

Current Situation and Problems of Youth Labor Market Integration in Azerbaijan

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Abstract: Sustainable economic development is directly related to the employment of the population, including youth. In particular, in the modern era of digitalization of the economy, the rapid obsolescence of professions and knowledge, there are serious problems with the integration of young people into the labor market. The article also analyzes the problems in ensuring youth employment in the Republic of Azerbaijan, the impact of education, including vocational education, on the labor base. From this point of view, the main features of the youth labor market have been studied, the division of education of employed and unemployed youth in Azerbaijan has been given, and authors have been put forward to solve problems in the field of youth employment.

Key –word: Labor market, youth employment, youth vocational education, vocational education institutions, informal labor market, segmentation, population.

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1. Introduction

In connection with the transition to a market economy, a labor market has emerged in which supply and demand relations operate. At the current stage of formation and development of the market economy, the purpose of the labor market is to provide the employee with the necessary income to support himself and his family, effective employment that directly assists in the realization of his professional knowledge and skills, and on the other hand, consists of being.

Thus, the labor market is a concept that expresses the demand for labor on the one

hand, and social-labor relations in connection with the use of its skills and competencies, on the other hand, and is directly related to the concepts of employment and unemployment. The main task of the labor market is to ensure optimal flexibility of employees, balancing labor supply and demand. A well-organized and efficient labor market ensures more purposeful use of labor potential.

2. The main component and segmentation of the labor market

The level of organization of the labor market depends on its components and the activity of each of them.

The main components of the labor market include:

- 1) employers who form the demand for labor;
- 2) labor resources that form the supply of labor;
- 3) the state, trade unions and intermediary institutions (employment agency, labor exchange, etc.) acting as intermediaries between employers and employees;
- 4) legal acts regulating the relations between the subjects of the labor market;
- 5) The mechanism of operation of the labor market is a self-regulatory mechanism determined by the interaction of labor supply and demand.

The formation of supply and demand depends on many factors, including historical, socio-economic and political processes in society. The demand for labor, its qualification and quality parameters are formed by the labor market. The structure of labor demand is determined by specific types of labor and depends on the profession, specialty, age, sex, social status, etc. of the labor force. divided into groups depending on factors.

There is no single labor market for the entire economy. It is a complex system of relations, consisting of subsystems in the form of specific target markets called segments. Segmentation of the labor market is important for the analysis of the market, the study of its structure and capacity, the identification of the contingent that creates demand and supply, the definition of prospects for the development of the labor market.

Segmentation can be defined by level of education, profession, specialty level, field of activity, area, demographic characteristics. According to the level of education, the labor market of employees with higher, secondary specialization, primary profession, full secondary, basic secondary and primary education, lawyers, economists, geologists, medical workers, etc. by profession. labor market of skilled workers, labor market of high, medium, low-skilled and unskilled workers by qualification level, labor market of economic workers by field of activity, national, regional and local labor market by area, youth, adults, children, by demographic characteristics, there is a women's labor market. Among them, the youth labor market has a special place, because young people participate in each of the other markets.

3. Features of the youth labor market

They are the most dynamic members of the society, whose lives are not burdened with certain worries, who are living the period of completing their physical and spiritual development, and who are preparing for the future with sufficient education.

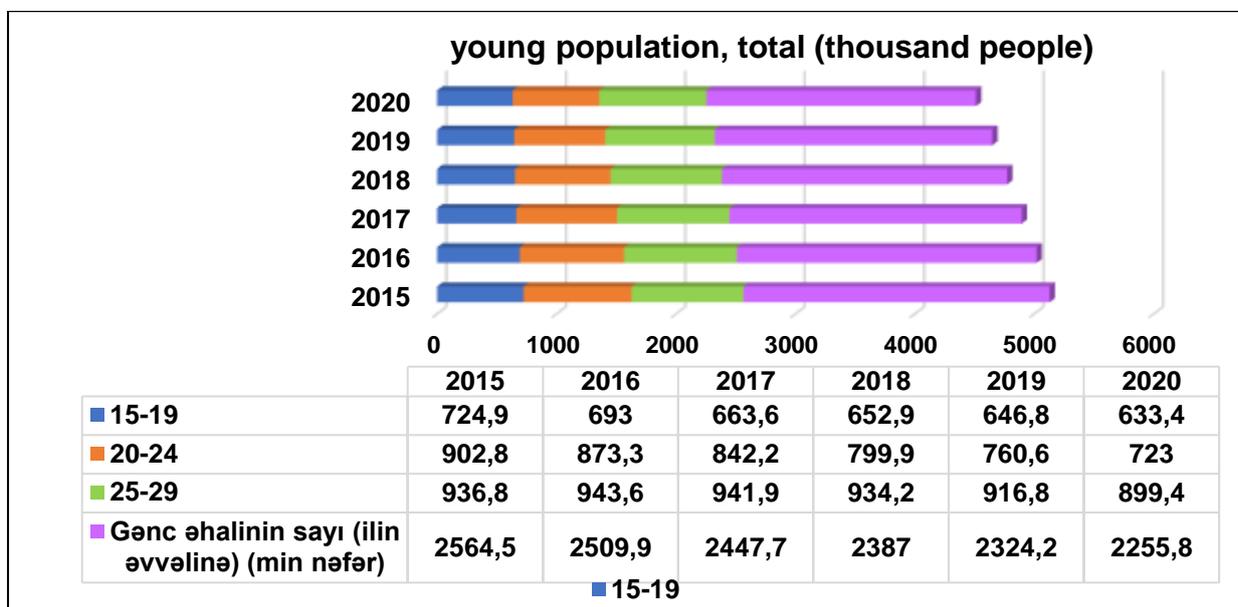
Youth is a period in which thoughts, behaviors, and professional orientations are formed at a certain and limited age, and the individual as a whole is prepared for an active economic life. Young people, who are an important part of the labor force, differ from other groups by their agility, mobility, independence, ability to work longer and at the same time inexperience, lack of competitiveness and special needs for protection in the labor market.

