

**The Situation of Youth in the Commonwealth of Independent States
(CIS) Countries
(Analytical review)**

Elena Zotova, PHD in Economics,
Senior Researcher INF RAS

Moscow 2024

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Introduction

Youth and youth policy are among the priorities of the global development. 2025 will mark the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the World Program of Action for Youth^{1,2}

The 10 priority areas identified by the international community are: education, employment, hunger and poverty, health, the environment, drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, leisure activities, girls and young women, and the full and effective participation of young people in society and decision-making³. These areas were subsequently supplemented by ensuring intergenerational solidarity, ensuring the availability of information and communication technologies for all young people, raising awareness about HIV/AIDS, and protecting young people from direct participation in armed conflicts.

Policies and programs of action related to youth are regularly reviewed at meetings of the UN General Assembly⁴. The UN documents adopted on youth-related issues emphasize the need for action to empower youth, including young women and girls, in order to address global challenges, including, inter alia, the total eradication of poverty, the eradication of hunger and malnutrition, the elimination of food shortages, climate change, pollution, loss of biodiversity, as well as addressing the effects of technological change and reducing the widening gap between developed and developing countries in all spheres, the importance of promoting sustainable growth and ensuring full and productive employment and decent work for all young people.

For the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), issues related to youth are also a priority.

The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was established on December 8, 1991. It currently includes the following states: Republic of Azerbaijan, Republic of Armenia, Republic of Belarus, Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Moldova, The Russian Federation, Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Republic of Uzbekistan and Ukraine.

¹ A/78/189 Policies and Programs Involving Youth. Report of the Secretary General.

URL:<https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n23/209/87/pdf/n2320987.pdf?token=963bgsXfHG0WXY1hQq&fe=true>
<https://social.desa.un.org/publications/issues/Youth>

² A/RES/62/126 Policies and Programs Involving Youth: Youth in the Global Economy – Promoting Youth Participation in Social and Economic Development. URL:

<https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n07/471/33/pdf/n0747133.pdf?token=p7WtukyCjflhowAWXf&fe=true>
<https://social.desa.un.org/publications/issues/Youth>

³ A/RES/50/81 World Program of Action for Youth. URL:

<https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n96/771/43/pdf/n9677143.pdf?token=sqEZXhuzxAmj41fscE&fe=true>
<https://social.desa.un.org/publications/issues/Youth>

⁴ A/RES/78/179 Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December, 2023. URL:

<https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n23/422/34/pdf/n2342234.pdf?token=hqv2gBSYdeJri6yGbG&fe=true>
<https://social.desa.un.org/publications/issues/Youth>

Today, the CIS is a regional interstate organization recognized by the international community⁵. Its distinctive features are the organization of countries' interaction in almost all spheres.

The CIS countries are characterized by a rich diversity and dynamic interaction of cultures, and have a common history. In the CIS, young people are not just a demographic segment, but a driving force ready to shape the future of each member country and the region as a whole.

This review presents a comprehensive analysis of the young generation of the CIS countries with a focus on its socio-demographic characteristics, current youth policy in the CIS countries and the directions for its development in the future.

The first section of the review presents a detailed socio-demographic portrait of young people in the CIS countries. It analyses demographic characteristics of youth, distribution of youth between urban and rural areas, educational attainment, employment status, family and health status of young people in the CIS countries. This section aims to give a complex portrait of the young population, highlighting the diversity of this group in different CIS countries.

In response to the diverse needs of young people, CIS countries have developed a number of policies and programs to support their development. The second section of the review examines the current landscape of youth policy in the CIS, analyzes its scale, and priority areas and compares youth policy principles of different countries. Topics include education and training, employment and entrepreneurship, health and well-being, and a number of other areas. This analysis provides an overview of how well current policies meet the needs of young people.

In the third section, based on the conclusions obtained in the previous sections, possible directions for the development of youth policy in the CIS countries are outlined, including the actions of governments, public and youth organizations aimed at more effective support for the younger generation. Key areas of action include increasing youth participation in policy-making processes, using technology for education and job creation, and strengthening mental health and social inclusion support systems. The review highlights the importance of a collaborative approach to policy development, involving stakeholders from government, civil society, the private sector and young people themselves, to ensure that policies respond to the changing needs and aspirations of young people.

This review can be useful for policymakers, educators and community leaders in the CIS countries, providing a detailed understanding of the current state of youth and suggesting directions for future policy initiatives. By investing in the development of its young population, the CIS region can harness its potential as a driver of innovation, social change and economic growth, paving the way for a prosperous and sustainable future.

⁵ An important milestone for the CIS recognition was granting CIS the observer status by the UN General Assembly in March 1994. Similar status granted to the CIS at UNCTAD (19 April 1994).

Youth in the CIS Countries: Socio-Demographic Portrait

The UN defines youth as people between the ages of 15 and 24⁶, but this definition is not used by everyone and not always. The European Union often uses the 15-29 age classification when referring to youth⁷. Back in 2020, the G20 countries also decided to classify people from 15 to 29 years old as young people, motivating this by the global demographic trend of population ageing and changing living conditions. Furthermore, national governments use different age ranges to determine who is considered to be youth, including according to the tasks they are addressing. For example, in the Russian Federation, in accordance with the Federal Law "On Youth Policy in the Russian Federation" (No. 489-FZ of December 30, 2020⁸), young citizens aged 14 to 35 inclusive are classified as youth.

In addition to the above-mentioned statistical definition of the term "youth", it should be noted that the meaning of the term varies considerably from country to country around the world. As noted in UN Resolution A/RES/50/81, the definition of youth has constantly evolved in response to changing political, economic and socio-cultural conditions⁹

It is worth mentioning that there is a certain discrepancy in the definitions of "young people" and "children." The UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child¹⁰, defines persons in the 0-18 age group as children. Hence, those in the 16-18 age group are viewed both as children and young people, which may cause contradictions and discrepancies during data analysis and interpretation.

The CIS countries use the 15-29 age range to analyze the situation of young people¹¹.

Speaking about the socio-economic portrait of young people in the CIS countries, first of all, it is necessary to answer the following questions: how many young people live in the CIS, how many girls and women are among them, where do they live – in cities or rural areas, what kind of education do they have, do they work and where do they work? An important

⁶ A/78/189 Policies and Programs Involving Youth. Report of the Secretary General.

URL: <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n23/209/87/pdf/n2320987.pdf?token=963bgsXfHG0WXY1hQq&fe=true>
<https://social.desa.un.org/publications/issues/Youth>

⁷ The Right to the Future: Youth that Transforms Armenia. National Human Development Report 2018/2019. URL: <https://www.undp.org/armenia/publications/right-future-youth-transforms-armenia>

⁸ Federal law "On Youth Policy in the Russian Federation". URL: <http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/bank/46328/page/1>

⁹ A/RES/50/81 World Program of Action for Youth. URL:

<https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n96/771/43/pdf/n9677143.pdf?token=sqEZxhuzxAmj41fscE&fe=true>
<https://social.desa.un.org/publications/issues/Youth>

¹⁰ A/RES/1386 The Declaration on the Rights of a Child. URL:

<https://documents.un.org/doc/resolution/gen/nr0/142/09/pdf/nr014209.pdf?token=1tGXWXLqx5NRQm8dkm&fe=true>

¹¹ Youth in the Commonwealth of Independent States: A Statistical Portrait. URL:

<https://new.cisstat.org/web/guest/Молодежь>

contribution to this portrait will be the information on the marital status of young people and the presence of children. Of course, we also cannot forget about the health of young people.

Table 1 presents the answers for some of these questions.

Demography

Table 1 Characteristics of Youth in CIS Countries (as of 01.01,2022)

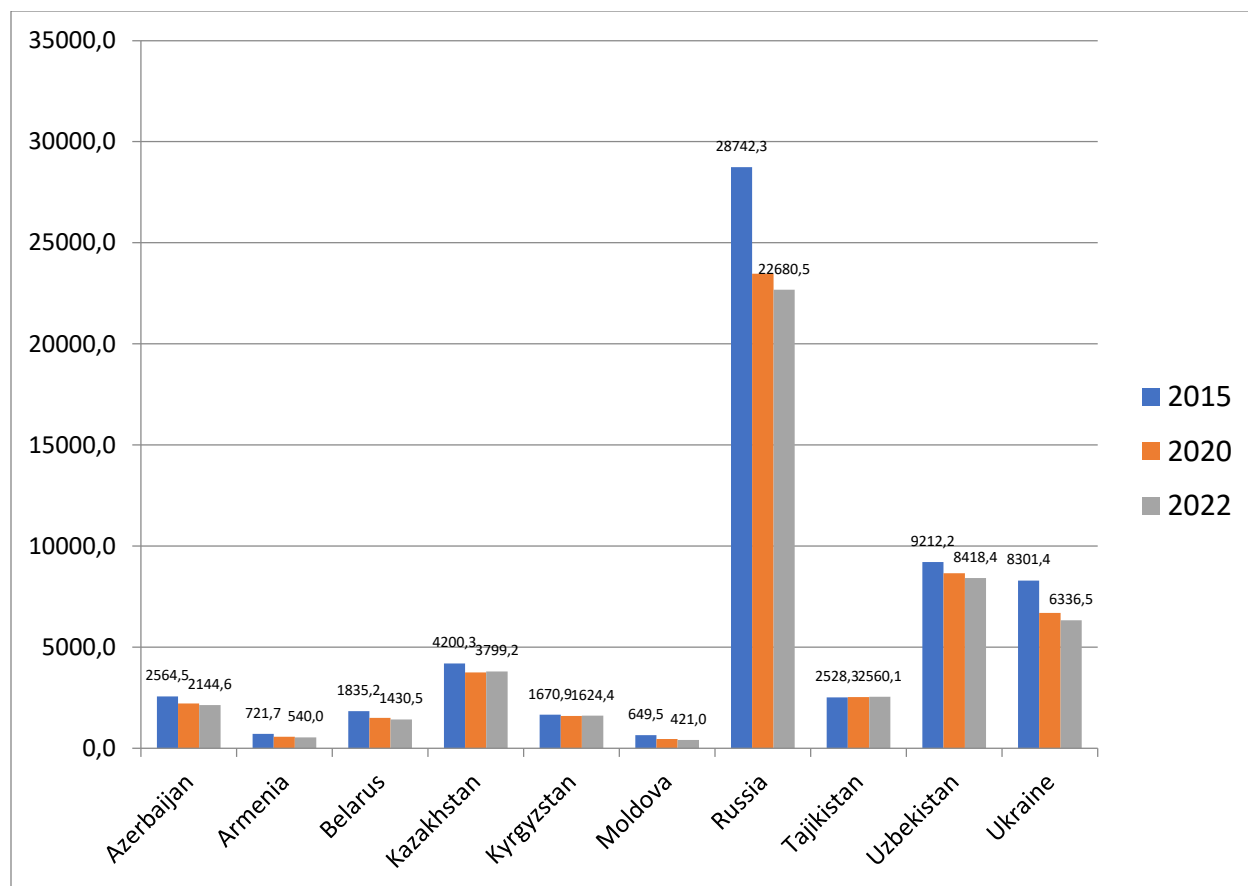
Country	Population, thousand persons	Youth aged 15-29, % of the population	Women aged 15-29, % of youth aged 15-29
Republic of Azerbaijan	10 063,3	21,3	48.8
Republic of Armenia	2 961,4	18,2	48.9
Republic of Belarus	9 255,5	15,5	49.2
Republic of Kazakhstan	19 503,2	19,5	49.0
Kyrgyz Republic	6 912,9	23,5	50.1
Republic of Moldova	2 565,0	16,4	49.5
Russian Federation	146 980,1	15,4	48.8
Republic of Tajikistan	9 886,8	25,9	49.8
Turkmenistan	7057841 ¹²	...	...
Republic of Uzbekistan	35 271,3	23,9	48.8
Ukraine	40 997,7	15,5	48.6

Source: "Youth in the Commonwealth of Independent States: A Statistical Portrait". /CIS Statistical Committee, UNFPA. M. M75 2023. - 156 p. URL: <https://new.cisstat.org/web/guest/Молодежь>

As can be seen from Table 1, the share of young people in the CIS countries is different – the minimum in the Russian Federation, the highest in Republic of Tajikistan. In general, it is not surprising that the structure of the population in countries is different. Of greater interest is the dynamics of this indicator. In almost all CIS countries, except Republic of Tajikistan, the share of young people aged 15-29 is decreasing. At the same time, in Republic of Tajikistan, the observed growth is not high (see Fig.1 below).

