

1.8. THE RIGHT OF YOUNG PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE IN PUBLIC AND POLITICAL LIFE: SOME ASPECTS

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Introduction

This article was prepared within the framework of basic research in 2597 GFZ "Problems of constitutional development of Kazakhstan as a sovereign state: the past, present and future."

While preparing this article the statistics as well as the data from the survey commissioned by the MES Institute of State and Law of Kazakh National University under the name of Al-Farabi, during the preparation of the National Report "Youth of Kazakhstan-2015" were used. The sociological research was carried out in 16 regions of Kazakhstan, and over 2,200 respondents – young people aged between 14 and 29 years old - were interviewed. They also conducted the focus-group interviews of young people and experts on the youth.

The youth as a subject of public and political life

Under the socio-political life we understand – an area of social life, where the most important social issues in accordance with the interests of classes and social strata are concentrated and produced by the mechanisms and ways how to solve them, and ideas translated into the language of social practice.

It should be noted that young people play a key role in political and social life of the community as a social group that is the most susceptible to changes in a society and ready to take an active part in their implementation. The following key features of youth as a subject of socio-political relations are highlighted:

1. The age factor in terms of their participation in public and political life (14-29 years);

2. The specificity of the youth social position. Young people usually differ in instability, mobility products, relatively low social status and limited social ties;

3. Features of the youth consciousness:

- Liability. It manifested in insufficient hardness of attitudes, social orientations of uncertainty;

- Transgression. Consciousness is the ability to overcome the barrier between the existing and new situations, allowing to apply samples in the future life effectively;

- Extreme. This manifestation of maximalism in consciousness and extremes in behavior within a group and at individual levels⁸.

In Kazakhstan, young people can exercise their rights to become actively involved in public and political life by means of the following forms of participation:

1. Exercise of professional activities in executive state bodies aimed at implementing the objectives and functions of the government;

2. Implementation of active and passive electoral rights;

3. Participation in activities of political parties, youth associations and organizations;

4. Participation in activities of ethno-cultural associations;

5. Volunteer work;

6. Appeals to the state authorities;

7. Signing of mass appeals, petitions, memoranda;

8. Participation in protests, strikes and demonstrations.

The youth participation in the work of state bodies

The forms of involvement in the public and political life of the country shall be considered more detailed. The government professional activities are assumed as one of the most important forms of participation in the public and political life of the country. According to the Agency of Civil Service Affairs of the Republic of

⁸ Molotov cocktail. Anatomy of Kazakhstan youth. - Almaty Alliance think tank, the Foundation them. Konrad Adenauer, 2014. - 194 p.

Kazakhstan the number of people, who combating against corruption in the ranks of civil servants within the category of young people (under 29), made up 25% of the total number of civil servants, which is 22,941 units, of which: 4 political units and 22 937 administrative units.⁹ It should be noted that Kazakhstan is increasing the number of young akims of all levels every year. At present their deputies (up to 29 years) account for 143 people on January 1, 2015.

Nowadays the staff of state organs of the Republic of Kazakhstan is not rejuvenated sharply. The influx of young people for serving in state bodies is carried out naturally.

Electoral participation of young people

The next form of the youth participation is expressed by their active and passive voting rights. In recent years the growth rate of Kazakh youth electoral activity was evidenced by the presidential elections on April 26, 2015, where 96.6% of the voted for the incumbent President, Nursultan Nazarbayev, was young people. The election results clearly showed the high confidence of the youth to the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan and their support of his strategic directions.

In accordance with Art. 51, sec.4 of the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan¹⁰ young people, who have achieved the age of 25, can be granted suffrage into the Majilis of the Republic of Kazakhstan. According to the Central Election Commission of the Republic of Kazakhstan there are no MPs under the age of 29 years in the Majilis.

In accordance with Art. 86 of the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan¹¹, those young people, who have reached the age of 20 can be nominated as candidates for deputies of Maslikhats of the Republic of Kazakhstan at all levels. According to the report from October 1, 2015 presented by the Central Election Commission of

⁹ Monitoring of the Republic of Kazakhstan Agency for Civil Service Affairs and anti-corruption on the state of civil service of Kazakhstan.

¹⁰ The Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan (adopted at the national referendum on 30 August 1995) (as amended as of 02.02.2011, the).