According to the ILO classification, young people belong to the population group

aged 15-24. In Europe, the age group is 15-29 years old, in Russia it is 16-30 years old. Until 2007, young people in Azerbaijan belonged to the 16-35 age group. However, according to the Decree signed by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on amendments and additions to the Law on Youth Policy in 2007, the age limit for young people is set from 14 to 29, in this regard, the world age limit is 29 (scientific research and in the education system, this is up to 42 years). In addition, young people are classified into several age groups: 15-17, 17-21, 21-24 and 24-29. In addition, the document stipulates that young conscripts can continue to work in their workplaces after discharge. Youth covers the period between the ages of 14-29, ie the time of completion of compulsory education, employment, starting an independent active life, stabilization of personal life.

The group of young people under the age of 17 mainly includes students of upper secondary schools and primary vocational education institutions. As a rule, they are under the care of their parents. Determining the main socio-economic landmarks of people in this period, including professional orientation happens. Students of higher and secondary vocational education institutions, graduates of vocational education institutions of the year, as well as high school graduates who are unable to continue their education and do not have any profession, entering the labor market according to the age group of 17-21 years old. applies to discarded. It should be noted that low levels of education and incompetence have a negative impact on the employment opportunities of this last category of people, increasing tensions in the labor market.

Figure 1. Number of young population by age groups

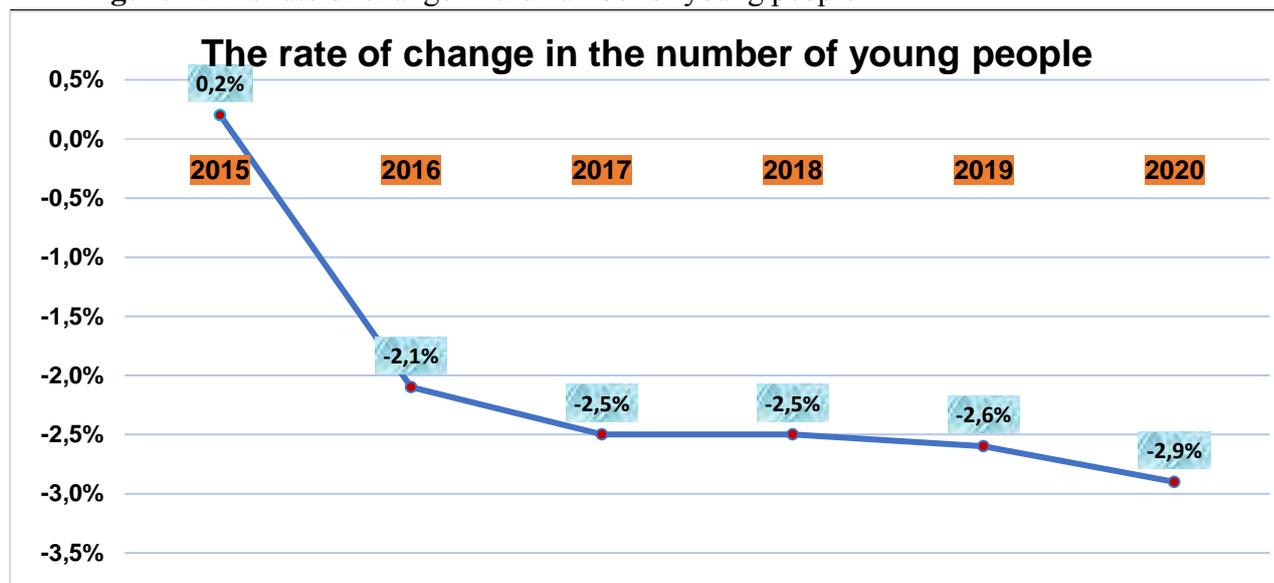


Source: Azerbaijan State Statistics Committee. www.stat.gov.az

A group of young people aged 21-24 are those who have completed or are completing vocational training in higher and secondary vocational education institutions. These young people are less

competitive in the labor market due to their lack of professional experience and skills and are considered the weakest group.

Figure 2. The rate of change in the number of young people



Source : www.stat.gov.az.

The group of young people aged 24-29 includes those who have already specialized in a certain profession, gained experience and skills. They are already making their demands on the proposed job.

Recently, Azerbaijan is also a demographic problem is showing itself. Both declining birth rates and rising migration are already causing demographic problems in the region. One of the factors influencing the decrease in the number of young people is the fact that today's families are less prone to children, and the average monthly salary in the country is not enough to pay for the social care of the family. That is, today's families are content with fewer children. 25-30 years ago, people with 3-4 and in the Soviet era, families with 3-4 children were considered as a normal family model, but in the current situation, they prefer to be content with a maximum of two, and in most cases one child. Even most families have only one child. Let me note that the changes that have taken place over the past 10 years must also be viewed in the context of modernity. Other reasons why today's families prefer the "small family" model are that they are less inclined to take

responsibility for their young people. Thoughts such as "not being able to look after many children on a small budget" can also affect this.

The entry of young people into the labor market is formed by graduates of higher, secondary and primary vocational education institutions and secondary schools who need to find a job or change jobs. It should be noted that not all people in this category are looking for work and, therefore, do not enter the labor market. Some of them plan to continue their education or do not look for work for other reasons

The youth labor market has its own characteristics:

First of all, the labor market of young people is characterized by flexibility and mobility, both professionally and territorially, as well as socially. In the labor force, young people are also demographically agile and active. They are more agile among domestic and foreign migrants and in the redistribution of the workforce by occupation.

