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PROBLEMS OF READINESS OF THE SECONDARY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM FOR THE GROWTH OF THE INCOMING POPULATION

Introduction. The relevance of the study of this problem is due to the growing burden on the secondary vocational education system, namely the increase in the number of graduates of 9th and 11th grades who choose this level of education after school. The purpose of the article was to study the problems, consequences and risks of the growth of the number of entrants to the secondary vocational education system.

Methodology. The leading method of research was the analysis of statistical data in the field of vocational education, as well as a sociological study conducted by the Center for the Economics of Continuing Education of the RANEPa in August 2020 among 903 graduates of educational organizations of the secondary vocational education system, which revealed the main motives for young people to choose the next stage of education.

The Results of the study are the conclusions that the secondary vocational education system is not currently ready for increased interest on the part of young people. The growing number of middle-level and skilled personnel entering training programmes is constrained by limited resources for secondary vocational education, which forces young people to enter professional educational organizations on a paid basis or choose other regions for admission. The author considered the factors limiting the possibility of the secondary vocational education system to the tendency to increase the number of people wishing to enter professional educational organizations and the associated risks.

Conclusion. The materials presented in the article can be used by the executive authorities of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation to assess the dynamics

of development indicators and evaluate the performance of the secondary vocational education system and educational organizations.

Keywords: secondary vocational education, resource provision, quality of education, educational migration, enrolment.

The demand for secondary vocational education is growing every year in the country. The dynamics of the growth of students in professional educational organizations has been observed since 2014. D. Glushko spoke about this in his speeches [1], and it was also noted in a number of regional publications [2; 3; 4; 5; 6].

Indeed, the calculated indicators based on statistical data presented on the official website of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation, namely the analysis of statistical forms of SPO-1 [7] for 2014-2020, suggests that since 2014, the demand for training programs for mid-level specialists (PPSSP) has been steadily growing and in 2020 exceeded the number of those wishing to continue university education (fig. 1).

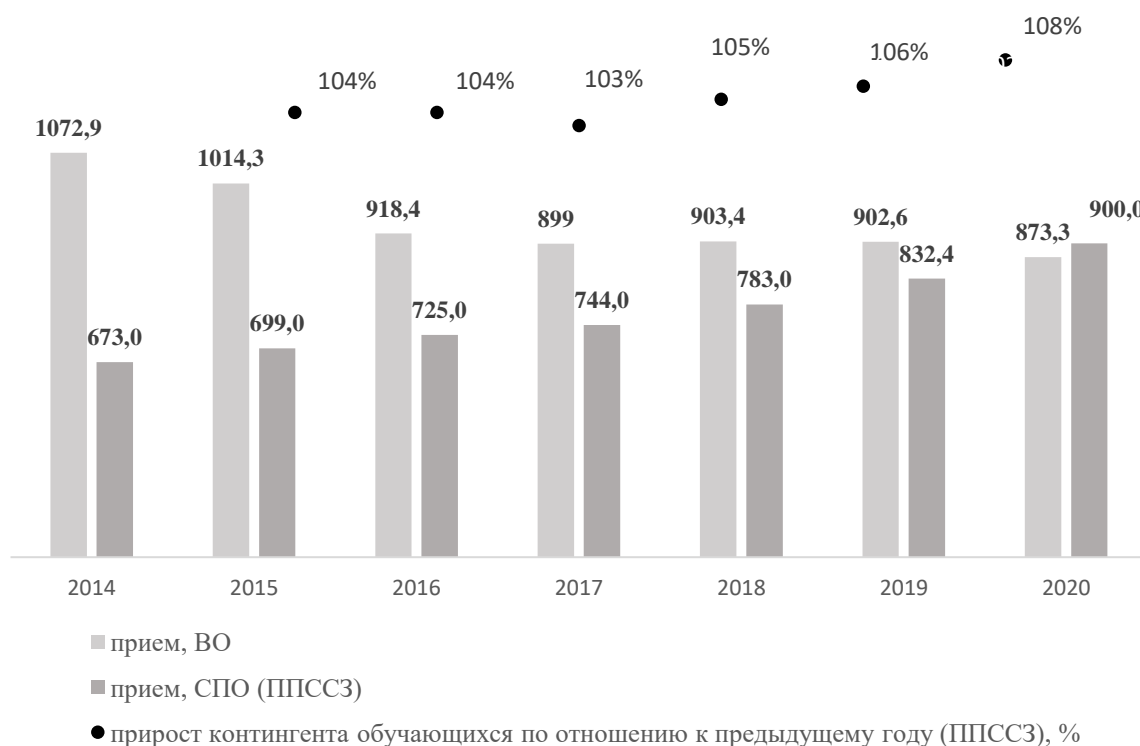


Figure 1 – Dynamics of admission of students by levels of professional education, thousand people.

The average annual increase in applicants for mid-level training programs is 5%, so we can say that in the coming years, according to training programs, an increase in the number of applicants is expected from 45 to 72 thousand people.

The decline in the quality of school education associated with the transition to distance learning during the pandemic [8], as well as the abolition of the Unified State Exam in 2020 and 2021 for eleventh graders who do not plan to enroll in universities [9] led to an even greater influx of those wishing to study in professional educational organizations. Secondary vocational education is no longer an option for triplets, the competition in the secondary vocational education in 2020 has grown so much that the average score in many educational organizations was not lower than 4.0 [10] and the competition reached 12 people per place [11], currently a category of parents is beginning to form who consider the choice of secondary vocational education the best solution for their children.

The growth of the number of young people aged 15-18 by 2031 by 1.79 million people predicted by Rosstat [12], even with a fixed percentage of the increase in the number of applicants to the public educational institution, will lead to the fact that the system will not be able to withstand the additional load.

