

CHAPTER

2



Teenagers at Instituto Reciclar, during their training at the recycling factory in Sao Paulo.

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ECONOMIC ENGAGEMENT

THE transition to the world of work marks a crucial stage in young people's lives. It extends the possibility of independence, the application of academic learning, and social and economic productivity, and it sets the stage for defining an individual's potential in terms of earning capacity, job options and possibilities for advancement. When and how young people enter the labour force can have life-long implications for their employment experiences and can impact the well-being of those individuals as well as their relationships with family, friends, the community and society.²⁵

25 World Youth Report 2011—Youth Employment: Youth Perspectives on the Pursuit of Decent Work in Changing Times (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.12.IV.6).

Young people typically experience the greatest difficulty finding work. Youth are three times more likely than older adults to be unemployed. Their relative lack of skills and experience puts them at a disadvantage, but it is also often the case that in times of economic hardship it becomes easier for employers to retain existing older staff than to hire new, often younger, workers.

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT

Young people have been disproportionately affected by unemployment, underemployment, vulnerable employment and working poverty. Even during periods of robust economic growth, the labour market is often unable to assimilate large numbers of youth. In recent years, the situation has been exacerbated by the lingering effects of the global financial and economic crisis, with declining numbers of youth able to find decent work.²⁶

Recent estimates indicate that 73 million youth, or 13 per cent of all young people worldwide, were unemployed in 2014.²⁷ While joblessness is a concern almost everywhere, in low- and middle-income countries it is underemployment in the informal sector rather than unemployment in the formal sector that constitutes the primary employment-related challenge faced by youth.

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), an estimated 600 million productive jobs would need to be created for young people over the next decade to absorb those currently unemployed and provide job opportunities for the 40 million youth expected to enter the labour market each year.

REGIONAL DISPARITIES

In many respects, the economic crisis is global in nature; regardless of a country's level of income or educational attainment among youth, young people are being disproportionately affected. However, worldwide figures mask wide-ranging regional differences in the employment challenges facing young people.

Although since 2012 there has been a decrease in youth unemployment rates in many regions, this has not been the case everywhere. In 2014, youth unemployment was highest in the Middle East, rising from

²⁶ According to the International Labour Organization, "decent work sums up the overall aspirations of people in their working lives". The ILO Decent Work Agenda comprises four strategic objectives: promoting jobs, guaranteeing rights at work, extending social protection, and promoting social dialogue, with gender quality as a cross-cutting objective. See <http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/decent-work-agenda/lang--en/index.htm>.

²⁷ International Labour Organization, *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015: Scaling Up Investments in Decent Jobs for Youth* (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2015). Available from http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_412015.pdf.

27.6 in 2012 to 28.2 per cent in 2014 and in North Africa, rising from 29.7 to 30.5 per cent during the same period. Increases also occurred in South-East Asia and the Pacific (12.7 to 13.6 per cent).²⁸

At the same time, the youth unemployment rate decreased in: Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) (17.4 to 17.2 per cent), Latin America and the Caribbean (13.5 to 13.4 per cent) and sub-Saharan Africa (12.1 to 11.6 per cent).²⁹ The lowest youth unemployment rates are found in South Asia (9.9 per cent) and East Asia (10.6 per cent).³⁰

When broken down the statistics highlight diverse regional and national situations and challenges when it comes to youth unemployment.

In developing countries, a particular challenge is the large numbers of youth who, working irregularly in the informal sector, cannot escape from working poverty. In 2013, it was estimated that 286 million employed youth were living on less than US\$ 4 per day, and 169 million were subsisting on less than US\$ 2 per day.³¹

28 Ibid.

29 Ibid.

30 Ibid.

31 Ibid.

BOX 2.1.

YOUTH NEET

Increasing use is being made of the NEET rate—the proportion of young people not in employment, education or training—to measure and gauge the economic participation of youth who are the least educated and most likely to be socially excluded.

According to the International Labour Organization, the NEET rate for Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries as a group rose 2.1 per cent between 2008 and 2010, to 15.8 per cent, which translates into one in six young people not engaged in work, academic pursuits, or skills acquisition. Particularly affected have been Spain, Ireland and Denmark, with youth under the age of 25 and young women identified as the most vulnerable. Although the figure remains high, the share of young NEETs in the European Union has declined in recent years, falling from a high of 13.1 per cent in 2012 to 12.4 per cent in 2014.

Source: International Labour Organization, *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015: Scaling Up Investments in Decent Jobs for Youth* (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2015). Available from http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_412015.pdf.

Meanwhile, developed economies have been among those hit hardest by the global economic crisis. As noted, while youth unemployment rates have started declining in the European Union, they continue to exceed 20 per cent in two thirds of EU countries.³² Indeed, the aggregate youth unemployment rate of 16.6 per cent across the EU's 28 Member States masks wide ranging differences between countries. In 2014 youth unemployment levels were still at worryingly high levels in Spain (53.2 per cent), Greece (52.4 per cent), Croatia (45.5 per cent), Italy (42.7 per cent) Cyprus (35.9 per cent) and Portugal (34.8 per cent).³³

Sustained high rates of unemployment and under-employment have had a serious impact on young people's economic engagement, and with

employment trends likely to continue in many parts of the world,³⁴ prospects for the full economic participation of young people seem bleaker than ever.³⁵

Addressing youth unemployment is difficult because the problem is multidimensional in nature. It is driven by both job scarcity and skill scarcity (skill mismatches and shortages). Too few jobs are being created for new entrants to the labour market, and many young people, including those with a tertiary education, do not possess the skills required to meet today's labour market needs.

DECENT JOBS

With more than 87 per cent of the world's youth living in developing countries, efforts to address employment challenges must include not only generating more job opportunities for young people, but also improving the quality of work and working conditions. As noted previously, many youth in developing economies are underemployed, working in the informal economy and often holding multiple part-time or temporary jobs in precarious conditions for little pay; this is particularly true for young women (see box 2.2).

Even with a job in hand, many young workers continue to experience job vulnerability and instability. Youth may find few opportunities for skills development and advancement, and they are often

³² Ibid.

³³ International Labour Organization, *World of Work Report 2014: Developing with Jobs* (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2014). Available from http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_243961.pdf; see the interactive map at http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/multimedia/maps-and-charts/WCMS_244259/lang--en/index.htm.

³⁴ International Labour Organization projections for the period 2015-2019 show no change until 2018, when a slight jump from 13.1 to 13.2 per cent is expected (ibid.).

³⁵ International Labour Organization, *World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2015* (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2015), p. 21. Available from http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_337069.pdf. ³⁵ International Labour Organization, *World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2015* (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2015), p. 21. Available from http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_337069.pdf.

BOX 2.2.

GENDER DISPARITIES IN YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Although important gains have been made in education worldwide, labour market prospects continue to be more unfavourable for young women than for young men virtually everywhere. Women are also disproportionately involved in part-time and/or informal and precarious work and are overrepresented in sectors with exploitative working conditions and low labour union density. While the male-female pay gap is closing in certain developed contexts, persistent earning disparities between young men and young women in some regions continue to interfere with women's full economic engagement.

Globally, young women are also less likely than young men to become entrepreneurs, in part due to cultural and societal barriers in some countries, which further limits the employment options for female youth.

Sources: (a) International Labour Organization, *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015: Scaling Up Investments in Decent Jobs for Youth* (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2015). Available from http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--dgreports/--dcomm/--publ/documents/publication/wcms_412015.pdf; and (b) Jacqui Kew and others, *Generation Entrepreneur? The State of Global Youth Entrepreneurship* (London, Youth Business International and Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2013). Available from <http://www.youthbusiness.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/GenerationEntrepreneur.pdf>.

subjected to long working hours; insecure, informal and intermittent working conditions; and periods of joblessness.

In low-income countries, nine in ten workers are employed in the informal sector. At least three in four youth are irregularly employed, frequently combining own-account and family work with casual, and often part-time, paid employment.³⁶

ILO school-to-work transition surveys conducted in 28 low- and middle-income countries show that three quarters of young workers aged 15-29 years are engaged in the informal economy as either wage earners or necessity-driven self-employed. The incidence of informal employment is even higher among young women.³⁷

Job quality is a concern in developed countries as well. A marked erosion in employment conditions—including a shift from long-term employment contracts to short-term and/or part-time contracts and temporary work, the loss of entitlement to insurance and benefits, and longer working hours—has changed the playing field for young labour market entrants, compounding the youth employment challenge.

Most developed countries have experienced an increase in both voluntary and involuntary temporary and part-time work among youth. The proportion of

³⁶ International Labour Organization, *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015*.

³⁷ International Labour Organization, "Informal employment among youth: evidence from 20 school-to-work transition surveys" (4 February 2014). Available from http://www.ilo.org/employment/areas/youth-employment/work-for-youth/publications/thematic-reports/WCMS_234911/lang--en/index.htm.

BOX 2.3.

TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT: PASSING THE COST-BENEFIT TEST

When equipped with relevant skills and education, young people become better positioned to secure decent work. Investment in skills training and development is an increasingly popular programmatic and policy response to tackling the youth unemployment challenge. However, the costs of developing skills training programmes versus the benefits gained, particularly in times of long-term and persistent youth unemployment, are a consideration.

