



2024 ECOSOC Youth Forum
**"Youth shaping sustainable and innovative solutions:
Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty in times of crises"**

IDENTIFICATION	
Session title	Youth and the Future of Work
Session focus	SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals
Session leads	International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Major Group on Children and Youth (UNMGCY) and the World Organization of the Scout Movement
Session organizers	International Organization for Migration (IOM), International Trade Centre (ITC) and World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)
BACKGROUND & KEY ISSUES	
<p>The recent years have presented a series of significant challenges for economies, societies and people worldwide, with young people facing particularly severe consequences. As the world embarked on a path to recovery from the pandemic and its wide-ranging socio-economic impacts, communities everywhere were confronted with a complex web of challenges including conflicts, humanitarian emergencies, soaring inflation rates, and the escalating concerns related to climate change.</p> <p>Despite the odds, recovery from the pandemic is underway with labour markets showing surprising resilience. Global unemployment has dropped to the lowest level since the outbreak of the pandemic and labour force participation has recovered in most regions (ILO, 2024). Yet, considerable challenges remain, especially for young people who continue to encounter decent work deficits. As of 2023, the global youth unemployment rate stood at 13.3 per cent, 3.5 times that of adults (ILO, 2024). Too many young people – some 289 million – are not in employment, education or training (NEETs) with young women facing twice the likelihood of falling into this category compared to their male counterparts (ILO, 2023). These young people are neither gaining professional experience through a job nor developing their skills through participation in an educational or vocational programme. This is not only a waste of their economic potential, it is also likely to have a lasting impact on their future prospects in the labour market.</p>	

Moreover, there are major regional disparities with youth labour markets in high-income countries fully recovered while youth in low-income countries encountering significant barriers to enter productive employment and decent work. The jobs that young people do manage to secure or retain are often temporary, vulnerable and in the informal economy, with little to no social protection. These jobs offer limited space to raise their voice, seek representation, and exercise their rights. The aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis exacerbated this situation, pushing an increasing number of young people into precarious jobs.

The multiple crises, rapid technological advancements, globalization, and demographic and migration shifts are leading to changes in the labour market. As societies and economies transform, new jobs may be created while others may disappear. The mismatch between the skills – technical and core skills - possessed by young people and those demanded by the job market is compounded by unequal access to education, training, digital technologies, decent jobs, and social protection. At the same time, employers anticipate a structural labour market churn of 23% of jobs in the next five years ([WEF, 2023](#)), implying labour market uncertainties for young people. In the absence of effective policy responses, these issues could deepen societal and economic disparities among young people and leave them unprepared for the evolving world of work.

Recognising the urgent need to adapt to these changes, it is crucial to harness the power of partnerships and collaborative efforts to promote a youth-inclusive, sustainable and resilient future of work. Moreover, promoting decent jobs for youth in the future of work is an important source of financing for development. When young people have access to decent jobs, it provides them with an income to finance their consumption and human capital investments, stimulating demand for goods and services, bolstering economic activity and providing governments with the necessary tax revenue to invest in local development and development aid.

In this context, the upcoming session on SDG 17 at the 2023 ECOSOC Youth Forum, entitled “Young People and the Future of Work” will focus on:

- (i) The opportunities to stay ahead of the curve, including through skilling, re-skilling and upskilling youth, and prepare for the ongoing and future changes in the world of work, together with young people as equal partners, and
- (ii) Concrete actions by governments in creating an enabling environment for job creation in wage and self-employment and by the private sector in boosting the hiring and nurturing of youth talent.

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION/PLENARY

The session will convene a diverse, inter-generational group of stakeholders including government officials, young changemakers, youth-led and civil society organizations, private sector entities, and the UN system. The session aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Share knowledge and promote mutual learning on job creation and skills development strategies promoting young people’s transition into decent jobs of today and the future.
2. Discuss innovative approaches and best practices in shaping an inclusive future of work for young people grounded in social justice.

3. Spotlight multi-stakeholder partnerships accelerating action and progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the UN [Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth](#)¹ and the whole of society approach of the [Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration \(GCM\)](#).

In line with the ambitions of the Pact for the Future, particularly with regards to young people and future generations, the session will emphasize the importance of empowering and meaningful engaging young people in shaping the future of work they will inherit.

Furthermore, in keeping with the principle leaving no one behind, the session is committed to thoroughly addressing the unique challenges, needs, and priorities of vulnerable and marginalized youth, including young women, migrants and refugees, and youth with disabilities, ensuring their perspectives and experiences are integral to the conversation.

