Submetido em: 15/10/2024 **Aprovado em:** 11/12/2024

ISSN: 2316-2880

REGULATION OF STATE YOUTH POLICY TO IMPLEMENT THE PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND MINIMIZING THE MANIFESTATION OF **ANTI-SOCIAL ACTIONS**

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ABSTRACT

Objective: In the contemporary context of the EAEU member states, the regulation of national youth policy aimed at promoting sustainable development principles and preventing antisocial behavior represents a pressing and significant challenge. This study aims to analyze the mechanisms of state regulation of youth policy as a means of implementing sustainable development principles and mitigating the risks associated with antisocial behavior among young people.

Methods: The study employed a mixed-methods research design combining a qualitative-quantitative thematic approach with expert surveys conducted across EAEU countries, supported by Kendall's concordance coefficient to assess consensus and rank key priorities in youth policy regulation.

Results: The article presents a conceptual overview of key theoretical constructs defining state youth policy (SYP) and examines widely adopted international models of interaction between the state and the youth sector. Drawing on the results of an expert survey, the research identifies current development priorities for SYP, outlines





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strategic directions and objectives of state regulation, and explores instruments for supporting youth initiatives.

Conclusion: The study concludes that strategic policy documents constitute the primary mechanism for implementing youth policy. The core priorities of SYP development are identified as: ensuring security, promoting youth health (with particular emphasis on the growing prevalence of bullying), and enhancing youth capabilities and integration. Key strategic directions for state regulation include fostering healthy lifestyles, facilitating youth employment, ensuring access to housing and affordable education, encouraging youth engagement in socio-political processes, and promoting youth integration within the EAEU framework.

Keywords: Bullying; State regulation; Youth policy; Health; Sustainable development

INTRODUCTION

One of the most complex and significant challenges in the formation of civil society is the development of state youth policy—the relationship between the state and youth (Yurchenko, Zavyalova, 2023). Youth constitute a strategic resource capable of ensuring the progressive development of the state and society. At present, the EAEU countries face the challenge of ensuring that young people can exercise their political, socio-economic, and cultural-spiritual rights through a system of guarantees that will help transform youth into an active participant in socio-economic processes (Akimov & Kadysheva, 2024; Volkov et al., 2024; Akhmetshin et al., 2024a; Baikov, 2024).

Over the past decades, youth policy in the EAEU countries has become an integral part of state policy and represents a comprehensive system of measures aimed at creating the necessary conditions for young people to make a conscious choice about their life paths. In addition to basic regulatory documents, a number of subordinate regulatory acts have been established in the EAEU countries, governing specific aspects of state youth policy, particularly: support for youth public organizations, employment facilitation, development of youth housing programs, and work with gifted youth, among others (Bodnaletova et al., 2022). To implement these measures, various strategies and national and regional target programs have been periodically developed (Lukov, 2013).

State youth policy (hereinafter referred to as SYP) as a complex and multidimensional phenomenon attracts the attention of researchers from various scientific fields. At the same time, the issue of regulating state youth policy for the





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implementation of sustainable development principles remains underexplored (Mutia et al., 2025; Vasilev et al., 2025).

Thus, the relevance of this article is determined by the stated problem, which consists of implementing the principles of sustainable development based on the regulation of state youth policy.

The aim of this article is to analyze the mechanisms of state regulation of youth policy for the implementation of sustainable development principles.

In this study, we addressed the following research questions:

- 1. What are the main priorities for the development of state youth policy at the present stage?
- 2. What should be the key strategic directions of state regulation of youth policy?
- 3. What mechanisms should be provided for sustainable state regulation in the field of youth initiative support?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

State Youth Policy: Concept and Substantive Characteristics

To define the concept, essence, characteristics, and content of state youth policy (SYP), it is advisable to briefly analyze the approaches developed in two dimensions: political science and sociology. Summarizing existing concepts in political science and sociology, three approaches to defining the concept and content of the categories "state youth policy" and "youth policy" can be distinguished.

