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► Social Dialogue With and For Youth: Challenges and Opportunities in the Evolving World of Work

Maria Mexi



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► Contents

	Page
► Contents	3
► Preface	5
► Acknowledgments	6
► Executive Summary	7
► Introduction	11
► 1. From Great Recession to Great Resignation: Youth in a Spiral of Crises	13
The Great Recession and its aftermath	13
The COVID-19 pandemic	13
The Great Resignation	15
► 2. Supporting Youth during Hard Times	16
► 3. Social Dialogue and Links to the Challenges that Young People Face	21
What social dialogue offers	21
► 4. Social Partners Delivering for Youth: Pre-pandemic and Pandemic Evidence	24
The evidence in more detail	25
Youth policymaking—social partners engaged, young people disconnected	33
Social dialogue—putting youth at the centre	33
An opportunity gained rather than lost?	38
► 5. Beyond the Pandemic: Social Dialogue Empowering Youth for a Better Future of Work	41
The digital transition—risks and opportunities	41
The environmental transition—risks and opportunities	43
► Conclusion and discussion	45
► References	49
► Appendix 1	62

► Preface

For decades, young people have been caught in a spiral of successive crises, the consequences of which will be felt throughout their lives and more widely within society.

During the COVID-19 crisis, youth were disproportionately affected. A triple shock, consisting of cut education, job losses and huge barriers to enter the labour market, were felt across the world albeit with some differences. The incomes of young workers have declined disproportionately compared to the adult population, while the various “job retention” schemes devised by Governments and social partners were less effective in protecting young workers than the general population.

The situation of young people is further challenged as a result of weak labour market prospects linked to the increase of food and energy prices and worsening financing conditions, particularly in developing countries, aggravated by the conflict in Ukraine and elsewhere. These recent negative developments are jeopardizing progress – in particular, towards SDG targets, including target 8.6 aimed to substantially reduce the proportion of young people not in employment, education, or training. The risks of a “lost generation”, of long-term structural damages and of increasing informality, are real.

The scale and scope of the socio-economic policy response to the COVID-19 crisis have been unprecedented. However, all too often, the assistance provided to young people lagged behind the substantial support offered to older and more established workers. As governments, employers and workers take stock of the lessons learned from the crisis and the response measures to address its enduring impacts, the development and implementation through social dialogue of employment and labour market policies directed at young people and with young people, can prevent deeper economic and social scarring and promote a better future of work for all.

All actors in the world of work —employers’ organizations, workers’ organizations and governments - have a shared obligation to address the impacts of these crises on youth; to reduce the proportion of young people who are at risk of being permanently left behind; and to expand job and income opportunities for them while promoting intergenerational solidarity. This pushes us all to think outside the box concerning policy-making in ways which are “Youth Sensitive” and “Youth Inclusive”, and to devise innovative and at the same time pertinent policies.

The ILO constantly stresses the need to place social dialogue at the centre of national and international efforts for addressing current and future challenges facing young people, in line with the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work adopted at the centenary ILC in 2019.

An illustration of this approach was the ILO tripartite High-level meeting on Social Dialogue With and For Youth held on 29 and 30 November 2022 in Geneva. The meeting involved workers, employers, governments and youth in a discussion on how to better address the current youth employment crisis, and how to enhance the links between youth and social dialogue.

An earlier version of the present report was presented and debated on this occasion. It is hoped that the findings of this report (which also incorporates examples and points raised at the high-level meeting) will contribute to expanding efforts by the ILO and its constituents to support youth-inclusive social dialogue for the development of youth-sensitive policies and programmes in the years to come.

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► Acknowledgments

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► Executive Summary

In the last 15 years, young people have been caught in a spiral of successive crises, the consequences of which will be felt for decades. This catastrophe forces us to seriously consider the paucity—or even lack—of engagement opportunities for young people to shape response and recovery measures. What is to be feared is that there will be more crises like the COVID-19 pandemic in the future, making it harder for young people to transition to better working conditions and independent, sustainable livelihoods.

Action is needed on many fronts. Working towards SDG 8 of the Agenda 2030 and promoting decent jobs for youth and economic growth, as well as creating multiple opportunities for young people's engagement, whose talent and innovative spirit can help build a better economic recovery, is critical. Inclusiveness in building up a youth-responsive recovery is about acknowledging that all actors in the world of work—employers and their organizations, workers' organizations and governments have a shared obligation to reduce the proportion of young people who are at risk of being permanently left behind. It is also part of inclusiveness to consider the voices of young people and their rights at work, as well as how we can work together to promote their voices and agency in social dialogue and collective bargaining so that they can easily integrate into their communities and the labour market.

This report adds to knowledge of how social dialogue can address the multiple challenges that young people face. Combining conceptual insights with global evidence, it maintains that social dialogue will require a collective vision and action by all world of work actors—social partners particularly—in shaping a robust landscape of social dialogue with and for youth. By shedding light on the challenges and opportunities of inclusively involving young people in social dialogue, the report contributes to the growing policy interest in youth issues.

Ten messages emerge from the report:

1. Social dialogue has played an essential role in the development of the modern workplace as well as the political and economic interventions that have raised the living conditions of millions of workers, notably since World War II. Countries with a strong social dialogue system have weathered crises better than others by defying disruptions and adapting to their circumstances more flexibly. Investments in digital and environmental transitions have the potential to create new employment opportunities for young people, but also cause significant disruption to the workplace and profoundly rattle the world of work. To that purpose, social dialogue must become more inclusive, collaborative, and youth-responsive.
2. The ILO has stressed the need to place social dialogue at the centre of national and international efforts to address current and future challenges facing young people. The 2018 Resolution concerning the second recurrent discussion on social dialogue and tripartism (107th Session of the ILC, 2018) called upon “Members, with the support of the Organization [to] promote gender equality and non-discrimination, and encourage the strengthening and increase of participation and engagement of women and youth in social dialogue”. Social dialogue on youth issues is also consistent with the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work (adopted at the centenary ILC in 2019), which calls for “Strengthening the capacities of all people to benefit from the opportunities of a changing world” and the need for the ILO to strengthen the capacity of its three constituents. Therefore, involving youth and youth organizations in social dialogue institutions and processes requires developing organizational, institutional and technical capacities and skills among the social partners to deliver a sustainable, inclusive and resilient recovery for youth.
3. In the youth policymaking field, pre-pandemic, social dialogue had long been used as a tool to combat youth unemployment, advance the employment of young people, and enhance the effectiveness and inclusivity of active labour market policies that facilitated the transition from school to work. In some European and Latin American countries, youth representatives were used in the governance of national training systems, while several Asian and African countries displayed tripartite involvement in their national human resource advisory councils. More broadly, this report shows that in the pre-pandemic period (from the mid-2010s to 2019) there was widespread social partner engagement at different stages of youth employment policymaking—naturally, to varying degrees in different countries. The different stages encapsulate the “involved and consulted” type of engagement used in most countries and paving the way to the “fully involved” type of engagement observed most commonly at the policy formulation stage. Indeed, globally, the highest level of social partner

engagement is seen during this stage, which is important because it gives the social partners the chance to influence the initial scope of policy. Links and articulation between different forms and levels of social partner engagement can also be observed not only among but also within countries.

4. This report also shows that countries worldwide have included youth-led organizations—in different modes and degrees—in youth national employment policymaking as well as variations of social partner involvement with some countries designing and implementing youth-related labour market strategies and plans through tripartite consultation and full social partner engagement. Some countries seek to adopt youth-related policies through directly involving youth representatives in designing such policies. Yet other countries seek primarily to consult on youth matters with social partners representing youth. At the same time, the evidence presented in this report reveals that the COVID-19 crisis has posed great challenges to youth engagement. There has been inadequate youth inclusion in formal social dialogue and policymaking, as well as limited representation of youth perspectives in key processes, preventing a more inclusive post-pandemic recovery. Throughout the COVID-19 crisis, young people were insufficiently and not widely engaged in the design and delivery of immediate and more long-term recovery measures.
5. Overall, what has been observed is a lack or paucity of young people's participation in policymaking which has acted as an impediment to well-informed policymaking, as well as a legacy of "youth disconnect" – coming from the broader spectrum of youth political disengagement and general distrust vis-à-vis public institutions – that appears to be affecting the field of social dialogue as well. In the early 2000s, many youth movements lamented such things as "we have a vote, but we don't have a voice". Disengagement from social dialogue and its institutions does not occur in a vacuum—it is part of this larger process entailing a lack of opportunities for economic, societal and political participation. If left unaddressed, that could even destabilize political and economic systems altogether in the context of growing democratic backsliding.
6. A variety of factors shape the underlying causes of an observed "disconnect" between young people and policymaking, including the country context, perceptions of how public authorities and institutions address the needs and aspirations of younger people, and public authorities' capacity (or lack thereof) to respond to long-term priorities—intermeshed with the complicated and interconnected disruptions of the evolving world of work. Further, rising economic inequality and intergenerational divides in life opportunities have made it increasingly hard for young people to secure a foothold in the job market, creating "dissatisfaction" with how policy and related institutions deliver for them. Moreover, the lack of connections between young people and policymaking at all levels suggests that there is still unresolved thinking about how youth agency can be understood and supported for participation in policy design and implementation, including formal social dialogue structures.
7. The COVID-19 crisis has underlined the need to bring young people into policymaking, to build relationships with existing social dialogue actors, and to capitalize on good practices to reduce inclusiveness deficits. The evidence highlights the need for making special efforts to engage hard-to-reach young people—notably rural youth, minority groups, young people with disabilities, and single parents coping with and surviving in very difficult job markets. Also, it is crucial to increase young people's opportunities to engage with employers' organizations, join workers' groups or national youth employment coalitions, and participate in the design, implementation, and monitoring processes of policies and programmes. Equally critical is the creation of opportunities that enable young people to be successfully engaged in developing social dialogue outcomes, and in implementing policy objectives or commitments pertinent to them—in short, delivering policies with them and for them.
8. Concurrently, increasingly complex and varied forms of youth participation require the adaptation of traditional bipartite or tripartite social dialogue systems, and the creation of opportunities for more youth-friendly social dialogue in the future. For example, effective youth engagement may require that social partners adapt to youth-driven hybrid forms of mobilization that blend spontaneous protest and advocacy action with representation in formal social dialogue mechanisms. And, given the evolving and interconnected challenges, there is a need for increased collaboration between social partners and representatives of youth-led groups, beyond the strict purview of the labour agenda, to better respond to disruptions cutting across environmental, economic and social aspects. Overall, the pandemic crisis is opening an opportunity to recalibrate the relationship between youth and social dialogue institutions. Social dialogue is crucial for policies for young people and must be assured either by direct representation of youth groups in policy consultation and decision-making or through social partners. Trade unions and employer organizations can play a significant role in

transforming positive pre-pandemic experiences into robust inputs and lessons that can reinforce the contributions that social dialogue can make as an institutional framework for policymaking and implementation at multiple levels – national, sectoral, and local.

9. Several key preconditions may determine the effectiveness of efforts to incorporate youth-related concerns in social dialogue. Besides the importance of freedom of association and collective bargaining rights, four other preconditions appear crucial: strong political will on the part of all parties to prioritize youth issues and engage in meaningful dialogue with young people to discuss youth realities and prospects; increased capacity of social dialogue institutions, as well as employer and worker organizations that deliver with and for young people, by improving and expanding existing modalities for dialogue, cooperation, and partnerships with youth-led organizations, movements, and networks; clear standards for governments and social partners to assess and monitor how they engage young people in effective and efficient collaboration; and sufficient resources and the existence of strong youth structures, such as youth advisory boards or committees as well as networks of young people within social partner entities to provide a channel for listening to young people and reinforcing their engagement with the work of social partners while ensuring systematic attention to youth issues. In short, injecting a youth perspective requires increasing the ability of all actors and institutions in the world of work to collaborate, and rectify deficiencies in reaching young people.
10. An important message to keep in mind is that young people's engagement concerns us all. Youth involvement is vital for greater ownership, a key ingredient for improving the effectiveness of policy interventions. Young people's voices are indispensable for ensuring a more equitable and inclusive future of work during the COVID-19 recovery and beyond. Meaningful youth involvement is a means of achieving positive changes in young people's lives and of building an engaged society and world of work. Working with young people must be at the heart of future efforts, to develop a strong trusting relationship responsive to their needs guided by principles of openness and fairness; to improve their capacity and skills to successfully advocate for their interests; and to encourage them to constructively take part in social dialogue and labour governance in ways that considerably improve opportunities for young and older workers to collaborate, think, create and connect productively. This is particularly vital in preventing further disengagement of young people from social dialogue processes and for effectively utilizing the leverage offered by effective collective action and representation of interests. Overall, investing in social dialogue with and for young people is as much about identifying the agents of transformation as it is about articulating new ideas. It is, above all else, about people and their aspirations for a better future of work.

