

Volunteerism in the Republic of Tatarstan

Yulduz Khayrullina^{1,2,*}, Regina Garipova¹ and Farida Talibova²

¹Institute of Social and Philosophical Sciences and Mass Communications of Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russia

²Center of Advanced Economic Research in the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tatarstan, Kazan, Russia

Abstract. This article investigates volunteerism within the Republic of Tatarstan, offering a comprehensive examination of the phenomenon. Its purpose is to analyze the landscape of volunteerism, considering legal frameworks, motivations, and challenges. The research relies on a sociological inquiry conducted in the Republic of Tatarstan in 2023. This investigation, a broad-scale survey targeting volunteers aged between 14 to 35 years, furnishes insights into the practices young individuals engage in as volunteers, alongside offering a snapshot of the current landscape and potential future of volunteerism in the region. The analysis points towards a promising trajectory of volunteerism within the republic, underscoring the pivotal role governmental entities play in fostering the growth of this movement locally. However, it is posited that the forward momentum of this domain within the republic is contingent upon a synergistic relationship between the volunteers and the state, viewed as a crucial facilitator. A profound interrelation is identified between the altruistic aspirations of volunteers to effectuate societal transformation and their own tangible career and material aspirations. In conclusion, the article proffers insights and recommendations stemming from the author's research, shedding light on the future direction and enhancement of the volunteer movement in the republic.

1 Introduction

In contemporary society, the emphasis on volunteerism is undeniable, marking a pivotal point in the evolution and fortification of civil society [1, 2]. Sociologist G.P. Bodrenkova asserts that the forward trajectory of civil society and the plethora of social challenges it faces are intrinsically linked to the degree of public engagement in volunteer endeavors, especially when these are pursued altruistically and of one's own volition [3, 4].

Internationally, the foundation of volunteer initiatives and movements rests upon these seminal documents:

1. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (proclaimed by the UN General Assembly on December 10, 1948) [5];
2. Universal Declaration of Volunteers (dated September 14, 1990) [6];
3. Universal Declaration of Volunteering (released in January 2001) [7];
4. UN Resolution A/RES/56/38UN, encompassing recommendations to bolster

* Corresponding author: jrhajrullina@kpfu.ru

volunteerism (issued in January 2002) [8].

Within the Russian Federation, volunteer actions and their associated organizations, in addition to international conventions, are governed by:

The Constitution of the Russian Federation, specifically articles: 2, 17, 30, 45, and 114a [9];

Federal Law from August 11, 1995, titled "On Charitable Activities and Volunteering" [10];

Federal Law as of December 30, 2020, addressing "Youth Policy in the Russian Federation" [11];

Blueprint for Advancing Volunteerism in the Russian Federation through 2025 (sanctioned by the Government of the Russian Federation on December 27, 2018) [12].

Per the Federal State Statistics Service's reports, Russia's volunteer count in 2021 stood at 3,878,470, marking a 4.5% increase from the previous year's figure of 3,711,249 [13]. Under the "Social Activity" initiative, a segment of the overarching "Education" national project, the Federal Agency for Youth Affairs (Rosmolodezh) reported that by the end of 2021, over 11.6 million citizens were actively volunteering through various centers and NPOs [13].

Moreover, comprehensive public surveys managed by premier research entities underscore a surge in Russia's volunteer engagement, mirroring the efficacy of the national strategies and the interventions executed in this realm [14].

The terminologies "volunteering" and "volunteerism" encompass myriad definitions and perspectives. In Russian legal texts since the 1990s, "volunteering" has been delineated as an integral facet of charitable deeds, defining volunteers as individuals contributing "uncompensated efforts for the benefit of the recipient, inclusive of charitable organizations" [10].

In contemporary scientific discourse, especially within sociology, there are myriad theoretical and methodological stances on the subject of volunteering. For instance, prominent domestic sociologists I.V. Mersyanova and L.I. Jacobson [15, p. 10] conceptualize volunteering as "an altruistic individual or group endeavor, undertaken for the betterment of others or society at large, viewed as a form of philanthropic engagement".

On the other hand, Sociologist G.P. Bodrenkova [3, p. 23] sees volunteerism as "a paradigm for positive progression, fostering personal maturation and the enhancement of youth, as they actively partake in socio-cultural shifts. These shifts, grounded in transformative changes, aim at elevating societal welfare while concurrently accommodating the aspirations and needs of the younger generation".

