

## Global Employment Trends for Youth 2024

Originally Published: ILO

### Introduction:

The Global Employment Trends for Youth 2024, Decent Work, Brighter Futures report by the International Labour Organization (ILO) highlights the state of youth employment globally and regionally, focusing on challenges, progress, and future prospects. The report has investigated the where, why and how of young people's labour market vulnerabilities, and highlighted the policy measures and interventions that aim to support youth job, creation and effectively set young people on the pathway to a bright future of work. Celebrating its 20th edition, the report shows both improvements and ongoing struggles for youth in securing decent employment, particularly in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Key Findings:

- **Post-COVID-19 Recovery and Employment Trends:** The report notes that the global youth unemployment rate in 2023, at 13%, is the lowest in 15 years, signaling a recovery from the pandemic. Approximately 64.9 million young people were unemployed worldwide in 2023, a decrease from pre-pandemic levels. However, recovery remains uneven across regions. In regions like the Arab States, East Asia, and Southeast Asia and the Pacific, youth unemployment rates are still above pre-crisis levels, despite some economic recovery. Young men have generally benefited more from the recovery than young women. Before the pandemic, the youth unemployment rate for men was higher than for women. However, post-crisis, this gender gap has narrowed, with young women facing both sharper unemployment rate increases during the pandemic and a slower recovery.
- **NEET Status and Gender Gaps:** The report also draws attention to the significant challenge posed by the large share of youth not in education, employment, or training (NEET). In 2023, 20.4% of the global youth population were classified as NEET, with women disproportionately affected—two out of three young people in NEET status are women. Youth NEET rates remain high in many regions, particularly in low-income countries and sub-regions like the Arab States, North Africa, and sub-Saharan Africa.
- **Regional Challenges and Inequalities:** Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab States face high rates of youth unemployment, with more than one in three economically active youth unemployed in the Arab States. Furthermore, in sub-Saharan Africa, three-quarters of young workers remain in insecure jobs, often within the agricultural sector. Demographic pressures further complicate the situation, especially in Africa, where the youth labor force is expected to grow significantly by 2050, while other regions may experience contractions. These demographic shifts exacerbate the challenge of creating sufficient decent jobs for the rising youth population in Africa.

• **Future Outlook and Policy Recommendations:** Moving forward, the global youth unemployment rate is expected to continue decreasing slightly over the next two years, but challenges like educational mismatches and rising youth anxiety persist. Many young people remain concerned about job stability and economic security. The report emphasizes the need for comprehensive youth employment policies, particularly in areas like job creation, education, training, and gender-responsive measures. Addressing global inequalities through international cooperation and public-private partnerships will be crucial in ensuring brighter futures for youth.

### **Conclusion:**

While global youth unemployment has reached its lowest levels in 15 years, significant challenges remain. Despite positive trends, including the recovery from COVID-19, youth in many regions still face major hurdles. Particularly concerning is the high rate of youth who are not in employment, education, or training (NEET), with a large gender gap showing that two-thirds of these individuals are women. The report points to Africa and the Arab States as regions with critical youth unemployment and job insecurity issues, while also noting the demographic pressure Africa will face due to the growing youth labor force. The report calls for increased focus on job creation, skills development, and policies aimed at reducing global inequalities, particularly gender disparities. The future of youth employment will depend on how well the international community, governments, and other stakeholders address these issues. The potential for a "Youthquake" in Africa, where the population is significantly younger, could provide both a challenge and an opportunity for global economic stability.

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**Author:** Naina Gupta, PILOT at Pratham