► Introduction

Global changes have a profound impact on the world of work. The COVID-19 pandemic has not been the only disruption—technological shifts, climate change, geopolitical conflicts, economic and energy instability, and ageing populations are just a few presenting substantial challenges to societies and economies. The mechanisms driving these upheavals have far-reaching implications for future employment prospects, labour market imbalances and skills mismatches, and the fundamentally different priorities and aspirations of younger generations, necessitate effective youth-sensitive and youth-inclusive social dialogue.

In this evolving world of work, young people are organizing and standing publicly for social and environmental justice and a brighter future with “decent work”, which is hugely important to the International Labour Organization (ILO). Many young people are advocates for economic norms and ethical standards that safeguard the environment and people’s livelihoods, and value and practise sustainable behaviour. The civic mobilization and engagement of young people who, time and again, demonstrate themselves to be global agents for positive change, are frequently recognized and commended. For many young women and men, however—especially the most disadvantaged—the realities of the labour market remain noxious: around the world, in 2021 around 75 million young people were unemployed, 408 million were in employment, and 732 million were not in the labour force. Alarming, the situation and the prospects of young people in the labour market have deteriorated especially for the NEET population (i.e. young people that are Not in Employment, Education or Training). In 2020, the global youth NEET rate increased by 1.5 percentage points, reaching its highest level in at least 15 years. If left unaddressed, these developments will jeopardize the attainment of many targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) relating to youth, especially that of 8.6 which calls for a significant reduction in the number of young people who are not in employment, education, or training (ILO, 2022a, 2022b), as well as other SDG targets such as SDG 10 (“Reduced Inequalities”). Most young NEETs, in countries with weak or no social protection, have few, if any, resources or safety nets for financial or social support, which raises the possibility that they will fall into poverty facing serious challenges to their education, economic prospects and mental health. The effects of young people falling into poverty would also trickle down to their children, leaving a lasting impact on the fabric of our future societies and labour markets, especially on the rise of inequality.

Overall, ‘Pandemics’ (WEF, 2021), the descendants of the Millennials and Centennials are now exiting a pandemic not seen in generations but also face new global turmoil. New factors are making them vulnerable to “scarring,” a situation where certain groups of young people are trapped or locked in a cycle of persistent disadvantage and experience lower outcomes on the job market than their peers, even when economic and employment conditions improve. The children and young people of today are the workforce of the future. With a fast changing and volatile world of work, it is time for social partners to provide every young person with adequate labour and social protection as well as equip them with the necessary education and skills so they can support the economy through the environmental and digital transformations and shoulder the rising costs of an ageing population globally while addressing the economic impacts of unpaid care provided by young people (Brimblecombe et al, 2020). Action is needed on many fronts. Working toward SDG 8 and promoting decent jobs for youth and economic growth, as well as creating multiple opportunities for young people’s engagement, whose talent and innovative spirit can help build a better economic recovery, is critical. Inclusiveness in building up a youth-responsive recovery is about acknowledging that all actors in the world of work—employers and their organizations, workers’ organizations and governments have a shared obligation to reduce the proportion of young people who are at risk of being permanently left behind. It is also part of inclusiveness to consider the voices of young people and their rights at work, as well as how we can work together to promote their voices and agency in social dialogue and collective bargaining so that they can easily integrate into their communities and the labour market.

Talking about diversity and fostering the multi-layered (intragenerational and intergenerational) solidarity on which democratic citizenship in the form of worker and citizen involvement depends is also an important component of inclusiveness. In this context, voicing concerns and providing tailored support for different groups, such as those ‘pandemics’ facing a dangerous disconnect with education and early work experience, but also young women in precarious work, young people with disabilities, and young people from indigenous communities or young migrants and refugees facing severe multiple disadvantages, is critical for building inclusive future labour markets

and cohesive societies. In a nutshell, mobilizing and organizing collectively and the development of agency, voice and representation and its expression through social dialogue and collective bargaining are the surest route to a more inclusive future.

This report adds to the knowledge on how social dialogue can address the multiple challenges that young people face. Combining conceptual insights with global evidence, it maintains that social dialogue will require a collective vision and action by all world of work actors—social partners particularly—in shaping a robust landscape of social dialogue with and for youth. By illuminating the challenges and opportunities of inclusively involving young people in social dialogue, the report contributes to the growing policy interest in youth issues.

After this Introduction, this report is structured into five sections, plus a Conclusion. Sections 1 and 2 present background and context on the multiple crises that young people have lived through in the last 15 years, along with related government and social-partner action. They discuss the spiral of crises that have affected young people, beginning with the Great Recession of 2008 and continuing with the present “Great Resignation”, and have given rise to “Generation Disrupted”,¹ leaving Millennials and Gen Zers feeling uncertain about the future. Sections 1 and 2 also underline the importance of embracing the issues that most connect with these two generations to generate a multitude of opportunities where social dialogue can be used in a changing world of work.

Section 3 lays out the conceptual framework for defining and comprehending social dialogue, as defined by the ILO and treated in the literature, as well as how this framework pertains to young people and to the challenges they face.

Section 4 summarizes pre-pandemic and pandemic evidence on how social partners have delivered for youth, and the challenges and opportunities associated with engaging with youth in the institutions and processes of policymaking and social dialogue. The evidence indicates the presence of a “youth disconnect” that just may, rather than being a missed opportunity, provide an opening to recalibrate the connection between youth and social dialogue institutions and actors.

Section 5 turns to the future, illustrating the opportunities for empowering young people to thrive in a better future of work, in which they become the primary agents of change. The key to this shift is social dialogue, which has been shown effective in managing previous crises and in yielding consensual results. Social dialogue can be used to address youth vulnerabilities and concerns about the evolving ravages and disruptions caused by technological, ecological, socio-economic and demographic changes, as well as future crises like COVID-19. Fundamentally, this move entails bringing together all actors in the world of work and developing capacity and knowledge on how to connect with young people, listen to their voices, and respond to their needs and goals.

The Conclusion presents key implications and takeaways, throwing light on areas for future research and policy action.

¹ The term comes from the “Global Youth Mobilization for Generation Disrupted” initiative, which is being run by the “Big 6” youth groups (Young Men’s Christian Association, YMCA; World Young Women’s Christian Association, YWCA; World Organization of the Scout Movement; World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts; International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, IFRC; and The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award), and it seeks to support young people in developing solutions to lessen the effects of COVID-19.

► 1. From Great Recession to Great Resignation: Youth in a Spiral of Crises

In the last 15 years, young people have been caught in a spiral of successive crises, the consequences of which will be felt for decades. This catastrophe forces us to seriously consider the paucity—or even lack—of engagement opportunities for young people to shape response and recovery measures (see the evidence in Section 4, as well as OECD, 2022). What is to be feared is that there will be more crises like the COVID-19 pandemic in the future, making it harder for young people to transition to better working conditions and independent, sustainable livelihoods.

The Great Recession and its aftermath

The Great Recession of 2008 was the most severe economic downturn since the Great Depression some eight decades earlier, inflicting profound scars on the world economy. Gross domestic product (GDP) plunged, increasing unemployment rates and affecting industries that had traditionally been a safe space for workers (Grusky et al., 2011). The downturn affected practically everyone, but young people were among the worst losers (Bell and Blanchflower, 2011). This crisis eroded many young people's trust in public institutions, with huge democratic and civic implications (OECD, 2020a, 2020b, 2020c; see also this report's Conclusion).

The effects of the Great Recession on youth labour market' have been widely documented (for example, Genda et al., 2010; Aassve et al., 2013; Cozzolino et al., 2018; Sironi, 2018; Curry, 2019; Schoon and Bynner, 2019; Salazar et al., 2020). Young adults had a higher rate of unemployment than all older groups. The effects of the economic downturn also affected the quality of work: younger workers were more likely than older ones to have insecure and precarious jobs. For instance, during the Great Recession, young adults in some European nations, such as the United Kingdom and Italy, were more likely to have part-time work and zero-hour contracts than in previous years (Eurofound, 2016; Prassl, 2018).

After the Great Recession, multiple governments set up new programmes to help young people in difficult labour market conditions (OECD, 2009; Bell and Blanchflower, 2011). Yet these programmes did not last long because the 2008 crisis led many European governments to bail out banks resulting in increased public debt, GDP and consumption to shrink, and budget deficits to expand. This new public debt was used to justify austerity measures and tax rises, which did not spare young people. Several governments, such as those in the United Kingdom and Spain, reduced student aid and raised tuition fees (Theodoropoulou and Watt, 2011; Antonucci and Hamilton, 2014). Retrenchments exacerbated matters, including the prospects of young people at the margins of European employment and welfare settings (Marion, 2014; Gray and Barford, 2018; Barford, and Gray, 2022).

The COVID-19 pandemic

After a lengthy recovery from a decade-long financial crisis, young people around the world experienced their second major global crisis with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, which reinforced young people's separation from the labour market, heightening the all-too-real danger of a "Generation Disrupted" (UN, 2020) on several fronts (WEF, 2021; ILO, 2021a; Sándor et al 2021; OECD, 2021a).

According to multiple studies (including European Anti-Poverty Network, 2020; Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2020; Eurofound, 2020a, 2020b, 2020c; Gato et al., 2020; Albrecht et al., 2021; Konle-Seidl and Picarella, 2021; Ravens-Sieberer et al., 2021), young people have borne a disproportionate share of labour-market and social consequences of the COVID-19 crisis, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds (ILO, 2020a), owing primarily to the informal and precarious type of work they performed, poor working conditions, exposure to violence and stigmatization, and a lack of support or protection from public services. Young workers have lost significant income through unemployment and reduced working hours, because they are over-represented in industries that have suffered greatly from COVID-19, such as tourism, retail, lodging and food services (Piasna et al., 2020; ETUI, 2021; European Commission, 2021). Young gig workers have also been affected, as young people are more likely to work in new and diverse forms of work, making them less well protected by social protection laws (Berg et al, 2018; Mexi, 2019, 2020a, 2020b; Bonvin et al., 2023).

The pandemic's impact on young people's socio-economic conditions has also affected their mental health and well-being (see, for example, Claybourne et al., 2019; McCartan et al., 2021), especially because of their precarious status (Barford et al., 2020). Young people are usually under mental and emotional stress as they often have to work in less favourable conditions or accept temporary or insecure contracts (Cornaglia et al., 2012; Finning et al., 2019). Adolescents with poor mental health have worse educational and employment outcomes, both during and after the health episode. Such outcomes include a higher chance of unemployment, dropping out of school, receiving inferior marks and failing to attend classes (Fergusson and Woodward, 2002; Patel et al. 2007). Youth unemployment is strongly linked to poorer mental health (Strandh et al., 2014). The link is bidirectional: excellent mental health has a significant impact on getting and keeping a job; in contrast, unemployment generates stress, which may have detrimental effects on mental health, such as depression, anxiety and low self-esteem (Wilson and Finch, 2021). The pandemic's impacts on mental health were not equal for all young people, but particularly more harmful for the groups with marginalized social backgrounds (Mastrotheodoros, 2020, citing Ambrose, 2020 and Ioannidis, 2020).

These effects demand immediate action (ILO, 2021b), given that they are interrelated and are likely to intensify over time because of the prevalence of informality in traditional but also tech-based emerging sectors.