It's noteworthy to distinguish between the Russian and international perspectives on volunteering, as they differ fundamentally in their core tenets and objectives. Whereas international scholars predominantly focus on the advantages garnered by the volunteers themselves [16], Russian academics underscore the profound societal implications and benefits of these altruistic endeavors [17]. We contend that these two viewpoints should not be mutually exclusive; instead, they should be integrated. This integrated perspective was the guiding framework for our empirical investigation.

Our choice of the Republic of Tatarstan as the subject of our study was deliberate. Recognized for its fervent promotion of volunteerism, both in terms of community participation and legislative action, Tatarstan stands out. Presently, the republic boasts over 1,247 volunteer groups, with a committed volunteer base of 138,165 individuals [18]. Moreover, in 2022, Tatarstan clinched the title at the nationwide "Region of Good Deeds" volunteer initiative competition for an impressive fourth consecutive time, underscoring its commitment to promoting volunteerism [19].

2 Methods

To discern the perspectives of volunteers concerning the volunteer movement within the Republic of Tatarstan and outline their actual involvement in this endeavor, we administered a questionnaire to young individuals within the age bracket of 14 to 35 who consistently participate in volunteer activities (n=400). The core objectives of this research were to: gauge the duration of their volunteer experience; determine prevalent areas of volunteerism among the youth; evaluate self-perception of the volunteers; identify motives behind volunteering; understand future aspirations in this realm; recognize challenges present in this domain; explore the relationship dynamics between volunteer organizations and governmental bodies.

The collected data illuminated distinct characteristics of the volunteer movement within the republic and suggested potential future trajectories.

3 Results

A significant proportion of the young participants have been involved in volunteer endeavors for over six months, as illustrated by the breakdown: less than three months: 10.5%, up to six months: 15.8%, six months to one year: 21.2%, one year to three years: 23.7%, over three years: 18.4%, beyond ten years: 10.5%. This pattern underscores the persistent engagement of the respondents in volunteerism (Fig. 1).

Moreover, 52.6% of the volunteers participated at a frequency of at least bi-monthly, with 39.5% volunteering two to five times annually or even more. A minority, at 7.9%, reported volunteering just once.

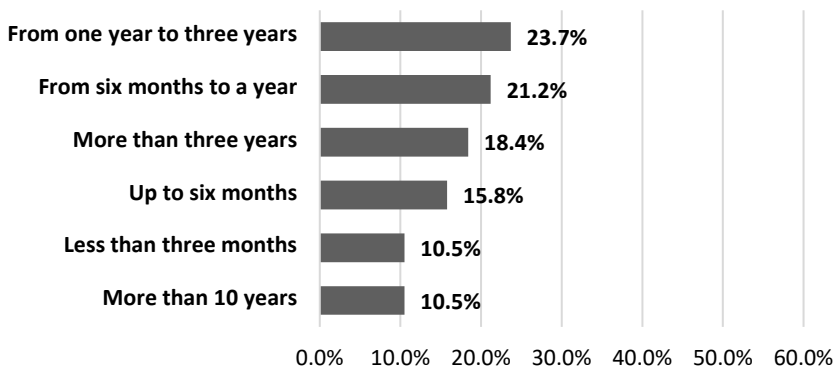


Fig. 1. Duration of volunteer engagement

The dominant forms of volunteer activities encompassed: civic and patriotic education (68.4%), cultural and artistic ventures (55.3%), ecological and environmental conservation (47.4%), social support and services (39.5%), beautification and landscaping (34.2%), physical fitness and sports (28.9%), educational initiatives (26.3%). The least sought-after domain was emergency prevention and mitigation at (2.6%) (Fig. 2).