Supporters of the first approach argue that youth policy is presented as a system of comprehensive and regular state activities towards youth, thereby denying or downplaying the significance of other, non-state types of youth policy (Eliseev, 2015; Zubok, 2016). This approach expands the boundaries of SYP by equating youth policy in general with state youth policy. According to Eliseev (2014), SYP covers all areas of youth life, includes all issues related to youth development and education, encompasses all socialization processes, and represents the totality of ideas about the place and role of youth in society and their implementation. SYP consists of the collective actions of all state and social institutions; however, each actor and social institution implements it differently, depending on their needs and capabilities, taking



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local conditions into account (Bratash, Emelyanenko, 2024; Abdullayev et al., 2024; Vasilev et al., 2025).

The second approach to studying youth policy (YP) is represented by researchers who favor non-state forms of youth policy present in society (Andersson, 2012; Wallace, 2014). From their perspective, YP refers to activities carried out by youth themselves, as well as the activities of other policy actors aimed at unlocking youth potential (Tawfig, 2025).

Ponomarev (2018: 138), developing the idea that youth policy consists of two components (one of which is SYP), suggests using a broader term for the second component: "public youth policy." This term refers to "the process and result of youth interaction with public and political movements (including youth movements), organizations, parties, self-organized and informal youth groups (including banned political and criminal structures). The actors of such policies may include entities outside the sovereignty of the state, such as international organizations, humanitarian foundations, and transnational corporations".

Rostovskaya (2018) identifies two types of non-state youth policy (YP) that pose significant challenges to society. The first is asocial youth policy, which emerges from the activities of political forces that engage with young people while promoting goals and values that significantly diverge from societal norms. This type of policy has a distinctly anti-social character. The second is asystemic youth policy, which is directly opposed to the state and its institutions, particularly the system of state youth policy. Due to its covert nature, this type of policy can pose serious threats to young people and contribute to instability.

Supporters of the third approach distinguish between "state youth policy" and "youth policy," identifying state youth policy as the core of youth policy. Kibanov (2016) was among the first to define youth policy as a broader concept that includes policies implemented by all state structures, social institutions, and organizations - i.e., the actors involved in youth policy.

Corporate youth policy (conducted by enterprises and institutions) is more characteristic of countries with a well-developed private sector, where corporations, recognizing their social responsibility and possessing economic capabilities, integrate youth policy into their activities (Rosanti et al., 2024). Such policies are most commonly implemented through a lifetime employment system, in which companies incentivize employees to contribute maximally to their work by offering various social benefits such



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as pension plans, partial coverage of medical and recreational expenses, access to physical education and sports (Gladilina et al., 2018) facilities, organization of mass sports events, and support for talented youth (Zinurova & Tuzikov, 2012). This policy is designed not only to fulfill youth's social, spiritual, and physical needs for developing their labor potential (Soekamto et al., 2022; Zentsova, 2024; Mambetova et al., 2024) but also to promote their successful socialization and self-realization.

Unlike other actors, the state has the ability to base its youth policy on law and legislation. The government apparatus can use both incentives and coercion to achieve its goal—forming a young generation that ensures societal and state progress (Asankulov, 2015; Mohanty & Rath, 2024). The normative definition of SYP is based on the thesis that this area of state activity is a systemic phenomenon. Since SYP is a complex system, its analysis can be conducted through various approaches (Komarova, 2019).

Trufanova (2018), after analyzing the SYP system from a legal science perspective, suggests applying two approaches: the regulatory approach and the component approach. Based on the regulatory approach, the researcher identifies two blocks: theoretical and practical. According to her, the theoretical block includes the formation of SYP through constitutional and legal means (Constitution, laws, and subordinate regulatory legal acts), while the practical block encompasses the forms of implementation of these acts (compliance, application, execution, and enforcement).

Applying the component approach allowed Trufanova (2018) to identify four components: institutional, regulatory-political, functional, and cultural-ideological.

- The institutional component includes the actors implementing SYP, namely: government authorities, local self-government bodies, public organizations, political parties, and youth itself (Cornejo-Paredes, 2024).
- The regulatory-political component consists of legal and regulatory acts that govern SYP and the youth socialization process.
- The functional component includes the forms and directions of activities carried out by authorized bodies and the methods used in SYP implementation.
- The cultural-ideological component reflects the values and priorities of the state and society (Shkhagapsoev, 2024).