High rates of labour market informality and a lack of formal job opportunities in low and middle income countries have resulted in young people leaving or deferring entry into the labour market, whereas high income countries with larger formal sectors have witnessed significant increases in youth unemployment (Barford et al., 2021a). Also, rural youth mostly work in the informal sector and are likely to have insecure jobs (ILO, 2020b), with young women in rural areas in particular, facing multiple gender-specific labour market disadvantages, such as lower earnings and labour exploitation, as well as having weak access to productive resources (ILO, 2022a; UN, 2021a). According to ILO figures, informal work accounts for 77 per cent of young people aged 15 to 24, which is higher than the worldwide average of roughly 61 per cent. Globally, about 362 million young people are in informal employment, with more than half of them living in Sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia; 37 per cent of this total is made up of young women, who are over-represented in low-income countries' informal employment (Chacaltana et al., 2019, p. 1).

The high rate of young people's participation in informal work raises several concerns. Given a lack of regulations and opportunities for training and development, informal employment severely impedes human and social capital growth and decent work opportunities. And beyond the individual are far-reaching implications for long-term economic recovery and growth. Widespread and pervasive informality is linked to significantly negative economic outcomes, such as a loss of potential government tax revenue, which is a major impediment to the viability of labour protection and social security systems, resulting in fewer government resources devoted to financial buffers and social safety nets to manage disruptions during recessions, higher poverty, lower investment and reduced productivity (Ohnsorge and Yu, 2022). Further, partly because of technological disruptions, informality is likely to become a persistent characteristic of labour markets in both developing and developed countries, as an increasing number of young people take up new tech-enabled jobs, especially on or via digital platforms (Berg et al., 2018; Ng'weno and Porteous, 2018; Pinedo Caro et al., 2021).

The pandemic's devastating consequences on youth were seen worldwide. For instance, in Africa in 2020, young workers were particularly hard hit in all countries and income groups, resulting in an 8.7 per cent employment loss, against 3.7 per cent for adults. "While youth employment is in crisis everywhere", as Chacaltana and Dasgupta stress "it is particularly the case in Africa, where the youth labour force is growing while job opportunities in an evolving labour market are scarce" (2021, p. 10). The COVID-19 and social-distancing measures also posed significant risks to long-term equity and social mobility (Gettliffe, 2021), affecting vulnerable groups disproportionately, such as youth, who often work in contact-intensive sectors with fewer opportunities to socially distance themselves and work from home (African Development Bank Group, 2021).

Against such a confluence of negative effects on young people, it is vital to invest in creating opportunities for decent work (as one of the biggest factors for wanting to emigrate is a desire for a better job) and to halt the brain drain (El Ouassif, 2021). This concerns migrant-sending countries, particularly among their pools of skilled young workers. The issue further underlines the importance of implementing the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work and the Abidjan Declaration, which states (Art. 1a) that "making decent work a reality for Africa's youth" and "promoting social dialogue" should be amongst the top priorities for any African region that invests in a "human-centred approach to the future of work".

In Asia-Pacific, working-hour losses were bigger for youth than for adults and are more likely to lead to actual job loss (rather than temporary employment suspension) for youth than adults (ILO, 2020c, p. 18). In Europe, the number of young workers who reported having zero working hours per day climbed by 3.7 per cent from before the pandemic (EYF and People Dialogue and Change, 2021, p.9). Disillusioned and burned out, many went on to accept jobs for which they were overqualified, risking being trapped in a precarious trajectory characterized by lower wages and informality, as demonstrated by previous crises. For instance, individuals who graduated from university during the 2007-08 financial crisis have lower wages and employment prospects (Rothstein, 2020). According to the Global Risks Perception Survey (GRPS), “young disillusionment” among those most vulnerable to “scarring” is a major issue that will pose a serious threat to the workplace in the coming years. Hard-won societal achievements and the achievement of the right to work may be reversed if the present generation does not have enough access to educational and labour market opportunities (WEF, 2022).

In Europe, furthermore, young people from disadvantaged backgrounds (many of them lacking the skills, job-search abilities, work experience and financial resources to obtain work) were more than twice as likely to have given up work: 15.4 per cent of disadvantaged young people reported having ceased employment compared with 7.4 per cent of non-marginalized young people. Young women also reported quitting employment at a rate of 12.9 per cent, while young males reported quitting at a rate of 9.8 per cent (EYF and People Dialogue and Change, 2021, p. 9). Globally, young people reported lower levels of life satisfaction and mental well-being because of the stay-at-home restrictions and school closures (ILO, 2020a). More importantly, the generation affected by school closures may have worse employment prospects than previous generations, with school closures exacerbating both cross-country and intra-class inequality, depending on countries’ effectiveness and capacity in providing, designing, and implementing distance learning programs, as well as families’ socioeconomic background and resources to ensure access to distance learning (UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank and OECD, 2021).

The Great Resignation

The unprecedented conditions of the last few years have caused many people worldwide—and many young people—to reconsider their priorities, resulting in the Great Resignation according to a Pew Research Center survey (Parker and Horowitz, 2022). More specifically, based on the findings of the Deloitte Global 2022 Gen Z and Millennial survey conducted in 46 countries, 40 per cent of Gen Zers and 24 per cent of Millennials want to quit their jobs in the next two years, while around one third of those surveyed would resign even if they did not have another job lined up, indicating significant discontent. The steep and rising cost of living, given high inflation (see also Roy-Mukherjee et al., 2022), was identified as the most important concern by Generation Zers (29 per cent) and Millennials (36 per cent).

Other responses reflect the concerns that these generations have been voicing since the Great Recession of 2008: they do not feel economically secure, and they are deeply concerned about whether they will be able to retire comfortably. At the same time, Gen Zers and Millennials are aiming to effect change and are ready to pay a premium for sustainability according to the Deloitte Global 2022 Gen Z and Millennial survey (ibid.), while they strive to work collectively to enhance true digital inclusion (ITU, 2021; Jyotishi, 2022).

► 2. Supporting Youth during Hard Times

Despite many young people's concerns, some governments after the Great Recession failed to take early and adequate action for young people, leaving long-lasting scars on their professional growth and well-being (O'Higgins, 2011; 2017; Carcillo et al., 2015). Recognizing this omission and the need for early action, during the COVID-19 pandemic several countries responded with targeted policies, devoting sizable resources.

Drawing primarily on ILO and OECD databases of national-level responses and other sources,² table 1 shows how the measures have varied, in scale and approach.³

► **Table 1. Emergency interventions to support young people in three key areas and country examples**

Three key areas	Country examples
1. <i>Emergency and additional income support</i>	Several countries, including Australia, Belgium, Colombia, France, Israel, Latvia, Mexico, New Zealand and the Republic of Korea, adopted emergency income support measures and increased social benefits aimed primarily at young job seekers and low-income young people. For instance, five additional special payments (totalling COP 356,000 per recipient) were made to participants in Colombia's Jóvenes en Acción (Youth in Action) programme, which provides conditional cash transfers to 14 to 26 years old living in conditions of vulnerability or poverty. In Australia, a Coronavirus Supplement provided additional support to 16 to 21 years old receiving the Youth Allowance who were searching for a full-time job, studying part-time or were temporarily unable to work. Latvia adopted similar measures, establishing a grant for job seekers who had just completed higher education. In New Zealand, an increase in the Youth Payment for 16- to 17-year-olds and the Young Parent Payment for 16- to 18-year-old parents was included in the 2021 budget as part of a larger effort to enhance social support beyond the pandemic. In Austria, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway and the United States, emergency financial assistance programmes for students in post-secondary education and institutions was implemented. In Denmark for example, the government announced temporary modifications to the State Education Grant to enhance financial support to young people, many of whom had previously relied largely on part-time labour to make ends meet. In the United States, a Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund was established to give financial assistance to students during the crisis. In March 2020, US\$6 billion was provided to students as financial assistance, and another US\$18 billion was granted in March 2021 to prevent hunger, homelessness and hardship caused by the crisis. A number of countries relaxed minimum contribution rules, which may have aided young people, who are more likely to be newly employed. Individuals in Canada only needed around three weeks of uninsured work to become eligible for employment insurance until September 2021. In Portugal, the minimum contribution to access unemployment insurance was reduced to six months for those who were unemployed between mid-March and end-June 2020. Minimum contribution obligations in Spain were suspended, even for temporary employees.

² For more information, see the [ILO Database on Country Policy Responses](#): ILO (2021c); ILO Monitor: COVID-19 and the World of Work (various editions); Barford et al. (2021a); "Special Issue on Covid-19 and Youth" (UN DESA, 2020); OECD (2021c); OECD (2020c); OECD (2021d); OECD (2021e); OECD (2021f).

³ The goal of this report is not to provide an extensive and comprehensive overview of implemented policies, but to demonstrate how, during the pandemic crisis, countries addressed youth issues and how youth employment policymaking became structured around the "three key areas".

Three key areas	Country examples
2. <i>Hiring subsidies to promote employment</i>	New youth-hiring subsidies have been established or existing programmes were expanded in Australia, Belgium, Chile, Colombia, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, New Zealand, Portugal, Sweden and the United Kingdom. In Chile, employment incentives for young people were launched, under which companies who hire 18- to 24-year-olds, women or persons with disabilities from disadvantaged backgrounds were eligible to receive a subsidy of up to 60 per cent of the employee's monthly compensation, compared with 50 per cent for other workers. The subsidy was set at CLP 270,000 per month and was available for up to six months, with the company required to demonstrate that the new hiring increased the number of employees beyond July 2020's levels. Spain's recovery plan includes a statement on implementing far-reaching labour reforms, to accompany the major transformation processes that the economy must prepare for, under the impact of the dual green and digital transitions. The document announces a "coherent program of reforms that aims to shrink unemployment periods, structural unemployment and youth unemployment down to the European average". It sought to build a new model based on: simplified hiring, in-house flexibility as an alternative to employment terminations and successive short-term employment contracts, a guarantee of decent work, and a reskilling and upskilling mechanism, to facilitate adaptation and switching to tasks or sectors.

Three key areas	Country examples
3. <i>Work-based learning opportunities and apprenticeships</i>	Through additional subsidies or the extension of existing schemes to boost apprentice retention and employment during the COVID-19 crisis, countries increased social benefits aimed primarily at young job seekers and low-income young people (Australia, Belgium, Colombia, France, Israel, Latvia, Mexico, New Zealand and the Republic of Korea) and often improved work-based learning options. New incentive systems for employing or keeping apprentices were created in eight countries (Australia, Austria, France, Germany, Ireland, New Zealand, Switzerland and the United Kingdom), and existing schemes were ramped up in another eight nations (Belgium, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, the Republic of Korea and the United States). In Germany, the federal government launched a “secure apprenticeship” plan in July 2020 to financially assist small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that were severely damaged by the COVID-19 crisis, as well as to incentivize them to continue apprenticeship training. The initiative also pays SMEs that hire trainees from companies that went bankrupt because of the lockdowns. In Flanders (Belgium), from September 2020 to August 2021 the apprenticeship fee paid to businesses was raised from €500–750 to €1,000 per year per trainee. Some of these programmes have helped to maintain or increase the number of apprentices in employment. In France, where increasing apprenticeship uptake has been a government priority even before the COVID-19 crisis, an increase in apprenticeships in 2020 was attributed to a combination of the “1 young person, 1 solution initiative”, which provided a €5,000–8,000 bonus for companies recruiting apprentices between 1 July 2020 and 31 December 2021, and to legislation passed in 2018 that simplified restrictions for companies to hire apprentices, increasing the age maximum from 25 to 29 years old, and making apprenticeships more appealing to young people. In Switzerland, a new COVID-19 apprenticeship taskforce was established in May 2020 to coordinate policy at the subnational level, and it helped to avert any reduction in apprenticeship enrolment from the previous year. For enterprises recruiting apprentices in Geneva, for example, lump-sum incentives of CHF 3,000 became available beginning in May 2020. In the United Kingdom, the budget presented on 27 October 2021 planned to boost training by injecting billions of pounds into the “skills fund”. The government’s objective was to support economic growth by offering more training opportunities for those aged 16 and above. This boost came after the government launched the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill in May 2021. The government also sought to increase the minimum hourly wage for younger people: from £8.36 to £9.18 for 21- to 22-year-olds, from £6.56 to £6.83 for 18- to 20-year-olds and from £4.62 to £4.81 for those under 18. Apprentices will see their hourly wage increase from £4.30 to £4.81.