For example, a delayed transition from school to work can lead to the erosion of skills, resulting in decreased benefits from skills development schemes. The International Labour Organization notes that overeducation and overskilling coexist with undereducation and underskilling, in that so far as long-term unemployment is the norm for young people, their skills and education gradually become obsolete.^a Ensuring that skills training programmes

are linked to job placement is therefore a facet of successful skills programmes, and this may balance the cost-benefit equation as well as ensure that the skills mismatch is reduced.

In conflict and fragile State situations, this is also the scenario. A study looking at entrepreneurship programmes in poor and fragile States concluded^b that it was difficult to find a skills training programme passing a simple cost-benefit test, and that the injection of capital, in the form of cash, capital goods, or livestock, had a greater positive impact on long-term earning potential and the tendency towards entrepreneurship than did skills training programmes.

Sources: (a) International Labour Organization, *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2013: A Generation at Risk* (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2013), p. 13. Available from http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_212423.pdf; and (b) Christopher Blattman and Laura Ralston, "Generating employment in poor and fragile states: evidence from labor market and entrepreneurship programs" (19 July 2015).

young people working less than 30 hours per week increased from 21 to 30 per cent in OECD countries between 2007 and 2014, with the average for the 28 European Union countries reaching 43.3 per cent.³⁸

MITIGATING THE IMPACT: ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES

Persistent unemployment among young people can have a lasting impact on society. Relatively high levels of youth unemployment are linked to reduced economic

growth and in many places have led to civil unrest and the disruption of traditional power structures.³⁹ However, the costs of joblessness go beyond macroeconomic considerations and interference with the status quo. Long-term unemployment and underemployment can also adversely affect young people's health, well-being and self-esteem and can diminish their future earning potential and employment prospects.

³⁸ International Labour Organization, *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015*.

³⁹ This is explored in some detail in chapter three of the present publication, which focuses on youth political participation.

Many Governments have acknowledged the devastating long-term consequences of unemployment for both young individuals and society and have placed dealing with the youth unemployment crisis at the top of both national and international agendas in a bid to keep the possibility of a “lost generation of young workers” from becoming a reality. Investing in skills development and training, establishing internships, and promoting entrepreneurship have been identified as key tools in addressing the crisis.

Although legitimate efforts are being made to mitigate the effects of the crisis through the types of targeted programmes and schemes mentioned above, many young people still fall through the cracks and are left to navigate the employment landscape themselves. The present chapter highlights how through internships (Gianni Rosas), entrepreneurship (Claudia Pompa), and participation in trade unions (Amy F. Huziak), young people are navigating their engagement in a changing labour market.

INTERNSHIPS

Young people are increasingly turning to internships as a gateway to the labour market. With limited employment opportunities available, internships can provide an excellent opportunity for young people to gain occupational knowledge and develop skills and capabilities to better equip them for a career in their desired field.

Historically, internships have been linked to either educational or policy outcomes, with many youth undertaking internships as part of their educational curriculum. In such placements, a primary focus is placed on the learning outcomes for the young person.

In recent years, the economic crisis has brought about a shift in the role internships play within the employment framework in many areas. Increasing numbers of companies and organizations are offering, often full-time and unpaid, internships for recent graduates. In such incidents, the internship is not necessarily linked to specific educational outcomes, and in many cases the work of the young intern is replacing that of regular staff.

In developed countries in particular, would-be interns are facing a new dynamic. Whereas traditionally an internship would have been the first step towards a paying job within a company or organization, there has been a trend in recent years for employers to offer unpaid internships with no possibility of career progression within the organization.

Today, it is not uncommon for young people to undertake numerous back-to-back unpaid or low-paid internships as they struggle to gain a foothold on the career ladder. Far from better preparing young people for economic life, unpaid internships have the potential to leave youth in an economically more

vulnerable position than they would be in had they never undertaken the internship in the first place.

Amplifying the precarious situation of many young interns is the lack of strong regulation and safeguards surrounding internships. In many cases, young unpaid interns are not entitled to the basic benefits and entitlements of regular staff, including health insurance. As such, many young people are calling for stronger regulations and the development of benchmarks for quality internships so that young people struggling to gain a foothold in the labour market, can do so without exploitation.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Globally, young people are 1.6 times more likely than older adults to become entrepreneurs.⁴⁰

As young people face delayed or fractured entrance to the labour market, Governments (often facing severe economic and financial cutbacks and constraints) are focusing on promoting youth entrepreneurship. Likewise, many young people themselves have become more realistic about their job prospects in an uncertain economy and are starting their own enterprises.

Entrepreneurship has the capacity to provide many young people with real employment possibilities and opportunities. However, Governments that focus

excessively on encouraging youth entrepreneurship and fail to stimulate wider employment and job creation through broader and more robust employment strategies are, in effect, unfairly shifting much of the responsibility for job creation and healthy labour market performance away from the larger public and private sectors to young people, which can leave many youth vulnerable.

Indeed, though young people are more likely than adults to start their own businesses, they face a host of special challenges that vary across countries and regions. The obstacles faced by those setting up and running a new business may be intensified for youth, whose age and inexperience can place them at a disadvantage, and young entrepreneurs must also deal with less-than-optimal labour market conditions deriving from the global economic crisis.⁴¹

Among the particular barriers they face, young people trying to start a business may find it especially

⁴⁰ Jacqui Kew and others, *Generation Entrepreneur? The State of Global Youth Entrepreneurship* (London, Youth Business International and Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2013). Available from <http://www.youthbusiness.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/GenerationEntrepreneur.pdf>.

⁴¹ Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and European Commission, *Policy Brief on Youth Entrepreneurship: Entrepreneurial Activities in Europe* (Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, 2012), p. 20. Available from http://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/Youth%20entrepreneurship%20policy%20brief%20EN_FINAL.pdf.

difficult to secure credit, loans or other types of financing and often lack the knowledge and skills to use financial services efficiently. Because few financial service institutions adequately cater to the needs of young entrepreneurs in many regions, young people often rely on family and friends to obtain the funding they need for their start-ups.⁴²

TRADE UNIONS

With dauntingly high youth unemployment and underemployment in many parts of the world, young people are finding it increasingly difficult to secure quality jobs that offer benefits and entitlements. Employers have the advantage of being able to offer young workers contracts that provide little in the way of career security, health-care benefits or pension schemes, knowing that young people with few other prospects are not in a position to bargain and are poorly aligned to organize into collective bargaining units to try and improve their situation.⁴³

As a consequence of this vulnerability, many young people end up in precarious work situations, with a short-term or non-employee contract (or no contract), little or nothing in the way of pension benefits, and no health insurance or unemployment insurance.⁴⁴ This interferes with a young person's ability to plan for the future and become financially secure. The expansion of precarious work means that more

young workers are stuck in non-standard employment than was the case in previous generations.⁴⁵ As the number of youth lacking a firm foothold in secure, long-term employment has declined, so has their participation in trade unions. At present, engagement in economic life is occurring largely on the terms of employers and not young employees.

As the number of youth lacking a firm foothold in secure, long-term employment has declined, so has their participation in trade unions. Not only can such employment precarity make joining a trade union seem futile, but many fear that defending their rights will further jeopardise their already shaky prospects. Intergenerational divides within trade unions can compound the situation. Many trade unions operate on a two-tier system, where older workers with more secure contracts and robust entitlements sit at one level, and young workers with less secure contracts and conditions on another.

42 Approximately three quarters of youth rely primarily on personal sources (family or friends) for funding to start a business in sub-Saharan Africa (77.7 per cent), in Latin America and the Caribbean (75.7 per cent), and in Eastern Asia, Oceania and Southern Asia (73.2 per cent). In the Middle East and North Africa, the figure is almost 70 per cent. See Jacqui Kew and others, *Generation Entrepreneur? The State of Global Youth Entrepreneurship*.

43 See the contribution by Amy F. Huziak in chapter two of the present publication.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid.

IN SEARCH OF BENCHMARKS FOR QUALITY INTERNSHIPS

Gianni Rosas

INTRODUCTION

An internship involves short-term exposure to a work setting—a “practice period” during which the learner receives training and acquires experience in a specific field or career area.⁴⁶ This institution is relatively new but is becoming increasingly important as a means of obtaining workplace-based experience and thereby easing the school-to-work transition, particularly in countries where education and training systems tend to rely primarily on theoretical training and offer little or no exposure to the world of work.

Over the past few years, recourse to internships has steadily increased in a number of countries, particularly those affected by the global economic and financial crisis. This can be partly attributed to the need for young people to stay engaged in the labour market and improve their prospects for employment when the economy rebounds. The unprecedented youth employment crisis has become a stubborn reality in most countries and in all regions. It has resulted in increased vulnerability among young people, who are now faced with higher unemployment, lower quality of work and structural underemployment for those who find jobs, greater labour market inequalities among different groups, a longer and less secure school-to-work transition, and increased detachment from the labour market.

Currently, two out of five young people in the labour force are either unemployed or working but poor. Of the estimated 200 million unemployed in 2014, about 37 per cent (or around 73 million) were between the ages of 15 and 24.⁴⁷ In that year, the global youth unemployment rate was 13 per cent—nearly three times the adult rate.⁴⁸

Work experience is highly valued by employers, and the lack of such experience constitutes a major obstacle for first-time job seekers. Companies often hesitate to recruit young people because the return on investment from inexperienced youth may be uncertain.