The fourth feature of the youth labor market is the training of young professionals in all possible professions,

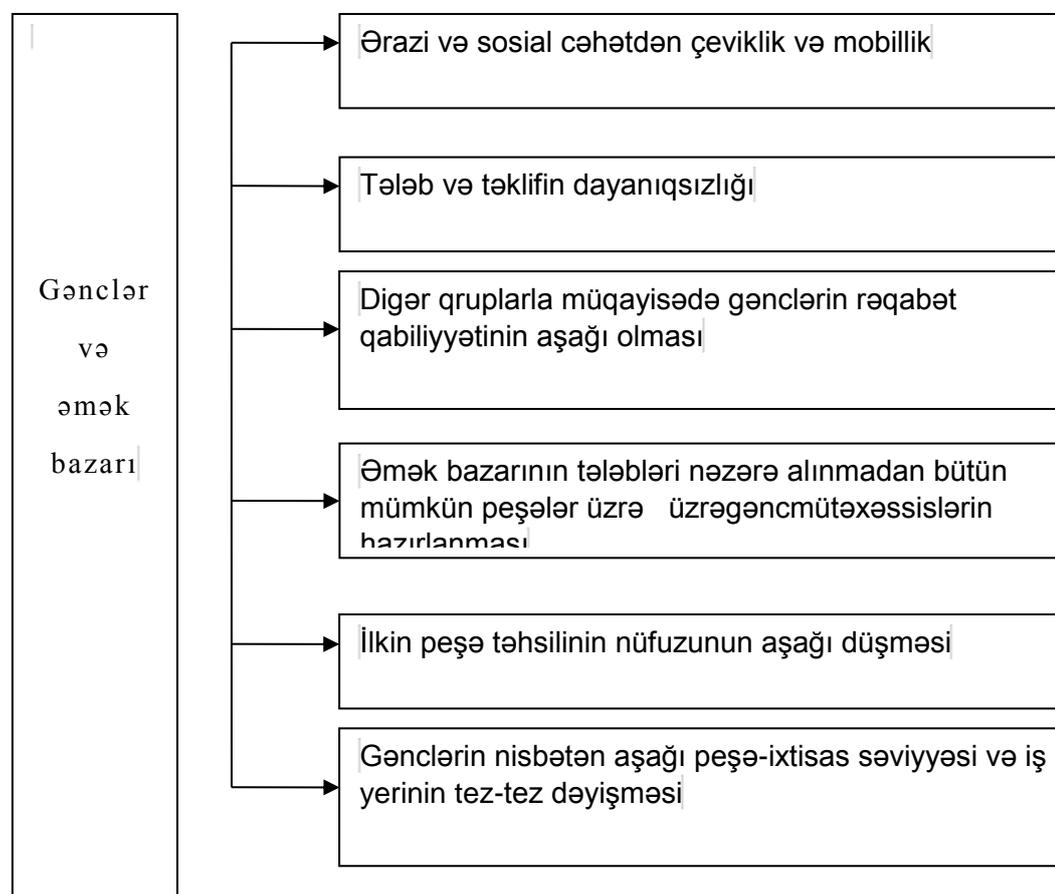
regardless of the requirements of the labor market. Due to the lack of demand for many of these professions in the labor market, young job seekers, including new graduates of educational institutions, are not able to find a job in their specialty and are forced to work in jobs that do not correspond to their specialty or remain unemployed. Most of these young people are forced to retrain in other professions and specialties, which means both additional costs and longer time to enter the labor market.

It is known that education plays a key role in ensuring youth employment in modern times. The creation of new enterprises and jobs has had a significant impact on the efficient use of existing labor resources, employment and improving the material well-being of the population. However, the creation of jobs

does not mean the elimination of unemployment.

The creation of these jobs should take into account regional characteristics and potential workforce, and train qualified personnel to work in new jobs. Therefore, much remains to be done to transform Azerbaijan into a country with a skilled workforce and a flexible labor market.

One of them, perhaps the first, is the implementation of an active employment policy for young people, who are the main workforce. In this regard, the study of social behavior of young people in connection with education and employment is relevant in terms of the formation of the labor market and the provision of effective employment of young people.

Scheme.1 The main features of the youth labor market

4. Economic activity, employment, unemployment rate of the population

Here, on the one hand, the ratio of the needs of the labor market to workers with different levels of specialization in one or another profession, on the other hand, the tendencies and plans of young people in choosing a future life are important. In order to implement an active employment policy, the composition and structure of the existing and future labor resources in the country should be studied and formed in accordance with the

perspective development of the country's economy.

The level of employment is also an important indicator of the labor market. The level of employment for the whole population, as well as for individual groups of the population (sex, age, education, place of residence, etc.) is calculated by the following formula.

$$M = \frac{S_m}{S_{if}} * 100,$$

where M - employment level, S_m - engaged of those number, S_{if} - economic active of the population is the number.

According to statistics, if we look at

the dynamics of growth or decline in the dynamics of economic activity, employment, unemployment in the socio-

economic and other indicators of the labor market:

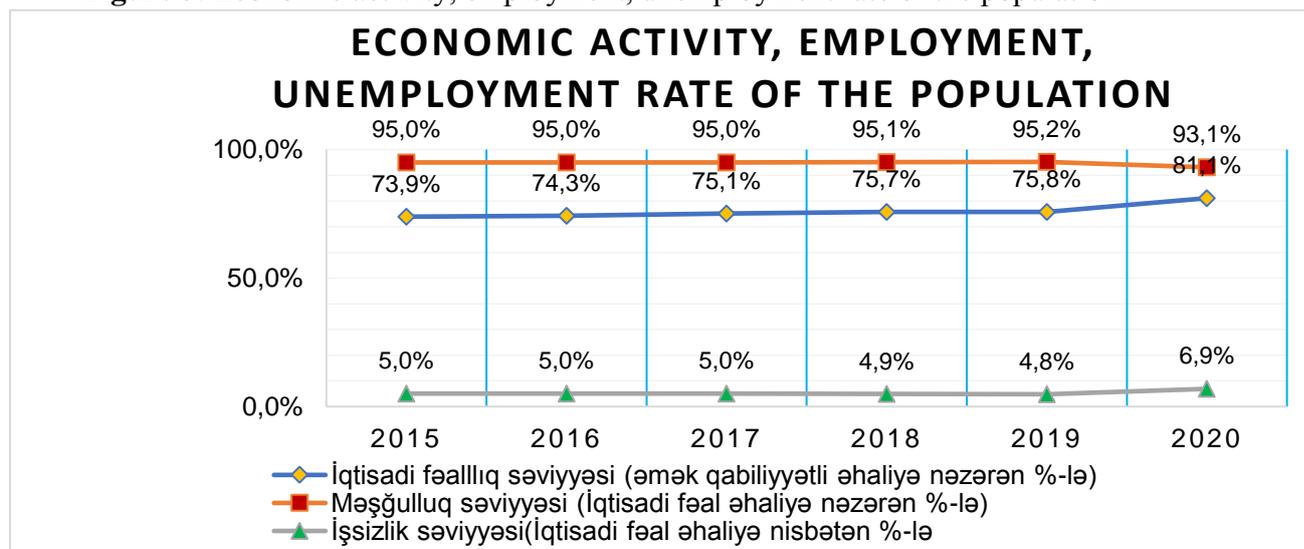
Table 1. Economic activity, employment, unemployment rate of the population in%