Most countries around the world adopted labour market interventions to assist young people in securing and retaining both employment and work-based learning possibilities, despite differences in breadth and aim. Several countries sought to improve or implement new job-retention programmes to safeguard jobs; some introduced or enhanced financial incentives to attract and keep apprentices and young people in full-time roles.

Many countries (Appendix I) had youth-specific strategies in place before the COVID-19 crisis. These ILO findings are consistent with a study conducted by the OECD in April 2020, in which 25 OECD countries reported having a functioning national youth plan (OECD, 2021a). A focus on establishing comprehensive national youth strategies continued in several countries during the pandemic. For instance, in the Republic of Korea, the government released a Youth Policy Basic Plan in December 2020 to encourage a whole-of-government approach to help young people through the crisis, including policy directions for each ministry. In New Zealand, a youth strategy for 2020–

22 was introduced to alleviate the impact of the crisis on young people, with a focus on Maori and Pacific young people, LGBTI+ young people, and young people with disabilities. In France, the government has produced a youth employment strategy for the COVID-19 recovery (OECD, 2021a).

At a regional level, in October 2020 all European Union (EU) countries adopted a recommendation reaffirming their commitment to “ensuring that all young people under the age of 25 receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship, or a traineeship within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education” (EU Council Recommendation 2020, Art. 22). This reinforced Youth Guarantee expands on the 2013 Youth Guarantee by raising the age limit for young people from 25 to 29 years old and by demanding focused and tailored approaches for vulnerable groups. It aims to support the development of young people’s skills for a changing world of employment, especially the skills required for environmental and digital transitions.

Several EU countries are therefore revising or establishing new youth policies to meet this Youth Guarantee. In Spain, the 2021–27 Strategy for the Reinforced Youth Guarantee was prepared and negotiated with regions, trade unions, employers’ organizations and youth stakeholders before being announced in June 2021 (OECD, 2021a). In Ireland, the Pathways to Work 2021–25 plan outlines the next employment services strategy and will be used to implement the reinforced Youth Guarantee by enhancing resources accessible to young job seekers. The new national implementation plan for the enhanced Youth Guarantee in Luxembourg includes target group mapping as well as activities to increase outreach to vulnerable populations (OECD, 2021a).

Still, questions may be raised about the responsiveness and effectiveness of such policy interventions, given that countries needed to have made a greater effort in engaging youth in national response and recovery plans (OECD, 2022). According to the “Risks that Matter” 2020 Survey, some two-thirds of 18 to 29 years old stated that the government should do more to safeguard their well-being and economic and social security (OECD, 2021b). Still, there is a need to pay more policy attention to youth as a distinct target group, reach out to the most vulnerable, and focus on reducing the long-term effects on young people (for instance, the enduring educational effects of school closures have not been properly addressed so far) has been emphasized in the literature (see, for example, Konle-Seidl and Picarella, 2021; EYF and People Dialogue and Change, 2021; Wilson and Finch, 2021).

As shown below, engaging young people and youth groups in policy design through social dialogue for how measures should be developed and implemented is an approach that would have allowed young people to make decisive contributions.

Today, after years of lockdown, restrictions, social isolation and the massive loss of jobs, the pandemic’s consequences are still being felt. In order to deepen and develop our solidarity with young people in a world full of emergencies and new crises, it is critical to assess impacts across different age groups and involve young people in building prosperity and social cohesion. Additionally, the world of work actors must promote deeper social dialogue by meaningfully engaging young people and youth organizations; experimenting with novel ways to connect with them; and developing more networked, inclusive and sustainable recovery interventions.

► 3. Social Dialogue and Links to the Challenges that Young People Face

What social dialogue offers

Social dialogue in all its forms (bipartite and tripartite social dialogue, including collective bargaining and workplace cooperation) and at all levels (national, federal, regional, sectoral, enterprise and across borders) is a critical component in effective labour market governance and socially sustainable growth in today's democracies (ILO, 2018a). In times of crisis, social dialogue may assist in reconciling opposing interests and in establishing trust in, commitment to, and ownership of policies, just as it does in times of prosperity (ILO, 2013a, 2018a). In the academic and policy literature, social dialogue is described as an instrument for providing a voice to key stakeholders by opening venues and levels for participation in decision-making (Papadakis, 2006; Didry and Jobert, 2011; de Munck et al., 2012; ILO, 2012, 2013b, 2013c), and as necessary for complementing parliamentary democratic processes and labour administration systems (Papadakis, 2021).

As part of these attributes, social dialogue is especially relevant for shaping new policies, devising win-win solutions and tackling collective-action problems. By promoting consensus building on substantive norms and ownership of policies, it neutralizes and rectifies imbalances in a faster, more flexible and tailored way than top-down regulatory interventions and individual litigation. Social dialogue can thus function as an effective regulatory alternative. In a similar spirit, the ILO Global Commission on the Future of Work states:

- The strength of viable social contracts lies in the ongoing process of social dialogue that occurs among the main actors in the world of work. When it functions, as it should, social dialogue promotes participation, fairness and legitimacy. It produces equitable and enduring solutions to the most vexing problems in the world of work, which are widely accepted by those who had a part in framing them (ILO, 2019a, p. 23).

By drawing on the expertise and experience of the social partners, social dialogue leads to better-informed policy. It provides a venue for negotiating and resolving trade-offs between opposing viewpoints in the best interests of all individuals affected by these policies.

Social dialogue also fosters “ownership” of proposed ideas, which might help to avoid future opposition and conflict that would otherwise stifle their efficacy (ILO, 2013c, 2018b; Hermans et al., 2017). Similarly, social dialogue, including within Economic and Social Councils and similar institutions (see below), has at times played a crucial role in providing support for tailored policy actions, as in response to the global financial crisis of 2008 (Rychly, 2009; Guardanich and Molina, 2017). The beneficial influence of social dialogue in these cases may be because, through the idea of “democratic ownership”, social dialogue consultation may help to overcome opposition to change by giving stakeholders a vote in how that change is implemented (Hermans et al., 2017). Conversely, the absence of social dialogue, particularly in crisis periods, may constitute a serious challenge for social cohesion (for example, Ghellab, 2009; Papadakis and Ghellab, 2014).

More recently, social dialogue has been seen as a key tool with which to manage the disruptions in the evolving world of work and major transitions, such as environmental and digital transitions (ILO, 2018b), as well as demographic changes (ILO-AICESIS, 2017), which largely affect young populations. The ILO Global Commission on the Future of Work (2019, p. 42) has stressed the need for strengthening collective representation of workers’ and employers’ organizations through social dialogue, and has urged public measures to fulfil this need:

- Collective representation and social dialogue provide the institutional capabilities needed to navigate future of work transitions [...] At company level, works councils, consultation and information arrangements and worker representation on boards are all proven mechanisms to manage the challenges of change and to allow people to exercise influence over their working lives. Collective bargaining is a fundamental right and a powerful tool for economic success and social equity, not least in times of transformational change. Tripartite social dialogue allows opportunity for the

partners to the social contract to consider the broader societal issues that change brings and to guide policy responses (ILO Global Commission on the Future of Work, 2019, p. 42).

In a similar vein, the preamble to the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work adopted by the 108th (Centenary) International Labour Conference (ILC) of the ILO states that “social dialogue contributes to the overall cohesion of societies and is crucial for a well-functioning and productive economy”.

Participation in social dialogue is the central means whereby young workers can articulate their interests and act to promote them, whether as individuals or collectively. The ILO has stressed the need to place social dialogue at the centre of national and international efforts to address current and future challenges facing young people (Box 1).

► Box 1. Social Dialogue with a Focus on Youth—The ILO Perspective

The 2018 Resolution concerning the second recurrent discussion on social dialogue and tripartism (107th Session of the ILC, 2018) called upon “Members, with the support of the Organization [to] promote gender equality and non-discrimination and encourage the strengthening and increase of participation and engagement of women and youth in social dialogue”. Previously, the 2013 ILC report on debates on the occasion of the 1st Recurrent discussion on “Social Dialogue” under the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization had highlighted that:

184. [...] as reported in the 2012 general discussion on the youth employment crisis, fewer than half the countries that have adopted youth employment policies have involved the social partners—or youth representatives—in discussing and drafting them. Matters seem better in mainstreaming youth employment in national employment policies: more than three-quarters of countries developing comprehensive employment policies and integrated youth employment as a major area of concern consulted the social partners (ILO, 2013b, p. 49).

During the previous decade’s global financial crisis, the ILC, at its 101st Session in 2012, having undertaken a general discussion on the basis of the ILC report *The Youth Employment Crisis: Time for Action*, stressed (pp. 4, 7, 13) that:

13. There is no one-size-fits-all. There is a need to take a multi-pronged approach with measures to foster pro-employment growth and decent job creation through macroeconomic policies, employability, labour market policies, youth entrepreneurship and rights to tackle the social consequences of the crisis, while ensuring financial and fiscal sustainability.

14. Guiding principles include: [...] Promoting the involvement of the social partners in policy development through social dialogue.

25. [...] experience suggests that education and training measures that are responsive to the world of work result from strong partnerships between the government, in particular education and training authorities, including through social dialogue including collective bargaining and workplace collaboration.

26. Governments should give serious consideration, as appropriate, to: [...] (b) Improving the links between education, training and the world of work through social dialogue on skills mismatch and standardization of qualifications in response to labour market needs, enhanced technical vocational education and training (TVET), including apprenticeships, other work-experience schemes and work-based learning.

49. Employers’ organizations should give serious consideration, as appropriate, to, and workers’ organizations should: (a) Promote and encourage the greater participation and representation of young people in their organizations and increase their voice in social dialogue. [...]

Similarly, calls have been launched at the regional level—as in the EU where the European Parliament has underlined the need for strong and structured social dialogue in all workplaces to address young workers and their needs—for the social partners to step up their efforts to inform young people of their right to engage in social dialogue, and increase involvement by this substantial segment of the working population in the structures of their representative organizations (Box 2).

► Box 2. The EU Youth Dialogue

Since 2002, the EU has run a dedicated EU Youth Policy based on the principles of active participation and equal access to opportunities, now in the framework of the EU Youth Strategy 2019–2027, which focuses on three core areas—“connect, engage and empower”—and encourages cooperation between EU countries on all issues concerning young people (EU, 2022).

The dialogue with policymakers and other dialogue activities happens in 18-month work cycles. Each cycle focuses on a different theme set by the Council of Youth Ministers. The one from mid-2020 to end of 2021 was “Europe for YOUTH—YOUTH for Europe: Space for Democracy and Participation”. The thematic priority is directly connected to Youth Goal number 9: Space and Participation for All. From the beginning of 2022 until the middle of 2023, the cycle is titled “Engaging Together for a Sustainable and Inclusive Europe” (EU, 2022). Furthermore, the European Social Partners’ seventh work programme 2022–2024 prioritizes youth unemployment and skill matching in Europe inter alia, and it comes at a critical moment, ahead of an EU initiative on social dialogue (ETUC et al., 2022). In the past, the EU’s Regional Social Dialogue allowed groups of nations to debate themes of common interest such as youth employment and the demographic transition in Europe, leading to the signing of a framework of action on youth employment (2013) and an agreement on active ageing (2017). In addition, social partners were involved in adopting national “youth guarantee implementation plans” in Bulgaria, Cyprus and Germany. However, in several other nations, social dialogue in the context of the Youth Guarantee was viewed as a formality and was often limited (ILO, 2018a).

Social dialogue on youth issues is consistent with the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work (adopted at the centenary ILC in 2019), which calls for “Strengthening the capacities of all people to benefit from the opportunities of a changing world” and the need for the ILO to strengthen the capacity of its three constituents. Therefore, involving youth and youth organizations in social dialogue institutions and processes requires developing organizational, institutional and technical capacities and skills among the social partners to deliver a sustainable, inclusive and resilient recovery for youth.