Figure 1. Number of Young People Aged 15-29 in the CIS Countries, Thousands (2015, 2020, 2022)

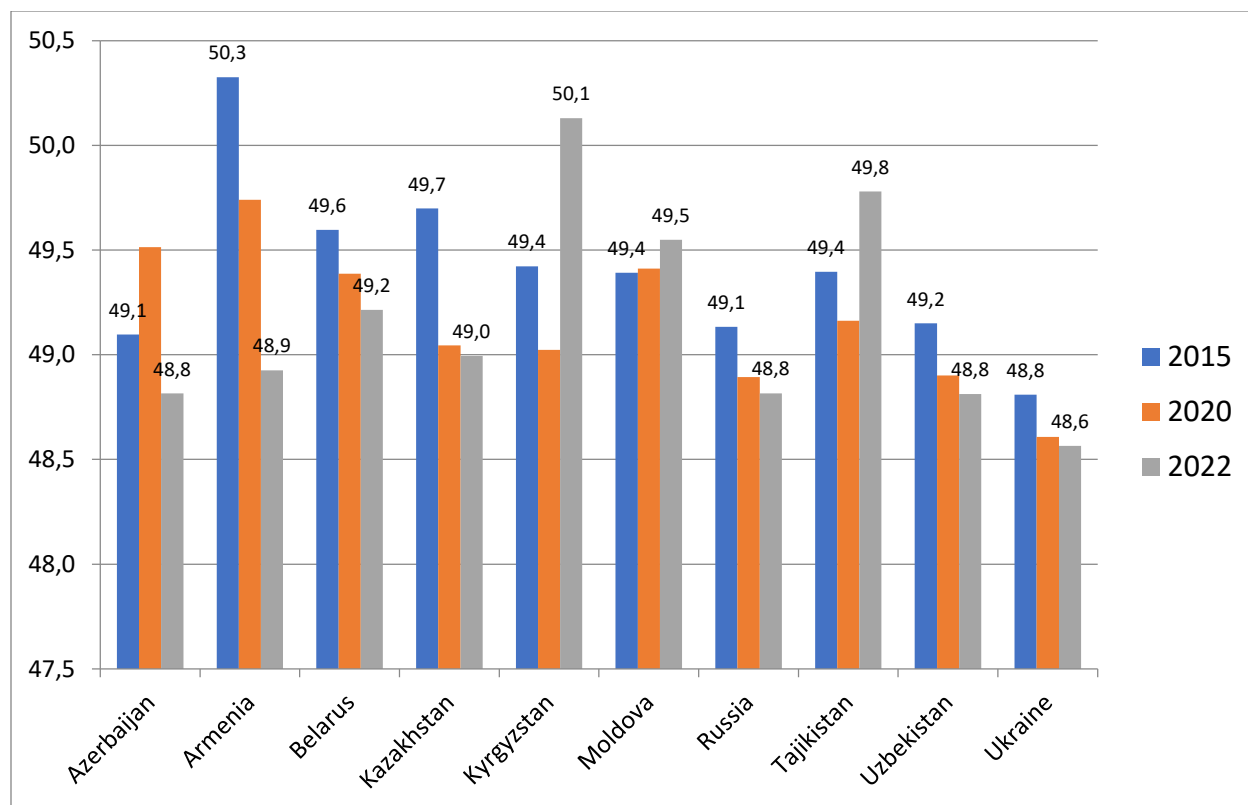
¹² Turkmenistan Statistical Committee URL: <https://www.stat.gov.tm>



Source: “Youth in the Commonwealth of Independent States: A Statistical Portrait”. /CIS Statistical Committee, UNFPA. M. M75 2023. - 156 p.URL: <https://new.cisstat.org/web/guest/Молодежь>

The proportion of young girls in the total number of young people varies less across countries than the proportion of young people as a whole. It is close to 50%, that is, young people are distributed by gender quite evenly - approximately half and half. At the same time, the number of young men in almost all CIS countries, except the Kyrgyz Republic, exceeds the number of young women, although not by much. In the Kyrgyz Republic, the number of young women exceeds the number of young men by 0.1 %. At the same time, the dynamics of changes in the share of young women in the total number of youths in different countries is more heterogeneous. In seven of the ten countries for which the CIS Statistical Committee publishes data, the proportion of young women has been declining in recent years. But in three countries, such as the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Moldova, and the Republic of Tajikistan, the share of young women among young people has increased (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Share of Women in the Number of Young People Aged 15-29 in the CIS Countries, % (2015, 2020, 2022)



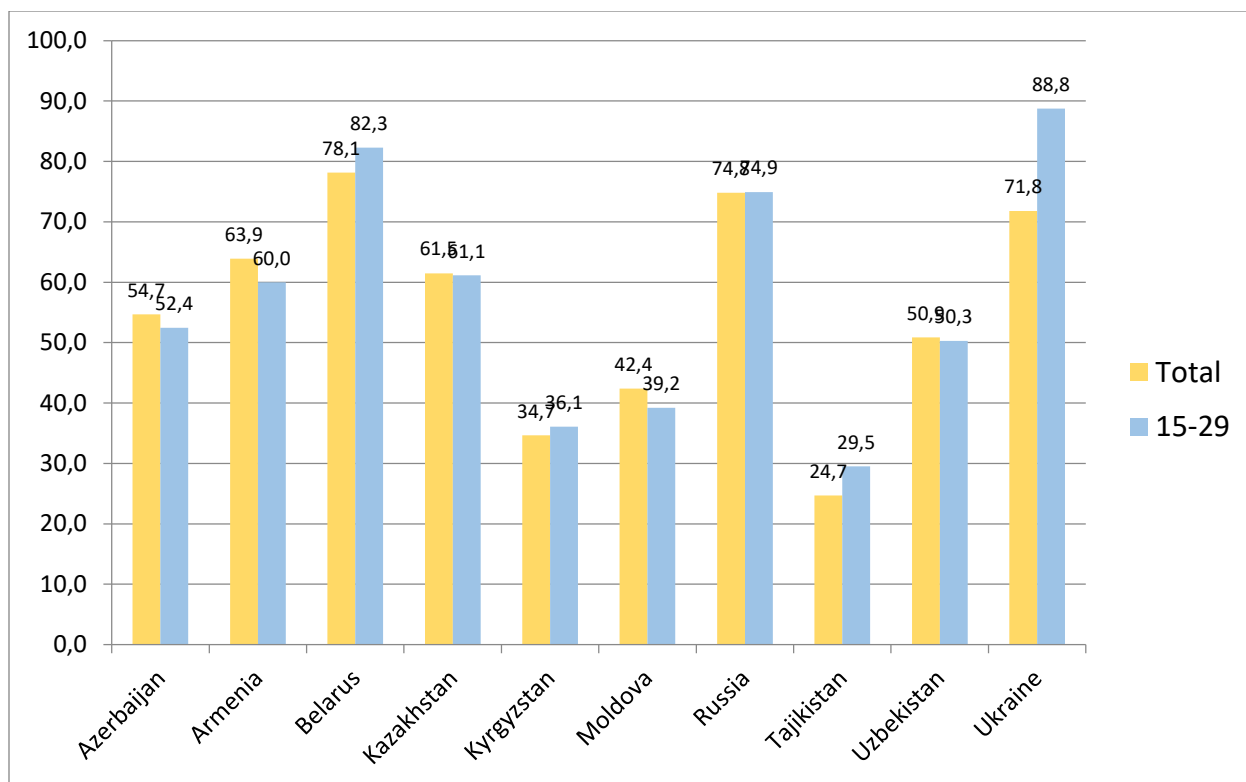
Source: “Youth in the Commonwealth of Independent States: A Statistical Portrait”. /CIS Statistical Committee, UNFPA. M. M75 2023. - 156 p. URL: <https://new.cisstat.org/web/guest/Молодежь>

Place of Residence

The gap between distribution of young people among urban and rural areas in the CIS countries is due to economic, social and educational factors. Many young people in the CIS countries move to cities in search of educational and employment opportunities. This trend contributes to urbanization and necessitates the development of infrastructure to meet the needs of a growing urban population. Inequalities between urban and rural areas persist, affecting the quality of life and access to resources for young people. Cities often provide better opportunities for education and employment, contributing to migration trends. Cities have greater access to digital technologies, the internet and information and communication tools, and better access to social services, including health care, recreational facilities and cultural institutions. Well-developed infrastructure in cities contributes to a better quality of life.

Figure 3 shows that the share of the urban population among young people in the CIS countries ranges from 30% to almost 90%. At the same time, a high proportion of young people in urban areas (above 40%) is observed in seven of the 10 countries.

Figure 3. Share of Urban Population in Total Population and in the Age Group 15-29, % (as of Beginning of the Year, 2022)



Source: *Youth in the Commonwealth of Independent States: A Statistical Portrait*. /CIS Statistical Committee, UNFPA. M. M75 2023. - 156 p. URL: <https://new.cisstat.org/web/guest/Молодежь>

Education

A significant characteristic of the youth of the CIS countries is the level of education. The proportion of young people with general education in all CIS countries exceeds 40 %. At the same time, it ranges from 40 % (men in the Republic of Belarus) to 89.9 % (women in the Republic of Tajikistan) in the CIS countries. The share of young people with secondary or primary vocational education varies across the CIS countries, with the lowest rates in the Republic of Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic, and the highest in the Republic of Belarus and the Russian Federation.

Finally, the share of young people with higher education is generally comparable to the share of young people with secondary vocational education and ranges from 4.7 % (young women in the Republic of Tajikistan) to 32 % of young women in the Republic of Belarus.

A comparison of the levels of education of young men and women shows that at the level of general education, the proportion of men is higher than that of women in all countries except the Republic of Tajikistan. At the level of secondary vocational education, the picture begins to change and the share of young women with secondary vocational education in some countries, such as the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Armenia, for example, begins to exceed the corresponding share of young men.

Finally, in tertiary education, the picture is almost completely reversed, with the proportion of young women with tertiary education in six of the eight countries exceeds that of young men.

Table 2 shows the proportion of young men and the proportion of young women with relevant levels of education.