İllər	İqtisadi fəallıq səviyyəsi (əmək qabiliyyətli əhaliyə nəzərən %-lə)	Məşğulluq səviyyəsi (İqtisadi fəal əhaliyə nəzərən %-lə)	İşsizlik səviyyəsi (İqtisadi fəal əhaliyə nisbətən %-lə)
2015	 73.9%	 95.0%	 5.0%
2016	 74.3%	 95.0%	 5.0%
2017	 75.1%	 95.0%	 5.0%
2018	 75.7%	 95.1%	 4.9%
2019	 75.8%	 95.2%	 4.8%
2020	 81.1%	 93.1%	 6.9%
Dinamikalar üzrə artım (azalma)	 7.2%	 -1.9%	 1.9%

Source : www.stat.gov.az.

According to the latest data of the current year, according to the State Statistics Committee of Azerbaijan, in 2015-2020, the number of able-bodied people of working age increased by 273.4 thousand people at a rate of 4.3%, from 6198.7 thousand to 6477.5 thousand people. The number of economically active population was 5251.3 thousand people, which is 51.8% of

the average annual population, **81.1%** of the able-bodied population and 79.2% of the labor force. In 2015-2020, the number of economically active population increased by 274.8 thousand people or 5.3% to 5251.3 thousand people, and the number of employed population increased by 336.0 thousand people or 6.4% to 4887.8 thousand people. has done.

Figure 3. Economic activity, employment, unemployment rate of the population

Source: www.stat.gov.az

5. Analysis of the level of education of the employed population

Looking at the indicators of 2020, the share of employment was 49% of the total population, 75.5% of the labor force, 73.7% of the able-bodied population, and 93.1% of the economically active population. Research on employment shows that there is a difference in the level of economic activity and employment. The level of employment has an upward trend. According to the latest research and statistics, according to the latest statistics for 2019 and 2020

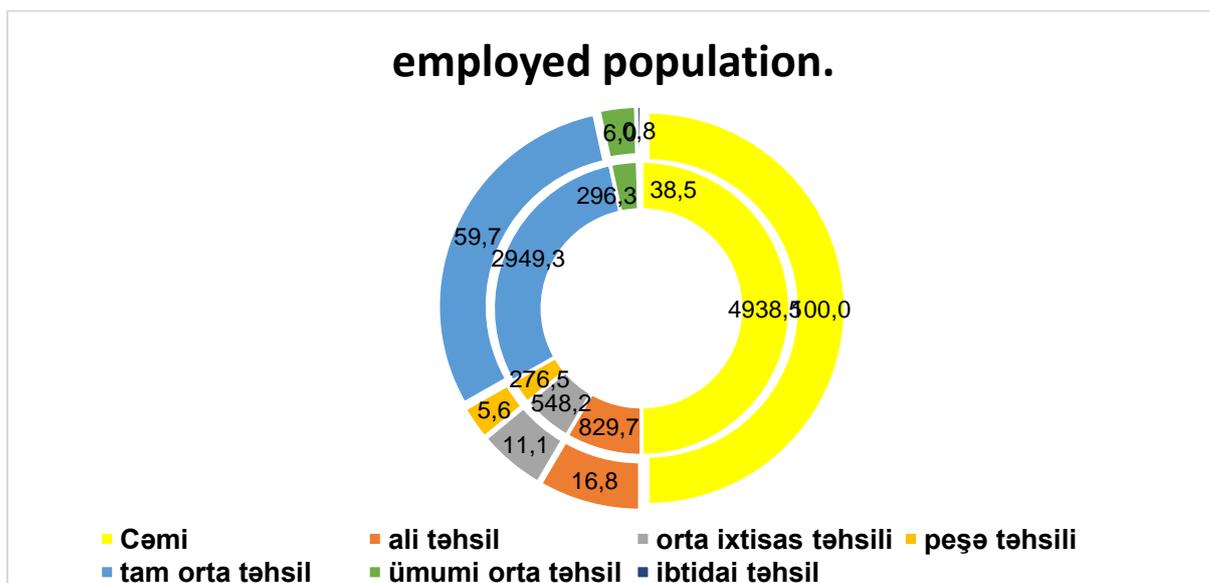
(negative) -1.0% decrease is observed. The consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic should not be overlooked.

According to official data, the unemployment rate has been growing steadily over the years, reaching 3.6% of the population this year, 5.6% of the working age population, 5.5% of the labor force and 7.4% of the employed population. . According to the latest figures for 2020, the unemployment rate increased by 363.5 thousand people as a result of the "Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, reaching **6.9% of the economically active population** .

Table 2. Distribution of the employed population by level of education, thousand people

Education level	In total , a thousand people	In total , in percent
Total	4938.5	100.0
Higher education	829.7	16.8
Medium specialty education	548.2	11.1
Profession education	276.5	5.6
Exactly average education	2949.3	59.7
General average education	296.3	6.0
Primary education	38.5	0.8

Figure 4. Distribution of the employed population according to the level of education.



Source : www.iqtisad.net

Analysis of the level of education of the employed population shows that more than half of them have **completed secondary education**, and the number of this category was 2949.3 thousand people, 59.7% of the employed population, 296.3 thousand people or 6% of the total secondary education . The share of higher education in the total employed population was 16.8%, the number of vocational educated was 276.5 thousand people or 5.6%. The share of mid-level professionals is 11.1%. The number of people with primary education with the lowest rate is 38.5 thousand, which is 0.8% of the employed population.