► 4. Social Partners Delivering for Youth: Pre-pandemic and Pandemic Evidence

In the pre-pandemic era, social dialogue had long been used as a tool to combat youth unemployment, advance the employment of young people, and enhance the effectiveness and inclusivity of active labour market policies that facilitated the transition from school to work. In some European and Latin American countries, youth representatives had been involved in the governance of national training systems, while several Asian and African countries had tripartite involvement in their national human resource advisory councils.

For instance, at a national level, a Tripartite Commission on Youth Employment was established in Spain in 2006 as a consultative organization affiliated to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. In Paraguay, a National Board for Youth Employment Creation (a participatory organization of 26 institutions, including social partners, that focuses on formulating and implementing youth employment policies and programmes) was established by presidential order in 2008. In Peru, a tripartite Social Dialogue Roundtable on Youth Employment featuring young delegates was established in 2011 and was legally incorporated into the organization of the National Work Council.

Within their own organizations, several social partners have created formal structures for youth. Examples include the formation of young employers' organizations in Chile, Colombia and Mexico, and of workers' organizations aimed at youth, as in Tunisia. Youth employment concerns were prioritized in the Republic of Korea (APEC Human Resource Development Working Group, 2018), with the Economic, Social and Labour Council incorporating organizations representing youth in its structure.

At local and regional levels, youth perspectives were incorporated into dedicated local plans and pacts, such as the Local Plan for Youth Integration in France, two tripartite youth employment pacts at the regional level in Bulgaria, and a similar pact in Albania. Tripartite social pacts were signed in Chile, Italy, the Republic of Korea, Slovenia and Zimbabwe: these gave social partners a central role in decision-making on education and training, labour market standards, and active labour market policies (Baccaro and Galindo, 2018). In Europe, 33 national youth policies or national action plans on youth employment were promulgated between 2013 and 2017. In some situations, youth and civil society organizations, as well as employers' and workers' organizations, were active in the adoption process (ILO, 2018a).

Globally, efforts by trade unions to mobilize young people include initiatives such as a "recruitment" campaign targeting young workers pursued by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) in 2010. More broadly, as Appendix I suggests, in the pre-pandemic period (from the mid-2010s to 2019) social partner engagement occurs at different types of youth employment policymaking. The different types encapsulate the "*partially involved*" type of engagement common in most countries and paving the way to the "*fully involved*" type of engagement observed mostly at the *policy formulation stage*. Indeed, globally, the highest level of social partner engagement at the policy formulation stage is important because it gives the social partners the chance to influence the initial scope of the policy (Box 3). Links and articulation between different forms and levels of social partner engagement can also be observed not only between but also within countries.

Our research also reveals variations of involvement with some countries designing and implementing youth-related labour market strategies and plans through tripartite consultation and full social partner engagement. Others seek to adopt youth-related policies by directly involving youth representatives in designing such policies. Yet other countries seek primarily to consult on youth matters with social partners representing youth.

"Partially involved" refers to involvement only for some elements of the youth employment strategy, and it includes the categories "Informed" and "Consulted" (ILO Employment Policy Gateway, no date)

► **Box 3. A Glance at the Policy Process – First and Last, Why it Matters**

The first stage of the policy process—policy formulation—is crucial because at this point decision-makers must define the public problem they intend to address (such as youth unemployment or the skills gap). At this stage, policymakers develop courses of action to address the problem. At this stage, high-level officials generally at this stage define who will participate in the process and how they will participate in later stages of the process, such as policy adoption and implementation, and proposing solutions, thereby establishing an ideological road map for the fundamental elements and guiding philosophy of future policy (Goldstein and Keohane, 1993). Because it establishes the context for how and why the policy will be approved, implemented and assessed, the policy formulation stage is critical to increasing implementation effectiveness and fostering trust, particularly among tripartite actors. *The prevalence of social partner engagement during policy formulation may indicate an effort by the government to address all existing policy positions and to achieve the broadest possible consensus on desirable policies and potential courses of action, indicating that issues related to youth employment are of great domestic concern.*

Engaging social partners may also be advantageous during one of the policy process's final stages—monitoring the policies implemented. Although governments have the technical responsibility and commitment to monitor policy implementation and impact, workers' and employers' groups, as well as youth-led actors, can also be involved in gathering data, offering recommendations, and—wherever needed—mobilizing to make policymakers transparent about the impact of policies. It is perhaps self-evident, but proactively engaging young people in the policy process and providing meaningful opportunities for involvement can lead to higher levels of youth trust (Dardeli, 2021).

The evidence in more detail

Pre-pandemic, 73 of the 187 International Labour Organization member states identified social partner engagement in some or all six stages of youth policymaking (appendix 1). These six stages of youth policymaking are: formulation, implementation, development, awareness-raising, assessment and monitoring. Overall, **seven countries⁴ fully involved workers and employers** at almost all stages. **Seventeen countries⁵ partially involved⁶** workers and employers at all stages. **One country⁷ included employers only**, partially involving them at all stages of youth employment policymaking. The remaining countries reported a mix of full and partial forms of engagement, which varied by policymaking stage. This section focuses on the 73 countries engaging social partners in youth policymaking. The evidence that follows details the type of engagement with workers' and employers' organisations by country, region and policymaking stage.

Full involvement of workers and employers

Over a third of countries (29)⁸ fully involved workers and employers in the **formulation** of youth employment strategies (e.g. National Action Plans for youth). The second highest engagement of workers' and employers' organisations was amongst the 22 countries⁹ involved in **implementation** (e.g. social partners as official implementers of a strategy or programme). This was followed by **development** of youth employment programmes in 18 countries¹⁰ (e.g. sectoral programmes with clear, numerical youth employment targets); **awareness-raising**,

⁴ Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, China, Colombia, Turkey, [Zimbabwe](#), [Uruguay](#).

⁵ Australia, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Sri Lanka, Turkmenistan, Viet Nam, Morocco, Indonesia, New Zealand, Thailand, Spain. These were the countries for which data were available.

⁶ 'Partially involved' refers to social partner involvement only for some elements of the youth employment strategy, and it includes the categories 'Informed' and 'Consulted'

⁷ Ghana.

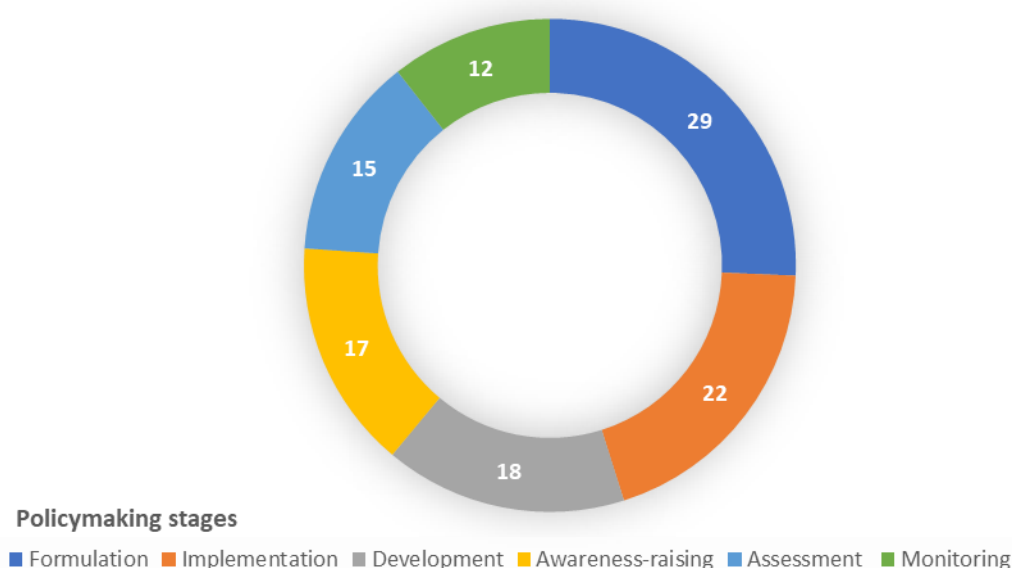
⁸ Colombia, El Salvador, Uruguay, Afghanistan, Cambodia, China, Philippines, Timor-Leste, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czech Republic, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Benin, Botswana, Central African Republic, Gambia, Madagascar, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Tunisia, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

⁹ Ecuador, Colombia, Mexico, Jordan, Gambia, China, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, Malta, Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkey, Benin, Botswana, Egypt, Gabon, Madagascar, Rwanda, Tunisia, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

¹⁰ Colombia, Uruguay, China, Philippines, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czech Republic, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Tajikistan, Turkey, Uzbekistan, Botswana, Central African Republic, Madagascar, Rwanda, Tunisia, Zambia.

marketing and promotion in 17 countries¹¹ (e.g. campaign to promote youth employment); **assessment** of youth employability in 15 countries¹² (e.g. alignment of youth qualifications and skills to labour market needs); and **monitoring** and evaluation of youth employment interventions in 12 countries¹³ (e.g. active labour market programmes). Some countries reported little or no involvement of social partners, or employer-only engagement (figure 1 and appendix I).

► **Figure 1. Number of countries with full social partner engagement, by stage in the policymaking process. N=73.**



Social partner engagement in the different stages of social dialogue has a distinct geographical distribution, with African countries dominating the following list of regional engagement (figure 2). Of course the numbers reported below are also influenced by the number of countries there are in each region. Below are the number of countries by region fully involving workers' and employers' organisations, by policymaking stage:

- **Formulation:** 12 countries from Africa,¹⁴ 3 from the Americas,¹⁵ 5 from Asia and the Pacific,¹⁶ and 9 from Europe¹⁷ fully involved workers and employers.
- **Implementation:** 10 countries from Africa,¹⁸ 3 from Americas,¹⁹ 1 country from Arab States,²⁰ 1 country from Asia and the Pacific,²¹ and 7 countries from Europe²² fully involved workers and employers.

¹¹ Ecuador, Colombia, El Salvador, Mexico, Uruguay, Afghanistan, Philippines, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, Malta, Turkey, Botswana, Egypt, Gambia, Sao Tome and Principe, Tunisia, Zimbabwe.

¹² Colombia, Mexico, Uruguay, Jordan, China, Timor-Leste, Azerbaijan, Germany, Malta, Turkey, Benin, Botswana, Gambia, Rwanda, Zimbabwe.

¹³ Colombia, Uruguay, Jordan, China, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Malta, Tajikistan, Turkey, Uzbekistan, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Gambia.

¹⁴ Benin, Botswana, Central African Republic, Gambia, Madagascar, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Tunisia, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

¹⁵ Colombia, El Salvador, Uruguay.

¹⁶ Afghanistan, Cambodia, China, Philippines, Timor-Leste.

¹⁷ Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czech Republic, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkey.

¹⁸ Benin, Botswana, Egypt, Gabon, Madagascar, Rwanda, Tunisia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Gambia.

¹⁹ Ecuador, Colombia, Mexico.