Table 2 Level of education of the population aged 15–29 years (according to population censuses; % of the population group of the corresponding sex and age)

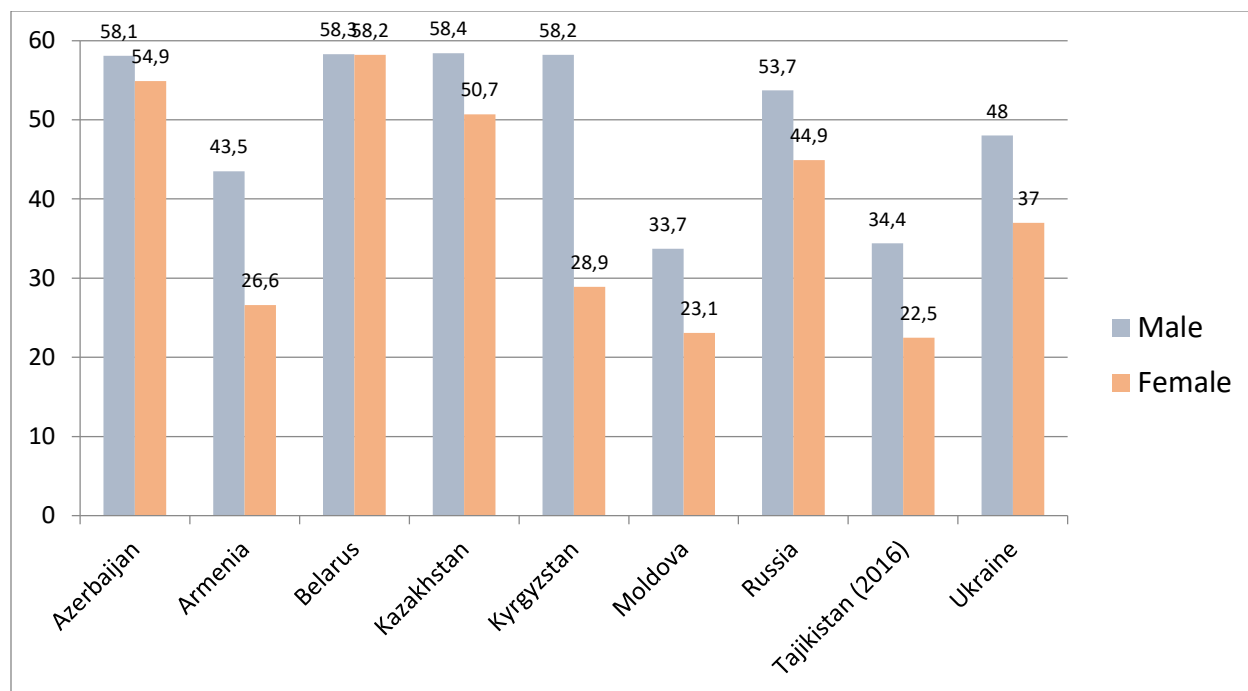
Country	Gender	Higher and Incomplete Higher (including post graduates)	Secondary and primary professional	General (complete secondary, secondary, secondary primary)
Republic of Azerbaijan (2019)	Men	11,9	12,2	75,6
	Women	11,6	13,5	74,7
Republic of Armenia (2022)	Men	19,1	14,5	65,9
	Women	27,6	16,5	55,5
Republic of Belarus (2019)	Men	19,6	35,8	43,9
	Women	32,6	26,7	40,2
Republic of Kazakhstan (2009)	Men	20,8	20,9	58,0
	Women	28,4	20,1	51,4
Kyrgyz Republic (2009)	Мужчины	13,0	4,8	81,4
	Women	16,8	6,1	76,4
Republic of Moldova (2014)	Men	13,7	22,6	63,7
	Women	19,8	19,9	60,3
Russian Federation (2021)	Men	18,2	27,7	53,7
	Women	25,0	23,0	51,6
Republic of Tajikistan (2010)	Men	10,5	3,9	83,8
	Women	4,7	3,5	89,9

Source: "Youth in the Commonwealth of Independent States: A Statistical Portrait". /CIS Statistical Committee, UNFPA. M. M75 2023. - 156 p. URL: <https://new.cisstat.org/web/guest/Молодежь>

Employment and unemployment

The level of youth employment in the CIS countries is quite high. In five of the eight countries more than 50% of young men are employed. At the same time, the employment of young women lags behind, and only in the Republic of Belarus is almost equal to the employment of young men (more than 58%). In other countries, the employment rate of young women ranges from 23.1 % in the Republic of Moldova to 54.9 % in the Republic of Azerbaijan (see Figure 4)

Figure 4. Employment Rate of the Population Aged 15–29 years (Based on Labor Force Surveys, %, 2021)



Source: “Youth in the Commonwealth of Independent States: A Statistical Portrait”. /CIS Statistical Committee, UNFPA. M. M75 2023. - 156 p.URL: <https://new.cisstat.org/web/guest/Молодежь>

When analyzing the averages, it is important to understand that young people are not homogeneous in their age composition and the employment rate of young people aged 15-19, 20-24 and 25-29 years has obvious differences. It increases with increasing age as young people finish their studies and enter the workforce. At the same time, older people are the most active in entering the labor market, the employment rate of young people of these ages reaches 90% or more¹³.

For real portrait of the younger generation, the quality of employment is also of interest. Whether young people work in the formal or informal sectors of the economy, to what extent the education they have received helps them find decent work, and in which sectors young people are most in demand. These and other characteristics are calculated from labor force surveys.

The involvement of young people in informal employment may be due to factors such as limited employment opportunities, economic instability and the desire for flexibility. At the same time, informal employment often does not provide job security, and young people may face uncertainty about income stability and future employment opportunities. In addition, workers in the informal sector may not have full access to the social protection provided to formal sector workers. The analysis of these phenomena is of considerable interest for a deeper understanding of the labor potential of young people.

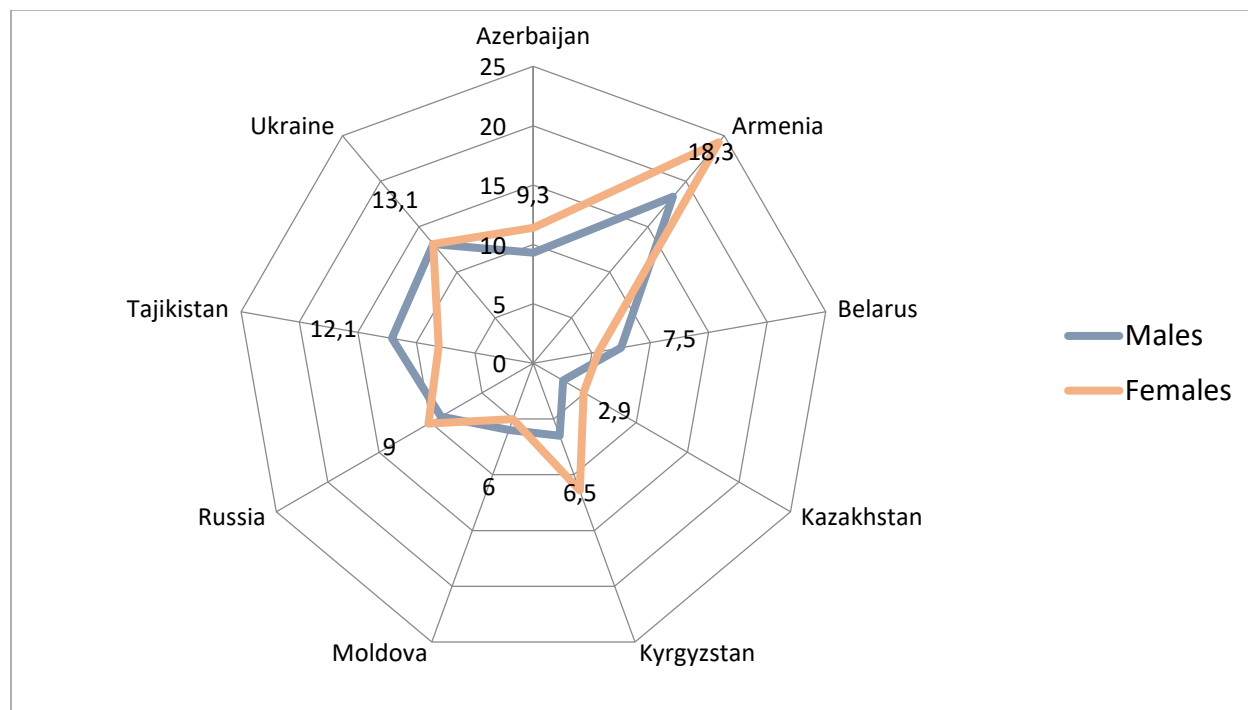
¹³ Youth in the Commonwealth of Independent States: A Statistical Portrait. /CIS Statistical Committee, UNFPA. M. M75 2023. - 156 p.URL: <https://new.cisstat.org/web/guest/Молодежь>

However, the way in which the data are presented and the differences in the definitions used in the CIS countries can make the analysis difficult. Definitions of informal employment vary, and reporting data on young men informally employed in the non-agricultural sector as a percentage of informally employed men of all ages, rather than as a proportion of the total number of young men, does not provide an indication of where young men are more likely to find work.

Unemployment and underemployment are a common problem among young people in the CIS countries. Factors contributing to this problem include the mismatch of young people's skills with business requirements, limited employment opportunities and barriers to entry into the labor market.

The highest unemployment rate among young people aged 15-29 is recorded in the Republic of Armenia, and the lowest in the Republic of Kazakhstan. At the same time, unemployment among young women in five of the nine CIS countries for which data are available is higher than unemployment among young men, while in three countries the unemployment of young men is higher than that of young women. The differences in the unemployment rate are mainly due to economic reasons and the different structure of the economies of the CIS countries (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Unemployment Rate of the Population Aged 15-29 in CIS Countries (Based on Labor Force Surveys, %, 2021)

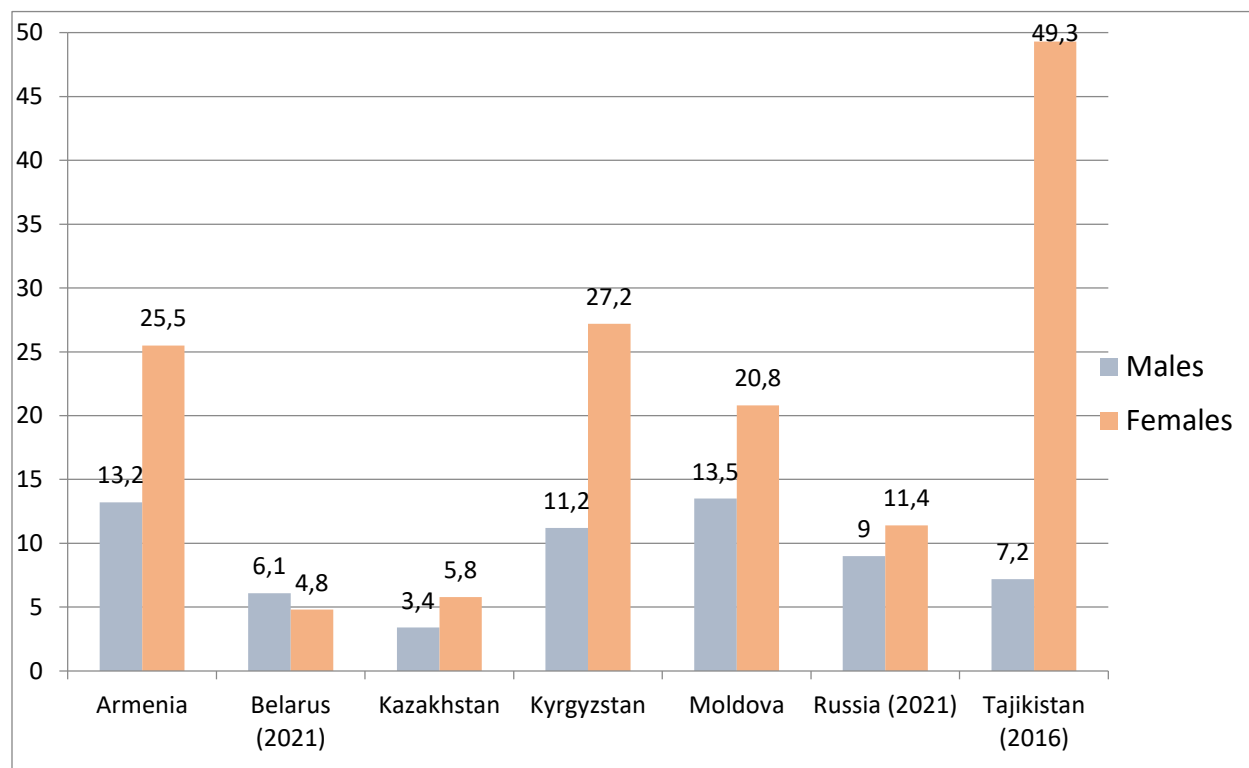


Source: "Youth in the Commonwealth of Independent States: A Statistical Portrait". /CIS Statistical Committee, UNFPA. M. M75 2023. - 156 p. URL: <https://new.cisstat.org/web/guest/Молодежь>

Apart from employed and unemployed youth in every country there is a group of young people who are most at risk of being permanently left behind in the labor market – those who are

Not in Employment, Education or Training (the NEET). This disengagement is often not a matter of choice but a result of various systemic, economic, and social barriers. (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. Share of NEET Youth 15-29 in the CIS Countries (Based on Labor Force Surveys, % of Total Number of Youth of Corresponding Sex and Age, 2022)



Source: “Youth in the Commonwealth of Independent States: A Statistical Portrait”. /CIS Statistical Committee, UNFPA. M. M75 2023. - 156 p. URL: <https://new.cisstat.org/web/guest/Молодежь>

In CIS countries the distribution of NEET status between young men and women varies significantly due to cultural, economic, and social factors. However, in all countries apart from Republic of Belarus young women share in the NEET dominates that of men.