Ensuring youth employment is one of the most pressing problems of our time. Thus, young people are an important part of the working population, as well as a key force in the future development of society. The effective use of this force depends to a large extent on its education, raising the level of vocational training, increasing its intellectual potential, and mastering specialties in accordance with the requirements of the labor market. The rapid change in labor demand in the modern labor market requires a more flexible policy to ensure youth employment.

Table 3. Distribution of the employed population by education level and age groups , (thousand people).

Yaş qrupları	Məşğul əhali, gənclərin sayı, cəmi	o cümlədən təhsil üzrə					
		ali təhsil	orta ixtisas təhsili	peşə təhsili	tam orta təhsil	ümumi orta təhsil	ibtidai təhsil
Cəmi	4938.5	829.7	548.2	276.5	2949.3	296.3	38.5
Məşğul gənclərin təhsil səviyyəsi, cəmi.	1250.5	257.6	137.7	48.7	695.1	109.6	1.8
15-19	92.6	-	5.6	2.4	69.0	15.3	0.3
20-24	444.1	77.8	50.9	20.8	248.1	45.8	0.7
25-29	713.8	179.8	81.2	25.5	378.0	48.5	0.8
Faizlə							
Məşğul gənclərin təhsil səviyyəsi, cəmi.	25.3%	31.0%	25.1%	17.6%	23.6%	37.0%	4.7%
15-19 %-lə	1.9%	-	1.0%	0.9%	2.3%	5.2%	0.8%
20-24 %-lə	9.0%	9.4%	9.3%	7.5%	8.4%	15.5%	1.8%
25-29 %-lə	14.5%	21.7%	14.8%	9.2%	12.8%	16.4%	2.1%

Source: State Statistics Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

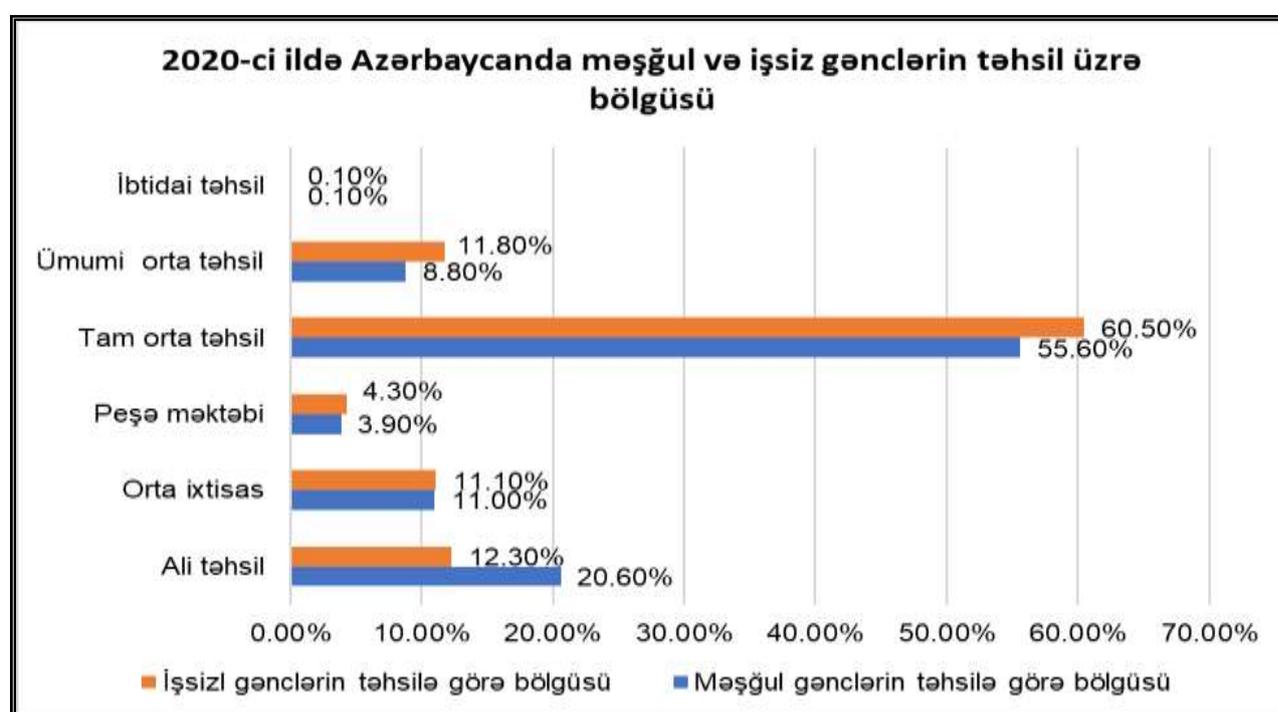
The number of people employed in the economy among young people under the age of 20 is small, unlike other age groups. If we look at the distribution of the employed population by education level and age groups, young people (15-29) account for 25.3% of the total employed population, 20-24 age groups with higher education, ie 77.8 thousand people, 9.4%, 25-29 age groups 179.8 thousand people, and the interest rate is 21.7%. 9.3% of those with secondary special education in the age group of 20-24, and those with secondary special education are still in the 25-29 age group. Their share in the employed population is 14.8%. The share of young people with vocational education in the total employed population is 17.6%, where those aged 15-19 are 0.9%, young people aged 20-24 are 7.5%, and the share of young people with primary education is 4, Is 7%. The highest rate of employment among young people is in the age group of 25-29. The youngest able-bodied part of the population is 15-24 years old. At this age, people's spiritual and cultural needs are formed and they reach a certain level

of qualification. Those in this group must acquire adequate knowledge and skills and prepare themselves for future jobs. Therefore, their main activity is to receive education separately from production, to gain knowledge to understand new techniques and technologies. The majority of people aged 15-24 are engaged in education, regardless of their place of residence, and enter the labor market after graduation. The process of acquiring knowledge in society requires an increase in the army of permanent students, which leads to a decrease in the level of labor activity of people aged 15-24. Studies show that 20-24 (25%) and 25-29 (18%) age groups have the largest share in the age structure of the employed population. It is considered that if the share of those aged 20-24 in the age structure of the population is higher than in the older age groups, there may be an increase in labor supply (unemployment). The following table shows the distribution of education of employed and unemployed youth in Azerbaijan

