

Global Agenda Council on Youth Unemployment 2012-2014



Understanding/Context

The global unemployment rate among 15- to 24-year-olds was estimated at 12.6% in 2013, with 73 million people jobless worldwide, according to the International Labour Organization. Levels of informal employment among young people are soaring and youth are finding it ever more difficult to find jobs that match their skills and education. Calls for urgent collective action have escalated, but the scale and complexity of the crisis limit the impact of isolated initiatives. Members of the Global Agenda Council on Youth Unemployment are urging leaders to move from discussing the issues to implementing solutions. It is clear that a collective approach is needed to address the systemic nature of the challenge, particularly at the country level. Long-term strategies to better align educational systems with labour market requirements and efforts to promote entrepreneurship are sorely needed.

“Calls for urgent collective action have escalated, but the scale and complexity of the crisis limit the impact of isolated initiatives.”

Shaping the Agenda

The Council is launching a campaign to promote bold, collective and cross-industry efforts to face the challenges in this area. The campaign provides a radical new “rules of engagement” framework alongside a “menu of options” that can be tailored and scaled worldwide to maximize impact and sustain results. It has produced an infographic to familiarize decision-makers and the public with the cause of the problem, its severity and potential solutions.

In collaboration with the Global Agenda Council on Emerging Multinationals, the Council has generated knowledge of the value, models and adoption of apprenticeships and workplace mentoring. By defining successful protocols, creating implementation tools and engaging a select number of employers in programme validation, the TEN Youth programme represents an effective and scalable solution for employers to support first-time job seekers.

The goal of connecting young entrepreneurs to markets is highlighted by the Council’s support of the World Series of Innovation and the YouthTrade Movement. Working with the Global Agenda Council on Africa, StartUp Africa is a programme designed to develop entrepreneurial thinking in a large number of African youth. Through a series of competitions, it awards the best and the brightest with increasing levels of financial support, mentors and business services to help them bring their ideas to life.

The Council contributed a chapter of case studies on youth employment for the Education and Skills 2.0: New Targets and Innovative Approaches report, which will be launched at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2014.

Contact Information

Research Analyst: Mehran Gul, Senior Knowledge Manager, Global Agenda Councils, mehran.gul@weforum.org

Council Manager: Tanya Millberg, Associate Director, Deputy Head of Europe, tanya.millberg@weforum.org

Forum Lead: Martina Gmür, Senior Director, Head of the Network of Global Agenda Councils, martina.gmur@weforum.org