Several factors contribute to this gender disparity:

1. While access to education is opened for all youth, in some CIS countries, cultural norms and economic barriers disproportionately affect women's ability to pursue further education or vocational training.
2. Women often face higher levels of discrimination in the labor market, including lower wages for the same work and lesser opportunities for advancement. Traditional gender roles and expectations can also limit women's participation in the workforce, encouraging or necessitating a focus on domestic and caregiving roles instead.

3. Young women are more likely to bear the brunt of domestic responsibilities, including childcare. This can significantly limit their ability to engage in education or employment.
4. In some CIS countries, early marriage and pregnancy can lead to women leaving education or the workforce. Social norms and lack of support for young mothers can make returning to education or employment particularly challenging.

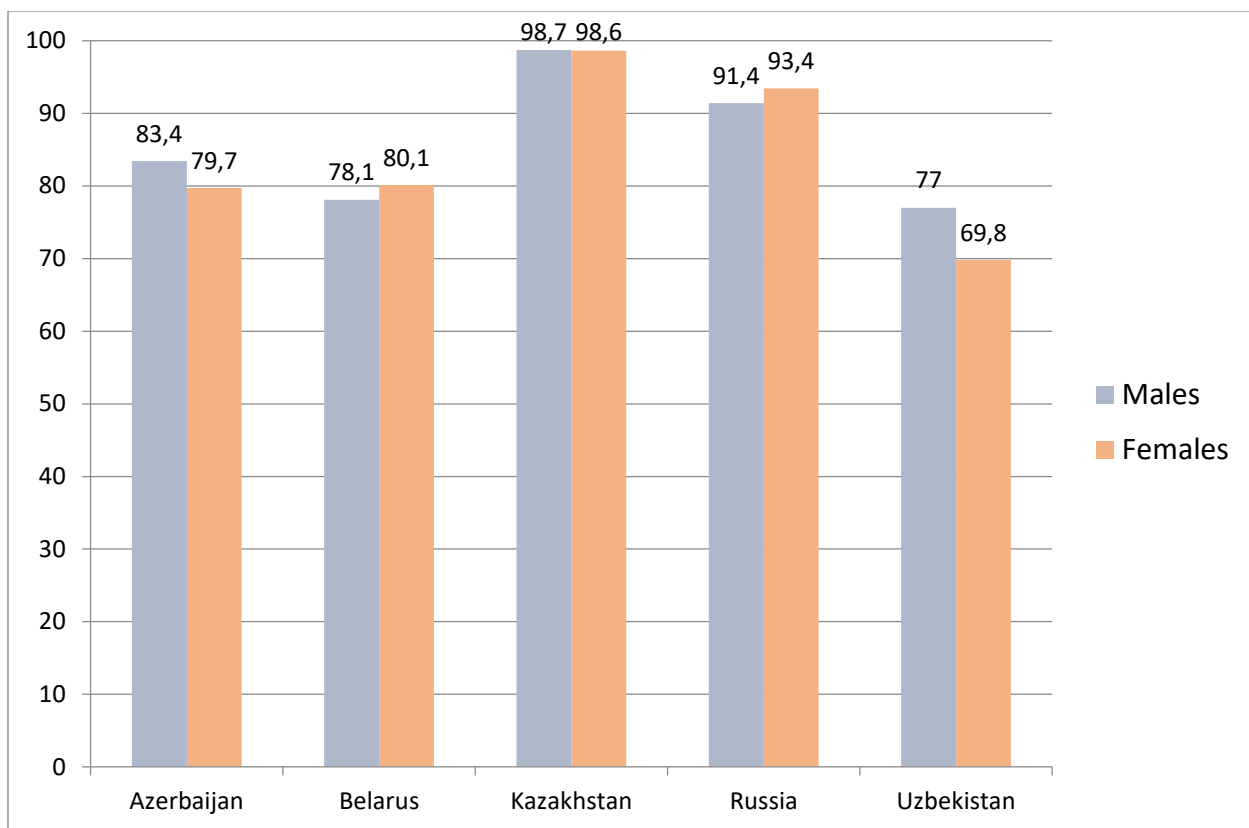
Addressing the NEET challenge in CIS countries requires comprehensive and multi-faceted approaches. These may include reforms in education and vocational training systems to align them more closely with labor market demands, the creation of more and better job opportunities, targeted social programs to support vulnerable youth, and initiatives to promote entrepreneurship and innovation among young people. The engagement of NEET youth into these processes is crucial not only for their personal well-being but also for the socio-economic development and stability of CIS countries.

The development of technology is creating new employment opportunities for young people. Technology-related professions, such as software development, digital marketing, and data analytics, are becoming increasingly relevant in the job market.

Technology has enabled remote work opportunities, providing flexibility for young people in terms of where to work. This has become especially relevant in times of increased attention to remote work during the global COVID-19 pandemic. Technology has lowered barriers to entry. Many young people in the CIS countries are using technology to start their own businesses, contributing to innovation and economic growth.

Figure 7 shows the proportion of young people with Internet skills. As can be seen from the data presented, there is a gender gap in these skills, but in some countries the gap is in favor of young women rather than young men.

Figure 7. Youth with ICT Skills (Based on Labor Force Surveys, % of Youth Population of Corresponding Age, 2021)



Source: “Youth in the Commonwealth of Independent States: A Statistical Portrait”. /CIS Statistical Committee, UNFPA. M. M75 2023. - 156 p. URL: <https://new.cisstat.org/web/guest/Молодежь>

Family

An important characteristic of young people is marital status. Marriage trends and family structure in countries are influenced by a combination of historical, cultural, economic and demographic factors. Shifts in social norms have an impact on marital tendencies and family structures. Unregistered marriages (cohabitation), delayed marriage, and changing perceptions of gender roles affect the development of family dynamics¹⁴.

In the CIS countries, among young people there is a noticeable tendency to postpone marriage. Economic uncertainty, the pursuit of higher education, and changing social norms are all contributing to this delay.

Cohabitation without official marriage has become more common among young people. Couples may live together before or instead of getting married under the influence of changing social relationships.

¹⁴ Changing patterns of marriage and unions across the world. URL: https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/files/documents/2020/Jan/un_2016_factsheet2.pdf

Urban areas often experience higher rates of late marriage and cohabitation due to increased access to education, career opportunities, and exposure to diverse lifestyles. In contrast, rural areas are more likely to adhere to traditional marriage patterns.

Economic factors, such as financial stability and housing affordability, play a significant role in young people's decision to get married.

Economic difficulties can lead to postponement or abandonment of marriage until young people feel more secure about their financial situation.

Cross-border marriages are not uncommon in the CIS region, reflecting historical ties and shared cultural elements. People can marry someone from a neighboring CIS country, which leads to a variety of family structures.

Nuclear families, consisting of parents and their children, remain the predominant family structure in the CIS countries. This structure is often influenced by urbanization and modernization.

However, multigenerational households, in which several generations live together under the same roof, are also common. In some regions, especially in rural areas, the extended family provides meaningful support to the younger generation.

In the CIS countries, there are also single-parent families, which, as a rule, are headed by single mothers. Divorce, separation or the death of a spouse contribute to the formation of single-parent families.

Changing gender roles affect the structure of the family. Women's increased participation in the workforce and the pursuit of higher education are contributing to a shift in traditional roles in families.

Cultural and ethnic diversity and religious beliefs in the CIS countries also affect the family and ideas about family values.

Finally, a significant role is played by the government's policy to support young families, aimed at ensuring work-life balance, parental leave and childcare facilities.

Available statistics only partially measure and evaluate these processes.

Table 3 presents data from various sources on the average age of getting married among young people in the CIS countries, the share of young women who are married (as of 2023 according to the UN Department of Economic and Social Policy) by age, and the average age of the mother at the birth of the first child. Although the statistical correctness and comparability of these data may not meet strict criteria, they do provide some insight into the marital status of young people in the CIS countries.

Table 3 Marriages and Births

Country	Median Population Age ¹⁵	Average Marriage Age for Youth 15-29 ¹⁶		Share of Young Women Married or in a Union by Age Groups, % ¹⁷			Maternal Age at Birth of the First Child ¹⁸
		Men	Women	15-19	20-24	25-29	
Republic of Azerbaijan	32,5	28,4	24,2	8,8	40,8	64,4	24,6
Republic of Armenia	35,2	31,2	27,7	3,7	35,0	63,8	25,7
Republic of Belarus	40,7	28,6	26,3	3,2	53,4	74,1	26,9
Republic of Kazakhstan	29,5	...	...	5,4	52,0	74,4	...
Kyrgyz Republic	23,9	27,3	23,6	8,8	54,2	82,1	23,1
Republic of Moldova	34,7	29,3	26,2	9,7	54,2	83,3	25,1
Russian Federation	39,2	29,3	27,1	6,0	28,4	53,6	26,0
Republic of Tajikistan	21,8	...	...	12,2	75,4	87,1	...
Turkmenistan	26,3	...	...	4,7	42,9	74,5	...
Republic of Uzbekistan	27,0	26,5	22,3	3,6	45,2	81,5	23,5
Ukraine	44,7	...	...	4,6	38,5	62,8	...

Source: <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/population-by-country/>
 “Youth in the Commonwealth of Independent States: A Statistical Portrait”. /CIS Statistical Committee, UNFPA. M. M75 2023. - 156 p. URL: <https://new.cisstat.org/web/guest/Молодежь>
 UN population division data portal
 URL: <https://population.un.org/dataportal/data/indicators/42,45,44/locations/51,31,112,417,398,498,643,762,795,804,860/start/2015/end/2023/table/pivotbylocation?df=e6790cd4-e310-4ea6-b32a-398e8d48ae17>

The data presented in the table shows that in countries with younger populations, young people get married or married earlier than in countries with older populations. The proportion of early marriages ranges from 3.2 per cent of women in the corresponding age group in the Republic of Belarus to 12.2 per cent in the Republic of Tajikistan.