Table 4 . Distribution of education of employed and unemployed youth in Azerbaijan

Education level	Distribution of employed youth by education	Distribution of unemployed youth by education
high education	20.6%	12.3%
Vocational	11.0%	11.1%
Vocational school	3.9%	4.3%
Complete secondary education	55.6%	60.5%
General secondary education	8.8%	11.8%
Primary education	0.1%	0.1%

Source: "Azerbaijani youth" Statistical collection. Baku 2020

Figure 5. Education distribution of employed and unemployed youth in Azerbaijan

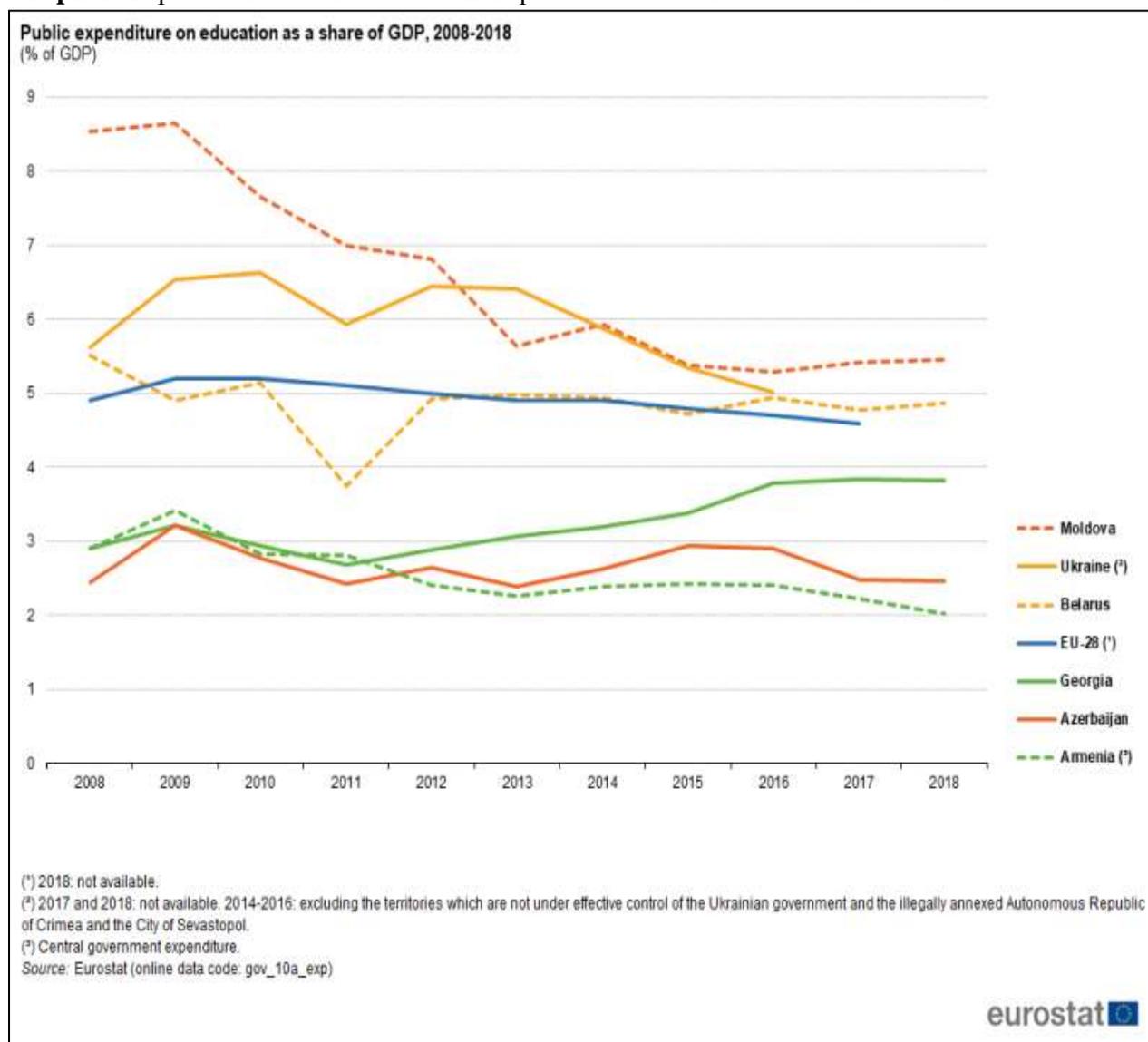
Source : State Agency for Vocational Education

The graph shows that 60.5% of unemployed youth have completed secondary education, and 11.8% have general secondary education. In fact, 72% of unemployed youth have no profession or specialty.

In 2019, public spending on education in Azerbaijan amounted to 2.7% of GDP. In general, this figure is much lower than the average of 4.5% in Eastern European countries and higher middle-income countries.

In general, vocational education expenditures in Azerbaijan, as part of total education expenditures, are low and have fallen from 2.1% to 1.4% in the last five years. In 2019, a total of 39.6 million manat was allocated for the initial PTT, which is 11.7 million manat more than in 2018. In 2019-2020, there were 164,000 vocational students and 56,000 secondary school students in the country. The chart below shows the expenditures of the CIS and European countries on education from GDP.

Graph 1. Expenditures of the CIS and European countries on education from GDP



Source:

[https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statisticsexplained/index.php?title=File:Public_expenditure_on_education_as_a_share_of_GDP,_2008_2018_\(%25_of_GDP\)_ENPE19.png & oldid = 463238](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statisticsexplained/index.php?title=File:Public_expenditure_on_education_as_a_share_of_GDP,_2008_2018_(%25_of_GDP)_ENPE19.png&oldid=463238)

Vocational education and training (PTT) in Azerbaijan is mostly school-based. Currently, only a few vocational schools partner with companies and send students to companies for internships. The link

between the PTT system and business is weak and not systematic. The chart below shows the number of people enrolled in vocational schools.