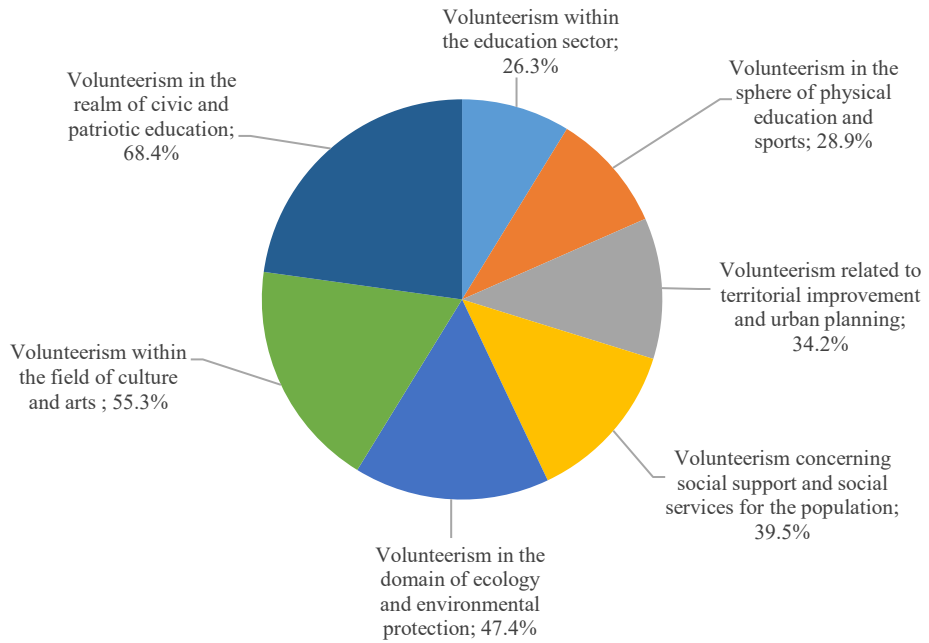


Fig. 2. Predominant areas of volunteer activities

Intriguingly, a mere 47.4% of respondents unequivocally identified themselves as a "genuine volunteer", spotlighting a matter of self-identity and group affiliation. This also calls attention to the nebulous definition of "volunteer".

Delving into the subjective motives underpinning their participation, chief driving factors included: engaging with intriguing individuals (57.9%), enhancing societal life (aiding people) (55.3%), acquiring new experiences, knowledge, and skills (47.4%), personal fulfillment and the aspiration to contribute to the country and republic's development (42.1%), thus, the primary incentives are a blend of altruism and personal growth (Fig. 3).

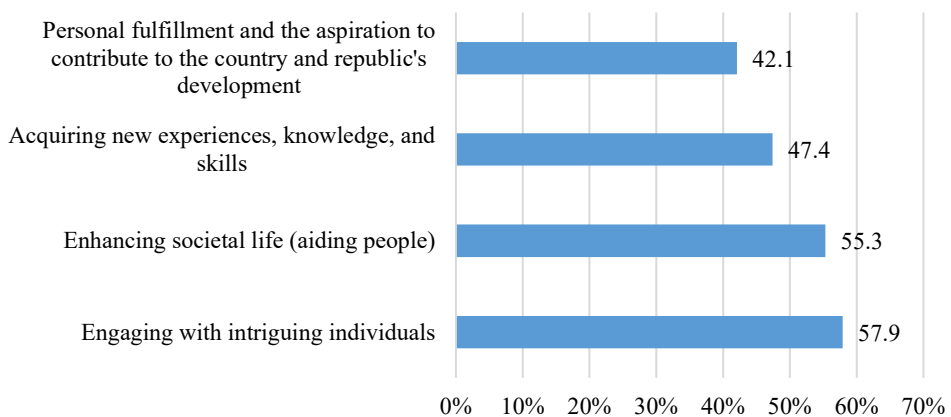


Fig. 3. Underlying incentives for volunteering

Regarding their vision for future involvement, a significant (63.2%) of the youth aim to allocate even more time to volunteering.

A staggering (97.4%) of respondents advocate for governmental aid and incentives for volunteerism (Fig. 4). Concurrently, when queried about which entities hold the most sway over volunteerism's trajectory, the predominant sentiment was that both volunteers and the government held equal potential (71.1%).