Most researchers agree that the state is the primary actor in the implementation of youth policy (YP) and, accordingly, performs functions inherent to it alone, particularly:





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- 1. Institutionalizing the value orientations of modern youth, which should be legally established and fixed in fundamental legal acts, strategies, and programs, while promoting these values through mass media (Eliseev & Kretov, 2019; Klyukovskaya et al., 2023). A key aspect of state policy is structuring the interests and values of various population groups and seeking compromises among them, as final decisions should not provoke conflicts (Zainicheva, 2015; Abdullah et al., 2024; Semenova, Lazutova, 2024). Only the state can perform this function.
- 2. Regulating the legal framework for the activities and interactions of various actors involved in SYP (Kochetkov, 2010).
- 3. Coordinating efforts among all government agencies, political parties, organizations, associations, movements, and social institutions to create conditions for youth development and self-realization (Valeeva, 2020; Al-Sarraf & Hassan, 2024).
- 4. Ensuring guaranteed social, economic, and political conditions for youth socialization, protecting young members of society from social exclusion, and providing them with opportunities for social integration based on the principles of social solidarity and security (Babosova, 2015).
- 5. Social protection for youth groups that can independently address their problems or at least mitigate them (Ysmanova, 2014).

The implementation of SYP involves many actors with different legal statuses and varying capacities to influence the youth policy framework (Letova, 2024). This influence targets youth living conditions, the youth movement, and young families. The system of SYP actors consists of two groups:

- Authorities with legal powers, including government bodies, local selfgovernment agencies, and state institutions.
- Non-governmental actors, including youth, public organizations, youth NGOs, and student self-government bodies (Krotov, 2017).

The first group of actors shapes SYP by adopting legal and regulatory acts that define the principles, goals, and directions of youth policy, as well as the powers of government bodies and the legal status of other stakeholders.

The second group of actors has the right to participate in SYP development and implementation by engaging in consultations with government bodies, conducting public monitoring, and participating in the execution of social programs for youth (Krotov, 2017; Basko et al., 2024).



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The implementation of regional and local youth policy depends on national-level youth policy, as decisions made at the national level require implementation at all levels following established norms and regulations. The need for regional and local SYP implementation stems from the necessity to address youth transition challenges, which are often encountered at the beginning of adulthood (Pomelova, 2017). Consequently, regional and local youth policy is particularly important, as it directly tackles youthrelated issues and creates conditions for their social development and integration.

However, the mechanism for implementing SYP at regional and local levels must not only align with national interests but also consider regional-specific factors. such as geographical, socio-economic, and demographic characteristics of municipalities. Therefore, one of the key objectives of regional and local SYP is to harmonize national interests with the local needs of young people (Mezhina & Vasilieva, 2016). The practical implementation of regional SYP must account for regional traditions and differences, varying policy directions, diverse forms and methods of work, and resource availability (personnel, financial, and material support). However, these regional variations do not alter the core principles and objectives of SYP (Pomelova, 2017).

A critical factor for SYP success is the proper formulation of its objectives. Simply stating what the policy is aimed at is not enough—it is essential to clearly define the expected outcomes across different areas. Additionally, policy objectives should be publicly disclosed, so that both those implementing the policy and those affected by it can understand and support it (Evstratova, 2018).

Since youth policy addresses a wide range of issues, the activities of its actors naturally overlap with various other state policies, such as social, educational, humanitarian, and family policies. The strongest interconnections are observed between youth policy and social policy, as many SYP directions focus on resolving social issues affecting youth (Zubok et al., 2021).

However, viewing SYP solely as a subset of social policy is a mistaken approach. Unlike social policy, which often employs compensatory measures, youth policy requires stimulating methods to encourage development. Modern social policy primarily targets vulnerable youth groups, leaving talented youth and those with untapped potential overlooked. SYP, as an independent direction of state policy, should serve as a systematic effort by the state in collaboration with other stakeholders to support the socialization and self-realization of all youth groups.



Global Models for Regulating State-Youth Relations

The practical implementation of youth policy (YP) in a specific country is influenced by many societal factors, particularly the political system and the corresponding social policies. This has led to the formation of numerous theoretical models based on the practical experience of different countries in implementing YP. Researchers have summarized a significant number of common and distinctive features, which have been grouped into corresponding classifications.