Figure 6. Number of people admitted to vocational schools in Azerbaijan .

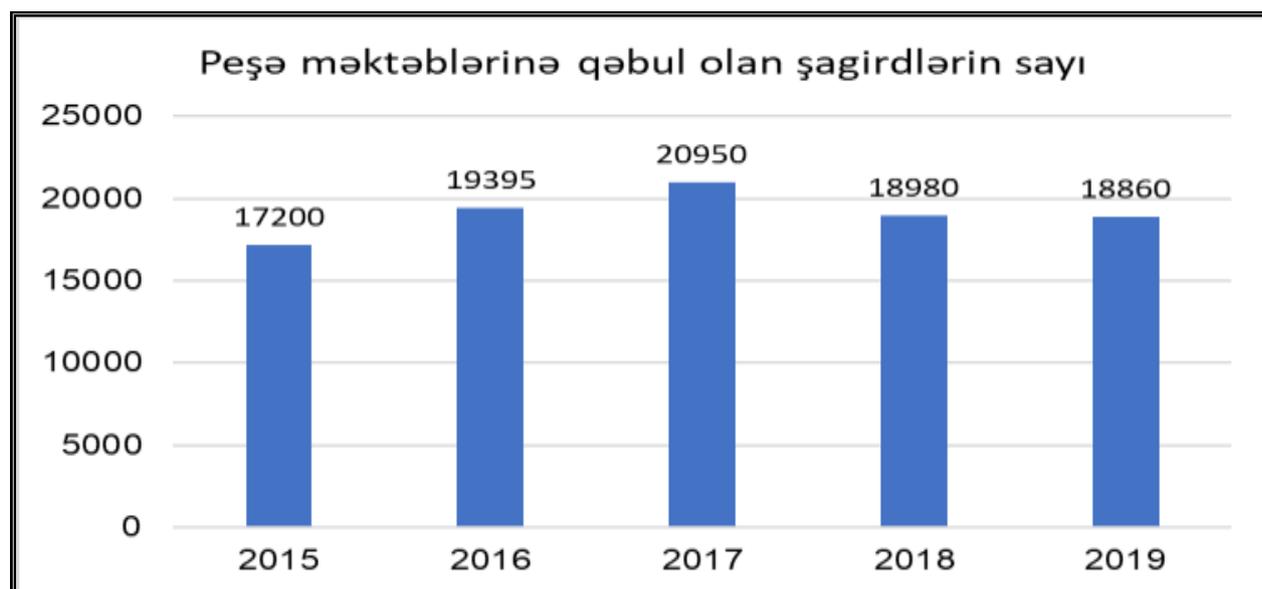


Table 5. Distribution of youth by economic activity and unemployment rate.

Age groups	Distribution of economically active population by age groups	Distribution of the unemployed population by age groups	Unemployment level in %
Total	5190.1	253.8	5%
Economic active and unemployed young people	1368.2	123.8	9.0%
15-19	106.2	15.1	14.2%
20-24	507.1	63.1	12.4%
25-29	754.9	45.6	6.0%

If we look at the unemployment rate by age groups, those aged 15-19 and 20-24 have the highest unemployment rate (14.2%; 12.4%) (Table 6). Studies show that the division of the unemployed into age groups suggests that the largest share

(30%) of the total unemployed population belongs to the 25-34 age group. The high unemployment rate in the 15-19 and 20-24 age groups does not depend on their share in the population.

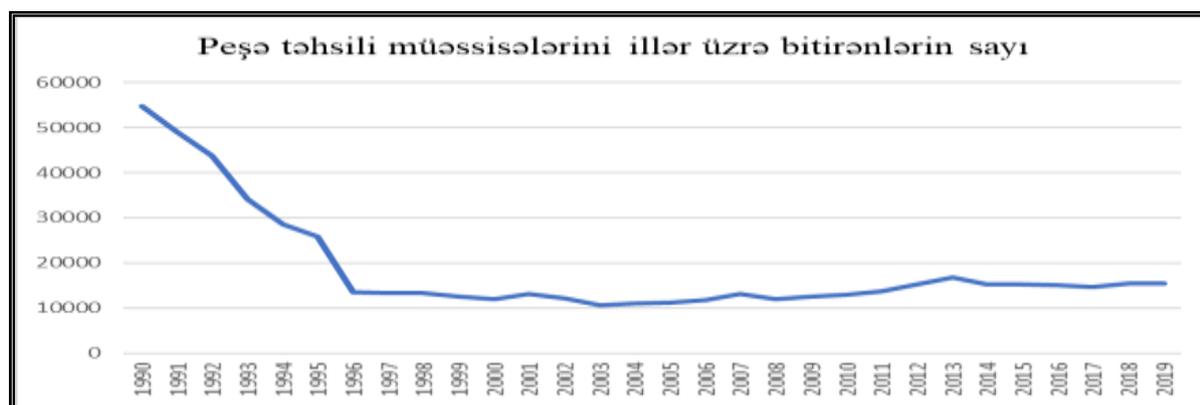
Table 6. Distribution of youth by education by age group

Age groups	Economic active population, total	including _ education on					
		ali education	average specialty education	profession education	the middle education	common average education	primitive education
Total	5190.1	864	578.9	295.5	3064.9	323.6	40.4
Young people total (thousand people)	1368.2	270.8	149.7	53	769.9	122.6	2.2
15-19	106.2	-	5.8	2.9	80.6	16.7	0.2
20-24	507.1	84.5	56.9	23	289	52.8	0.9
25-29	754.9	186.3	87	27.1	400.3	53.1	1.1

Source : <https://edu.gov.az/>

The chart below shows the number of students graduating from vocational schools in Azerbaijan over the years.

Graph 2 . Number of students graduating from vocational schools in Azerbaijan by years



Source : <https://www.stat.gov.az/source/education/>

The graph shows that in the last 29 years, the number of students graduating from vocational schools has sharply decreased in 1990-2000. Since 2008, interest in vocational education has increased, and this growth trend continues.