¹⁵ <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/population-by-country/>

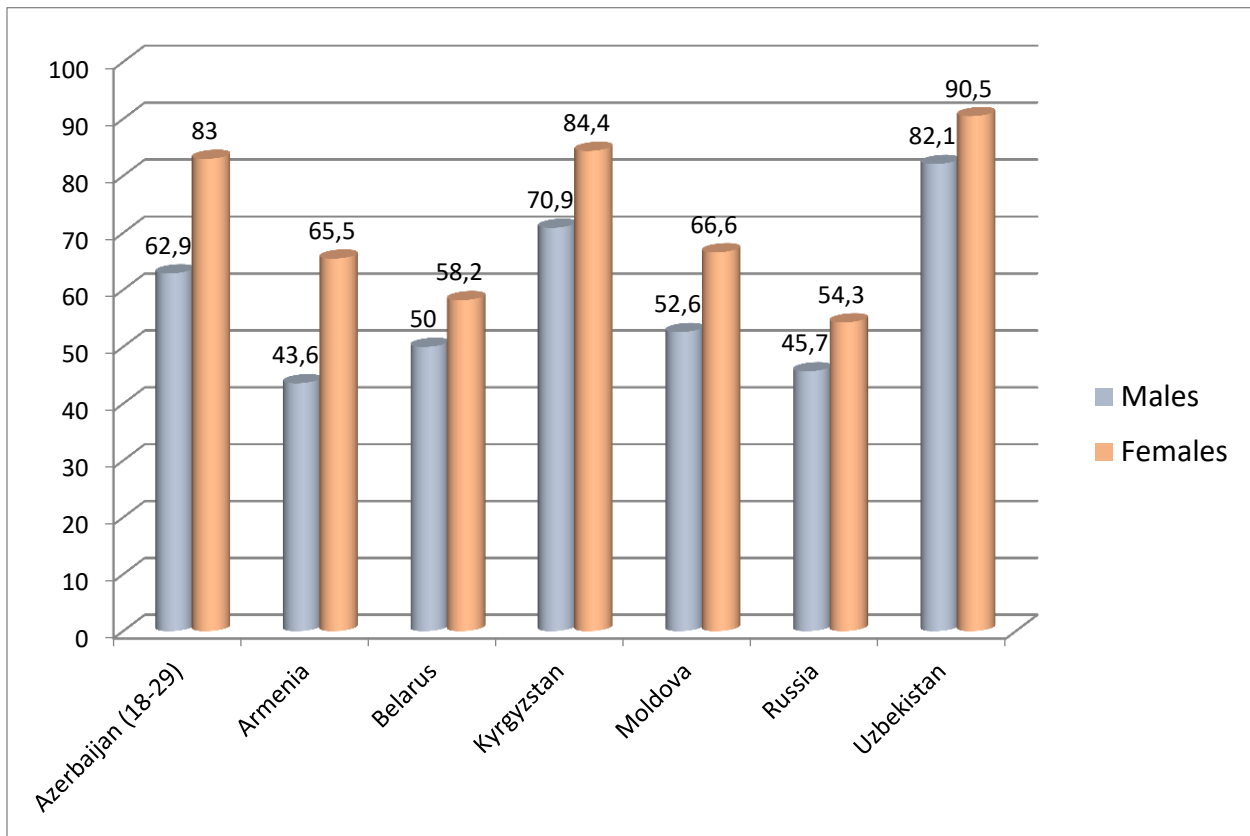
¹⁶ Youth in the Commonwealth of Independent States: A Statistical Portrait. /CIS Statistical Committee, UNFPA. M. M75 2023. - 156 p. URL: <https://new.cisstat.org/web/guest/Молодежь>

¹⁷ UN population division data portal.
 URL: <https://population.un.org/dataportal/data/indicators/42,45,44/locations/51,31,112,417,398,498,643,762,795,804,860/start/2015/end/2023/table/pivotbylocation?df=e6790cd4-e310-4ea6-b32a-398e8d48ae17>

¹⁸ Youth in the Commonwealth of Independent States: A Statistical Portrait. /CIS Statistical Committee, UNFPA. M. M75 2023. - 156 p. URL: <https://new.cisstat.org/web/guest/Молодежь>

The share of marriages of youth aged 15-29 in the total number of marriages of all ages (%) is shown in the Figure 8.

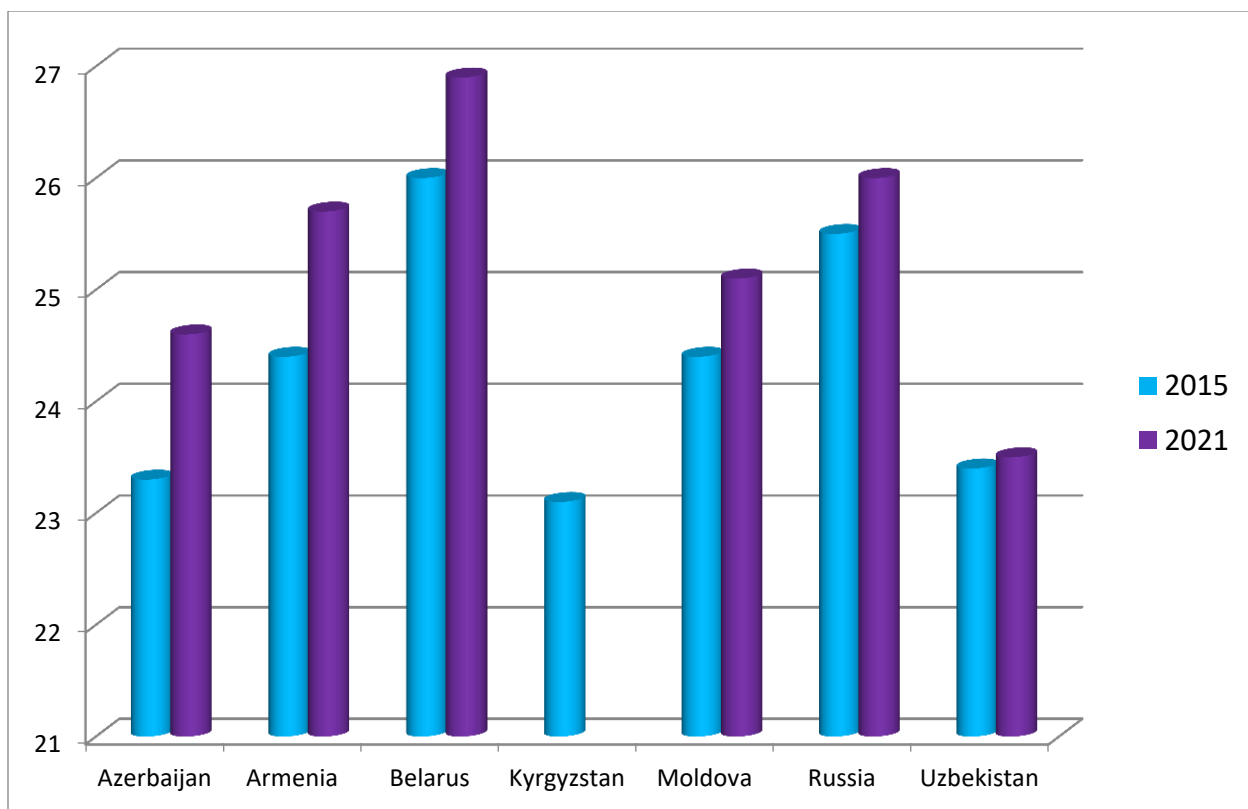
Figure 8. Share of Marriages of Youth Aged 15-29 Registered in I 2021 in the Total Number of Marriages of all Ages (%)



Source: "Youth in the Commonwealth of Independent States: A Statistical Portrait". /CIS Statistical Committee, UNFPA. M. M75 2023. - 156 p. URL: <https://new.cisstat.org/web/guest/Молодежь>

Maternal age at birth of the first child in all countries is greater than 23 years. (see Figure 9).

Figure 9. Maternal Age at Birth of the First Child (2015, 2021)



Source: “Youth in the Commonwealth of Independent States: A Statistical Portrait”. /CIS Statistical Committee, UNFPA. M. M75 2023. - 156 p. URL: <https://new.cisstat.org/web/guest/Молодежь>

Health

The health status of young people in the CIS countries is determined by many parameters, ranging from general health and nutrition to mental health and substance use.

The health status of young people in the CIS countries varies according to lifestyle, socio-economic conditions and access to health services. Together, these factors contribute to country disparities in the health status of young people.

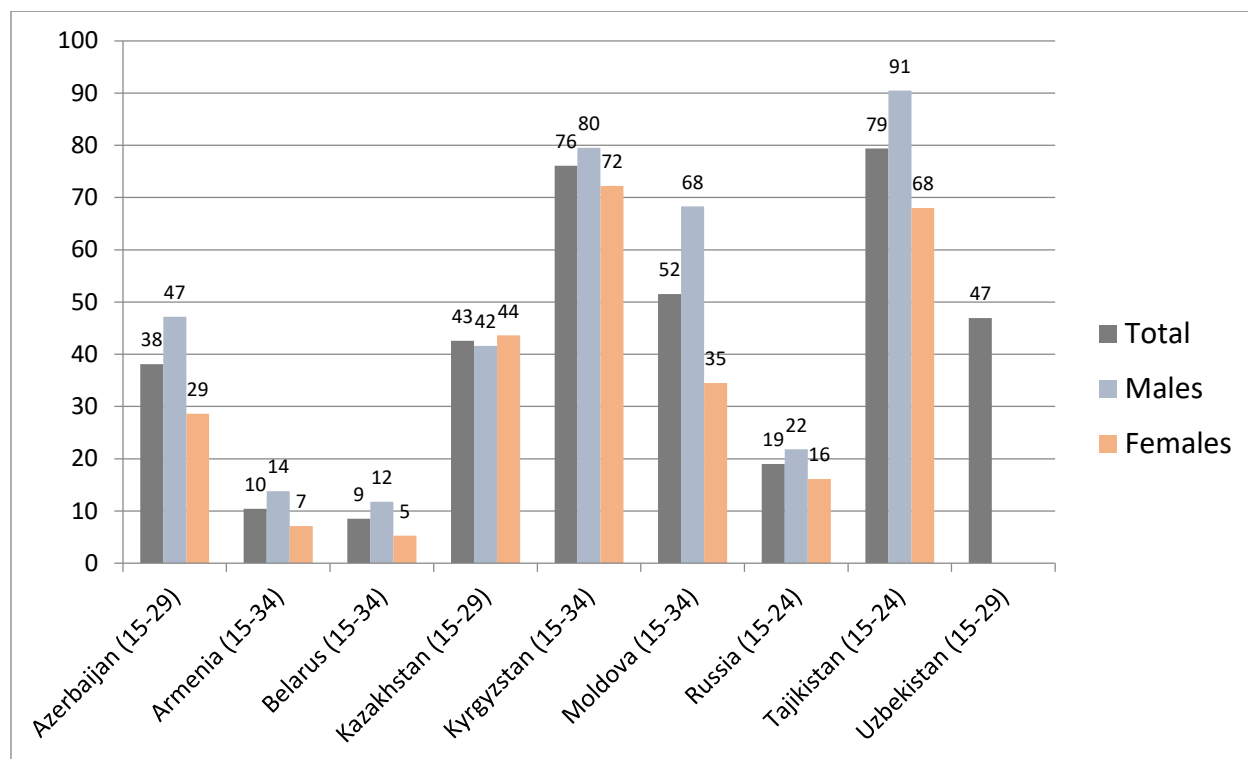
Urbanization and changing lifestyles have affected young people's dietary patterns, potentially increasing the risk of noncommunicable diseases. Young people have mental health problems, including depression, anxiety and suicidal tendencies. The World Health Organization highlights that half of all mental disorders in adulthood begin before the age of 14, although many cases go undiagnosed and untreated¹⁹.

Alcohol and drug use among young people is a concern, with alcohol being the most widespread substance.

¹⁹ WHO Adolescent and young adult health. URL: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescents-health-risks-and-solutions>

The prevalence of infectious diseases varies. Figure 10 presents data on the incidence of active tuberculosis in young people. Despite the measures taken by countries, the disease is still a serious disease, causing a proportion of deaths.

