic general education and 1.1% do not have basic general education, 16.4% have higher vocational education, 19.3% have secondary vocational education, 20.3% - basic vocational education (Trud i Zanatost v Rossii, 2013). It is important to bear in mind that the regional labor markets are heterogeneous, and that the rate of youth unemployment is influenced by specific regional factors. The currently existing interregional differences in the rate of youth unemployment are largely determined by the level of economic development of the region, the demographic structure of the population and the share of young people, the structure of jobs, and the availability of vocational education for young people.

The purpose of this study is to perform an empirical analysis of the factors affecting the reduction of youth unemployment in the regions of Russia, and to assess the impact of vocational education on the reduction of youth unemployment.

To do this, we perform the following research tasks:

- generate a typology of the Russian regions by the rate of youth unemployment;
- characterize the typological groups using the economic, demographic and social parameters;
- perform correlation and regression analyses of the baseline variables explaining the existing rate of youth unemployment in the different typological groups;
- make interregional comparisons and compare the impact of vocational education on the reduction of youth unemployment in each typological group.

We identified the most significant factors reducing youth unemployment in the regions of different types, and the impact of vocational education on the reduction of unemployment.

The object of our study is the unemployed aged 20-29 years with different levels of education. The research methods include regression models and factor analysis. The paper is organized as follows. In the second section we perform cluster analysis of the Russian regions by the rate of youth unemployment and characterize the selected groups. Assessing the regression models, in the third section we identify the factors affecting the reduction and growth of the rate of youth unemployment. The regression analysis is performed for all groups of regions separately and for Russia as a whole. Our findings and recommendations are presented in the summary section.

2. Methodology

2.1. Cluster analysis of the Russian regions

The Russian labour market is characterized by the high heterogeneity. We used cluster analysis to create relatively homogeneous groups of regions. The classification of the regions of Russia by the rate of unemployment among the young people aged 20-29 years is based on the data obtained from Federal State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation (Rosstat). In order to carry out a comparative analysis, we have calculated the average rate of unemployment for the age group 20-29 years in Russia. The regions are ranked by the degree to which their rates of youth unemployment differ from the Russian average (Rusanovskiy, Blinova & Bylina, 2014). The results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Russian regions classified by the rate of unemployment among the 20-29-year olds

No	Number of regions	Unemployment rate, %	Group members
1	3	more than 18.0	The Republics of Dagestan, Tyva, Chechnya
2	21	from 10.8	The Republics of Altai, Kabardino-Balkaria, Kalmikia, Karachayevo-Cherkesia, Sakha (Yakutia),

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