Together with programmes offering summer jobs and part-time employment to students, periods of workplace-based practice in the form of internships have helped many young people escape the “experience trap” (a lack of work experience linked to the inability to find a job in the first place). Although data on internships are scant, available evidence from a number of countries points to the increased likelihood of former

46 See Gianni Rosas, Valli Corbanese and International Labour Office/International Training Centre, *Glossary of Key Terms on Learning and Training for Work* (Turin, 2006).

47 International Labour Organization, *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015*. Within the United Nations System, and in all its statistics and indicators, young people are identified as those between the ages of 15 and 24.

48 *Ibid.*

interns finding a job.⁴⁹ In some cases, however, internships run the risk of being used for purposes other than learning. The surge in the number of internships over the past five years has heightened debate over the conditions under which internships take place—in particular the unpaid ones, which in some countries have been the subject of scrutiny for their alleged use as a way of obtaining cheap labour and replacing existing workers or entry-level jobs. Against this backdrop, a number of national and international institutions, youth organizations, researchers and media entities have started looking into the benchmarks and elements that define quality internships and identifying mechanisms to ensure that internships are a valuable learning experience and that the rights and entitlements of young interns are respected.

THE RISE OF INTERNSHIPS: A GLOBAL TREND

Internships were first introduced in the United States of America in the nineteenth century. They later spread to other developed countries and have more recently been established in several low- and middle-income countries.

Until the 1930s, internships in the United States were only offered in the medical profession. They were then extended to liberal-arts-based professions and later to white-collar occupations in public administration and political organizations.⁵⁰ From the 1970s onwards, internships spread throughout most advanced economies and are now increasingly a feature of the education and labour market systems of low- and middle-income countries. Internship arrangements can be found in several industries and occupations, in for-profit and not-for-profit

organizations, and within both the public and private sectors. The number of young people participating in internship programmes has also drastically increased. In the early 1980s as few as 3 per cent of college students in the United States secured an internship before graduation. Today, that figure is as high as 75 per cent.⁵¹ Similarly, in France, the number of young people taking on internships has more than doubled in six years.⁵² In the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development estimated that more than one in five employers planned to hire interns between April and September 2010; this represented a potential offer of a quarter of a million internships.

MAIN TYPES OF INTERNSHIPS

There are three main types of internships whose features are worth analysing to identify what constitutes a quality internship. They include those forming part of education programmes, those linked to youth employment policy, and those offered in the open market.

49 See, for instance, the results of the Internship and Co-op Survey, an annual survey of employers with internship and cooperative education programmes that is carried out each year by the National Association of Colleges and Employers. The 2013 Survey reported that among young people who found jobs, 63.1 per cent had participated in a paid internship programme, 37 per cent had served as unpaid interns, and 35.2 per cent had not participated in an internship.

50 For the history of internships in the United States, see Ross Perlin, *Intern Nation: How to Earn Nothing and Learn Little in the Brave New Economy*, chap. 2 (London and New York, Verso, 2012).

51 For more information, see Ross Perlin, "Five myths about interns". Available from http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/five-myths-about%20interns/2011/05/09/AFbWmT2G_story.html.

52 The Conseil économique, social et environnemental estimated that this number increased from 0.6 million to 1.6 million between 2006 and 2012 (*L'avis du CESE: L'emploi des jeunes* [September 2012], available from <http://www.lecese.fr/travaux-publies/emploi-des-jeunes-0>).

Internships linked to educational programmes.

These types of internships are part of a school's curriculum, be it higher vocational education or academic education. Young people alternate between studying in an institution and learning practical, job-related skills in the workplace and often receive learning credit for the time spent as an intern. In France, for instance, an internship must be an integral part of a learning activity associated with an educational programme. A negotiated agreement (*convention de stage*) is signed by the sending educational institution and the internship provider. This agreement should include a work plan, the start and end dates of the internship, the hours spent at the workplace, the stipend that will be provided, the social protection entitlements, and the supervision arrangements.⁵³ Similar programmes exist in most European countries, in Northern America and Latin America, and in several countries in Asia and the Pacific. The educational institutions involved in the negotiation of internship programmes usually specify the learning purpose and other conditions under which the internships take place. Typically, both the institution and the enterprise have a certain level of bargaining power, and this ensures a balance of the interests of both parties in the negotiation. Educational institutions also participate in the monitoring of the internship, though as the numbers of internship positions rise, institutions have less time to devote to monitoring during implementation, which can reduce the learning value of these programmes.

Internships linked to youth employment policy.

Government policies and programmes targeting the employment of young people are increasingly including measures that promote internships as a way for young people to gain

practical experience. The extent to which these kinds of internships are regulated varies across countries.⁵⁴ In Portugal, the Programa de Estágios Profissionais (Professional Traineeship Programme) targets young people who have completed secondary or tertiary education. The programme lasts from nine to twelve months and is regulated by law, with monitoring provided by labour market institutions.⁵⁵ The National Internship Programme in Botswana provides work experience for unemployed graduates.

Legal and administrative procedures are usually detailed in standard agreements that specify the conditions under which these internships take place. The conditions apply to all enterprises participating in the programme. Like many youth employment interventions, the internship programmes are usually monitored by institutions governing the labour market (such as employment offices and labour inspectorates), which can also write off implementing partners that do not respect the terms of the agreement.

Internships in the open market.

In recent years there has been an upswing in the internships young people undertake in the open market after graduation. These internships are usually advertised by enterprises, and their terms and conditions are negotiated directly between the employer and the intern. The latter usually has little

⁵³ See article L. 412-8 of the *French Code de la sécurité sociale*. Available from <http://legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCodeArticle.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006073189&idArticle=LEGIARTI000031087963&dateTexte=20151126>.

⁵⁴ Kari Hadjivassiliou and others, *Study on a Comprehensive Overview on Traineeship Arrangements in Member States: Final Synthesis Report* (Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, 2012).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

bargaining power. These kinds of internships tend to be less regulated and are more difficult to monitor in comparison with those organized by education or labour market institutions.⁵⁶ Open market internships are available on every continent. Several countries have started to develop laws and regulations defining internship content and implementation modalities, with a view to protecting young people. For instance, in 2014 the Council of the European Union adopted a recommendation on a quality framework for traineeships.⁵⁷ This recommendation focuses on the learning and training content of internships and the conditions under which internships should be implemented in the 28 member States of the European Union.

WHAT ARE THE BENCHMARKS FOR DEFINING QUALITY INTERNSHIPS?

Various institutions have undertaken analyses of existing data, national practice, and regulations governing the three types of internships, and their findings have been used to identify benchmarks for quality internships. Quality assurance standards may be compulsory or voluntary. In Europe, for instance, a number of Governments have enacted internship-related legislation or adopted quality frameworks. The latter have also been developed by non-governmental organizations and promoted on a voluntary basis by enterprises, employer organizations and professional bodies. The different regulatory approaches provide useful insights on the essential elements of a quality internship.⁵⁸ The quality components outlined below are based on the analysis of those regulations and frameworks and on the findings of surveys conducted by various organizations.

Purpose of the internship. The objective of an internship is to gain occupational knowledge, skills and experience. Learning must be primary and job performance secondary. There are different ways experience may be acquired during an internship; some interns shadow an experienced worker who acts as a trainer, while others are given work-related tasks and learn by trial and error. Because internship programmes are less systematic and structured than other forms of education and training, and because the intern is learning-by-doing in a real workplace situation, the boundaries between learning and work often become blurred, particularly when the internship conditions are not clearly established. In many countries, internships are helping growing numbers of young people get a foothold in the labour market, but there is also increasing controversy over practice, particularly with respect to the real purpose. It is becoming increasingly common for fair labour advocates—at the request of individuals or through class action or other collective mechanisms—to call on labour courts or institutions governing the labour market to clarify the purpose of internships

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Council of the European Union, “Council recommendation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships” (Brussels, 10 March 2014). Available from https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lssa/141424.pdf.

⁵⁸ There are five main types of regulatory approaches, including specific regulations for interns, pieces of general labour legislation that explicitly include internships, pieces of general labour legislation that exempts internships from its operations, general labour legislation that applies to internships as well, and soft law that relates to internships. For an analysis of these approaches, see Rosemary Owens and Andrew Stewart, “Regulating for decent work experience: meeting the challenge of the rise of the intern”, a paper presented for discussion at the Regulating for Decent Work Conference, held by the International Labour Office in Geneva from 8 to 10 July 2015. Available from http://www.rdw2015.org/uploads/submission/full_paper/209/RDW_2015_Owens___Stewart.docx.

and create more detailed guidelines. Box 2.4 shows the criteria applied in the United States to determine whether interns qualify as trainees or as employees.