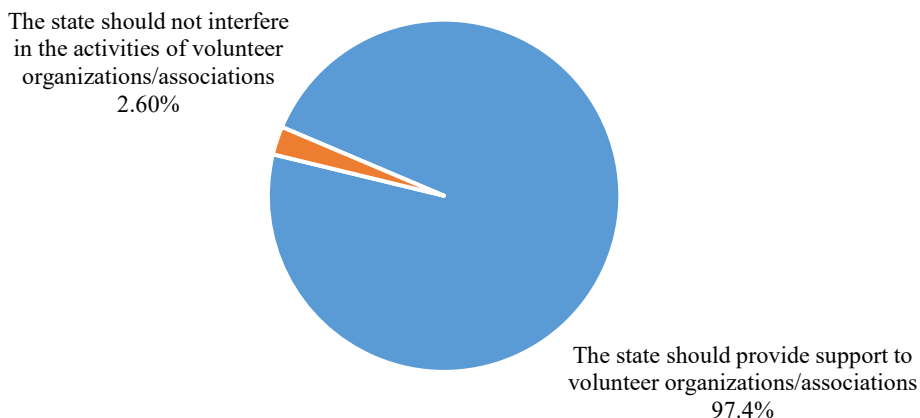


Fig. 4. Perspectives on governmental facilitation for volunteering

Per the participants, predominant hurdles stymying the momentum of volunteer activities in Russia encompassed: societal indifference and lack of civic engagement (71.1%), skepticism towards volunteers and their missions (42.1%), hostility amongst individuals (34.2%), a lack of information (31.6%), time constraints (28.9%), general laziness (26.3%) (Fig. 5).

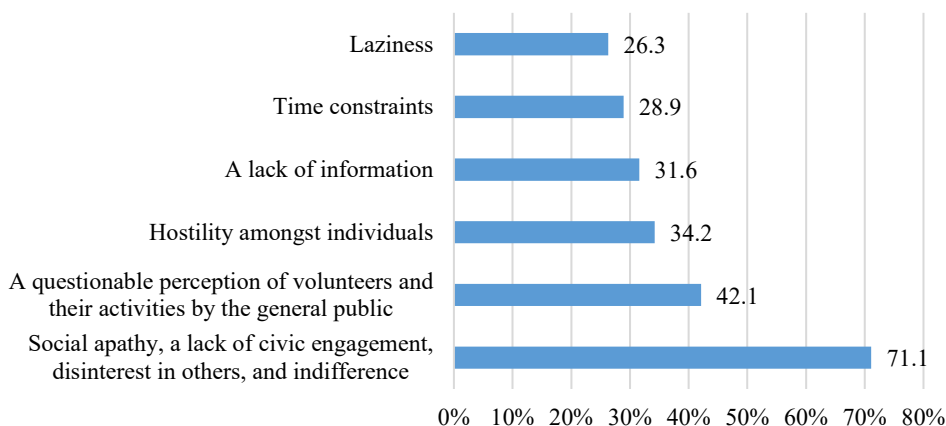


Fig. 5. Challenges impeding the advancement of volunteer initiatives in Russia

4 Discussion

Volunteerism stands as a multifarious phenomenon, capturing the interest of professionals from diverse fields like sociology [20], political science [21, 22], law [23, 24] and education

[25-27]. Internationally recognized researchers in this domain include L.B. Naumovski and S.L. Naumowska [28], B.J. Lough [29], L. Meijs and S. Kuhlen-Maas [30], K. Holmes, M. Poll, D. Husky-Leventhal [31], A. Sapir [32], J. Davis [33], I. Williamson [34], A.N. Normah, and Z.M. Lukman [35].

Meanwhile, Russian scholars contributing substantially to this dialogue comprise of B.R. Rakhmatulina [36], D.D. Andrianova [37], I.V. Fedulova [38], N.I. Gorlova [39], and A.V. Kibalnik [40].

The analytical comparison uncovers an inherent “duality” within the volunteer movement. This duality is manifest when young individuals, motivated by genuine altruism and societal transformation [41], also engage in volunteering to fulfill personal aspirations. These aspirations often intertwine with personal growth and potential career advancements [42], a pathway made possible by the social capital accrued during their volunteering stints. Thus, volunteering satiates both ethical and practical needs.

Our analysis further identifies a predominantly positive perception of the volunteer movement among the youth of the republic. However, they underscore existing challenges warranting collaborative interventions from both governmental agencies and volunteer participants. A pivotal component to highlight is the interdependence between the volunteers and their respective organizations, particularly in leadership roles. The significance of such practices resonates with the volunteers' feedback.