Overall, three models of state-youth relations regulation can be identified in global practice (Chevalier, 2016; Rodríguez-García et al., 2024):

- 1. A model where the state does not recognize youth as a distinct social group. In this model, youth are only subject to the same rights, freedoms, and responsibilities as ordinary citizens. This approach is characteristic of the American model of youth policy, where youth legislation is typically absent.
- 2. A model in which the regulation focuses on public relations arising from the creation of legal, socio-economic, and organizational mechanisms for realizing the rights, freedoms, and responsibilities of youth who find themselves in difficult life circumstances (e.g., youth with disabilities, youth exhibiting deviant behavior, etc.). This model is implemented in Western European countries.
- 3. A model in which the regulation focuses on public relations concerning the creation of legal, socio-economic, and organizational mechanisms for realizing the rights, freedoms, and responsibilities of young individuals as both citizens and as a distinct social group. This is the Scandinavian model.

These models define the presence or absence of special legislation regulating the relationship between the state, civil society, and youth, as well as the scope and subject matter of such regulation (Sidorov, 2020).

Despite certain achievements in funding, expanding legal and institutional frameworks, and improving the effectiveness and transparency of SYP, many pressing issues in this field remain unresolved.

First, in several countries, youth policy is handled by Ministries of Youth Affairs, which have limited political power and resources. At the same time, sectoral ministries typically operate independently of youth-related issues, failing to consider them in their decision-making. In some cases, institutional gaps between legislative and executive bodies (e.g., ministries of youth affairs and youth commissions) further exacerbate





these shortcomings. Such fragmentation negatively impacts all stages of SYP development, leading to weaknesses in monitoring and overall policy effectiveness. These challenges are primarily due to the absence of a macroeconomic youth policy integrated into national development plans, gaps in defining funding allocations, and a lack of adequate institutional capacity (Zhanabekov, 2013).

Second, in many countries, the participation of public youth organizations in addressing youth-related issues is dismissed or restricted. Some governments believe that youth cannot be included in governance processes or that their involvement would be ineffective. Consequently, opportunities for youth participation in governance are limited, while many youth organizations lack financial resources and fail to coordinate their activities effectively (Lukichev, 2014).

Addressing these issues is not only essential for adopting relevant legal measures but also for ensuring that youth are recognized as a crucial force in social development. Therefore, the legal, political, and economic conditions for youth organizations must be continuously improved to support their public and civic functions (Tsionik, 2017).

Third, the lack of accurate and reliable data on youth and the absence of comparative studies on youth-related changes within and between countries remains a major barrier to YP development. Limited research on specific youth issues further hinders the creation of scientifically grounded strategies for addressing urgent problems. Future efforts should focus on allocating appropriate financial and other resources, as well as establishing effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for assessing the youth environment.

METHODS

Research Approach

Based on the outlined approaches to youth policy regulation, a qualitativequantitative research approach was selected as the most suitable method for studying complex phenomena in conditions of heterogeneity and uncertainty in the initial data.

To implement the principles of sustainable development through youth policy regulation, a qualitative-quantitative thematic study was deemed the most appropriate research strategy. The data obtained through this approach is more informative and comprehensive compared to purely quantitative research, as it provides a higher level







of detail, enabling the collection of valuable insights and expert feedback on the research questions of interest.

Empirical Context

The EAEU countries are among those that have had an extensive youth legislation system for quite some time. It was formed in the first decade after the dissolution of the USSR and the establishment of independent states and has undergone various degrees of modification in the subsequent period. The first important point to note is that youth issues and the search for solutions to them have always been and continue to be in the focus of state authorities in the EAEU countries. Secondly, the formation of state youth policy (SYP) in the EAEU countries began at the very inception of these states and was based on traditions established in the former Soviet Union (Bobkov, Shichkin, 2024). In the USSR, attempts to develop a youth law as a foundation for forming youth policy were made three times: in 1966, 1977, and 1987-1991. However, only the last attempt resulted in the adoption of the Law of the USSR "On the General Principles of State Youth Policy in the USSR" on April 16, 1991 (Law of the USSR No. 2114-I, 1991) and the Law of the Kazakh SSR "On State Youth Policy in the Kazakh SSR" on June 28, 1991 (Law of the Kazakh SSR, 1991). The ideas of Soviet legislation became the basis for developing the legal framework in several modern EAEU countries. For example, on June 26, 1991, Kazakhstan adopted the Law "On State Youth Policy" (Law of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic No. 2114-1, 1991), and on March 13, 1992, Tajikistan enacted the Law "On State Youth Policy" (Law of the Republic of Tajikistan No. 561, 1992).