Recruitment. The intern recruitment process should be transparent. The advertisement should specify the main requirements and tasks and the conditions under which the internship is being offered (including duration, supervisory arrangements, and expected outcome). In Europe there are various recruitment channels, including educational entities, labour offices, employers and professional associations, social networks, websites, and intermediary organizations. In Italy, for instance, internships linked to educational programmes are managed by placement offices that advertise the positions and handle the matching process.⁶⁰ In the United Kingdom, the Government has encouraged enterprises to subscribe to the Common Best-Practice Code for High Quality Internships and make a voluntarily commitment to follow certain standards, including those relating to recruitment processes that should be the same as those applied for the recruitment of workers.⁶¹ A similar voluntary commitment to transparency in recruitment has been made by several enterprises in respect of the quality elements included in the European Quality Charter on Internships and Apprenticeships developed by the European Youth Forum.⁶²

Written agreement. Although circumstances vary considerably from one place to another, formalizing internships through written agreements is becoming an increasingly common practice in many parts of the world. Educational institutions, labour offices and individuals often enter into formal internship agreements with enterprises, and

similar arrangements are made between employers' organizations and trade unions. These agreements clearly specify the obligations of both parties as well as the conditions governing the internships (including learning content, duration, compensation, and social security entitlements). In Burkina Faso, the law requires a written contract to be signed by the employer and the intern prior to the start of an internship.⁶³ In the Netherlands, a standard internship agreement has to be signed by employers who take on trainees as part of an educational programme. These agreements may also be accompanied by workplans that define what the intern is expected to achieve during the internship period. Such plans provide a better understanding of the tasks and also facilitate monitoring of the quality of the internship. In Greece, all internship agreements linked to educational programmes include a detailed description of trainee-related tasks.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ For instance, a survey on quality traineeships was carried out between April and May 2013 in the 28 countries of the European Union. For information on the main findings of the survey, see TNS Political and Social, "The experience of traineeships in the EU", *Flash Eurobarometer 378* (Brussels, European Commission, November 2013). Available from http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_378_en.pdf.

⁶⁰ Council of the European Union, "Council recommendation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships".

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² The European Youth Forum is the largest youth organization representing the interests of young people in Europe. Its European Quality Charter on Internships and Apprenticeships is available from http://qualityinternships.eu/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/internship_charter_EN.pdf. The Forum has also published an employers' guide to quality internships, available from <http://www.youthforum.org/assets/2015/03/Employers-Guide-Quality-internships1.pdf>.

⁶³ Loi n. 028 -2008 du 13 mai 2008 portant Code du travail au Burkina Faso. Available from http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--ed_protect/--protrav/--ilo_aids/documents/legaldocument/wcms_126287.pdf.

⁶⁴ Council of the European Union, "Council recommendation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships".

BOX 2.4.

THE PURPOSE OF AN INTERNSHIP: THE SIX-PART TEST IN THE UNITED STATES

In the United States, the determination of whether an internship or training programme falls outside the scope of labour legislation is based on six criteria that courts have often referred to when rendering decisions on specific cases. These criteria derive from the United States Supreme Court case *Walling v. Portland Terminal Co.*, in which the Court was called upon in 1947 to determine whether yard brakemen engaged in a short training course organized by a railway company were to be considered trainees/learners or employees. The six criteria, which have since been applied to similar cases, are as follows:

1. "The internship ... is similar to training which would be given in an educational environment;
2. "The internship experience is for the benefit of the intern;
3. "The intern does not displace regular employees, but works under close supervision of existing staff;
4. "The employer that provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the intern;
5. "The intern is not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the internship; and
6. "The employer and the intern understand that the intern is not entitled to wages for the time spent in the internship."

SOURCES: United States Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, *Fact Sheet #71: Internship Programs under The Fair Labor Standards Act* (April 2010). Available from <http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.htm>. Also see <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/330/148/> for *Walling v. Portland Terminal Co.* case details.

Supervision. Supervision and mentoring are critical in achieving a quality outcome for internships. As mentioned previously, workplace-related skills and experience are transmitted through observation of experienced workers and through learning by doing. For this reason, interns should always be supervised, with a specified amount of time devoted to mentoring the trainees. The supervisor should set learning objectives, conduct reviews, and provide feedback to the intern. Legislative and regulatory frameworks do not necessarily guarantee the quality

of internships. It is the implementation of these regulations, sound monitoring and strong supervision of the entire process that play a key role in ensuring quality placements.⁶⁵ In Sweden, the employer is directly responsible for ensuring that trainees are under the direction, supervision and support of a person who is adequately trained for the intern-related assignments and has enough time to accomplish the task.

⁶⁵ Kari Hadjivassiliou and others, *Study on a Comprehensive Overview on Traineeship Arrangements in Member States: Final Synthesis Report*.

Duration. The duration of an internship should be determined based on the time needed to fulfil the training requirements. The limited duration and the explicit mention of start and end dates in formal internship agreements are considered important to prevent the substitution of regular workers with trainees. On average, internships last from 3 to 12 months. In Argentina, the duration of internships linked to educational programmes can range between 2 and 12 months, with a weekly load of up to 20 working hours.⁶⁶ In Rwanda, by law an internship cannot exceed 12 months,⁶⁷ while the average period of an internship in Botswana is 24 months. In France, the law limits the duration of an internship to six months.⁶⁸ Although not linked to the duration of a single internship experience, the succession (or *carousel*) of internships in which some young people get trapped has been identified as one of the features of the recent global job crisis. The practice of engaging in consecutive internships prolongs the learning period for young people and postpones their entry into remunerative employment.

Compensation. Internships can be paid or unpaid. An internship agreement should clearly specify any form of compensation offered to an intern. In general, it is recognized that the intern should be offered compensation or a stipend to cover living expenses (including the costs of transportation, meals and accommodation). This is often provided for internships linked to youth employment policy, particularly when the programmes are targeting disadvantaged youth who have limited financial means. The issue of pay is, however, related to the purpose of an internship (see the section on written agreements and box 2.4). In recent years, there has been controversy in many countries over the issue of

compensation in internships, with increasing numbers of former interns claiming they were engaged in routine tasks with little learning content or in performing the same work as that of regular employees.⁶⁹ In France, the law stipulates that students undertaking an internship lasting for more than two months should receive minimum compensation.⁷⁰ In Greece, students who undertake a compulsory internship are entitled by law to compensation.⁷¹ In the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the law requires that interns be paid the minimum wage.⁷² In some countries, the type of organization offering the service is taken into account for the determination of paid versus unpaid internships. In the United States, for instance, an unpaid internship with a for-profit organization is allowed only if there is no immediate advantage for the organization in question. An intern engaged in profit-generating activities would be considered an employee (see box 2.4). Likewise,

66 Argentina, Ley 26.427: *Créase el Sistema de Pasantías Educativas en el marco del sistema educativo nacional*. Available from <http://www.infoleg.gov.ar/infolegInternet/anexos/145000-149999/148599/norma.htm>.

67 Rwanda, Law 13/2009 Regulating Labour in Rwanda (27 May 2009). Available from http://www.africanchildforum.org/clr/Legislation%20Per%20Country/Rwanda/rwanda_labour_2009_en.pdf.

68 France, Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi, de la Formation professionnelle et du Dialogue social, "Les stages étudiants en milieu professionnel". Available from <http://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/informations-pratiques,89/fiches-pratiques,91/acces-et-accompagnement-vers-l,651/les-stages-etudiants-en-entreprise,3904.html>.

69 The New York law firm of Outten and Golden address this issue in some depth on their website, <http://unpaidinternslawsuit.com>.

70 France, Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi, de la Formation professionnelle et du Dialogue social, "Les stages étudiants en milieu professionnel".

71 Kari Hadjivassiliou and others, *Study on a Comprehensive Overview on Traineeship Arrangements in Member States: Final Synthesis Report*.

72 Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Ministry of Communication and Information, *Ley Orgánica del Trabajo, los Trabajadores y las Trabajadoras*. Available from <http://www.lottt.gob.ve/>.

where sponsorship is provided by labour market institutions in the context of youth employment policy, appropriate compensation makes internship positions accessible to all young people, particularly those coming from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds. The international principle of “equal remuneration ... for work of equal value” should apply when interns perform the same duties as regular employees.⁷³

Social protection. Interns should be covered by social protection, at least in the form of health and work accident insurance. The lack of social protection is often the most serious issue reported by interns.⁷⁴ In France, a trainee has automatic access to social security coverage.⁷⁵ In Greece, students who undertake a compulsory internship are entitled by law to health and work accident insurance.⁷⁶ In the Netherlands, students have a specific recognized legal status during the internship period and are covered by health, liability, and work accident insurance.⁷⁷

73 This principle is enshrined in the Constitution of the International Labour Organization (see http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:62:0::NO:62:P62_LIST_ENTRIE_ID:2453907:NO#A1).

74 See, for instance, the results of the survey undertaken by TNS Political and Social in “The experience of traineeships in the EU, *Flash Eurobarometer 378*.”

75 Kari Hadjivassiliou and others, *Study on a Comprehensive Overview on Traineeship Arrangements in Member States: Final Synthesis Report*.

76 Ibid.

77 Ibid.

78 Ibid.

79 Peru, Ministerio del Trabajo, *Ley n° 28518 sobre Modalidades Formativas Laborales*, Diario el Peruano (el 24 de mayo del 2005). Available from http://www.administracion.usmp.edu.pe/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/bt_legislacion.pdf.