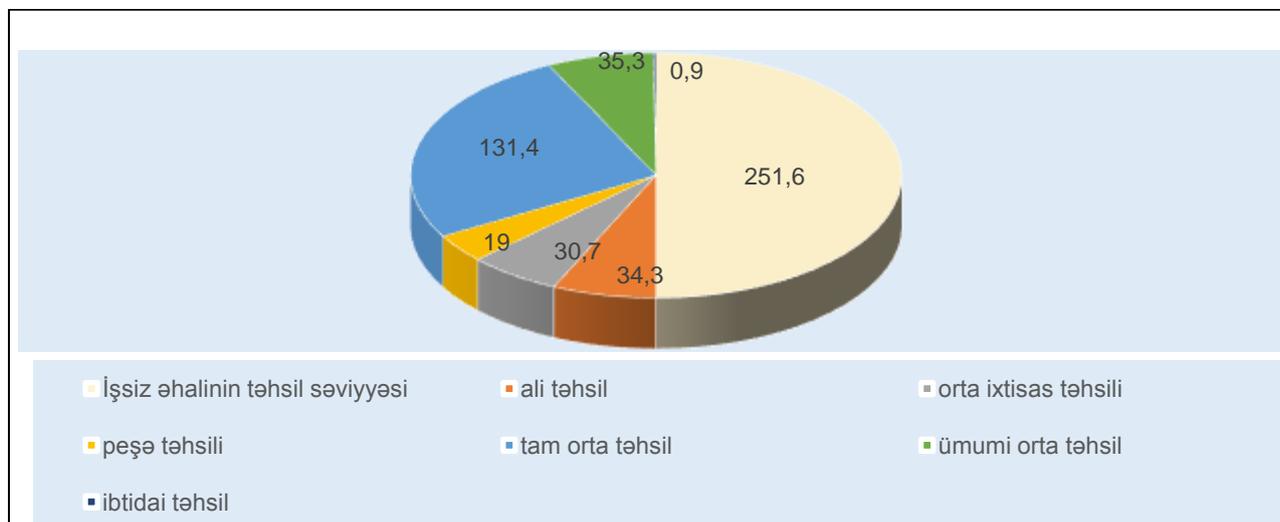
According to the latest information provided by the Ministry of Education, the number of students entering vocational education institutions in the country in 2020 increased by 27% compared to 2019.

It depends on the level of professional

skills and work experience required of the economically active population to graduate from high school and enter the labor market, which determines their place in the labor market. Of course, those in the 15-19 age group can be considered as pupils, students and citizens who are in active military service.

Therefore, the study of unemployment by age and level of education is of particular importance.

Daqram7 . Distribution of the unemployed by education level



Source : www.stat.gov.az

Table 7. Distribution of the unemployed population by education level and age groups (thousand people)

Yaş qrupları	İşsiz əhalinin təhsil səviyyəsi	o cümlədən təhsil üzrə					
		ali təhsil	orta ixtisas təhsili	peşə təhsili	tam orta təhsil	ümumi orta təhsil	ibtidai təhsil
Cəmi	251.6	34.3	30.7	19	131.4	35.3	0.9
İşsiz gənclərin təhsil səviyyəsi, cəmi.	14.7	14.7	13.3	5.2	72.6	14.1	0.0
15-19	-	-	0.3	0.5	12.4	1.6	0.0
20-24	7.3	7.3	6.4	2.6	37.8	7.3	0.0
25-29	7.4	7.4	6.6	2.1	22.4	5.2	0.0
Faizlə							
İşsiz gənclərin təhsil səviyyəsi, cəmi.	5.8%	42.9%	43.3%	27.4%	55.3%	39.9%	0%
15-19 %-lə	-	-	1.0%	2.6%	9.4%	4.5%	0
20-24 %-lə	2.9%	21.3%	20.8%	13.7%	28.8%	20.7%	0
25-29 %-lə	2.9%	21.6%	21.5%	11.1%	17.0%	14.7%	0

Source: State Statistics Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Statistical Yearbook, 2019

6. The result

A comparative analysis of the unemployment rate among young people by age groups shows that although the age group of 15-19 has decreased, the unemployment rate among young people aged 20-24 and 25-29 has increased. All these measures have not sufficiently solved the serious problems in vocational education.

According to research, the current unemployment problem in the country is not only due to lack of jobs, but also due to the fact that the vocational education and skills of unemployed citizens do not meet modern requirements of the labor market.

The quality of education in vocational education institutions should be constantly monitored. For this, evaluation criteria should be established, and monitoring should be entrusted to independent bodies. Certain statistics should always be kept to ensure the effectiveness of funding for vocational education and to control education. The extent to which the knowledge taught there, the dynamics, frequency and other indicators of employment of graduates should be in the center of attention, and, if necessary, reduce public funding for vocational schools, the results of which are unsatisfactory, as in Western countries.

In order to increase the interest of young people in vocational education in Azerbaijan, as in developed countries, young people studying here should be taught the skills of starting their own business in their field.

The reforms implemented in the country since 2016 have entered a new qualitative stage, and the main goals are the timely and quality implementation of the provisions of the "Strategic Roadmaps for the national economy and key sectors of the economy" to ensure effective youth

employment and a competitive workforce. create conditions for the formation of institutions that ensure the implementation of flexible policies in the market. From this point of view, in our opinion, it is important to solve the following problems in order to ensure effective employment of young people:

- Timely and incomplete implementation of strategic goals and priorities expressed in the "Strategic Road Maps for the national economy and key sectors of the economy", the existence of traditional problems in improving the level of education and professional skills of young people;

- delay in the transition to the "education-research-innovation" format in higher education institutions, failure to establish a vocational education system that meets modern requirements, and therefore the high number of young people with very low levels of professionalism in the labor market;

the ability of the majority of young graduates to realize themselves in the labor market and the lack of experience, professionalism required by employers and the lack of government incentive programs to eliminate them, etc.

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