On June 12, 2000, the Interparliamentary Committee of the CIS, including the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, and the Republic of Tajikistan, adopted a Model Law "On Youth and State Youth Policy" (Interparliamentary Committee Resolution, 2000). This law defined the goals, principles, main directions, and organizational measures for implementing SYP as a key aspect of the policies of the participating states.

The aforementioned factors prompted the governments of most modern EAEU countries to adopt new legislative acts or amend existing laws regulating SYP. For example, in July 2004, Kazakhstan enacted a new Law "On State Youth Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan" (Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 581, 2004). On





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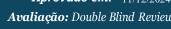
January 27, 2009, Kyrgyzstan adopted the Law "On the Basics of State Youth Policy" (Law of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 2566, 2009).

It is important to emphasize that in addition to basic laws establishing the mechanisms for implementing SYP, the EAEU countries also have numerous other legislative and regulatory acts aimed at its realization (Bizin, 2024). This does not refer to the broader legal framework that governs youth socialization processes through the resolution of major societal issues such as employment, education, and healthcare, but rather to specific legal and regulatory acts designed to create mechanisms for implementing SYP and executing youth-targeted programs. Youth programs are a widespread phenomenon in many EAEU countries.

This process is accompanied by the adoption of additional regulatory acts, including presidential decrees, government orders, and resolutions in this field. For example, in August 1999, the President of Kazakhstan adopted the Concept of State Youth Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and in June 2007, the government approved the Concept for Supporting and Developing Youth Competitiveness for 2008-2015 (Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 516, 2007). In April 2006, the President of Kyrgyzstan approved the Concept for the Development of State Youth Policy in the Kyrgyz Republic until 2010 (Decree of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 173, 2006).

To implement SYP in the EAEU countries, executive authorities have established relevant structures. First, it is important to note that these structures existed in almost every post-Soviet country (Krasnov, Sapozhnikova, 2024). Secondly, while some countries periodically established specialized executive bodies responsible solely for coordinating youth policy, over time, these functions were transferred to broader government agencies that also handle other policy areas. For example, in Russia, these included the Committee on Youth Affairs under the Government of the Russian Federation (1992-1998), the State Committee of the Russian Federation on Youth Policy (1999-2000), and the State Committee of the Russian Federation on Youth Affairs (2007-2008). In Kazakhstan, there was the State Committee on Youth Affairs (1991-1993) and the Ministry of Youth, Tourism, and Sports (1993-2000). In Belarus, there was the State Committee on Youth Affairs (1992-2001), while in Kyrgyzstan, there was the State Committee on Youth Affairs (1991-1992). However, over time, these functions were reassigned to broader government bodies dealing with multiple policy areas. In Russia, youth policy became part of the Department for Youth





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Policy under the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation; in Belarus, it was integrated into the Main Directorate for Educational Work and Youth Policy under the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus; and in Kazakhstan, it was handled by the Committee on Youth and Family Affairs under the Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The foundation of SYP in the EAEU countries consists of strategic documents, including:

- The Foundations of State Youth Policy of the Russian Federation until 2025, approved by Government Resolution No. 2403-r on November 29, 2014 (Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 2403-r, 2014).
- The Strategy for Youth Policy in the Russian Federation until 2030, which is currently under development.
- The Concept of State Youth Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2023-2029, approved by Government Resolution No. 247 on March 28, 2023 (Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 247, 2023).
- The Strategy for the Development of State Youth Policy in Belarus until 2030, approved by Council of Ministers Resolution No. 349 on June 19, 2021 (Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 349, 2021).
- The Concept of Youth Policy for 2020-2030, approved by Government Resolution of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 562 on October 18, 2019 (Government of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 562, 2019).

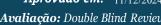
In accordance with the research objective, a selection of scientific sources was conducted using Russia's RSCI (Russian Science Citation Index) database, as well as international databases Web of Science and Scopus. The search was based on the keywords "state regulation," "youth policy," and "sustainable development", with a publication date limit of no older than 10 years.

Data Collection

The data was collected from August 10, 2023, to January 10, 2023, through an analysis of scientific literature on the research problem, selection of an expert pool, subsequent expert survey via email, and processing and analysis of survey results.

Emails inviting participation in the survey were sent to 52 experts from Kazakhstan and Russia. The selection criterion for the expert pool was the publication of at least three articles on the research topic in peer-reviewed journals. A total of 48





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experts agreed to participate, after which they were sent emails containing questions of interest that emerged after the literature review.