Figure 10. Tuberculosis Incidence Among Youth (Number of Newly Diagnosed Cases per 100000 Population of Corresponding Age)

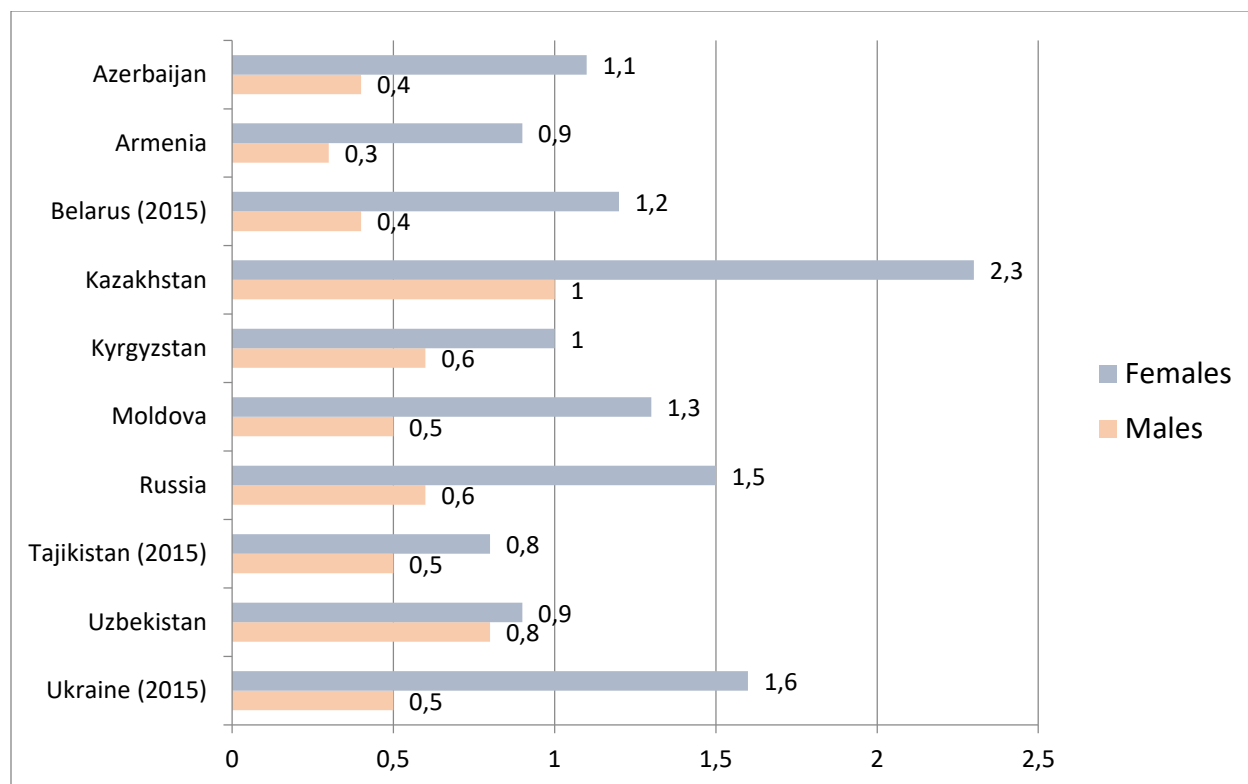


Source: “Youth in the Commonwealth of Independent States: A Statistical Portrait”. /CIS Statistical Committee, UNFPA. M. M75 2023. - 156 p. URL: <https://new.cisstat.org/web/guest/Молодежь>

Youth mortality is another indicator that characterizes the health, education and living conditions of young people.

In all CIS countries for which data are available, the mortality rate of young men exceeds that of young women, which also indicates a less responsible attitude of young men to their health, increased consumption of alcohol and other harmful substances, neglect of disease prevention measures, etc. (see Figure 8).

Figure 11. Youth Mortality (Number of Deaths of Men and Women Aged 15-29 per 1000 Persons of Corresponding Sex and Age, 2021)



Source: “Youth in the Commonwealth of Independent States: A Statistical Portrait”. /CIS Statistical Committee, UNFPA. M. M75 2023. - 156 p.URL: <https://new.cisstat.org/web/guest/Молодежь>

As per the data published by the CIS Statistical Committee²⁰, young people in the CIS countries are characterized by high risks of mortality from external causes. Among them, the risks of mortality from all types of traffic accidents, suicide, homicide and, in some countries, accidental alcohol poisoning, mainly men, stand out.

Portrait of Youth of the CIS Countries

Thus, the overall aggregate portrait of the youth of the CIS countries can be described as follows. Young people between the ages of 15 and 29, about half of whom are men and half women.

They live in both urban and rural areas. However, in most CIS countries, the share of urban youth is higher than that of rural youth.

They have education: most of them are secondary, a slightly smaller proportion of those have secondary vocational education, some have higher education. The distribution of women

²⁰ Youth in the Commonwealth of Independent States: A Statistical Portrait. /CIS Statistical Committee, UNFPA. M. M75 2023. - 156 p.URL: <https://new.cisstat.org/web/guest/Молодежь>

and men by levels of education is changing: if men predominate in secondary education, then in secondary vocational education there are already countries in which more young women than men have such education, and in higher education, the superiority of women is observed in almost all CIS countries.

A large proportion of young people, both men and women, find work, especially between the ages of 25 and 29, but the presence of unemployed youth indicates that education they have does not always match the demand of the labor market.

Furthermore, the most vulnerable group of youth are those not in employment, education or training as they are most at risk of being permanently left behind in the labor market.

At the same time, new technologies open up new employment opportunities for young people, and the development of digitalization and the Internet also makes it possible to expand learning opportunities.

Young people marry after the age of 22, but the age of marriage or cohabitation without official marriage tends to increase. The first child, as a rule, is born after the age of 23.

The health of young people is subject to the same risks as the health of other population groups, and the use of tobacco, drugs, and psychotropic substances plays a particularly negative role.

Finally, youth mortality comes mainly from external causes, of which road accidents play a key role. This fact, among other things, confirms that the state of health of young people is quite good.

Statistical data do not allow us to answer some questions regarding the portrait of young people. For example, data on young people's incomes and their relationship to education and employment status, the number of young people living below national poverty lines, how many young people use the Internet to generate income, etc., are limited. Nevertheless, the presented data shows the face of the youth of the CIS countries, although not always in detail.

Youth Policy of the CIS Countries

The importance of youth policy for the CIS countries is beyond doubt.

Back in 2005, “The agreement of the State Parties of the Commonwealth of Independent States on cooperation in the field of work with youth” was adopted²¹, and in 2012, the Interparliamentary Assembly of the CIS Member States adopted the Model Law "On State Youth Policy"²². In 2020, the CIS member states adopted the "Strategy for International Youth Cooperation of the CIS Member States in 2021-2030"²³, which defines the goals, tasks,

²¹ The agreement of the State Parties of the Commonwealth of Independent States on cooperation in the field of work with youth. URL: <https://cis-legislation.com/document.fwx?rgn=13619>

²² Model law «On State Youth Policy”. URL: <https://youthlib.mirea.ru/en/resource/748>

²³ Strategy for International Youth Cooperation of the CIS Member States in 2021-2030. URL: <https://youthlib.mirea.ru/en/resource/732>

principles, directions, forms and mechanisms for the development of youth cooperation in the CIS.

The Strategy for International Youth Cooperation of the CIS Member States for 2021–2030, among other tasks, aims to increase the creative innovative activity of young people and their competitiveness in the labor market, including by creating favorable conditions for the involvement of young people in entrepreneurial activities.

The majority of the CIS countries, have legislative acts aimed at protecting the rights and interests of young people, and they pursue a state youth policy (see Table 4).

Table 4 Youth Related Laws and Youth Policy Laws in the CIS Countries

Country	Legal Act
Republic of Azerbaijan	Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan No. 997-IIQ of April 9, 2002 "On youth policy" URL: https://youthlib.mirea.ru/en/resource/1
Republic of Armenia	No Law. Conception of youth policy of Republic of Armenia URL: https://youthlib.mirea.ru/en/resource/1868
Republic of Belarus	Law of the Republic of Belarus No. 65-3 of December 7, 2009 "On the Fundamentals of state youth policy" URL: https://youthlib.mirea.ru/en/resource/56
Republic of Kazakhstan	Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 285-V ZRK of February 9, 2015 "On state youth policy" URL: https://youthlib.mirea.ru/en/resource/167
Kyrgyz Republic	Law of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 256 of July 31, 2009 "On the basics of state youth policy". URL: https://youthlib.mirea.ru/en/resource/204
Republic of Moldova	Law of the Republic of Moldova No. 215 of July 29, 2016 "On youth" URL: https://youthlib.mirea.ru/en/resource/224
Russian Federation	Federal Law No. 489-FZ of December 30, 2020 "On youth policy in the Russian Federation" URL: https://youthlib.mirea.ru/en/resource/1174
Republic of Tajikistan	Law of the Republic of Tajikistan No. 52 of July 15, 2014 "On youth and state youth policy" URL: https://youthlib.mirea.ru/en/resource/752
Turkmenistan	Law of Turkmenistan No. 423-V of August 29, 2013 "On state youth policy" adjusted in 2022 URL: https://youthlib.mirea.ru/en/resource/783 URL: https://www.newscentralasia.net/2022/09/02/turkmenistan-adopted-a-new-law-on-youth-policy
Republic of Uzbekistan	Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. ZRU-406 of September 14, 2016 "On state youth policy" URL: https://youthlib.mirea.ru/en/resource/784

Ukraine	Law “On the main principles of youth policy”. 27 April 2021. URL: https://www.rada.gov.ua/en/news/News/207410.html
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Source: websites of countries and the CIS

At present, considerable experience has been accumulated in the implementation of the State youth policy. In the CIS countries, documents of a strategic and conceptual nature are adopted. In 2021, the strategies for the development of the state youth policy until 2030 were approved in the Republic of Belarus²⁴ and the Republic of Tajikistan²⁵, the Concept of Youth Policy for 2020-2030²⁶ and the Action Plan for 2021-2025 were adopted in the Kyrgyz Republic as the first stage of its implementation²⁷, the Program of the Republic of Armenia for 2021-2026 includes a special section "Youth"²⁸.

In some CIS member States, reports on the situation of young people²⁹ are prepared. Such reporting is enshrined in law in the Republic of Kazakhstan, where such reports are issued annually.

In some countries, the same structures are responsible for the preparation of the reports every year (the Ministry of Education in the Republic of Belarus, the Research Center "Molodezh" with the participation of the Ministry of Information and Social Development in the Republic of Kazakhstan), in other countries - different organizations, as in the Russian Federation.

As for the mechanism for collecting information on the situation of young people, it is generally the same in the Commonwealth. Official statistical data, the results of sociological research, and information from public authorities are used as sources.

The structure of the reports differs depending on the priority areas of state youth policy in the countries.

In general, youth policy in the CIS countries reflects a comprehensive approach to meeting the multifaceted needs of young people, aimed at empowering them. The main directions of youth policy in the CIS countries have much in common, but also certain country peculiarities.

²⁴ The Strategy for the Development of State Youth Policy of the Republic of Belarus until 2030. URL: https://bsu.by/upload/C22100349_1624395600.pdf?ysclid=ltm5fhs7zk316614961

²⁵ The Strategy of State Youth policy in Republic of Tajikistan. URL: https://online.zakon.kz/Document/?doc_id=34355691

²⁶ Concept of Youth Policy of Kyrgyz Republic in 2020-2030. URL: <https://e-cis.info/cooperation/2842/109930/?ysclid=ltm5s4oe7w583136823>

²⁷ Action Plan for 2021-2025 on Implementation of the Concept of Youth Policy of Kyrgyz Republic in 2020-2030. URL: : <https://yandex.ru/search/?text=План+мероприятий+на+2021-2025+годы+в+качестве+первого+этапа+реализации+Концепции+молодежной+политики+на+2020-2030+годы+Кыргызстан&lr=10393&fova=0>

²⁸ Program of the Government of the Republic Armenia for 2021-2026. URL: <https://www.gov.am/files/docs/4736.pdf/>

²⁹ E-Library «Youth in CIS». URL:<https://youthlib.mirea.ru/ru/resource/2259>

In the **Republic of Azerbaijan**, youth policy focuses on areas such as facilitating youth employment, supporting young families and youth organizations, and establishing "Youth Houses" to provide social services and promote healthy lifestyles among young people. February 2 is celebrated as National Youth Day to highlight the importance of youth in the development of the country.