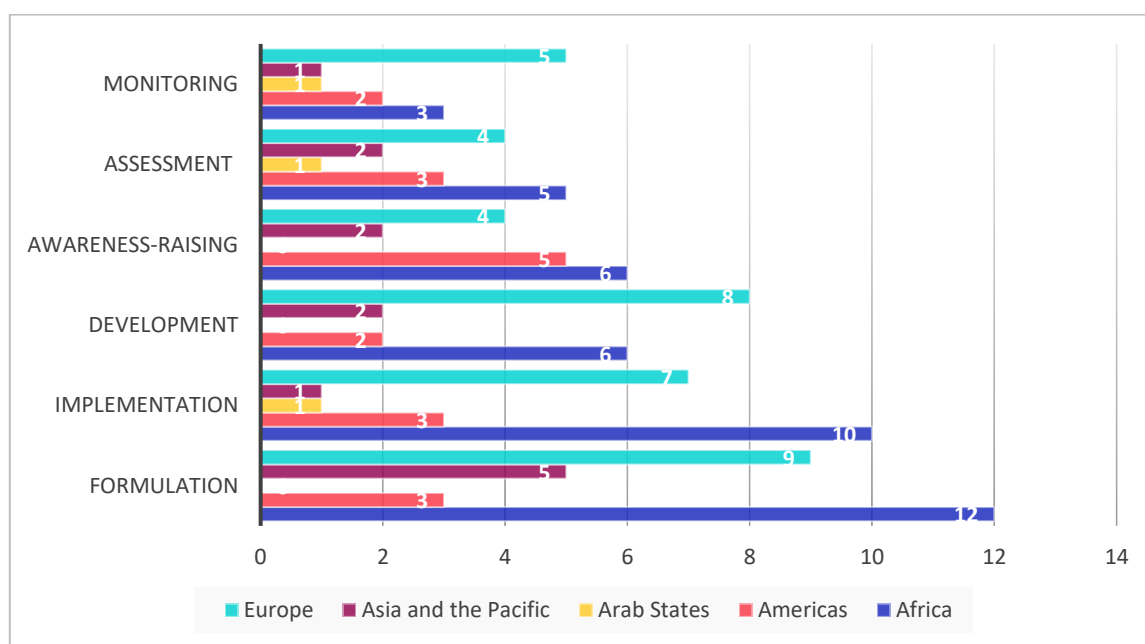
²⁰ Jordan.

²¹ China.

²² Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, Malta, Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkey.

- **Development:** 6 countries from Africa,²³ 2 from Americas,²⁴ 2 from Asia and the Pacific,²⁵ and 8 countries from Europe²⁶ fully involved workers and employers.
- **Awareness-raising:** 6 countries from Africa,²⁷ 5 from Americas,²⁸ 2 from Asia and the Pacific,²⁹ and 4 countries from Europe³⁰ fully involved workers and employers.
- **Assessment:** 5 countries from Africa,³¹ 3 from Americas,³² 1 country from Arab States,³³ 2 countries from Asia and the Pacific,³⁴ and 4 countries from Europe³⁵ fully involved workers and employers.
- **Monitoring:** 3 countries from Africa,³⁶ 2 from Americas,³⁷ 1 country from Arab States,³⁸ 1 from Asia and the Pacific,³⁹ and 5 countries from Europe⁴⁰ fully involved workers and employers.

► **Figure 2. Countries where workers and employers are fully involved, by region and policymaking stage.**
N=73.



Source: ILO Employment Policy Gateway (database)

²³ Botswana, Central African Republic, Madagascar, Rwanda, Tunisia, Zambia.

²⁴ Colombia, Uruguay.

²⁵ China, Philippines.

²⁶ Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czech Republic, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Tajikistan, Turkey, Uzbekistan.

²⁷ Botswana, Egypt, Gambia, Sao Tome and Principe, Tunisia, Zimbabwe.

²⁸ Ecuador, Colombia, El Salvador, Mexico, Uruguay.

²⁹ Afghanistan, Philippines.

³⁰ Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, Malta, Turkey.

³¹ Benin, Botswana, Gambia, Rwanda, Zimbabwe.

³² Colombia, Mexico, Uruguay.

³³ Jordan.

³⁴ China, Timor-Leste.

³⁵ Azerbaijan, Germany, Malta, Turkey.

³⁶ Botswana, Zimbabwe, Gambia.

³⁷ Colombia, Uruguay.

³⁸ Jordan.

³⁹ China.

⁴⁰ Bosnia and Herzegovina, Malta, Tajikistan, Turkey, Uzbekistan.

Africa is the region with the highest number of countries that fully involve workers and employers in youth employment strategies or programmes during four key stages of policymaking. These stages are: formulation, implementation, awareness-raising and evaluation. Europe has the highest number of countries with full social partner engagement during policy development and monitoring; Europe also reports high numbers of countries involved in social dialogue at all other stages; namely formulation, implementation, awareness-raising and assessment.

Partial involvement of workers' and employers' organisations

Over half of the countries reporting social partner engagement (44 out of 73)⁴¹ partially involved workers and employers at the stage of youth employability **assessment**. The second highest engagement of 42 countries⁴² was during **monitoring** and evaluation of youth employment interventions, followed by **implementation** in 40 countries,⁴³ **awareness-raising**, marketing and promotion in 38 countries,⁴⁴ **development** of youth employment programmes in 36 countries,⁴⁵ and **formulation** of youth employment strategies in 32 countries⁴⁶ (figure 3 and Appendix I).

⁴¹ Barbados, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Australia, Indonesia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Viet Nam, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, United Kingdom, Uzbekistan, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Liberia, Morocco, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa.

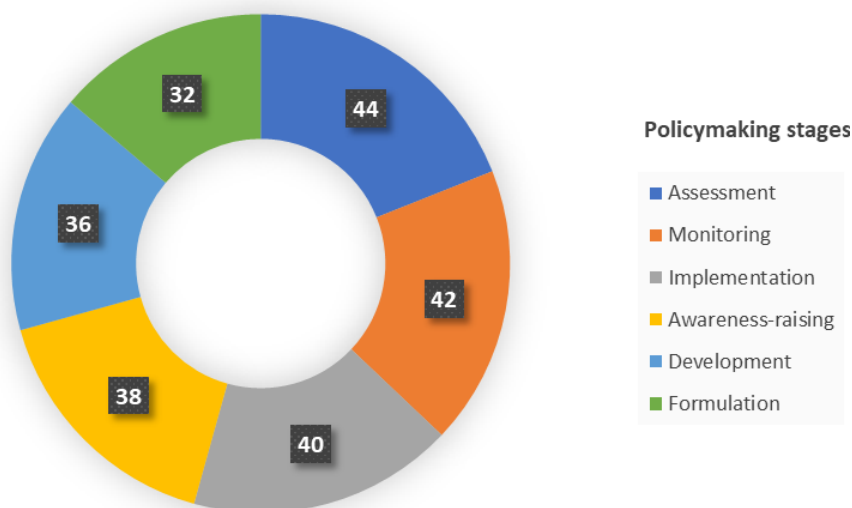
⁴² Barbados, Chile, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Mexico, Afghanistan, Australia, Cambodia, Indonesia, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Viet Nam, Thailand, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkmenistan, United Kingdom, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Morocco, Liberia, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tunisia.

⁴³ Barbados, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Uruguay, Afghanistan, Australia, Indonesia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Viet Nam, Belarus, Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Montenegro, Netherlands, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Morocco, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa.

⁴⁴ Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Australia, Cambodia, Indonesia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Viet Nam, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, United Kingdom, Uzbekistan, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Liberia, Madagascar, Nigeria, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa.

⁴⁵ Barbados, Ecuador, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Mexico, Jordan, Australia, Cambodia, Indonesia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Viet Nam, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Malta, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkmenistan, United Kingdom, Cameroon, Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gambia, Morocco, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone.

⁴⁶ Barbados, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Mexico, Jordan, Australia, Indonesia, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Viet Nam, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Turkmenistan, United Kingdom, Uzbekistan, Cameroon, Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Liberia, Morocco, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa.

► **Figure 3. Countries with partial social partner engagement, by stage. N=73.**

Source: ILO Employment Policy Gateway (database)

The regional distribution of partial social partner engagement is detailed below (figure 4):

- **Assessment:** 13 countries from Africa,⁴⁷ 5 from Americas,⁴⁸ 1 country from Arab States,⁴⁹ 10 countries from Asia and the Pacific,⁵⁰ and 15 countries from Europe⁵¹ partially involved workers and employers at;
- **Monitoring:** 14 countries from Africa,⁵² 5 from Americas,⁵³ 9 from Asia and the Pacific,⁵⁴ and 14 countries from Europe⁵⁵ partially involved workers and employers.
- **Implementation:** 12 countries from Africa,⁵⁶ 5 from Americas,⁵⁷ 11 from Asia and the Pacific,⁵⁸ and 12 countries from Europe⁵⁹ partially involved workers and employers.

⁴⁷ Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Liberia, Morocco, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa.

⁴⁸ Barbados, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Jamaica.

⁴⁹ Saudi Arabia.

⁵⁰ Afghanistan, Australia, Indonesia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Viet Nam.

⁵¹ Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, United Kingdom, Uzbekistan.

⁵² Cameroon, Central African Republic, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Morocco, Liberia, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tunisia.

⁵³ Barbados, Chile, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Mexico.

⁵⁴ Afghanistan, Australia, Cambodia, Indonesia, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Viet Nam, Thailand.

⁵⁵ Azerbaijan, Belarus, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkmenistan, United Kingdom.

⁵⁶ Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Morocco, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa.

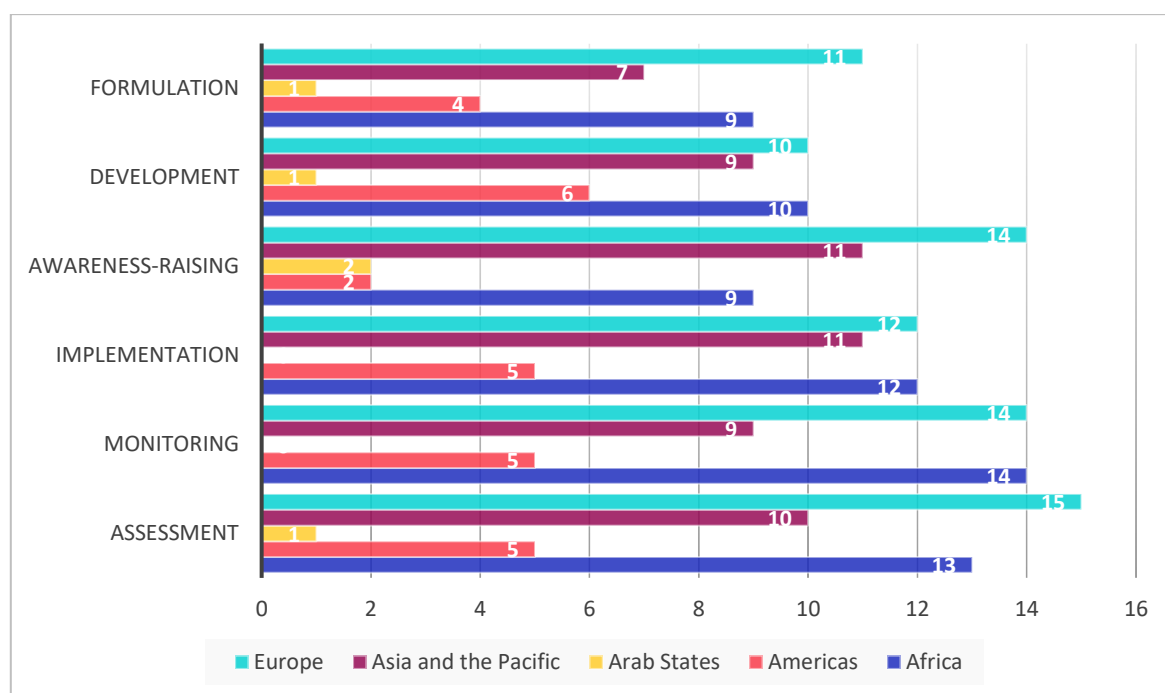
⁵⁷ Barbados, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Uruguay.

⁵⁸ Afghanistan, Australia, Indonesia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Viet Nam.

⁵⁹ Belarus, Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Montenegro, Netherlands, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan.

- **Awareness-raising:** 9 countries from Africa,⁶⁰ 2 from Americas,⁶¹ 2 from Arab States,⁶² 11 from Asia and the Pacific,⁶³ and 14 countries from Europe⁶⁴ partially involved workers and employers.
- **Development:** 10 countries from Africa,⁶⁵ 6 from Americas,⁶⁶ 1 country from Arab States,⁶⁷ 9 countries from Asia and the Pacific,⁶⁸ and 10 countries from Europe⁶⁹ partially involved workers and employers.
- **Formulation:** 9 countries from Africa,⁷⁰ 4 from Americas,⁷¹ 1 country from Arab States,⁷² 7 countries from Asia and the Pacific,⁷³ and 11 countries from Europe⁷⁴ partially involved workers and employers.