While volunteering espouses a non-hierarchical ethos, the state and its administrative apparatus remain influential, if not central [43]. Volunteers accentuate their organizational reliance on the government and voice their expectation for the state to bolster their endeavors, whether through financial backing or by paving avenues for their future career and academic progression.

5 Conclusions

Our sociological inquiry underscores the imperative of fostering the volunteer movement in the republic. The emphasis should not merely be on augmenting numbers but on a holistic approach to advocate for volunteerism. This approach should be attuned to the aspirations and prerequisites of the youth, the catalysts of transformation. A call for greater transparency within volunteer organizations is essential, promoting broader civic engagement and ensuring optimal utilization of individual competencies. This, in essence, lays the foundation for a robust civil society.

Presently, the volunteer movement is a resonant force, galvanizing countless young citizens. Amplifying this sector is paramount, given its dual role in facilitating both personal growth and broader socio-economic contributions from the youth [44].

Acknowledgments

This paper has been supported by the Kazan Federal University Strategic Academic Leadership Program (Priority-2030).

References

1. V. Grebennikova, T. Bonkalo, E. Rudenko, O. Us, A. Malkov. Spiritual and Moral Sovereignty of Personality in Information Society: A Subjective Environmental Approach. *Synesis*, **15**(4), 100-112 (2023).
2. V. Avdeev, O. Avdeeva, S. Rozenko, E. Kiselev, J. Bulygina. Public Safety and The Main Directions of Its Provision for The Sustainable Development of Modern Society.

- Relacoes Internacionais No Mundo Atual, **2(40)** (2023). doi: 10.21902/Revrima.v6i40.6340
3. G.P. Bodrenkova. *Systemic development of volunteerism in Russia: From theory to practice*, (ANO "SPO "SOTIS", Moscow, 2013).
 4. A. Turk, S. Tierney, G. Wong, J. Todd, H.J. Chatterjee, K.R. Mahtani. Self-growth, wellbeing and volunteering - Implications for social prescribing: A qualitative study. *SSM - Qualitative Research in Health*, **2** (2022). doi: 10.1016/j.ssmqr.2022.100061
 5. *Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly* (10 December 1948). Retrieved from: https://www.un.org/ru/documents/decl_conv/declarations/declhr.shtml Accessed on: December 5, 2023.
 6. *Universal Declaration of Volunteers adopted at the 11th Congress of the International Association of Volunteers* (14 September 1990). Retrieved from: https://cbkorablino.rzn.muzkult.ru/media/2018/09/02/1231340916/Vseobshhaya_Deklaraciya_Volonterov.pdf Accessed on: December 5, 2023.
 7. *The Universal Declaration of Volunteering, adopted by the international board of directors of IAVE – The International Association for Volunteer Effort at its 16th World Volunteer Conference, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, January 2001, the International Year of Volunteers (2001)*. Retrieved from: <https://www.iave.org/iavewp/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/universal-delcaration-on-volunteering.pdf> Accessed on: December 5, 2023.
 8. *United Nations General Assembly Resolution 56/38: Recommendations on support for volunteering* (2002). Retrieved from: <https://undocs.org/ru/A/RES/56/38> Accessed on: December 5, 2023.
 9. *The Constitution of the Russian Federation* (12 December 1993) Retrieved from: <http://www.constitution.ru/en/10003000-01.htm> Accessed on: December 5, 2023.
 10. Federal Law of the Russian Federation “*On charitable activities and volunteering*” No. 135-FZ. (11 August 1995). Retrieved from: <http://pravo.gov.ru/proxy/ips/?docbody=&nd=102037027&intelsearch=%B9135-%D4%C7> Accessed on: December 5, 2023.
 11. Federal Law of the Russian Federation “*On youth policy in the Russian Federation*” No. 489-FZ. (30 December 2020). Retrieved from: <http://publication.pravo.gov.ru/Document/View/0001202012300003> Accessed on: December 5, 2023.
 12. Order of the Government of the Russian Federation “*On approval of the concept for the development of volunteering*” No. 2950-r. (27 December 2018). Retrieved from: <http://government.ru/docs/35231/> Accessed on: December 5, 2023.
 13. *Report on the development of volunteerism in the Russian Federation in 2021*. Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation (2022). Retrieved from: https://www.economy.gov.ru/material/file/199285d92bc27d71cce39d563f67e5ff/Doklad_dobro_2021.pdf Accessed on: December 5, 2023.
 14. I. Polozhentseva, T. Kaschenko, I. Sinitsyna, S. Bashir, T. Lustina. *Students’ Movements Of Russia In The Era Of Globalization*. Revista on Line De Política E Gestão Educacional, 26(esp.2) (2022). doi: 10.22633/rpge.v26iesp.2.16561
 15. I.V. Mersiyanova, L.I. Jacobson (Eds.). *Potential and ways of development of philanthropy in Russia*, Publishing house of State University of Higher school Economics, Moscow (2010).
 16. J. Wilson, N. Mantovan, R.M. Sauer. The economic benefits of volunteering and social class. *Social Science Research*, **85** (2020). doi: 10.1016/j.ssresearch.2019.102368