Certification. Upon completion of the internship, the enterprise should provide the intern with a certificate or reference letter detailing the duration of the internship, the tasks undertaken, and the skills and experience acquired. This allows the intern to demonstrate what he or she has achieved when applying for prospective jobs. In France, the intern must be provided with a certificate upon completion of the placement.⁷⁸ In Peru, the host company or organization has to provide certification at the conclusion of an internship linked to an educational programme.⁷⁹

WHAT ARE THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH INTERNSHIPS?

The conditions for internships vary substantially across the contexts in which they take place. In many cases, the lack of regulations or their ambiguity and weak enforcement can lead to results that are not consistent with the purpose of an internship. Because of the adverse effects of the global economic crisis on young people, as well as the lack of a clear definition of the rights and duties associated with internships, young interns face certain risks. In some countries there have been growing numbers of class action suits and complaints, often led by youth organizations or trade unions, and the problems associated with internships have received increased attention from the media.

In many European countries, as well as in Australia, Canada and the United States, the number of internships has increased considerably over the past decade. This has coincided with the worsening of the economic situation and the disproportionate impact

of the global jobs crisis on young workers in recent years. In several sectors and occupations (including media, arts, fashion, public relations and public administration), there has been a significant increase in alleged cases of regular staff being replaced with interns. Although surveys have been carried out by some organizations to monitor the quality of internships being offered, the issues surrounding this emerging phenomenon have proven difficult to pin down.⁸⁰

Although no global estimates exist, some national surveys have provided information on the exponential growth of internships. The purpose of internships and the issue of compensation are the two areas that have received the most attention. In the United Kingdom, it was estimated that there were around 100,000 unpaid interns in 2010.⁸¹ Usually, unpaid internships are justified as being part of an academic programme.⁸² However, paid interns have a distinct advantage in the job market, according to a survey conducted in 2012 by the National Association of Colleges and Employers. Approximately 60 per cent of college graduates who participated in paid internships in 2012 received at least one job offer, while unpaid interns fared only slightly better than graduates who had not served internships; overall, 37 per cent of unpaid interns received offers of employment, while the same was true for 36 per cent of graduates with no internship experience.⁸³

In some cases, the lack of compensation makes internships de facto exclusive, as they limit participation to those who are able to cover their own living expenses, effectively institutionalizing socio-economic disparities. A study published by the Trade Union Congress of the United Kingdom found that only 12 per cent of the youth surveyed

in London said they could afford to live away from home to participate in an unpaid internship; 16 per cent responded that they would probably not be able to do so, and 61 per cent said they definitely did not have the financial means to live in the capital and take on unpaid work.⁸⁴ If internships are unpaid, there is also a greater risk that trainees will not be treated like other workers within an organization. Among the analyses that are available, many indicate that—all else being equal—internships that offer compensation and relate to the participant's field of study best facilitate the school-to-work transition by serving as a stepping stone to regular employment.

80 Boris Schmidt and Heidemarie Hecht, *Generation Praktikum 2011: Praktika nach Studienabschluss: Zwischen Fairness und Ausbeutung* (Berlin, Hans-Böckler Stiftung, März 2011). Available from http://www.boeckler.de/pdf/pm_2011_05_04_praktikumreport_lang.pdf. The German survey, conducted among graduates of four federally funded German universities, showed that 81 per cent of former interns had been engaged in full-fledged work throughout their internships. In 75 per cent of the cases studied, this work constituted part of the normal operations of the company, meaning the work of the interns was used to replace that which would normally have been undertaken by employees.

81 Kayte Lawton and Dom Potter, "Why interns need a fair wage" (London, IPPR and Internocracy, 31 July 2010). Available from <http://www.ippr.org/publications/why-interns-need-a-fair-wage>.

82 A survey on extracurricular unpaid work arrangements was conducted among law students in Australia. Interviews with 295 students from three different law schools indicated that half of the students performed unpaid work. See Andrew Stewart and Rosemary Owens, *The Nature, Prevalence and Regulation of Unpaid Work Experience, Internships and Trial Periods in Australia: Experience or Exploitation?* Report for the Fair Work Ombudsman (University of Adelaide, January 2013). Available from <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/763/UW-complete-report.pdf.aspx?Embed=Y>.

83 National Association of Colleges and Employers, "Unpaid internships: a clarification of NACE research" (16 October 2013). Available from <http://www.naceweb.org/s10162013/paid-internship-full-time-employment.aspx>.

84 For more information on the Trade Union Congress study, see <http://www.tuc.org.uk/economy/tuc-22040-f0.cfm>.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Young people deciding on an internship or engaged in an internship experience should do the following:

Review internship offers by using the main benchmarks for quality internships as a point of reference.

Although the benchmarks outlined above may not be universally applicable, they can provide a reference point for determining the relative quality of the internship positions offered. Young people who are intending to take on (or are actually involved in) an internship could review the terms and conditions of each offer to ascertain the extent to which quality elements are incorporated in the agreement or are part of the internship experience.

Collect information on the regulatory and monitoring frameworks governing internships in a given country, sector or occupation.

Many countries have adopted a set of minimal regulations to protect interns and trainees. There are also several codes of conduct that have been voluntarily adopted by many organizations offering internships. Prior to undertaking an internship, young people should collect relevant regulatory information in order to check whether the internships are in line with these regulations.

Contact organizations that represent the interests of young people to obtain advice on the conditions governing internships.

Youth organizations, employers' organizations and trade unions and are usually involved in the promotion and

monitoring of quality internships. They can help provide a better understanding of whether the basic conditions are being met and the rights and entitlements are being respected. They can also provide advice and support with regard to the process to be followed in cases where these conditions, rights and entitlements are not applied.

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YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP: THE COMING JOBS GAP—

600 MILLION REASONS TO PROMOTE YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Claudia Pompa

INTRODUCTION

In modern history, entrepreneurship has never been more important than it is at present. Societies today face complex challenges requiring strategic policies that extend beyond traditional economic solutions. Entrepreneurship and innovation can address these challenges by strengthening sustainability, creating jobs, generating economic opportunities and advancing human development. With the present concurrence of globalization, technological innovation and demographic trends, much greater attention is being focused on the role and potential impact of entrepreneurship.

Persistent unemployment among young people remains a problem, and youth entrepreneurship can play an important part in facilitating economic development, structural change and job creation. Around the world, entrepreneurship and small and medium-sized enterprise creation constitute sources of sustainable economic growth, driving innovation and structural changes in the economy while contributing to job creation and increased productivity. While young people often turn to self-employment because they cannot find jobs elsewhere, entrepreneurship can provide them with valuable skills such as critical thinking, decision-making, leadership,

teamwork and innovation—all of which remain relevant for the rest of their lives. In general, they gain expertise in areas not incorporated in traditional education, constructing unique careers that resonate outside the typical economic model by pulling in talent from their peers and fostering positive community development.

YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRENDS

While entrepreneurship is not new, the increased momentum behind its promotion and growth is indicative of unanswered needs in the global economy. It is likely that increased insecurity, diminished prospects for obtaining gainful employment, and the realization that the global economy does not have the capacity to create a sufficient number of jobs have all contributed significantly to the noticeable upsurge in the entrepreneurial aspirations of youth.

Most new businesses worldwide are started by individuals between the ages of 25 and 34, and younger people in general tend to support entrepreneurship

85 Deloitte, *Mind the Gaps: The 2015 Deloitte Millennial Survey—Executive Summary* (Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited, 2015). Available from <http://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/global/Documents/About-Deloitte/gx-wef-2015-millennial-survey-executivesummary.pdf>.

YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN NUMBERS

According to the 2013 report *Generation Entrepreneur? The State of Global Youth Entrepreneurship*, the number of 15- to 35-year olds who would actively consider becoming entrepreneurs varies widely. In sub-Saharan Africa, 60 per cent of young people would consider self-employment, while in Asia and the Pacific, Southern Asia and the European Union, the number drops to roughly 17 per cent.^a

One important factor influencing this disparity is the poverty level. In poorer regions, young people are more likely to actively pursue entrepreneurship because it often constitutes the best way to generate an income, while in richer countries, the likelihood of engaging in entrepreneurial activity depends largely on whether opportunities arise or are believed to exist, with the fear of failure weighing more heavily on the decision. The countries most affected by the global economic crisis, particularly those in the European Union, have seen a decline in the number

of youth starting their own businesses, likely owing to the perceived lack of opportunities.^b

In the European Union, young people aged 20-30 years are far more interested in entrepreneurship than are older adults; however, only 4 per cent of 15- to 24-year olds are self-employed, compared with 15 per cent of the general population.^c The youth figure is low in part because young people tend to face greater obstacles than do older adults when starting out in business.