The basic principles of youth policy in the Republic of Azerbaijan include, inter alia, the education of young people on the basis of the principles of patriotism, statehood, secularism, in the spirit of respect for the history, cultural heritage, customs and traditions, the state language and symbols of the Azerbaijani people, and national moral and universal values; ensuring the active participation of young people in the socio-political, socio-economic and cultural life of society, mobilizing their creative potential to solve national problems; observance of equality between women and men in the implementation of youth policy; the inadmissibility of restricting in one form or another the rights and freedoms of young people in connection with age, except in cases established by law³⁰.

In the **Republic of Armenia**, youth policy aims to address key issues facing youth, including education, health, and labor market issues, with the ultimate goal of ensuring inclusive and equitable development for Armenia's future.

The Government, among other things, envisages the promotion of critical thinking of young people, the development of research skills, entrepreneurship, knowledge of information technology and Internet literacy; expanding the range of career guidance projects and introducing new models for acquiring experience related to the future profession; helping young people to compete in the 21st century labor market; assistance in the development of entrepreneurial opportunities of young people and the establishment of enterprises by young people through the reform of the legal framework of social entrepreneurship and the introduction of new state programs to promote business; Increasing inclusivity and inclusion of young people with disabilities³¹.

In the **Republic of Belarus**, the fundamentals of youth policy are defined in the Law "On the Fundamentals of State Youth Policy" (2009), which defines the roles, objectives and directions of youth policy, including its implementation, regulation and financing. The Strategy for the Development of the State Youth Policy until 2030³² defines long-term national goals and priorities in 12 strategic areas, paying special attention to creating conditions for the effective self-realization of young people, the formation of responsible behavior and values in relation to health. The Ministry of Education, in particular its Office of Youth Affairs, plays a crucial role in implementing and coordinating youth policy, supporting youth employment, and increasing the

³⁰ Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan No. 997-IIQ of April 9, 2002 "On youth policy"

URL: <https://youthlib.mirea.ru/en/resource/1>

³¹ The Program of the Government of the Republic of Armenia for 2021-2026 .URL: <https://www.gov.am/en/gov-program/>

³² Strategy for the Development of State Youth Policy in Belarus Republic till 2030. URL: https://bsu.by/upload/C22100349_1624395600.pdf?ysclid=ltm5fhs7zk316614961

socio-political activity of young people. Youth policy and its programs have targeted budgets to support their initiatives and goals.

In **the Republic of Kazakhstan**, youth policy is of a comprehensive nature, aimed at protecting the rights and interests of young people, involving them in the socio-economic and socio-political life of the country. State youth policy is based on the following principles³³: 1) the priority of cultural, moral and spiritual values; 2) citizenship, responsibility, diligence; 3) interfaith harmony and interethnic tolerance; 4) continuity of generations, priority of family upbringing; 5) participation of youth in the formation and implementation of the state youth policy; 6) scientific, comprehensive and consistent approach to the formation and implementation of the state youth policy.

The policy is based on a broad interaction of various government agencies, including education, health, labor, entrepreneurship, culture, physical culture and sports, and religious activities, to ensure a holistic approach to youth development.

Work continues to improve legislation and implement strategic plans to support young people. The Youth Support Plan for 2021-2025, which includes 10 areas and 55 points of activity, is being actively implemented. In addition, the policy focuses on targeted work with youth who are not working, studying or undergoing vocational training (NEET), demonstrating a commitment to the inclusion of all youth in society.

Kazakhstan's approach to youth policy reflects an understanding of the significant role of youth in the country's future. The policy framework aims to empower youth through education, employment and active civic participation, fostering a sense of responsibility and belonging to Republic of Kazakhstan's national values among the younger generation. The strategy is part of a broader vision that aligns with the country's long-term development goals, emphasizing the importance of youth in achieving sustainable socio-economic progress.

In **the Kyrgyz Republic**, the formation and implementation of youth policy and the protection of the rights and legitimate interests of young people are based on the following principles³⁴: 1) ensuring the observance of the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of young people; 2) inadmissibility of discrimination against young people on the basis of sex, race, language, disability, ethnicity, religion, age, political or other beliefs, education, origin, property or other status, as well as other circumstances; 3) openness; 4) transparency; 5) ensuring equal participation of young people with disabilities in decision-making; 6) taking into account the needs and interests of young people in the development and implementation of state and municipal programs; 7) comprehensive and systematic formation and implementation of youth

³³ Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 285-V ZRK of February 9, 2015 "On state youth policy" URL: <https://youthlib.mirea.ru/en/resource/167>

³⁴ Law of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 256 of July 31, 2009 "On the basics of state youth policy". URL: <https://youthlib.mirea.ru/en/resource/204>

policy; 8) interaction of state bodies and local self-government bodies carrying out activities in the field of youth policy; 9) mandatory participation of youth, young families, youth public associations in the formation and implementation of youth policy.

Youth policy initiatives reflect a strong commitment to the empowerment of young people and their active participation in the socio-economic development of the country. These initiatives, along with efforts to combat youth unemployment by supporting entrepreneurship and sustainable livelihoods, include developing digital skills to increase youth competitiveness in the digital age, promoting gender equality, and empowering young women through mentorship and technology entrepreneurship opportunities. Youth centres have been established throughout the country to promote the active participation of young people in public life and decision-making processes.

At the request of the Ministry of Culture, Information, Sports and Youth Policy of the Kyrgyz Republic, UNDP, together with other UN agencies and partners, supported the development of an analytical comprehensive indicator of the dynamics of changes in the situation of young people in the Kyrgyz Republic - the Youth Welfare and Development Index (YWBDI)³⁵. The purpose of YWBDI is to determine the main directions for the development of youth policy and improve the quality of decisions made at the national and local levels regarding youth of the Kyrgyz Republic. These efforts underscore the integrated approach taken by the Kyrgyz Republic and its international partners to address the multifaceted needs of youth, aimed at harnessing their potential as key drivers of positive change and sustainable development.

In **the Republic of Moldova**, youth policy is defined by the Law on Youth (2016, amended in 2022)), which defines youth as persons aged between 14 and 35 years. This law, along with the Youth 2030 Strategy adopted in 2022, the Implementation Program for 2023-2026, as well as the Action Plan³⁶, aims to provide social, economic, political and legal guarantees for the development of young people.

The youth policy of the Republic of Moldova is based on the principles³⁷ of intersectoral cooperation and coordination between state institutions and youth organizations in order to achieve common goals; ensuring the equality and diversity of young people without discrimination; informing youth work institutions and youth organizations of young people about their problems, opportunities and rights in an accessible form; active involvement of young people in the decision-making process; equal distribution of responsibilities between public authorities and youth organizations on the basis of trust and mutual respect.

³⁵ Youth Wellbeing and Development Index in Kyrgyz Republic. URL:

<https://www.undp.org/kyrgyzstan/publications/youth-well-being-and-development-index-kyrgyz-republic>

³⁶ Government Resolution No. HG168/2023 validating the Development Strategy of youth sector "Youth 2030" and the Program for its implementation for 2023 2026. URL: <https://leap.unep.org/en/countries/md/national-legislation/government-resolution-no-hg1682023-validating-development>

³⁷ Law of the Republic of Moldova No. 215 of July 29, 2016 "On youth"
URL: <https://youthlib.mirea.ru/en/resource/224>

Key challenges include increasing employment, increasing access to education, health and personal development services, developing institutional capacity to work with youth, and promoting youth participation in decision-making through the establishment of local youth councils and other forms of participation.

These efforts in Moldova reflect an integrated approach to addressing the needs and capacities of young people, with a focus on their active participation in society and the economy, as well as facilitating their access to education and employment opportunities.

In **the Russian Federation**, youth policy is regulated by the Federal Law "On Youth Policy"³⁸, which defines young people as persons aged 14 to 35 years. The principles of youth policy are: combining the interests of the individual, society and the state, ensuring a balance between the interests and rights of young people, young families, youth public associations and the interests and rights of other citizens, public associations and organizations; interaction between federal government bodies, state authorities of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation and local self-government bodies operating in the field of youth policy; comprehensive, scientific strategic approaches to the formation and implementation of youth policy; openness and equal access of young people, young families, youth public associations to appropriate measures of state support; priority of state support for socially vulnerable young citizens and young families; mandatory participation of young people, young families, youth public associations in the formation and implementation of youth policy.

The Fundamentals of the State Youth Policy of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025³⁹ are focused on socio-economic development, focusing on patriotism, family values, morality, justice, a healthy lifestyle, respect for nature, the development of key competencies such as innovation, creativity, entrepreneurship, sociability, solidarity and efficiency.

In 2024 in his address to the Federal Assembly, the President of the Russian Federation proposed to consolidate the positive experience in the field of youth policy and launch a new national project, Youth of Russia, as early as 2024, indicating that this should be a project about the future and for the future of the country⁴⁰.

In **the Republic of Tajikistan**, the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan "On Youth and State Youth Policy"⁴¹ defines the organizational, legal, social and economic foundations for the upbringing, formation and development of young people.

State youth policy is based on the following principles: legality; selection of priority areas for the development of the state youth policy; taking into account the interests of different groups of adolescents and young people, including young people with physical and mental disabilities; balancing the legal rights of young people and other national groups; ample

³⁸ Federal Law No. 489-FZ of December 30, 2020 "On youth policy in the Russian Federation"

URL: <https://youthlib.mirea.ru/en/resource/1174>

³⁹ On Approval of the Foundations of the State Youth Policy of the Russian Federation for the period till 2025 URL: <https://www.prlib.ru/en/item/1513719>

⁴⁰ Presidential Address to the Federal Assembly. URL: <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/73585>

⁴¹ Law of the Republic of Tajikistan No. 52 of July 15, 2014 "On youth and state youth policy"

URL: <https://youthlib.mirea.ru/en/resource/752>

opportunities for young people to choose their life path; equal rights of young people to state support; preservation and protection of physical health and spiritual growth, the formation of patriotism and citizenship of young people; creation of an enabling environment for the enjoyment of socio-economic, political and personal rights; involving young people directly in the formulation and implementation of youth policies and programs; scientific substantiation, complex and consistent nature of the state youth policy and its implementation.

It is aimed at the effective use of the intellectual and spiritual potential of young people for the benefit of society, paying special attention to the legal and social protection, development of young people and their participation in social, economic and political life.

In **Turkmenistan**, youth policy is defined in the Law of Turkmenistan "On State Youth Policy"⁴², which focuses on the development of a patriotic, highly educated, physically and morally healthy young generation.

The main directions are the legal and social protection of young people, the promotion of cultural values, a healthy lifestyle, patriotism, and the encouragement of youth initiatives. For the first time, the Law of Turkmenistan "On State Youth Policy" was adopted on August 29, 2013, and in March 2017 it was amended and supplemented. The new version of the Law of Turkmenistan "On State Youth Policy" dated September 1, 2022 has been improved and enriched structurally and contentfully. The preamble, as well as some concepts used in the context of youth policy, have been rethought and redefined, and a number of new concepts and modern norms have been introduced.

In January 2021, the State Program on the State Youth Policy of Turkmenistan for 2021-2025 was approved⁴³, within the framework of which practical steps are being taken to ensure the most favorable conditions for the formation and development of the younger generation of Turkmen citizens, expanding opportunities for the maximum realization of its intellectual, creative and spiritual potential in the interests of society and the state. In order to ensure the economic independence of young people, their active participation in public, socio-economic and cultural life, a number of benefits are provided for the development of entrepreneurial initiatives, as well as for the implementation of the rights and obligations of young citizens, and their support from the state.