Given the ongoing discussions in the Russian Federation regarding the draft Strategy for Youth Policy in Russia until 2030, which is set to replace the Foundations of State Youth Policy of the Russian Federation until 2025, we formulated the following research questions:

- 1. What are the key priorities for the development of state youth policy at the present stage?
 - 2. What should be the main strategic directions for state regulation of youth policy?
- 3. What mechanisms should be provided for state regulation in supporting youth initiatives?

The experts were asked to justify their answers in an open format. All survey participants were informed about the survey's purpose and the researchers' intention to publish the results in a summarized form. After receiving the expert responses, a follow-up email was sent, asking them to rank the parameters identified during the study on an ordinal scale by assigning scores based on their level of significance. The ranking of each parameter was then determined according to the scores assigned by the experts.

Data Analysis

For a more objective analysis of the expert survey results, a measurement of expert opinion consistency was conducted using Kendall's coefficient of concordance (W), calculated as:

$$W = 12S/n2(m3-m)$$
 (1)

Next, the data obtained from the expert survey was processed to determine the weights of the identified parameters by constructing a ranking transformation matrix and subsequently calculating the arithmetic mean of the individual weights assigned to each parameter. The final weight values indicate the relative significance of each parameter according to expert opinions.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the empirical research results, the triangulation method was employed in data analysis. Triangulation was carried out through researcher triangulation, where multiple researchers participated in data processing. Afterward, discussions were held on each topic, and only information





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ISSN: **2316-2880**

agreed upon by all participants was included in the final report.

The triangulation process enhanced the reliability of the expert survey data and improved the overall quality of the obtained information. All research findings were documented in the final research report.

Results and Discussion

Based on the results of the field study (expert survey), the main priorities for the development of state youth policy at the present stage have been identified (see Table 1).

Table 1. Key Priorities for the Development of State Youth Policy

Nº	Priority	Description	Rank	Weight
1	Health	Formation and maintenance of a healthy lifestyle, including hygiene, proper nutrition, physical activity, safe use of gadgets and the Internet, mental health, etc.	1	0.38
2	Capability	Increasing youth participation, enhancing youth competitiveness within the country and at the EAEU level, developing civic and governance competencies.	2	0.26
3	Security	Improving environmental safety and strengthening youth resilience to external challenges.	3	0.21
4	Integration	Increasing mobility, social and cultural inclusion within the national society and the EAEU community, ensuring awareness of each other's lives, communication, and knowledge exchange, and removing barriers to self-realization.	4	0.15

The above-mentioned priorities apply to all age groups. At each stage of youth transition from childhood to adulthood, these priorities are implemented through activities and initiatives that consider the specific characteristics of young people's lives.

Based on the expert survey, the main strategic directions of state regulation of youth policy were identified (see Table 2).

 Table 2. Key Strategic Directions of State Regulation of Youth Policy

Nº	Direction	Rank	Weight
1	Promoting a healthy lifestyle among youth		0.36
2	Ensuring youth employment in the labor market	2	0.22
3	Providing housing for youth	3	0.19
4	Enhancing youth participation in socio-political life	4	0.11
5	Ensuring accessible education	5	0.08
6	Facilitating youth integration into the EAEU youth community	6	0.04





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The survey results allowed for a more detailed specification of the objectives of state regulation of youth policy for each of the main directions (see Table 3).