OVERALL FORMAT/STRUCTURE

Moderated by a young person, the session will feature an inter-ministerial and -generational dialogue on Young People and the Future of Work.

The dialogue will be divided into the following three segments:

1. **Future-proofing young people for the world of work**, discussing solutions by youth, policymakers and other stakeholders to prepare young people for the future of work including equipping them with market-relevant skills, investing in emerging sectors with high job creation potential, or interventions that protect and promote young people's rights at work.
2. **Innovative financing for the future of work**, exploring new and non-traditional financing models to scale up investments in decent jobs for youth such as crowdfunding, social impact bonds and impact investing.
3. **Impactful multi-stakeholder partnerships**, providing examples of effective collaboration, including for and with young people, that adopt a whole of society and whole of government approach, promoting policy coherence to address and efficiently tackle future of work trends.

Each segment will feature:

- i. Experiences from governments in designing and implementing policies and programmes that prepare young people for the future of work, encourage job creation in growing sectors, and ensure countries are well-equipped to navigate the changing landscape of the labour market.
- ii. Voices and perspectives from youth representatives on the opportunities to foster a future of work aligned with young people's aspirations and priorities.
- iii. Initiatives, lessons learnt and best practices from UN system partners, the private sector, civil society organizations, as well as broader stakeholders on scaling up action on youth employment.

Each segment will be approximately 25 minutes long.

¹ Decent Jobs for Youth is the global initiative to scale up action and impact on youth employment under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is a hub for catalysing partnership, collaboration and coordinated action at country and regional level, grounded in evidence-based solutions. Launched in 2016, with the endorsement of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination, it brings together governments, youth and civil society, the private sector, and many more partners advancing the vision of a world in which young women and men everywhere have greater access to decent jobs.

The session will integrate interactive elements to engage the audience throughout, while ensuring smooth continuity with the previous session on the Summit of the Future.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Segments	Guiding questions
<i>Segment 1 - Future-proofing young people for the world of work</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiences from young representatives • Government perspectives • Interventions from UN system partners, the private sector, civil society organizations, diaspora organisations, broader stakeholders 	<p><i>For young representatives:</i> How are recent transformations in the world of work affecting young people and what strategies do they want to see in action to promote a youth-inclusive future of work?</p> <p>What initiatives or solutions is your organisation implementing to promote decent jobs for youth in the future of work?</p> <p><i>For governments:</i> What are some policies/legislations or programmes your government is implementing to ensure there is a robust labour market hiring young people and that young jobseekers have the skills, opportunities, and protections needed to thrive in the evolving labour market?</p> <p>What are the ongoing efforts of your government to strengthen national institutions and equip them to better support young people in navigating the future of work?</p> <p><i>For other stakeholders:</i> What are some initiatives or programmes your organisation is implementing to ensure young people have the skills, opportunities, and protections needed to thrive in the evolving labour market? And, for employers, what actions are you taking to boost the hiring of young people and their meaningful exposure to the world of work?</p>
<i>Segment 2 – Innovative financing for the future of work</i>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiences from young representatives • Government perspectives • Interventions from UN system partners, the private sector, civil society organizations, broader stakeholders 	<p><i>For all:</i> What are some innovative financing models your government/organization has leveraged to scale up action on youth employment and what are the results so far?</p>
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Segment 3 - Impactful multi-stakeholder partnerships

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiences from young representatives • Government perspectives • Interventions from UN system partners, the private sector, civil society organizations, broader stakeholders 	<p><i>For all:</i> What effective multi-stakeholder partnerships, including for, with and by youth, are in place that capitalise on labour market changes to advance decent jobs for youth in the future of work?</p>
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NAMES AND TITLES OF SESSION SPEAKERS AND MODERATOR(S)

OVERVIEW OF PREPARATORY EVENT/CONSULTATION

ADDITIONAL DETAILS, SUGGESTED READING, IF ANY

- ILO, 2024. *Work Wise Youth: A guide to youth rights at work.* https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_909455.pdf
- ILO, 2024. *World Economic and Social Outlook Trends 2024.* https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---inst/documents/publication/wcms_908142.pdf
- ILO, 2022. *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2022: Investing in transforming futures for young people.* https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_853321.pdf
- <https://www.decentjobsforyouth.org/communications-material>
- *A declaration on Future Generations.* <https://www.un.org/en/summit-of-the-future/declaration-on-future-generations>
- WEF, 2023. *The Future of Jobs Report 2023.* <https://www.weforum.org/publications/the-future-of-jobs-report-2023/digest/>
- *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM).* <https://www.ohchr.org/en/migration/global-compact-safe-orderly-and-regular-migration-gcm>