In **the Republic of Uzbekistan**, the national youth policy, established by the Law on State Youth Policy of 2016⁴⁴, is focused on the legal and social protection of young people, encouraging their active participation in social development. The main principles of the state

⁴² Law of Turkmenistan No. 423-V of August 29, 2013 "On state youth policy" URL:

<https://youthlib.mirea.ru/en/resource/78>

⁴³ State Program of State Youth Policies of Turkmenistan. URL:

<https://www.turkmenistan.gov.tm/ru/post/37137/utverzhdena-gosudarstvennaya-programma-v-oblasti-gosudarstvennoi-molodezhnoi-politiki-turkmenistana-na-2021-2025-gg>

⁴⁴ Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. ZRU-406 of September 14, 2016 "On state youth policy"

URL: <https://youthlib.mirea.ru/en/resource/784>

youth policy are: openness and transparency; participation of young people in the implementation of the state youth policy; support and stimulation of youth initiatives; the priority of spiritual, moral and cultural values; Non-discrimination against young people. Education, employment and family support are the priorities of the policy, which also provides support for youth entrepreneurship and social services.

For **Ukraine**, the National Youth Strategy until 2030 and the Law of Ukraine No. 1414-IX "On the Basic Principles of Youth Policy" of 2021, as amended in 2022⁴⁵, are key legislative acts defining youth as persons aged 14 to 35 years.

These documents are aimed at promoting the competitiveness, participation and conscious contribution of young people to the development of society. Ensuring the safety, health and integration of young people is a priority. The Ministry of Youth and Sports is the main state body responsible for the implementation of youth policy, paying special attention to the consolidation of society, the realization of the potential of youth and the promotion of physical health.

CIS countries provide significant support to young people by providing social security, including housing assistance, food subsidies, and educational scholarships and grants, which are designed both to support young people in general and to support vulnerable youth groups.

Programs targeting youth in the CIS countries vary from region to region, and specific programs may depend on each country's economic policies, social priorities and government structures. However, despite the differences, some of the most frequently implemented programs aimed at young people in the CIS countries can be distinguished:

Education Support Programs:

Scholarships and grants: Many CIS countries offer scholarships and grants to youth to support their access to education, including higher education. These programs aim to reduce barriers to education.

Free or subsidized school meals: Some countries provide free or subsidized meals to schoolchildren, ensuring they have access to hot meals, which is especially important for low-income families of young parents.

Vocational Training Initiatives: Programs that offer vocational training and skills development opportunities are designed to increase youth employability by providing them with practical skills for the labor market

Employment and Entrepreneurship Programs:

Subsidized employment: Some countries implement employment subsidy programs that encourage businesses to hire young workers by offering financial incentives to employers. This helps to reduce youth unemployment.

⁴⁵ Law of Ukraine No. 1414-IX "On the Basic Principles of Youth Policy" of 2021, as amended in 2022. URL: https://online.zakon.kz/Document/?doc_id=38927004&pos=3;-60#pos=3;-60

Supporting Entrepreneurship: Youth entrepreneurship support programs provide resources, training, and financial assistance to young people looking to start their own businesses. These initiatives are aimed at strengthening economic independence.

Social Assistance and Cash Benefit Programs:

Child and Youth Benefits: Cash transfer programs, including for young families with children, aim to alleviate poverty through financial assistance. These benefits may depend on various factors, such as the level of per capita income per family member.

Social assistance for vulnerable youth: Specialized social assistance programs may exist for vulnerable groups of youth, such as orphans, young people with disabilities, or those who face unique challenges.

Health Initiatives:

Free or subsidized health services: Access to health care is essential for the well-being of young people. Some countries offer free or subsidized health services to ensure that young people have access to the health care they need.

Mental Health Support Programs: Programs that address mental health issues among young people, including counselling services and awareness campaigns, aim to support young people's psychological well-being.

Housing support:

Subsidized housing programs: Governments can provide subsidized housing or rental assistance programs for low-income youth, helping them secure stable and affordable living arrangements.

Homelessness Prevention Programs: Initiatives aimed at preventing homelessness among youth may include shelter services, counseling, and programs that address the causes of youth homelessness.

Youth Civic Engagement and Participation:

Youth councils and forums: Governments may establish youth councils or forums to encourage the active participation of young people in decision-making processes. These platforms provide an opportunity to speak out about the concerns of young people.

Volunteering and Civil Service Programs: Initiatives that encourage youth participation in volunteer work and civic service promote personal development and community building.

Digital Inclusion Programs:

Access to technology: Digital inclusion programs provide access to technology, such as computers and the internet, for youth in hard-to-reach regions. This is crucial for educational and professional purposes.

Digital Literacy Training: Curricula that focus on developing digital literacy skills among youth ensure that they can effectively navigate the digital landscape for education, employment, and community participation.

Sports and recreation programs:

Sports Clubs and Facilities: Investments in sports clubs and facilities provide opportunities for youth for physical activity, team sports, and recreation, promoting both physical and mental well-being.

Entertainment and cultural activities: Programs that organize recreational and cultural activities aim to enhance the social and cultural experiences of young people, promoting community engagement.

Family Support Programs:

Parental Leave and Child Care Support: Policies that support parental leave and aim to provide affordable childcare services promote the well-being of young families with young children.

Family Counseling and Support Services: Programs that offer family counseling and support services contribute to the overall well-being of youth by addressing family issues.

These examples demonstrate the diversity of youth-oriented programs in the CIS countries, although the availability, structure and effectiveness of these programs can vary greatly from one country to another in the region.

Future Directions of Youth Development Policies in the CIS Countries

Perspective areas for the development of youth in the CIS countries as a whole are determined by the Concept for the Further Development of the Commonwealth of Independent States, approved by the Decision of the Council of Heads of State of the CIS dated December 18, 2020⁴⁶. This document envisages: - "involvement of the younger generation of citizens in integration processes through participation in the implementation of projects and programs for the sustainable development of cooperation in all spheres of interstate relations", the implementation of the Strategy of the International Youth Cooperation of the CIS Member States for 2021-2030 (Decision of the Council of Heads of State of May 29, 2020) and the implementation of the International Youth Project "100 Ideas for the CIS".

The adopted strategic decisions are aimed, among other things, at creating favorable conditions for education, professional, scientific and creative growth of young people as the most reliable investment in the progress and modernization of society.

Forward-looking youth policies and measures that can be adapted to national circumstances to support youth development will primarily contribute to youth education and successful entry into the labor market, and will aim to remove barriers to quality employment for young people, especially young women.

An easy transition from school to work depends on many factors. Firstly, it depends on the quality of education and training, which should meet the requirements of business. Young students should have basic and vocational education and vocational training. Short-term training opportunities need to be expanded, especially for young job seekers with low or insufficient

⁴⁶ Concept of Further Development of the CIS. URL: <https://initiative.leader-ea.su/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/o-Концепции-дальнейшего-развития-СНГ.pdf>

skills and qualifications. Taking into account the relevant national circumstances, special attention will be paid to improving the preparation of young people for the increasingly digital world of work.

Ensuring that young people are able to take advantage of policies that promote employment and retain workers, such as part-time work, flexible working hours and employment subsidies, is also a promising direction. Youth will continue to expand access to social protection systems and provide financial support to unemployed youth.

At the same time, measures will be taken to increase the number of quality jobs and employment opportunities in the formal sector for young people, especially those with low qualifications. This should also be the focus of economic and sectoral policies.

There is also a need to remove barriers that prevent young people's successful transition from temporary or informal employment to permanent and formal employment. Employment services can play an active role in addressing this issue. To this end, investments should be made in high-quality, cost-effective employment and social security services, including active employment policies with programs tailored to the needs of young people.

Vulnerable groups, young people with disabilities, those who do not work, study or receive vocational training (NEET) and are at risk of being left out of the labor market need additional support. Behavioral analytics methods and approaches can be used to improve the effectiveness of these actions such as sociological surveys of youth needs and attitudes.

Promoting entrepreneurship to facilitate youth employment remains an important policy area for young people. Entrepreneurship programs for youth and actions to remove barriers to young people's access to appropriate financial services will continue to be promoted.

The involvement of young people and their representation in the tripartite social dialogue will remain an important area.

Finally, special attention will be paid to gender equality among young people. The most difficult component of such a policy is the change of gender stereotypes, the rejection of ideas about the subordinate role of women in the family and society. Work will continue with teachers, parents and students to overcome stereotypes about traditional gender roles in girls' education and employment.

There is a need to expand opportunities for education and training and career choices for girls and young women, including promoting their greater participation in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

It should be noted that considerable attention is paid to this in the CIS countries, as evidenced, among other things, by the statistical portrait of young people, which shows that the share of young women with higher education in most CIS countries is higher than the share of men. The gender gap in digital economy-related skills, such as computer programming skills, needs to be further narrowed.

Educating young women about entrepreneurship and improving their access to financial services will make it easier for them to access the labor market. The further development of affordable and high-quality childcare and elder care services, as well as the provision of parental

leave for young women and men, and the creation of family-oriented working opportunities and conditions, are also aimed at the same goal.

Finally, improving the monitoring of the situation of young people and statistics reflecting the interests of young people should be a promising direction. The harmonization of indicators characterizing the situation of young people, developed in the CIS countries, will increase not only the effectiveness of youth policy, but also the situation of young people.

Conclusion

Considerable attention is paid to the issues of youth and youth policy in the CIS countries.

Despite the demographic transition experienced by the CIS countries (declining birth rates and population ageing) and a decrease in the share of young people in the total population of the CIS countries, there is still a significant youth demographic group aged 15 to 29 in the CIS region.

Youth represent the future workforce, leaders, and contributors to society.

The analysis shows that the young population of the CIS countries is approximately equally divided into men and women, with a slight preponderance of men. Analyzing gender dynamics among young people is important. Understanding differences in education, employment and gender-based social expectations helps identify areas for targeted interventions to promote gender equality.

The distribution of young people between urban and rural areas varies across the CIS countries. In seven countries, the number of urban youths exceeds that of rural youth, while in three countries, the situation is reversed, with rural youth predominating.

In general, it can be stated that the level of education of young people in the CIS countries is quite high. In many countries, secondary education is compulsory, and vocational education and higher education are being developed. Analyzing the quality of education requires more diverse statistics. However, it is clear that there is a certain discrepancy between the curricula and the requirements of the labor market, which leads to the employment of young people in jobs that do not correspond to the profession they have acquired, and this also confirms the existence of unemployment among young people.

The high level of youth unemployment compared to the average population, as well as the level of underemployment among young people, is a common problem in the CIS region. Factors that contribute to this problem may include skills mismatches, limited employment opportunities and barriers to entry into the labor market.

Young people in the CIS countries marry after the age of 23, and young women at a younger age than young men. By the age of 29, most young women are married and have at least their first child.

The health of young people is generally quite good. This is evidenced by the data on youth mortality, which show that the most common mortality is from external causes, such as road traffic accidents, etc. However, among young people, there are also common diseases, such

as tuberculosis. The prevalence of many diseases and infections is also associated with the use of alcohol, tobacco and drugs by young people. Unfortunately, data on per capita consumption of these substances (as required by Sustainable Development Goal indicators such as indicator 3.5.2) are not published, making it difficult to analyze the situation in detail.

A comparison of youth policies in the CIS countries reveals differences in approaches and results. Analyzing successful strategies and identifying common challenges provides valuable information for regional cooperation, an important focus of which is the empowerment of young people and their involvement in civic and political processes.

Promoting the participation of young people in decision-making processes contributes to the development of a more inclusive and dynamic society. is crucial for fostering a sense of belonging and social responsibility.

Finally, speaking about youth and youth policy, it is necessary to note the role of cultural factors in the formation of the portrait of young people in the CIS countries. The interplay between national identity, ethnicity, and cultural influences contributes to youth diversity.

Monitoring the situation of young people, improving youth statistics, and preparing surveys and reports on the situation of young people contribute to the development and well-being of young people.

The participation of various stakeholders – governments, youth, civil society organizations, social partner organizations (business and trade unions) and others – will ensure the effective and full-scale implementation of the decisions taken and the prosperity of the youth of the CIS countries.

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