Sources: (a) Jacqui Kew and others, *Generation Entrepreneur? The State of Global Youth Entrepreneurship* (London, Youth Business International and Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2013). Available from <http://www.youthbusiness.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/GenerationEntrepreneur.pdf> (b) Ibid.; and (c) Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and European Commission, *Policy Brief on Youth Entrepreneurship: Entrepreneurial Activities in Europe* (Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, 2012), p. 20. Available from http://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/Youth%20entrepreneurship%20policy%20brief%20EN_FINAL.pdf

as a good career choice. A recent Deloitte survey⁸⁵ of 7,800 youth from 29 countries indicates that 70 per cent see themselves working independently at some point. However, there are important regional differences; only 52 per cent of the respondents in developed economies expect to be self-employed, as opposed to 82 per cent in developing economies. Such findings highlight the huge potential of entrepreneurship in emerging economies. Similarly, research conducted by Youth Business International (YBI) and the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) reveals that sub-Saharan Africa has a significantly higher proportion of potential entrepreneurs than any other

region.⁸⁶ The research shows that 60 per cent of the 18- to 34-year olds there believe they are able to perceive opportunities in their country and are confident in their ability to create and manage a new business.

Young people constitute an incredibly diverse group, and the different approaches and business models they use are a reflection of this. In the developed economies of Asia and the Pacific, the European Union, and Southern Asia, the majority of young

⁸⁶ Jacqui Kew and others, *Generation Entrepreneur? The State of Global Youth Entrepreneurship*.

entrepreneurs are driven by perceived opportunity, whereas in regions such as sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, and Latin America, entrepreneurs tend to be driven by necessity. Not surprisingly, most youth entrepreneurs are own-account business operators, though many youth also practice part-time and collective entrepreneurship. Many of these businesses are in easy-to-enter sectors and require low levels of skill since youth often lack the experience and expertise necessary to build complex businesses. It has been noted by some researchers that highly skilled youth tend to be snapped up by competitive businesses and therefore rarely participate in entrepreneurial ventures. It is essential to provide young people with the tools, skills and support they need to become successful entrepreneurs and thereby ensure that youth entrepreneurship represents a viable path.

A UNIFIED VOICE FOR YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

One way to provide the necessary tools, skills and support is through organizations established by and for young entrepreneurs. As the entrepreneurial aspirations of youth have continued to expand, young entrepreneurs have joined forces and are working together to engage with and make recommendations to policymakers, Governments and civil society on the issues that affect them and their enterprises. By banding together, young entrepreneurs have become a recognized and powerful constituency that policymakers can no longer ignore. The G20 Young Entrepreneurs' Alliance (G20 YEA) is a global network of young entrepreneurs working to strengthen international cooperation and promote

BOX 2.6. WHO WANTS TO BE AN ENTREPRENEUR?

Evidence indicates that entrepreneurship is more common among older male youth than among younger youth, with self-employment being least likely among younger women. In addition, entrepreneurship is often intergenerationally transmitted, with those whose parents are entrepreneurs being more likely to work independently.

Source: Francis Green, Youth Entrepreneurship, a background paper for the OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs and Local Development (OECD Local Economic and Employment Development Programme, 2013). Available from http://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/youth_bp_finalt.pdf.

open and constructive discussion on key issues relating to the support and growth of youth entrepreneurship. Another unified voice is the Federación Iberoamericana de Jóvenes Empresarios (FIJE), an association working with over 150,000 young entrepreneurs from 20 different countries in the Americas. By reaching out to Governments, policymakers and international organizations, FIJE provides representation for young entrepreneurs and is able to directly affect the environment in which youth operate. In addition, FIJE works closely with member nations by assisting them in the creation of new businesses, helping them develop networking opportunities, and providing training and business development support to both urban and rural youth.

Of equal importance are those associations working to mobilize the power of female entrepreneurs. Global Entrepreneurship Week, a huge event held in November each year to celebrate and promote entrepreneurship, continues to feature programming entirely devoted to women entrepreneurs and their successes and challenges. The Third Billion index, created by Price-Waterhouse Cooper, ranks the competitiveness of 128 countries across the globe based on their integration of women and female entrepreneurs into the general economy. Entrepreneurship think tanks such as the Global Entrepreneurship and Development Institute and GEM have all promoted the acceptance and participation of women in the economy as key to growth.

The examples above reflect the enormous potential youth entrepreneurship has to generate more and better economic opportunities at the community, State and global levels. Organizations supporting youth entrepreneurship can work to change the way the standard economic model views working with and for young people. As both individual entrepreneurs and advocates for youth entrepreneurship, young people have the power and capacity to change the role they play in the economy.

KEY CHALLENGES

Considering the enormous entrepreneurial potential of youth, Governments and policymakers around the world would be wise to focus greater attention on the barriers and challenges that prevent young people from starting and growing successful businesses. While limited access to capital still constitutes a major hurdle for young entrepreneurs to overcome, other barriers may be just as detrimental to the

development of a business. In fact, capital without an adequate support system, know-how and mentorship can quickly become lost investment. Obstacles tend to mount against young entrepreneurs, exacerbating their difficulties and effectively barring their entry to the workplace. Traditional education systems, a lack of access to knowledge and experience, a dearth of investment capital, negative societal attitudes, and market barriers can all undermine a young would-be entrepreneur's efforts to enter the marketplace; these challenges are addressed in some detail below.

A traditional education system that discourages entrepreneurship.

Unfortunately, traditional education and training do not encourage an entrepreneurial mindset, focusing instead on preparing students for paid work. In regions such as sub-Saharan Africa, poor numeracy and literacy skills, low levels of secondary and tertiary education, and high dropout rates hinder entrepreneurs and their ability to compete in local and global markets.

Lack of access to experience, networks and capital.

While young entrepreneurs may be able to learn a new set of skills, limited access to knowledge and networks can adversely affect their initiative. The success of a business is often determined by prior experience, knowledge and managerial skills, which young people have typically had little time or opportunity to acquire. Young entrepreneurs also have limited or no access to the networks and social capital necessary to run a business. They may have little knowledge about business development schemes and support systems from which their businesses could benefit. This limited

access to networks plays itself out in a fundamental scarcity of capital. Securing financing remains a major hurdle for young entrepreneurs, who are often denied traditional sources of funding because they lack collateral and a credit history and are perceived by financial markets to be a higher risk.

Societal attitudes towards entrepreneurship. Capital may be crucial to the immediate success of a business, but deeply ingrained societal views of entrepreneurship may have an even greater impact in the long term. Common barriers young entrepreneurs face are negative attitudes towards entrepreneurship and the stigma of failure. The cultural perception of entrepreneurs is a decisive factor in promoting youth entrepreneurship. In cultures that perceive business failure as negative, young people may not be as receptive to entrepreneurship. In certain cultures, perceptions regarding gender can also have an impact on the uptake of youth entrepreneurship. In the Middle East and North Africa, for example, men are 2.8 times more likely than women to start a business. This derives from societal views and customs relating to the role of women in business, in the economy and in the community.

Market disruption. Young people are not insulated from the circumstances and challenges that affect the business sector as a whole, including political instability, poor infrastructure, unfavourable legal and regulatory frameworks for small and medium-sized enterprises, limited market opportunities, and corruption. In developing countries in particular, entrepreneurs tend to operate in the informal sector, where they are especially vulnerable to abusive and corrupt practices.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

How can young people, their Governments and the international community strengthen entrepreneurship development and support? Policies and practical programmes should focus on expanding the development of entrepreneurial skills, providing mentorship and support systems, increasing access to financial capital, and fostering an enabling environment that favours youth entrepreneurship.

Unfortunately, there is little definitive evidence supporting or refuting the effectiveness of different youth entrepreneurship support models. Determining what works best across a range of contexts and situations is especially difficult. Only by acknowledging that there is no one-size-fits-all approach can policymakers begin to strengthen entrepreneurship in diverse markets and cultures. While several recommendations are offered below on how to improve entrepreneurship, the jury is still out on which policies have the greatest impact. Would creating an environment in which entrepreneurial businesses can thrive be more effective for combating unemployment than direct assistance to would-be entrepreneurs? Would better transportation options, improved markets and greater security create more beneficial conditions for entrepreneurship than large public policy interventions? At the moment there are no conclusive answers to questions such as these, as entrepreneurship is still evolving and the relevant data analysis has not yet caught up.

Expand and enhance entrepreneurship education. In order to better prepare the next generation of entrepreneurs, Governments, the educational community and civil society

need to work together to improve entrepreneurship programmes and expand their reach. Effective programmes not only raise awareness of entrepreneurship as a career path but also play a crucial role in helping youth overcome obstacles deriving from their lack of knowledge and experience. Programmes in primary school often help create awareness of entrepreneurship and highlight some of the skills and attitudes that are important for entrepreneurs to develop, while those provided during secondary education are more focused on the development of specific technical skills. Although these programmes are most easily delivered through formal education, they should also be developed outside the education system in order to reach out-of-school and at-risk youth.

Design support systems with target populations in mind.

Youth are often viewed as a single entity with similar needs and wants across borders and cultures, when in fact they are an incredibly diverse and dynamic group. In designing support systems, policymakers and practitioners should take into account this dynamism as well as the local context in order to best serve the needs of young entrepreneurs. The situation of female entrepreneurs offers a case in point. Young female entrepreneurs often do not face the same challenges or have the same needs as their male counterparts. In some cultures, for example, women may need safe meeting spaces or socially

acceptable methods of entering the economic system. Programmes supporting young entrepreneurs should incorporate mechanisms that address the specific needs of targeted groups of youth.

Involve the private sector and existing entrepreneurs through mentorship programmes.