17. S.A. Nalichaeva, A.A. Tkachenko, Z.V. Borisenko, B.I. Terentyev, E.M. Lukina. Volunteers' Resilience and Motivation. *Revista on Line De Política E Gestão Educacional*, **25**(esp.7), 4383-4398 (2021). doi: 10.22633/rpge.v25iesp.7.17391
18. *The Republic of Tatarstan took first place in the implementation of state youth policy*. New Kama (2023, March 29). Retrieved from: <https://elabugar-t.ru/news/novosti/respublika-tatarstan-zaniala-pervoe-mesto-v-oblasti-realizacii-gosudarstvennoi-molodeznoi-politiki> Accessed on: December 5, 2023.
19. The Republic of Tatarstan has become the winner of the All-Russian competition for supporting volunteer initiatives “*Region of Good Deeds*” for 4 years in a row. Ministry of Youth Affairs of the Republic of Tatarstan (2022, July 11). Retrieved from: <https://minmol.tatarstan.ru/index.htm/news/2103791.htm> Accessed on: December 5, 2023.
20. E. Kirillova, I. Otcheskiy, S. Ivanova, R. Karlibaeva, V. Sekerin. Developing Methods for Assessing the Introduction of Smart Technologies into the Socio-Economic Sphere Within the Framework of Open Innovation. *International Journal of Sustainable Development and Planning*, **18**(3), 693-702 (2023).
21. S.A. Swenson. The Political Spirituality of Buddhist Volunteerism in Contemporary Vietnam. *Political Theology*, **22**(1), 68-74 (2021).
22. S. Udupa. *Shadow politics: Front stage and the veneer of volunteerism*. *Communication, Culture and Critique*, **14**(3), 491-496 (2021).
23. I. Filipova, N.E. Anosova. *The Creative Factor in the Competition Between Human and Artificial Intelligence: A Challenge for Labor Law*. *Lecture Notes in Networks and Systems*, 345 LNNS, 182-191 (2022).
24. E. Yu. Antonova. *Terrorist Crimes in the Era of Digitalization: Forms of Activity and Measures for Counteraction*. *Journal of Digital Technologies and Law*, **1**(1), 251-269 (2023). doi:10.21202/jdtl.2023.10
25. L.G. Akhmetov, E.E. Merzon, A.L. Mirzagitova, I.M. Fajzrakhmanov, A.L. Fajzrakhmanova. *Information environment of professional training of future workers*. *Recent Trends in Social and Behaviour Sciences - Proceedings of the 2nd International Congress on Interdisciplinary Behavior and Social Sciences 2013, ICIBSoS 2013*, 539-541 (2014).
26. D. Denisova, E. Strandstrem, E. Akhmetshin, D. Nikolenko. *Efficiency of Various Forms of Simulation Training in the Training of Medical Professionals*. *European Journal of Contemporary Education*. **12**(3), 788-796 (2023). doi: 10.13187/ejced.2023.3.788
27. N. Tarabrina, E. Grabovskaya, A. Tikhonov, Y. Kraev. *Psychological features of the personality of students of different specialties*. *International Journal of Higher Education*, **9**(3), 152-157 (2020).
28. L.B. Naumovski, S.L. Naumovska. *Volunteerism in civil society: The world experience and the media*. *ASEAN Journal of Community Engagement*, **6**(1), 98-125 (2022). doi: 10.7454/ajce.v6i1.1148
29. B.J. Lough, C. Allum, P. Devereux, R. Tiessen. *The global research agenda on volunteering for peace and development* (CSD Research Brief No. 18-50), Washington University, Center for Social Development, St. Louis, MO (2018). doi: 10.7936/xe2f-5p62
30. L. Meijs, S. Koolen-Maas. *Civil society and (re) embedding volunteering*, in K. Biekart, A. Fowler (Eds.), *A research agenda for civil society*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham; Northampton, 161-172 (2022). doi: 10.4337/9781800378155.00020