Table 3. Strategic Directions and Objectives of State Regulation of Youth Policy

Strategic Directions	Objectives
Promoting a healthy lifestyle among youth	Motivating young people to adopt a healthy lifestyle; developing physical education and sports; organizing national, interregional, and regional sports competitions and tournaments; implementing programs to encourage youth participation in physical activities and sports.
2. Ensuring youth employment in the labor market	Encouraging employers to offer first-job opportunities; increasing youth competitiveness; introducing elective courses in educational institutions on entrepreneurship and business skills; conducting employment assistance programs for socially vulnerable youth; supporting youth entrepreneurship and defining support mechanisms; implementing a system for recognizing informal education results; promoting career guidance for students in grades 8-11.
3. Providing housing for youth	Offering preferential long-term loans for housing construction, renovation, or purchase with budget financing; providing mortgage loans with preferential terms of up to 30 years and exempting young families with children from interest payments; partially compensating interest rates on loans for housing acquisition or construction; offering state financial assistance to cover part of the housing cost.
4. Enhancing youth participation in socio-political life	Engaging youth in the development and implementation of state youth policy (SYP); involving youth in government bodies and local self-governance; ensuring youth participation in civil society development.
5. Ensuring accessible education	Guaranteeing continuous education; meeting the needs of individuals and society; aligning state educational orders with labor market demands; fostering collaboration between employers and educational institutions for student internships and securing employment contracts for graduates; involving employers in the design of educational programs, internships, and training processes.
6. Facilitating youth integration into the EAEU youth community	Involving central and local executive bodies and public organizations representing youth interests in international programs; promoting the Russian language as a language of international communication; developing youth projects and international agreements; expanding international youth cooperation within the EAEU; supporting the integration of youth organizations into international bodies and fostering cooperation between such organizations and national diasporas.

Note: Compiled based on the expert survey.

The results of the theoretical analysis indicate that the development of youth policy largely depends on the functioning of youth organizations, which is primarily





linked to the formation of civil society and youth initiatives within the EAEU countries. In this regard, based on the expert survey results, the mechanisms of state regulation necessary for supporting youth initiatives have been identified (see Table 4).

Table 4. Mechanisms of State Regulation for Supporting Youth Initiatives

Nº	Mechanisms	Rank	Weight
1	Opportunity to attract funding from state and local	1	0.36
	budgets, as well as other legally permitted sources		
2	Competitive support for civil society institutions that	2	0.24
	implement SYP priorities		
3	Non-governmental financial support for implementing	3	0.19
	projects initiated by young activists		
4	Analysis, monitoring, and evaluation of compliance,	4	0.13
	quality, and effectiveness of supported projects and		
	programs		
5	Creation, development, and support of youth centers	5	0.08

Note: Compiled based on the expert survey; the concordance coefficient is W = 0.70 (p < 0.01), indicating strong agreement among expert opinions.

DISCUSSION

As the results of the expert survey have shown, at every stage of restructuring state youth policy (SYP), it is essential to conduct an inventory of youth-related issues, which typically include access to education (Ninsiana et al., 2022), employment, physical and mental health, housing, rising crime rates, and other challenges (Kutsev, 2024).

Researches frequently highlights issues related to the mechanisms for implementing SYP, such as an insufficient level of scientific and methodological support, lack of necessary cooperation between central and regional/local executive bodies and public organizations representing youth interests, and unclear definitions of the rights and responsibilities of youth and the entities involved in SYP implementation (Tsionik, 2017; Evstratova et al., 2023).

However, according to experts, the core problem lies in the paternalistic nature of youth policy in the EAEU countries, which manifests as prolonged attempts by adults to control and direct youth development. The paternalistic approach results in youth developing according to adult expectations. This approach clearly reflects the desire of adults to mold youth into "the kind of young people we want to see", guiding them along "the path we choose for them" (Ysmanova, 2014; Ismailov, 2023; Nassanbekova et al., 2024).





It is important to note that the youth population targeted by youth policy in the EAEU countries encompasses a broad spectrum of young people, primarily categorized by age. For instance, in Russia and Kazakhstan, youth is officially defined as individuals aged 14-35 years. However, Resolution 2250 (United Nations Council, 2015) on Youth, Peace, and Security defines youth as individuals aged 18-29 years, while also recognizing variations in terminology at national and international levels. As a result, this age range can be interpreted broadly, typically falling between 15 and 29 years, with the UN definition specifying 15-24 years (Zhanabekov, 2013).

Beyond age categorization, it is also crucial to recognize the diverse social categories within youth populations. On one side, there is "at-risk youth," which includes street youth, young offenders, individuals with disabilities, and orphans (Sakenov et al., 2023; Kpeno et al., 2024). These young people require targeted support programs. On the other side, there is "talented youth," comprising individuals with special skills and competencies, potentially forming the future elite of the country (Mathur, 2024).

However, a significant portion of young people falls into the middle category, which often receives little attention in youth policy discussions. These so-called "ordinary youth" or "regular young people" (Vasilev et al., 2025) also face major challenges, including a lack of decent job opportunities, limited infrastructure for youth activities, and insufficient opportunities for self-realization, particularly in rural areas (Zubok et al., 2021).