¹¹ The Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan (adopted at the national referendum on 30 August 1995) (as amended as of 02.02.2011, the).

the Republic of Kazakhstan only 50 deputies of Maslikhats of the Republic of Kazakhstan are under the age of 30 (1.52% of the total number of deputies), including: in oblast - 3 deputies; district - 40 deputies; urban - 7 deputies.

The youth participation in the activities of political parties and youth organizations

Activities of political parties and youth organizations are one of the elements of the youth participation in the political processes of Kazakhstan society. The work of public youth organizations – is an area of socialization, which is significantly different from the classical areas of socialization. It is considered as voluntary, self-organization and self-determination. In addition, the work of youth organizations, along with education, communication and leisure, represents the interests of young people in all spheres of the state and society.

There are three main groups of youth organizations:

1. Youth wings (section) of political parties;
2. Independent public organizations in their activities are focused on performance, implementation and protection of the common interests of young people;
3. Non-governmental organizations, most of which are designed to address various issues of the narrow nature and depoliticized.

Political parties play a great role in lives of young as an instrument for forming political outlook of young people, as well as for creating conditions for their participation in the political processes of Kazakhstan society.

Today, the most active and productive works with the youth is carried out by the youth wing "Jas Otan". In addition to the latter, there are other "youth wings": Communist People's Party of Kazakhstan and the National Social Democratic Party.

Young people actively participate in the activities of youth associations and organizations. According to the Ministry of Education and Science, 1081 Youth public association were registered in Kazakhstan in 2014, but it should be noted that most of these organizations operate only within a certain state social order. This is due to the lack of a necessary material and technical base of

organizations. There are very few non-governmental organizations in the Republic of Kazakhstan, which address specific problems of young people (working with the disabled, difficult teenagers, and socially disadvantaged young people).

Youth organizations are considered as a source of support only for 15.3% of young respondents. Less than 6.9% of youth resource centers take part in the development of young Kazakhstan people. This is probably due to the low level of awareness of these structures, their objectives, tasks and services that they can provide young people. Therefore, it is necessary to specify their role and convey this information to each representative of the youngest.

Also, in parallel with the participation of the youth in political parties and public associations, they can represent and defend the interests of their ethnic groups by participating in the ethno-cultural associations as well as manage and report data of the associations engaged in the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan. According to the National Report "Youth of Kazakhstan – 2014" the proportion of young people in the ethnic and cultural associations accounted for 1.3% of the total population.

As for the volunteer movement it brings a significant contribution to the development of a sense of responsibility, develops skills, civic activity of the Kazakh youth. In all regions of Kazakhstan a volunteer movement is momentum, but at present there is no law, which could regulate the activities of volunteer movements. Even their status is not fixed by law, which is one of the major obstacles for implementing of volunteer activities.

According to outcomes of the case study, the opportunity to attract the youth to participate in the political process is evaluated as follows: 46.8% gave “aggregate” responses, 29.4% -was voted as “an average rate”, 10.8% demonstrated “a low rate”, 12.9% showed “indifference”¹².

¹² The results of the sociological research of the Institute of State and Law of Kazakh National University. Al Farabi.- Almaty, 2015.

Conclusion

In order to see how young people adequately exercise their right to participate in public and political life of the community, firstly, we must solve the problems arising in this area. Due to the collected data gained on the bases of the questionnaire and focus group research carried out in the region, at this point we have developed a number of the following recommendations:

1. To stimulate the development of volunteer activities in the regions, which shall be widely promoted by the Institute of volunteers through the media and encourage the work of volunteers;

2. To promote actively the results of the IPO, MRC, TSRMI in order to increase their funds in regions. Moreover, to create domestic and service clubs;

3. To pay attention to solving the problems of IPO;

4. To spread the maximum information, carry out massive PR-Companies for youth in order to increase young people motivation to work (the system of remuneration, gifts, moral incentives);

5. To increase the number of youth social projects with the participation of the State;

6. To increase the number of young deputies in Maslikhats of all levels, to consider the possibility of creating a Youth Parliament in the fields;

7. To expand the number of training programs in this area of the Republic and carry out the exchange of experience with other countries.

The youth is a resource, whose potential, as many researchers claim, is used inefficient. Due to the system approach to the issue and proper interaction with the youth, we will soon bring up an active, ambitious, versatile young generation that could be able to ensure the implementation of national strategies and the development of modern Kazakhstan.