The “soft support” provided by mentors is just as important as the technical skills young entrepreneurs need to start, maintain and grow their businesses. Almost 50 per cent of entrepreneurs fail without this support, while 88 per cent of those with business mentors survive. The *Global Youth Entrepreneurship Survey 2011* reveals that nonfinancial support such as mentoring is one of the most critical factors influencing business performance.⁸⁷ In the *2013 Start-Up Generation* report prepared by the Prince’s Trust in the United Kingdom, a third of the young people surveyed claimed that having a mentor would make them more likely to consider self-employment.⁸⁸ The crucial role mentors play in establishing networks and connections and serving as positive models for young entrepreneurs cannot be overstated.

Increase access to capital.

Increased access to financial resources is necessary to foster successful entrepreneurship across all economies. Typically, young entrepreneurs rely on personal or family funding to start their businesses, especially in developing countries, as access to finance is often constrained by requests for collateral and credit records. Almost three quarters of young entrepreneurs rely on their immediate network to fund their businesses. There is significant space for Governments and the financial sector in general to work together to develop better and smarter policies

⁸⁷ Youth Business International, *Global Youth Entrepreneurship Survey 2011: How Non-Financial Support Is Viewed by Young People Starting and Growing a Business* (London, 2011). Available from <http://www.youthbusiness.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/YouthEntrepreneurshipSurvey2011.pdf>.

⁸⁸ The Prince’s Trust and Royal Bank of Scotland Group, *The Start-Up Generation: Why the UK Could Be Set for a Youth Business Boom* (2013). Available from <http://www.slideshare.net/Centres-EU/the-start-upgeneration-2013>.

to improve access to financing mechanisms tailored to the specific needs of young entrepreneurs. The development of a range of financial instruments that take into account the type of entrepreneur, enterprise and capital needed would provide young entrepreneurs with more direct access to funding and lessen their reliance on local networks.

Foster an enabling youth entrepreneurship ecosystem. Young entrepreneurs are utilizing their own time, labour and ideas to change the status quo and redefine the economic rules of the game. This massive movement needs the support of all stakeholders if the larger unemployment issue is to be addressed through the development and strengthening of an enabling environment for youth entrepreneurship.

Countries across the world need to realize that promoting entrepreneurship is essential for developing human capital. For entrepreneurship to flourish, it needs an ecosystem in which multiple stakeholders play key supportive roles. Policymakers, academic institutions, the business community, and others need to work together to take advantage of this opportunity to fuel the engine of future economic growth. Empowering entrepreneurs improves social well-being by preparing young people to thrive and succeed in a globally competitive and dynamic world. Policymakers at all levels have an important role to play in establishing appropriate legal and fiscal frameworks to encourage entrepreneurship and to fill market gaps as necessary. Educational institutions play a critical role in developing the appropriate learning environment and utilizing relevant learning methods. Engagement of the private sector is absolutely necessary; companies and entrepreneurs play

instrumental roles in promoting entrepreneurship by providing knowledge, expertise, social capital and financial support.

Continued economic growth and innovation depend on the ability of the global economy to ensure that youth have the skills and confidence to move forward as entrepreneurs. The promotion of entrepreneurship across the globe, especially in developing nations, is essential to unleash the potential of youth and encourage sustainable development. As the population grows, more and more jobs will be required to keep the world employed; without entrepreneurs, those jobs may never exist. Entrepreneurship is key to generating new jobs and ensuring that youth remain invested in a positive future.

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YOUTH BARGAINING POWER: SECURING RIGHTS THROUGH TRADE UNIONS

Amy F. Huziak

INTRODUCTION

There has been a global shift from long-term employment contracts and permanent work to short-term contracts, temporary employment and casual work, and growing numbers of youth are turning to self-employment or the informal sector for lack of other options. These trends have effectively limited youth access to labour rights, benefits and entitlements (including social supports and public services), as precarious workers have few job prospects and are not in a strong position to bargain.

The marked increase in precarious work has affected young people's access to labour rights, including the right to join a union. Youth participation in trade unions and other workers' organizations has declined, and trade unions—institutions traditionally organized by workplace or sector—are struggling to adapt to the changing nature of how young workers interact with, or are excluded from, the labour market.

The recent trends relating to labour market participation among youth and their access to labour rights, trade union membership, job security and employment benefits show that the labour market experience of young people today is vastly different from that of the older population. The present thought piece examines the precarious state of youth employment and the lack of protection mechanisms for young workers, and argues that strengthening

labour rights and labour market outcomes is crucial to the current and future well-being of youth. It concludes with recommendations for stakeholders on strengthening the labour rights of young workers to better ensure economic and employment stability.

BOX 2.7.

WHAT IS PRECARIOUS WORK?

The definition of precarious work is contextual, depending largely on the economic, social and political structure in a particular country or region. In general, however, precarious work is characterized by one or more of the following descriptors: low wages or no wages (as in the case of unpaid internships); undefined work hours (casual, part time or zero hours); short-term or temporary employment; the lack of a defined relationship with an employer (as is the case with temporary work agencies); and the inability to exercise labour rights or overcome barriers to trade union representation. Precarious work may also be referred to as atypical, non-standard or non-decent work.

LABOUR MARKET TRENDS AMONG YOUNG WORKERS

As new labour market entrants, young workers have seen relative wages fall and employment conditions deteriorate since the 1980s. Over the past 30 years, growing numbers of young workers have come to occupy the sphere of flexible, casual and precarious work, operating on the periphery of more senior workers whose employment is relatively secure. Youth find themselves at a disadvantage even before they start looking for work, as they face higher skill requirements and high tuition and education costs, which serve to delay their entry to and full-time participation in the labour market. With such uncertain labour market conditions, the number of young workers who are mired in non-standard employment is much higher now than in previous generations.

89 International Labour Organization, *World Employment and Social Outlook Trends 2015* (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2015), p. 21. Available from http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_337069.pdf.

90 Ibid.

91 For example, statistics indicate that 13 per cent of young Canadians aged 15–24 years are unemployed. When those at the margins of the labour force are taken into account, Canadian youth are characterized by an underemployment rate of 27.7 per cent. Canadian Labour Congress. “Underemployment is Canada’s real labour market challenge” (6 March 2014), p. 4. Available from <http://canadianlabour.ca/issues-research/underemployment-canadas-real-labour-market-challenge>.

92 A list of country members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development is available from <http://www.oecd.org/about/membersandpartners/>.

93 International Labour Organization, *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2013: A Generation at Risk* (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2013), p. 13. Available from http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_212423.pdf.

94 International Labour Organization, *From Precarious to Decent Work: Outcome Document to the Workers’ Symposium on Policies and Regulations to Combat Precarious Employment* (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2012), p. 38. Available from http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---actrav/documents/meeting-document/wcms_179787.pdf.

Young and new workers are the most vulnerable to changes in the labour market, often because they lack seniority, experience and training opportunities. This is apparent in the job markets of today, where statistics indicate that the youth employment situation has simply not recovered from the 2008 global recession. In 2014, world youth unemployment stood at 13 per cent—nearly three times the corresponding rate for older workers.⁸⁹ Youth unemployment is expected to worsen in many countries over the next five years, even as the rates of those who have completed tertiary education increase.⁹⁰ The fact that higher education sometimes fails to prepare students for gainful employment means that a skills mismatch or skills shortage may be part of the problem, but an even bigger issue remains the lack of job creation for new entrants to the labour market.

Unemployment rates tell only part of the story, however. What is arguably even more troubling is underemployment. There are huge numbers of young workers—not reflected in unemployment statistics—who are involuntarily working part-time, are doing unpaid internships or other unpaid work, have returned to school because they cannot find work with the qualifications they possess, are coping with an illness or disability that prevents them from working, or have stopped looking for work because they have become discouraged.⁹¹

Although the proportion of the population working part-time varies widely across advanced and developing economies, rates of part-time and temporary work have increased overall. In OECD countries,⁹² the share of those engaged in part-time work rose from 20.8 per cent in 2000 to 29.3 per cent in 2011.⁹³ Precarious work and part-time work also

disproportionately affect women, who are overrepresented in sectors with exploitative working conditions and low union density.⁹⁴

The quality of jobs available to young workers is also declining. Although temporary contracts and internships provide some work exposure and experience and are therefore often considered a step on the pathway to stable, full-time employment, many young workers, especially women, find themselves unable to move out of the realm of precarious work to secure permanent, decent, family-supporting employment.⁹⁵ The new emphasis on a “sharing” economy and the widespread use of zero-hours contracts means that young people are on the verge of not even being able to conceptualize their labour as “a job”. This is increasingly leaving young workers in sectors where they are poorly paid, vulnerable to exploitation, and unlikely to become members of unions that could work with them to address injustice in the workplace.

Unemployment and underemployment also restrict young people’s access to benefits, entitlements and social supports. Shorter contracts and precarious employment mean that fewer young workers have access to health-care benefits through their employers or any type of company pension savings plan for

retirement. In addition, part-time workers who need full-time work to survive often cannot claim unemployment benefits, even if they are not earning a high enough wage to make ends meet.