► **Figure 4. Number of countries where workers and employers are partially involved, by region and policymaking stage. N=73.**



Source: ILO Employment Policy Gateway (database)

Europe and Africa have the greatest number of countries that have only partially involved workers and employers in some components of the national strategy or youth employment programs at all policymaking stages, followed by Asia and the Pacific and the Americas.

⁶⁰ Cameroon, Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Liberia, Madagascar, Nigeria, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa.

⁶¹ Dominican Republic, Guatemala.

⁶² Jordan, Saudi Arabia.

⁶³ Australia, Cambodia, Indonesia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Viet Nam, Azerbaijan, Belarus.

⁶⁴ Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, United Kingdom, Uzbekistan.

⁶⁵ Cameroon, Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gambia, Morocco, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone.

⁶⁶ Barbados, Ecuador, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Mexico.

⁶⁷ Jordan.

⁶⁸ Australia, Cambodia, Indonesia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Viet Nam.

⁶⁹ Germany, Greece, Hungary, Malta, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkmenistan, United Kingdom.

⁷⁰ Cameroon, Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Liberia, Morocco, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa.

⁷¹ Barbados, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Mexico.

⁷² Jordan.

⁷³ Australia, Indonesia, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Viet Nam.

⁷⁴ , Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Turkmenistan, United Kingdom, Uzbekistan.

Key findings

In sum, 73 countries were identified as having widespread social partner engagement in the national youth strategy and across several stages of youth employment policymaking.

The ILO's Employment Policy Gateway's evidence shows widespread engagement with social partners, yet with great variation in whether partners are fully involved, partially involved, consulted or informed,⁷⁵ and for which policymaking stages they are involved. In all five regions, reports of partial involvement of social partners outstrip full involvement in shaping youth-related policy. When countries only partially involve social partners in some elements of the national strategy or youth employment programs, it is primarily at the *assessment, monitoring, and implementation stages*, whereas full engagement of social partners is stronger during *policy formulation, implementation, and development*. Africa and Europe both report a high number of countries involving social partners across the stages of policymaking, either fully or partially. with the "partially involved" type of engagement being more prevalent in both regions, though Africa is a region with strong social partner inclusion ("fully involved") in many countries and in the majority of policymaking stages. Asia, the Pacific, and the Americas are the regions where the majority of countries partially involved social partners. Overall, a few countries (out of the 73) designed/implemented youth-related labour market policy through tripartite consultation and full social partner inclusion in all parts of the national strategy and at *all* policymaking stages.

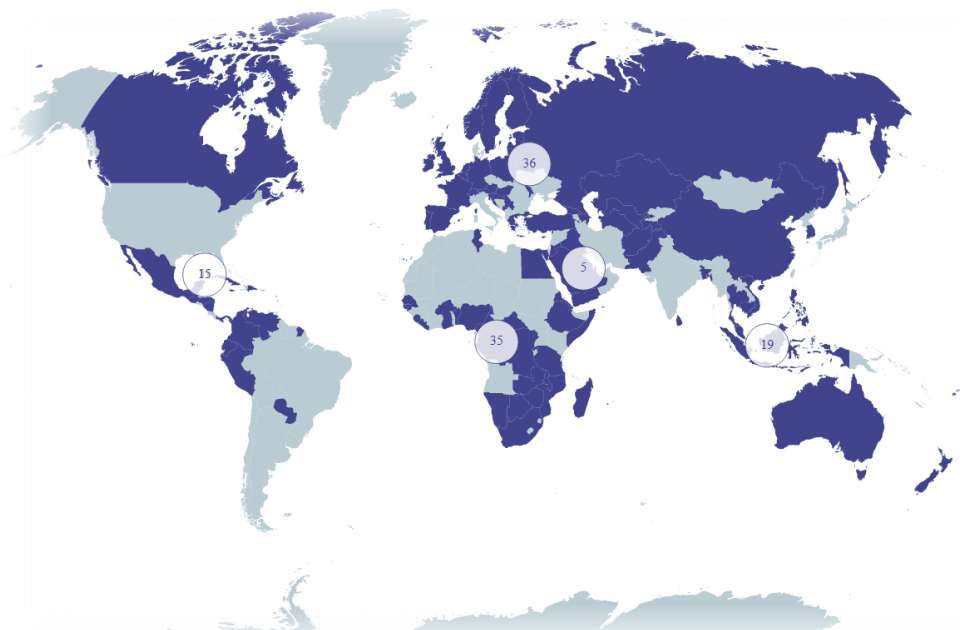
As recognized in the ILO's 2002 Resolution on Social Dialogue and Tripartism, to gain a wider perspective and consensus on specific issues beyond the world of work, tripartite constituents may choose to open social dialogue to other groups of civil society that share the same values and objectives (ILO, 2002). In line with this, the ILO Gateway on Employment⁷⁶ reports that 110 countries worldwide include youth-led organizations—in different modes and to different degrees—in youth national employment policymaking to date (figure 5).⁷⁷ Of these, in 54 countries youth-led organizations reported being "fully involved", in 27 "partially involved" (only for some elements of the national strategy), in another 27 "consulted", and in 1 "not involved."⁷⁸

⁷⁵ The ILO requests countries to self-report on the engagement of social partners (and youth organisations) on a scale ranging from 0 to 4, where 0= not involved, 1=informed, 2=consulted; 3=partially involved (only for some elements of the strategy) and 4= fully involved.

⁷⁶ Web page consulted on 30 May 2023

⁷⁷ Source: ILO Employment Policy Gateway, [Youth Employment Strategies, pre-pandemic data](#).

⁷⁸ Note that these numbers may differ from the numbers of the ILO gateway as in some countries provided multiple responses. To avoid double counting a correction has been made assuming that if a country selected more than one option then the highest value is the one that prevails.

► **Figure 5. Countries with Youth-Led Organisations Included in National Strategy.**⁷⁹

Source: ILO Employment Policy Gateway (database)

Regionally, 36 European countries reported the inclusion of youth-led organizations in the national strategy, with 35 in Africa, 19 in Asia and the Pacific, 15 in the Americas and 5 in the Arab States (figure 5). As shown in the table below, the degree of inclusion of youth organizations varies regionally. In Africa, of the 35 countries involving youth organizations in national strategy, 65 per cent reported full involvement, 15 per cent partial involvement (i.e. only for some elements of the strategy), and 21 per cent engaged in lower level inclusion in the form of consultation. In Europe, of the 36 countries involving youth organizations, 36 per cent were fully involved, 31 per cent partially involved and 11 per cent consulted. This tendency towards full or partial involvement is also observed in the 15 countries in the Americas (53 and 20 per cent respectively, with 27 per cent consulted); and in Asia and the Pacific (with 53 per cent fully involved, 32 per cent partially involved and 11 per cent consulted). The five Arab States had lower levels of full involvement (20 per cent) and higher partial involvement and consultation (both at 40 per cent).

► **Percentage of Available Countries with Youth-Led Organizations' Inclusion in the National Strategy, by region. (%)**

	Fully involved	Partially involved	Consulted	Informed	Not involved
Africa	65	15	21	0	0
Americas	53	20	27	0	0
Arab States	20	40	40	0	0
Asia and the Pacific	53	32	11	0	5
Europe	36	31	33	0	0
World	50	25	25	0	1

Note that the denominator for these percentages is the countries that responded to this ILO questionnaire, NOT all the countries in that region or the world. Data source: [ILO Employment Policy Gateway](#).

⁷⁹ Data mostly capture pre-pandemic developments. On the map, 'dark blue' countries are identified in the ILO Employment Policy Gateway database having youth-led organisations included in National Strategy; 'grey' countries indicates that data were unavailable. The map dates from May 2023.

Youth policymaking—social partners engaged, young people disconnected

Pandemic evidence shows, national measures encouraged the inclusion of social partners in youth employment policymaking, and the development of national youth strategies and plans (table 1) aimed at creating opportunities for economic transformation, decent employment and sustainable growth. Yet a lack or paucity of young people's participation in policymaking was an impediment to well-informed policymaking, built upon a legacy of “disconnect” that appears to be preventing a more inclusive post-pandemic recovery. Young people were insufficiently engaged in the design and delivery of recovery measures throughout the COVID-19 crisis, as illustrated in the following section.

A variety of factors shape the underlying causes of an observed “disconnect” between young people and policymaking, including the country context, perceptions of how public authorities and institutions address the needs and anxieties of younger people, and the public authorities' capacity (or lack of) to respond to long-term priorities—intermeshed with the complicated and interconnected disruptions of the evolving world of work. Further, rising economic inequality and intergenerational divides in life opportunities (Kohli, 2015) have made it increasingly hard for young people to secure a foothold in the job market, creating “dissatisfaction” with how policy and related institutions deliver for them.

Social dialogue—putting youth at the centre

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ILO has urged governments to work together with social partners—employers' and business member organizations as well as workers' organizations representing real-economy actors—to shape national policies that will mitigate the crisis effects, support their constituents, and help design a safe and sustainable return to work (ILO, 2020d). The ILO called upon its constituents to “rely on social dialogue for solutions” as part of its policy framework to address the COVID-19 crisis (ILO, 2020e). The ILO's initial assessments of national policy responses provided a number of cases in which social dialogue and social partners played an essential role in formulating such approaches (ILO, 2020e, 2020f). In addition, various ILO instruments and documents emphasized the need to enable wide social partner engagement and the leveraging of social dialogue for developing successful policies in times of crisis—and beyond (Box 4).

► Box 4. Social Dialogue – Shaping National Responses and Recovery

The need for social dialogue as a valuable tool to drive recovery was highlighted by the three ILO constituents in the ILO's “Global call to action for an inclusive, sustainable, and resilient human-centred recovery for the COVID-19 crisis”, which was adopted at the ILC in June 2021.

The ILO tripartite constituents committed, among other things, to:

- a. build on the role of social dialogue, both bipartite and tripartite, in the immediate response to the COVID-19 pandemic in many countries and sectors;
- b. promote social dialogue, including through governments consulting with social partners on designing and implementing national recovery plans and policies addressing the need for retention and creation of decent jobs, business continuity, and investment in priority sectors and areas, both public and private, to ensure a job-rich recovery;
- c. strengthen the capacity of public administrations and employers' and workers' organizations to participate in such dialogue.

Source : (ILO, 2021b, p.9).

The extent to which social dialogue occurred during the COVID-19 crisis was determined by a raft of factors (for example, ILO, 2020d0f), notably the availability and readiness of social dialogue infrastructure to support the culture and practice of social partner collaboration, as well as the capacity of social partners to push issues up the political agenda. In countries where tripartite social dialogue is well established and continual, the COVID-19 experience served to increase social partners' position and relevance as actors capable of initiating targeted efforts to mitigate the socio-economic consequences of the pandemic.

Concrete measures addressing youth issues were incorporated in a range of government responses to the COVID-19 crisis and national recovery plans (see, for example, Appendix I), with some having been the result of social dialogue (table 2). Yet according to our research and other data,⁸⁰ pre-pandemic observations of the “youth disconnect” appear to converge with pandemic observations. Within their youth plans, several countries had provisions for including young people in decision-making, though they did not occur everywhere nor to the same degree. Few of the recovery measures implemented were the outcome of direct involvement with young people or other youth stakeholders (table 2). This was despite a general acknowledgement that successful national youth policies which reflect youth needs and realities while promoting inclusive labour governance is critical for crisis management, as stressed by the former ILO Director General Guy Ryder (Ryder, 2021).