Methodology

The main research methods used were the method of analyzing the initial statistical and derived (calculated) data, the method of comparative studies, the method of comparing and generalizing the results obtained, as well as the quantitative research method – a mass sociological survey of graduates of the SPO system (903 respondents from the Sverdlovsk, Saratov and Volgograd regions with secondary vocational education were interviewed), aimed at identifying factors influencing the educational trajectories of young people.

The sources of information for calculation and analysis were data from forms of statistical observation:

- analytical materials of the GIVC MIREA;
- data of state aggregators of statistical data that are publicly available.

For a more visual presentation of the information, the results were displayed in the form of tables and diagrams.

Results

The redistribution of demand from higher to secondary vocational education, according to sociological research, is due, on the one hand, to the growing popularity of secondary vocational education, namely, the accession of the Russian Federation in 2012 to the international movement WorldSkills and the opportunity to participate in international competitions, on the other – the stagnation of real incomes of Russians. Statistics show that since 2000, real incomes of the population have been growing and were at the level of about 10% compared to the previous year, then since 2014 they began to fall, which could also affect the lack of financial capacity of families to prepare for admission and education of a child at a university. Young people living in low-income families are focused more on obtaining material benefits in the near future, the desire for quick employment and financial independence becomes an incentive for them to get a job.

A sociological survey of graduates of professional educational organizations showed that most of the young people lived, in their opinion, in families with a low level of resource security (66.1% of respondents). Resource availability in the study meant an integral indicator, including the social status and education of parents, as well as the financial situation of families. Only 3% of young people attributed themselves to households with a high level of security. Therefore, the main motive for the transition to "school – SPO" was the desire to start working earlier (51.4%), to get a specialty with which it is easy to find a job (22.6%) and lack of money to prepare for university (24.7%).

The negative effects of the pandemic will continue the trend of increasing the number of young people willing to study in the vocational education system, although today it can be seen that the load on the system is growing and in these conditions it is difficult to talk about the availability of secondary vocational education. The ongoing changes associated with the increased interest among young people in studying in the

secondary vocational education system according to the training programs of middle-level specialists (PPSSZ) are shown in the figures showing the dynamics of changes in the contingent of applicants after the 9th (Figure 2) and 11th grades (Figure 3).



Note – Source: Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation.

Figure 2 – Dynamics of the growth of the contingent of applicants to the secondary vocational school after the 9th grade, %

The number of applications submitted for PPSSP increased in 2021 almost 2 times compared to 2014 for applicants after the 9th grade and from 51.6% to 92.3% for applicants after the 11th grade. This suggests that eleventh graders are increasingly inclined to the decision to study in VET. This is evidenced by the increase in the share of accepted graduates of the 11th grades at the PPSSZ - if in 2014 their share was 32.5%, then in 2020 this indicator was already equal to 37.3% (Figure 3)



Note – Source: Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation.

Figure 3 – Dynamics of the growth of the contingent of applicants to the secondary vocational school after the 11th grade, %

It is important that the share of accepted graduates of the 9th and 11th grades from the total number of those who applied for PPSSZ is steadily falling, which indicates an insufficient number of admission control figures approved by regional education authorities. Calculated indicators based on the statistical form SPO-1 indicate that for three years starting from 2018, admission to training programs for mid-level specialists on a contractual basis after the 11th grade increased in 64 subjects, and after the 9th - in 83 subjects of the Russian Federation [6; 8].

The SPO system is currently not ready to accept the increased flow of applicants, the load on the system is too high. The problem is further aggravated by the fact that there is a shortage of personnel in professional educational organizations – more than 750 vacancies of teachers and 1,286 vacancies of masters of industrial training remain open in educational organizations [14]. The limited capabilities of state educational

organizations implementing SPE programs already lead to the fact that there is a growing trend of applicants to non-state SPE educational institutions (Figure 4).



Figure 4 – Dynamics of admission to non-governmental educational organizations of secondary vocational education by year, %

It is necessary to say about the provision of educational organizations with personnel. According to the statistics of 2021, there are 22.5 students per teacher in state educational organizations of secondary vocational education, and in non-state ones, there are already 40.9 students per teacher. Of course, this cannot but affect the quality of education [8]. The additional burden on regional secondary vocational education systems also leads to an increase in educational migration of young people.

The example of the Central Federal District clearly shows the educational migration of young people to regions that, in their opinion, are attractive from the point of view of further employment, as well as the availability in the VET of the region of recruitment for the profession / specialty of interest and the opportunity to enroll on a budget basis.

Conclusion

Secondary vocational education is becoming a new trend, leaving higher education behind in terms of the number of people accepted in 2020. Leaving school

after the 9th grade for the vocational education system, and for the last few years after the 11th grade, has become the norm for both young people and their parents.

The system of secondary vocational education is not ready for such a massive and rapid increase in the contingent. The shortage of teachers and masters of industrial training, inadequate material and technical base (only 34.2% of the equipment used in the training process is not older than 5 years) [15], low interest of enterprises willing to invest in the development of material and technical base and professional development of teachers and masters of industrial training does not solve the problem of availability of free secondary vocational education, and, as a result, in the coming years, the share of applicants to non-governmental educational organizations will continue to grow., this is due to the opportunity to get a sought-after specialty in an educational organization for less money than in a university.

The trend of growth in the number of applicants to professional educational organizations at present and in the near future requires the SPE system to respond to new challenges, among which can be called the expected growth in the number of young people aged 15-18 years, which will lead to an increase in the number of students and an increase in the load on the entire educational infrastructure, even if the trend of admission to educational organizations of SPE persists. In conditions of limited resources, it will be very difficult for the regional PDF systems to maintain the necessary level of quality of personnel training.

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