

## PROBLEMS OF “NEET” YOUTH MEASURING IN UKRAINE

Youth have a significant impact on countries' economies and the prospects of the labor market of young people depend on the economic system as a whole. Opportunities for young people to receive education, accordance of profession, skills and qualification with the requirements of the labor market, share of young people in the country's labor resources and employment opportunities for young people determine the innovative potential of a country.

But today one of the important socio-economic problems is youth unemployment. Young people are the most vulnerable and under-prepared for the realities of today's labor market. This is confirmed by the statistics. The youth unemployment rate is higher than the overall adult unemployment rate in most countries. For example, in 2018 in 28 EU countries the youth unemployment rate was 12 % (youth aged 15 – 29), the overall unemployment rate was 6.8% of the able-bodied population [1]. In 2018 in Ukraine the youth unemployment rate was 27,7 % (youth aged 15 – 29) and 36,6 (youth aged 15 – 35 years), and the overall unemployment rate was 8,8 % of the able-bodied population [2].

Foreign and domestic scientists work on solving the problems of the youth labor market. However, in domestic and foreign literature, more attention is paid to the problems of youth unemployment; less interest is given to the part of young people who are economically inactive. But this problem is gaining urgency. Over the last two decades in OECD countries, the proportion of this group among all young people has shown an upward trend. Therefore, research in the field of NEET youth, as well as the formation of information and analytical support for its measurement, remains open for further research.

The NEET youth category (not in education, employment or training) is a new concept that is being promoted by international organizations. The concept of NEET youth has been given an increased attention in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (hereinafter – SDG), namely SDG No 8. “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”. [3]. In the context of NEETs, it is proposed two targets: (8,5) “achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value”; (8,6) “substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training”. Thus, the level of NEETs is not only an important indicator of the development of the labor market, but also one of the main indicators of sustainable development of society.

The concept of NEET youth is a relatively new concept in international academic discourse, which is gaining in importance in today's society. The term was first used in 1999 in a report by the Social Exclusion Unit “Bridging the Gap: New Opportunities for 16 – 18 year olds Not in Education, Employment or Training” (UK Government's Commission) [4].

In 2002, European Commission DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion formally defined the NEET as “neither in employment nor in any education nor training” [5]. In essence, the definition reflects a literal transcript of the concept.

Since 2012, the concept of NEET has become widely accepted and used in international documents, including Eurofound (2012), OECD (2013), UCW (2013), Eurostat (2014), ILO (2013), SDSN (2014). The concept is constantly updated and supplemented, which indicates the dynamic development of such a phenomenon.

The etymological analysis of the NEET-youth revealed that the concept has a number of “shades” of its meaning. It should be noted that some countries use other names to describe the term, such as “disconnected youth” (widespread in the US) [6], “Ni-Ni generacion” (common in some Western European countries and South America) [7], “hikikomori” (in Japan) [8].

According to scientists, the main reasons for the spread (falling into the category of youth) of the NEET category are:

personal factors (such as low quality of educational services; health problems (physical and mental health, psychotropic substance use, alcohol addiction, drug addiction; teenage pregnancy, etc.);

factors of family upbringing and living conditions (low household income, poor living conditions, living in small or remote settlements, etc.) [9];

social factors (factors related to socialization of youth in society). For example, A. Zudina notes: “getting into the NEET group may be due to the socio-economic inequality of young people's families, which determine further learning outcomes and the success of the transition from learning to work” [10];

transformation of value system (loss of value to work and change it to passive income).

Unlike unemployment or employment, there is no international methodology or standard for determining the level of NEETs. In our opinion, this fact can be one of the obstacles to achieving SDG, as well as create confusion in the calculation and obstacles in comparing data between countries.

Eurostat, the International Labour Organization (ILO) [11] and some other organizations have adopted

the following calculation of the NEET youth rate: the percentage of the population of a given age group and sex who is not employed and not involved in further education or training.

The analysis of the results of NEET rate allows us to develop the recommendations, build or correct government policy according to NEET data (Fig. 1).

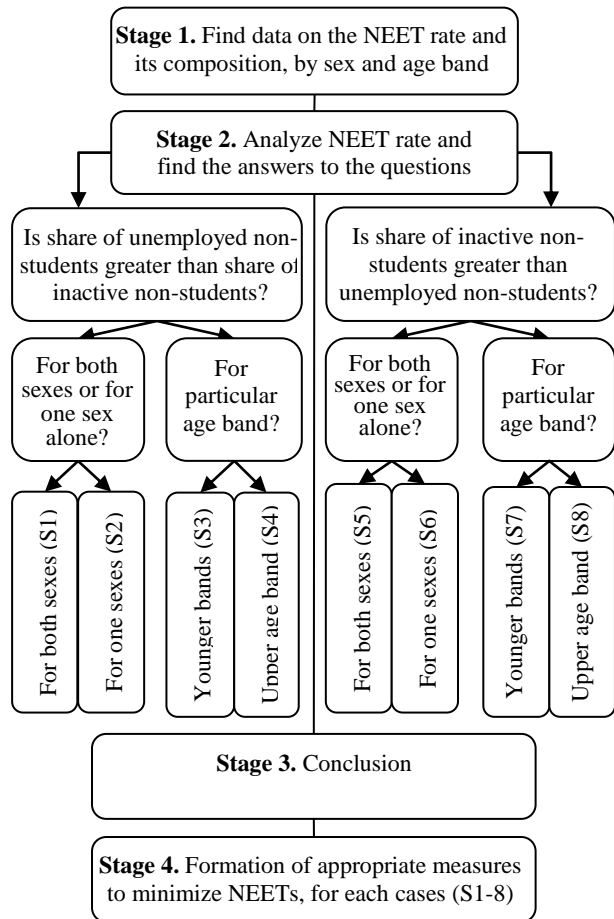


Fig. 1. The sequence of NEET rate analysis Structured by the author based on [11]

However, there are some statistical and methodological difficulties in the study of NEET youth, measuring the level, composition and trends of development in Ukraine. This significantly complicates the calculations and interstate comparisons of statistical data.

It has to do, specifically, with the age brackets that youth are assigned to by country. UNESCO pays special attention to the fact that youth is a heterogeneous category of population that is constantly changing and people fill the concept of NEET youth with different characteristics in different countries and regions.

Another problem is the lack of official statistical information on youth employment and unemployment by types of activity; share of unemployed non-students and share of inactive non-students, etc. Therefore, it is difficult to calculate NEETs, the extent of its economic activity and inactivity, as well as other indicators that give an idea of NEET youth in Ukraine.

The incompatibility of official statistics in Ukraine with international approaches does not allow the calculation of certain statistical indicators, such as the level of NEETs. The abovementioned leads to incomplete conclusions and the inability to make decisions that regulate the situation in the youth labor market. Together, this narrows the possibilities of achieving some goals of sustainable development, effective regulation of the youth labor market, reduces the number of NEETs, etc.

Thus, the result of this study is a generalization of the list of information and analytical support for measuring NEETs in Ukraine; improving the sequence of NEET rate analysis, which includes four steps when data are available.

The prospect of further scientific research in the field of NEET is to develop recommendations for the formation of information and analytical support center of measuring NEET indicators; as well as formation of appropriate measures to minimize NEETs for each situation.

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