31. K. Holmes, M. Paull, D. Haski-Leventhal, J. MacCallum, M. Omari, G. Walker, R. Scott, S. Young, A. Maher. A continuum of university student volunteer program models. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, **43(3)**, 281-297 (2020). doi: 10.1080/1360080X.2020.1804658
32. A. Sapir. Student volunteering in historical perspective: Debates and tensions in Israeli higher education. *Oxford Review of Education*, **48(6)**, 710-726 (2022). doi: 10.1080/03054985.2021.2011714
33. J. Davies. *"We'd get slagged and bullied": Understanding barriers to volunteering among young people in deprived urban areas*. *Voluntary Sector Review*, **9(3)**, 255-272 (2018). doi: 10.1332/204080518x15428929349286
34. I. Williamson, D. Wildbur, K. Bell, J. Tanner, H. Matthews. *Benefits to university students through volunteering in a health context: A new model*. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, **66(3)**, 383-402 (2018). doi: 10.1080/00071005.2017.1339865
35. A.N. Normah, Z.M. Lukman. *Volunteerism declined among university students: Why do they not volunteer*. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, **4(10)**, 276-280 (2020).
36. B.R. Rakhmatulina. *Pedagogical conditions for the formation of citizenship of adolescents in voluntary (volunteer) labor teams*, Dissertation ... candidate of pedagogical sciences: 13.00.01, Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution of Higher Education "Adyge State University", Maykop (2021), 221 p.
37. D.D. Andrianova. *Pedagogical conditions for the development of adolescent volunteerism in educational programs of basic and additional education*, Dissertation ... candidate of pedagogical sciences: 13.00.01, Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution of Higher Education "Russian State Pedagogical University named after A.I. Herzen", St. Petersburg (2020), 230 p.
38. I.V. Fedulova. *Formation of the social and civil potential of medical students through volunteer activities*, Dissertation ... candidate of pedagogical sciences: 5.8.1, Federal State Budgetary Institution "Institute of Pedagogy, Psychology and Social Problems", Kazan, (2022), 235 p.
39. N.I. Gorlova. *Historical development of volunteerism (volunteering) in Soviet Russia, the USSR and modern Russia*, Dissertation ... Doctor of Historical Sciences: 5.6.1, Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution of Higher Education "Kuban State University", Krasnodar (2021), 521 p.
40. A.V. Kibalnik. *Teaching students strategies for overcoming difficult life situations in the process of volunteering*, Dissertation ... candidate of pedagogical sciences: 13.00.01, Buryat State University named after Dorji Banzarov, Irkutsk (2019), 245 p.
41. M.Yu. Eflova, Yu.V. Vinogradova, A.V. Vitushkin. *Modern youth as an actor of the creative class*. *Kazan Social and Humanitarian Bulletin*, **1(58)**, 31-35 (2023). doi: 10.26907/2079-5912.2023.1.31-35
42. D. Sadirbekova, Z. Shalgynbayeva, V. Makhatova, O. Tabyldieva, R. Zharmukhametova, M. Sladkova, A. Amangeldi, A. Anuarbekova, E. Abdol. *Formation Technologies Of Professional Competence For Prospective Teachers*. *Revista on Line De Política E Gestão Educacional*, **25(esp.7)**, 4129-4142 (2021). doi: 10.22633/rpge.v25iesp.7.16172
43. V. Kukhar, E. Kot, O. Loretts, A. Ruchkin, N. Yurchenko. Analysis of the effectiveness of state support to farms in region of Russia. The case of Sverdlovsk region. *Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism*, **11(3)**, 676-681 (2020).
44. F.T. Talibova, Yu.R. Khairullina. The role of volunteering in the process of socialization

of youth in modern Russian conditions. *Kazan Social and Humanitarian Bulletin*, **4(55)**, 74-78 (2022). doi: 10.26907/2079-5912.2022.4.74-78