TRADE UNION TRENDS AMONG YOUNG WORKERS

Worldwide trends in trade union membership and collective bargaining coverage are difficult to analyse owing to the vast differences in trade union, government, and employer structures across countries—including the variances in how union membership is measured against formal and informal employment. Broad trends suggest that advanced economies tend to have relatively high union density, as demonstrated by the unionization rate in OECD countries (17.1 per cent for 2012).⁹⁶ Developing economies tend to have lower union coverage due to the limited reach of formal sector employment, and legally enshrined labour standards and collective bargaining rights are generally weaker in these areas as well. Such disparities notwithstanding, data on membership in global labour institutions such as the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), which represents 176 million union members in 162 countries and territories worldwide, paint a picture of broad economic and social influence by trade unions.

Gender- and age-disaggregated data reveal wide disparities in trade union participation among women and youth across countries. In developing economies such as the Philippines and Zimbabwe, women represent a small minority of union members. In advanced economies such as Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom, trade union density among women is on par with, or even exceeds, that for men.⁹⁷ Union

95 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and International Labour Organization, “Promoting better labour market outcomes for youth”, background paper for the G20 Labour and Employment Ministerial meeting, Melbourne, 10-11 September 2014 (August 2014), p. 7. Available from <http://www.oecd.org/g20/topics/employment-and-social-policy/OECD-ILO-Youth-Apprenticeships-G20.pdf>.

96 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, “Trade union density”, OECD.Stat (April 2015). Available from https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=UN_DEN.

membership for young workers is similarly disparate across countries; however, the overall trend is that youth are less likely to work in industries well represented by trade unions and are more likely to work in precarious jobs without union representation.

Another clear trend is the recent decline in overall union density.⁹⁸ Two major factors have contributed to this downward trend; union growth has not kept up with population growth, and constant attacks by anti-union employers and anti-worker Governments have made it more difficult to organize those workers entering the labour force. In addition, shorter job contracts are forcing workers to move quickly between many employers, which hinders their ability to unionize or improve working conditions in any single workplace.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Expanding youth participation in trade unions is a challenge worldwide, given the increase in precarious work and the corresponding decrease in decent, permanent employment in both advanced

and developing economies. This pronounced shift represents a major challenge for labour unions and workers' organizations, whose traditional models of organizing by workplace or occupation may need to give way to different models that better facilitate worker participation and the collective exercise of workers' power.

Unions face three major challenges in motivating young workers to organize in their workplaces. First, young workers often lack knowledge of labour standards and their rights on the job. Second, the precariousness of the current job market effectively discourages workers from defending their rights, standing up for injustice, going on strike, or taking any other action that might threaten their employment because finding a new job might be difficult or impossible. Third, the intergenerational inequality that has become institutionalized within the labour market has expressed itself within trade unions in the form of two-tier contract arrangements, in which concessions are made for young and new workers so that senior employees may retain their terms and benefits. These arrangements have reinforced generational differences in collective bargaining and workplace activism.

Faced with these obstacles, youth within trade unions have been working to challenge models of trade unionism and to organize to adapt to the changing nature of work—which presents an opportunity for change within trade union structures. Over the past 15 years, youth have achieved representation in international trade union structures such as ITUC and its regional bodies, the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) and national trade union centrals,⁹⁹ and in the ILO through mechanisms such

97 Sue Ledwith and others, summary of a research report on gender and trade unions (Oxford, United Kingdom, Global Labour University Alumni, 2010), p. 6. Available from http://www.global-labour-university.org/fileadmin/GLU_research_projects/Gender_and_trade_unions/Summary_report_for_GLU_webpage_Mar_2011_1_.pdf.

98 International Labour Organization, *World of Work Report 2014: Developing with Jobs* (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2014), p. 93. Available from http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_243961.pdf.

99 A "central" is a trade union organization that serves as an umbrella for multiple unions. Examples include the Canadian Labour Congress, the International Trade Union Confederation, and the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO).

as the Youth Employment Forum. Representation in these bodies means that youth themselves have a voice in setting national, regional and international priorities within the labour movement, ensuring that youth issues, representation and organizing feature prominently on union agendas.

At the local and regional levels, youth have also developed labour rights activist organizations and young workers' committees that inform youth of their rights and teach them how to exercise collective power in the workplace. These entities also work to facilitate the political engagement of youth in the democratic processes of unions, as well as in local, national and regional politics. Among other things, young worker-activists have moved to build solidarity through intergenerational alliances to combat two-tier contracts and precarious work arrangements.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Quality employment is proving elusive for many young people today. Youth seeking to enter the labour market are confronted with high rates of unemployment and underemployment and a system that has failed to create decent work or good jobs. The global shift from long-term, permanent, high-quality employment to precarious, short-term, low-paid work means that the labour market experience is vastly different for young workers nowadays than it was for previous generations when they were young. An analysis of youth unemployment trends and projections indicates that the situation is likely to worsen before it improves.

These trends have a huge impact on young people's access to labour rights, including the right to join and participate in trade unions. As competition for work increases, access to labour rights tends to decrease. However, this new dynamic also presents young people with the opportunity to redefine their role in workplaces and unions so that they are in a better position to strengthen labour rights for themselves and the next generation of workers.

That young workers have the power to create good jobs and ensure successful economic engagement through their participation in trade unions is not a revelation, but it is something that must be recognized by each new generation of institutions, Governments, employers and workers.

How can young workers, unions and global institutions promote and support the economic engagement of youth in trade unions and workers' organizations? To ensure that young workers have access to decent work, consideration must be given to the broader question of how to empower young people to participate in workplaces and labour unions, and stakeholders must be made to recognize that there is no single solution to the economic challenges young workers currently face. As the nature of the labour market shifts, so must the response of young workers, labour unions, educational institutions, Governments, employers, and other stakeholders at the local, national and global levels. Below are several recommendations for improving young workers' access to their labour rights worldwide.

Ensure that young people are informed of their labour rights. Young people must be made aware of their labour rights

if they are to participate fully in the labour market. Labour unions often assume the role of educating members on how to exercise their labour rights; however, since the majority of workers are not union members, the labour-related information individual workers receive varies greatly. Government and trade union partnerships with educational institutions (from primary to post-secondary levels) can empower young people to learn about their labour rights even before starting their first job. The development of a standardized labour education curriculum is key to improving the well-being of youth in the workplace early on.

Challenge political apathy and empower young workers to guide legislative change.

The democratic self-governance and participatory structure of labour unions offers an ideal environment for challenging political apathy among youth. Unions are a democratic vehicle for young workers' participation in economic decision-making in the workplace and in society as a whole. For young workers, unions provide the space and resources to organize on workplace, political and policy issues that are important for young people.

Governments must consult with young workers and unionized youth and empower them to contribute to improving labour legislation so that the priorities attached to youth employment are reflected in minimum workplace standards. The priorities of older workers and legislators may not be the same as those of young workers or new entrants to the labour force, and fair legislation is designed to meet the basic needs of all workers. It is also important to create mechanisms for political inclusion to ensure

that young people themselves are represented in the democratic structures of government at all levels, effectively empowering them as decision makers.

Create decent jobs for youth.

Governments have a responsibility to ensure that the rights and potential of youth are taken into account in the development of national education and labour policies, including policies on internships, apprenticeships and vocational training. Policies aimed at creating jobs for youth and matching skilled workers with available employment need to be a priority for governments at all levels as global unemployment rates worsen. These policies must incorporate provisions recognizing the labour rights of youth and the rights and roles of trade unions in both traditional and more precarious settings. For example, initiatives such as the European Union's Youth Guarantee, which identifies the input and support needed from trade unions and workers' organizations, must be developed to increase young workers' awareness of their labour rights and to ensure that those rights are respected in the workplace.

Unions can use the mechanism of collective bargaining to reduce intergenerational and gender-based inequalities. Unions are in a unique position to negotiate for the equal treatment of their members, working to minimize or eliminate wage and entitlement differentials between workers who are experiencing discrimination based on gender, age or experience. Although trade unions do not play the same role government entities do in job creation, they are able to push for decent conditions in the workplace—which benefits all workers, but particularly those who are traditionally marginalized in the labour market.

Increase research and dialogue.

Global stakeholders such as the United Nations and ILO should continue to provide support for research on young people's labour rights and to create space for a broader discussion about strengthening the collective power of youth to assert those rights.

Increase unionization.

Unions must engage with young workers to organize in new workplaces and sectors while simultaneously defending and expanding legislated labour rights. Union structures must ensure that resources are prioritized for the organization of new workplaces, especially in the retail, service and informal sectors, where young workers are increasingly employed. The advantages to increasing union membership are clear in both developed and developing nations. Union members have the collective ability to negotiate for better working conditions, higher wages, increased attention to occupational health and safety concerns, and employment benefits and entitlements. In short, unions have the ability to create decent jobs where only precarious work existed before. The labour movement is perhaps the only mechanism that can definitively empower young workers themselves to create change in the labour market and help ensure the labour rights of this and future generations.

Governments also have a key role to play in increasing union density. Legislative change that facilitates the organizing of workers by workplace or sector is key to ensuring that the proportion of workers covered by collective agreements is as large as possible. Private sector employers also play an important part in terms of their obligation to deal fairly with workers and unions and to prioritize the creation of fair and safe workplaces.

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