The EAEU countries are among those that have long-standing and extensive youth legislation. This framework developed in the first decade after the collapse of the USSR and has undergone various changes in the years since. It is also important to note that youth policy legislation is part of a broader legal framework that focuses on the development of civil society in the EAEU countries (Zubok et al., 2021).

The responsibility for developing and implementing youth policy in the EAEU countries is assigned to various executive bodies, which handle youth policy alongside other issues within their jurisdiction. In this scenario, when a single ministry (responsible for SYP) oversees a wide range of societal issues, there is a risk that youth policy might become "lost" among other priorities (Bezpalova et al., 2023). Other ministries do not prioritize youth issues and lack a clear vision of how their responsibilities and actions can be integrated with SYP priorities and implementation measures. Ministries also fail to ensure consistent and sustainable coordination of





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efforts to integrate youth issues into government decision-making across all sectors. As a result, certain target groups may be overlooked, and resources may be allocated inefficiently (Valeeva, 2020; Afanasyev et al., 2016; 2017).

As highlighted in the expert survey results, one potential mechanism for state regulation in supporting youth initiatives is the creation, development, and support of state-funded youth centers in the EAEU countries. These centers would be responsible for organizational, legal, methodological, and informational support for regional centers. Additionally, they would coordinate national and international youth events, address youth needs, and implement best international practices and innovations.

However, at present, youth participation in formal youth organizations in the EAEU countries remains low, while informal civic activism among youth prevails (Lukichev, 2014; Zyablikov et al., 2023).

The main instrument for implementing national SYP strategies in the EAEU countries is the state youth programs, whose action plans not only align with SYP priorities (Akhmetshin et al., 2024b) but are also supported by actual funding sources and responsible budgetary authorities at both national and regional levels (Leheza et al., 2023; Savina, 2024).

One of the most effective mechanisms for implementing these programs is the organization of national and regional competitions to select projects and initiatives for state support. Securing funding sources for project implementation is one of the biggest challenges that youth organizations face (Hernández García de Velazco, 2022).

In the EAEU countries, one of the primary mechanisms for distributing budgetary funds is through national competitions for selecting programs and projects developed by public organizations. The winning projects receive state financial assistance for their implementation.

CONCLUSIONS

This article addressed the following research questions:

- 1. What are the key priorities for the development of state youth policy at the present stage?
 - 2. What should be the main strategic directions for state regulation of youth policy?
- 3. What mechanisms should be provided to support youth initiatives and minimize the risk of antisocial behavior?

As previous research findings have shown, youth policy has a unique





characteristic that distinguishes it from all other areas of domestic policy – it is the policy of the country's future. Therefore, its implementation is continuous, as there is no pause in generational change.

In the EAEU countries, the field of youth policy is supported by an extensive legislative framework. A defining characteristic of youth policy in the EAEU countries is its paternalistic approach, one manifestation of which is the broad age definition of youth (14-35 years old). This situation creates challenges for effective policy implementation, as different age groups within youth have varying needs and interests that require tailored approaches. Such an expansive definition of youth leads to inconsistent and uncoordinated youth programs, a lack of alignment in youth policy (SYP) development, and potential inefficiencies in resource allocation.

A possible solution to this issue could be the legislative adoption of a narrower youth age range (14-29 years old) and the explicit specification of age groups in strategic documents. This would allow for a clearer definition of priorities and mechanisms for implementing initiatives tailored to each category.

In addition to legislative support, strategic documents are the key tool for implementing SYP. As shown by the results of the expert survey, the priorities for the development of the SYP recognized by experts are safety; health (especially manifestations of bullying); ability and integration; and the main strategic areas of state regulation of youth policy are the formation of a healthy lifestyle for young people, ensuring employment of young people in the labor market, providing young people with housing and affordable education, activating the participation of young people in sociopolitical life, which would help reduce the occurrence of uncontrolled antisocial manifestations, promoting the integration of young people into the youth community of the EAEU. Despite the theoretical and practical contribution, this study is partially limited by the size of the expert sample and therefore does not allow generalizations. Therefore, we recognize the need to conduct parallel studies on this problem. The general results of several studies, including experts located in countries outside the EAEU, will create a more generalized picture of the regulation of youth policy of the state for the implementation of the principles of sustainable development.

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