► **Table 2. National response and recovery measures (strategies and plans) with a focus on youth**

Country	National response and recovery measures (strategies and plans) with a focus on youth
Australia	In 2010, the most recent national youth strategy was developed. The government has been developing a National Youth Policy Framework in response to consultations with young Australians in 2019 and 2020. The Framework defines the ideas and goals of youth policy, as well as the efforts being undertaken to solve the challenges that young Australians face. The Framework reflects the reality of young Australians' life in 2021, including the influence of COVID-19. Other positive developments include the creation of the Office for the Youth, youth steering committee, five youth advisory groups, and the development of youth engagement strategy and youth affairs coalition - an apex body for youth in Australia.
Austria	The National Youth Strategy is defined as a process and is updated through regular inter-ministerial meetings. The most recent official Youth Goals, set in September 2020, focus on four main areas: employment and education; youth involvement and initiative; quality of life and a cooperative spirit; and media and information. Federal ministries are expected to specify at least one objective for young people in their areas of competence, and young people are engaged in developing and implementing youth policies. A cross-ministerial effort led to the formation of an Inter-ministerial Youth Employment Task Force for 2020/2021, based on extensive consultation with the interested parties including young people. The Task Force's focus is on increasing the availability of education, apprenticeships, coaching and counselling, and early “low-stakes” offers.
Colombia	The Ministry of Health and Social Protection announced mental health guidelines for young people in March 2020. Since the pandemic's outbreak, virtual discussions targeted at reducing suicidal behaviour have been undertaken in partnership with young stakeholders. (A mental health hotline was formed in response to COVID-19; between April 2020 and March 2021, more than one-third of callers were 15- to 29-year-olds.)
France (UIMM, 2020)	A bipartisan manifesto of industrial sector proposals dated May 2020 featured a measure on “(iii) Support[ing] work-study programmes and employment for young people” and called for immediate measures in favour of young people, who risk becoming the first victims of the crisis, including: • A campaign to promote work-study training; • Temporary and exceptional measures to encourage companies to continue work-study recruitment by, for example, lowering the cost of recruiting a work-study trainee; • Assistance in buying computer equipment by apprentices to train remotely; • New housing and mobility aid for young people to better support them towards a first job in certain industrial employment areas; • Relaxation of certain contract execution terms to allow a young person who has been unable to find work to continue and validate his or her training; • Urgent measures for industrial apprenticeship training centres to assist them in financing the additional costs associated with implementing health measures.

⁸⁰ There may, of course, be unreported country responses with youth involvement owing to the different databases and other sources that we reviewed.

Country	National response and recovery measures (strategies and plans) with a focus on youth
	In many texts, the French Economic, Social and Environmental Council (ESEC), which is “bipartite plus”, issued recommendations concerning youth, including: • “Building Tomorrow” emphasizes intergenerational solidarity to support young people's absorption into the labour market via education, training and labour, as well as into society by sustaining the relationship with older people or individuals with disabilities (Conseil économique, social et environnemental, 2020a). • The “youth guarantee”, which is being strengthened and expanded. • Implementation of a “basic income” starting at age 18 for impoverished young people, as well as giving assistance in their accessing training. • Incentives in the form of work-study assistance measures and employment mediation for enterprises involved in the professional integration of young people (who are the most disadvantaged in the labour market). • “Annual status report from France 2020”, which includes “support measures for the youth must be extended and deepened, in particular by training, the implementation of a minimum income and the development of assisted contracts” (Conseil économique, social et environnemental, 2020b). • Declaration “Youth, the duty to provide a future”. This aims to: ○ Guarantee access to minimum social benefits for 18- to 25-year-olds, support and secure the entry of young people into the world of work; and ○ Give young people the ability to act and influence the future by including them in decision-making (Conseil économique, social et environnemental, 2020c). • “Poverty: Listening to the Warning Signs to Avoid a Humanitarian Crisis”. For example, the CESE recommended establishing a minimum basic income that would be available, under certain conditions, to young people under the age of 18 who are not enrolled in school, work, or training. This method will be accompanied by assistance and an employment mechanism (Conseil économique, social et environnemental, 2020d).. • Another plan is the “1 jeune, 1 solution”, which has a total investment of €9 billion. It mobilizes a set of levers to respond to all circumstances, such as hiring assistance, training, support and financial aid for young people in need. Communication and collaboration with social partners, businesses and regions were used to build the approach. • The pharmaceutical industry employers' group, Les Entreprises du Médicament (LEEM), and five major trade unions (FO, CFE-CGC, CFDT, CFTC and UNSA), signed an agreement on 9 September 2021, creating a telework framework for the sector, which employs over 124,000 people. The agreement, which is intended to serve as a framework for companies to negotiate their own terms and conditions, requires telework to be used only in exceptional circumstances and as support for pregnant employees, family caregivers, those pursuing dual work-study programmes and disabled employees working remotely. The scope of the agreement, according to LEEM leadership, also covers young workers, because enterprises would find it more difficult to recruit young people if teleworking was not accessible.
Italy	Federmeccanica and Assital have joined forces with three trade unions—Fiom-Cgil, Fim-Cisl, and Uilm—to establish MetApprendo, a digital platform designed to help in the application of the individual right to training enshrined in the engineering and metals sector's collective agreement. The digital platform will offer a range of services to companies in the sector, including assessing training needs, developing customized programmes and providing online training. The platform aims to lessen the sector's polarization—with high-flying professionals on one hand and low-skilled employees on the other—and to provide a route that empowers young people and facilitates their labour market integration. This initiative is particularly creative in the field of Italian labour relations..

Country	National response and recovery measures (strategies and plans) with a focus on youth
Jamaica⁸¹	The “Rebuild Jamaica Taskforce” in June 2020 had consultations with various parties, including trade unions and employers, aiming to improve the social safety net and pursue labour market reforms(COVID-19 Economic Recovery Task Force, 2020). This goal highlights the significance of strengthening the social safety net as well as investing more resources on youth, community and social development. Further, labour market changes are required to meet the competitive demands projected to dominate in the post-COVID-19 scenario. Labour flexibility will be critical as working patterns evolve throughout the world. The Taskforce stated that vocational training, in addition to formal education, vocational training and lifelong learning are critical aspects for worker employability(idid: p.50). In an environment of economic recovery, re-skilling employees, particularly those who lost their jobs because of the pandemic and even adolescents, can assist individuals in responding to labour market demand and seizing employment and entrepreneurial opportunities, increasing creativity and productivity. “Youth Training” (section 7.4.4) is one of the activities that should be investigated. The HOPE Programme and other youth training programmes should be strengthened.
Luxembourg	As part of the development of the 2022–24 Youth Action Plan, a survey of young people and professionals working with young people has been planned.
Mexico	Incorporating and consulting with young people in policy formation is one of the three pillars of Mexico's National Youth Program for 2021–24, which was established in January 2021.
Morocco	The CESE (Economic, Social, and Environmental Council) published a paper entitled “The Health, Economic, and Social Elements of the ‘COVID-19’ Pandemic and Possible Action Levers”. Among the recommended measures was the creation of a bonus (for example, a tax exemption) for the state to temporarily boost the recruitment of young people. A youth consultative council was also set up to combat discrimination.
Occupied Palestinian Territories	The Occupied Palestinian Territories have adopted a National Employment Strategy (2021–2025) with the support of the ILO, developed through tripartite social dialogue and the participation of relevant government, employer and employee representatives. The strategy provides for targeted support for less advantaged groups, including youth, with the goal of facilitating their smooth transition to the labour market and “leaving no one behind”.
Paraguay	The National Employment Policy 2022-2026, approved with tripartite consensus with support from the ILO, focuses on youth and includes, among other, priorities in decreasing unemployment, enhancing digital skills and capacities, giving young people a good start (first job program), strengthening the role of public employment services in matching skills with jobs, and developing a dual system based on the models used by Switzerland and Germany.
Peru	The social partners were consulted throughout the development of the National Employment Strategy 2021. One of the main aims of the National Youth Policy is to “increase the young population's access to respectable jobs”. It includes guidelines to put in place systems and methods that encourage young people's employment and entrepreneurship; and to provide incentives for the formal hiring of young people.
Poland	Young people have been consulted in recent years, leading to the publication of a paper in February 2019 outlining 2020–30 goals from the perspective of young people. The labour market; civic activities; sports, health and tourism; innovation and digitization; culture; and education have all been identified as key areas. The Youth Guarantee implementation plan was in the process of becoming updated in 2021, with the aim of putting a greater emphasis on green and digital skills, targeted assistance in career services, and extended outreach efforts to young people.

Country	National response and recovery measures (strategies and plans) with a focus on youth
Portugal	The preparation of a Green Book on the Future of Work begun, with the government coordinating and engaging with social partners and civil society. In June 2021, a draft document that incorporated tripartite discussions was submitted. Following talks based on this Green Book, social partners were presented with a slew of initiatives and amendments to the Labour Code to promote a Decent Work Agenda and the involvement of young people in the labour market. Incentives to reduce segmentation and temporary employment are among these measures; a tripartite agreement on skills and vocational training was signed by the government, employer groupings (CAP, CTP, CIP, and CCP) and one of the trade unions (UGT). Actions have also been taken to prioritize the needs of the youth, such as rebalancing the weight of wages in GDP, combating youth unemployment, fiscal measures, the "right to disconnect" from work and refrain from engaging in work-related electronic communications, and financial support to companies that formally employ young people.
Senegal	The Employment and Training Council (2009) was replaced in 2021 by a National Council for Youth Reintegration. It includes the National Youth Council, which serves as a representative organization body for social partners. Concurrently, the Presidential Youth Employment Council facilitates special recruitment in various industries, community projects, and other labour-intensive public projects.
Spain	In November 2020, the Economic and Social Council published a report on Youth and the Labour Market in Spain, highlighting critical initiatives to encourage youth employment, vocational education and training, and social inclusion (Consejo Económico y Social España, 2020).
Switzerland	In April 2020, a compromise was achieved between social partners and other actors involved in apprenticeship policymaking to guarantee that apprenticeship-training examinations be completed on schedule and that degrees not to be deemed of lesser quality despite the pandemic's harmful effects (Union Patronale Suisse, 2020)
Trinidad and Tobago	Pathways for Youth: A Strategy Plan for Federal Collaboration, released in 2016, brings together federal ministries and agencies that work on issues affecting young people aged 10 to 24. The plan's development included a public consultation, which also entailed "listening sessions" with young people. Policy implementation is often carried out at the federal level (Office of the Prime Minister, no date).
United States	Pathways for Youth: A Strategy Plan for Federal Collaboration, released in 2016, brings together federal ministries and agencies that work on issues affecting young people aged 10 to 24. The plan's development included a public consultation, which also entailed "listening sessions" with young people. Policy implementation is often carried out at the federal level.
Zambia	The tripartite consultative labour council is committed to a social dialogue process that is sensitive to youth matters and promotes youth interests. With the Apprenticeship Act of 2020, the government with the support of the ILO, is revising the labour framework in order to increase productivity and school-to-work transition. This is also intended to alleviate skill mismatches by connecting education and vocational training to the world of work.

Sources: ILO, COVID-19 Country policy responses (updated 16 November 2021) (ILO, 2021d);⁸² ILO Youth Employment in Times of COVID (Barford et al., 2021a); OECD Policy Responses to Coronavirus (COVID-19), What Have Countries Done to Support Young People in the COVID-19 Crisis? (updated 6 July 2021)(OECD, 2021a).

⁸² <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/regional-country/country-responses/lang--en/index.htm>

An opportunity gained rather than lost?

The COVID-19 crisis has presented youth engagement with great challenges, as evidenced by an online survey we conducted to include the views of the members of the International Association of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions (AICESIS).⁸³ Still, the crisis provides an opportunity to recalibrate the relationship between youth and social dialogue institutions.

AICESIS respondents were asked to assess the extent to which youth-related policies were included in the agendas and activities of Economic and Social Councils (ESCs), and the social dialogue opportunities available to youth. A significant majority (83.8 per cent) of respondents stated that their ESC included some form of activity on youth-related issues (for example, publication of reports on issues related to young people or drafting of specific aspects of general reports), while 54.1 per cent said that they had regular ad hoc contacts with young representatives who are not formally represented in the ESC. Simultaneously, 46.0 per cent of respondents claimed that their ESC youth engagement was due to the existence of specialized ESC sections or committees dealing with youth problems. Nearly three quarters of respondents (73.0 per cent) said that their ESC had been engaged in dialogue with youth (youth associations and networks, including vulnerable and marginalized groups) via indirect representation of youth through social partners, while a small number of ESC respondents (8.1 per cent) stated that they had been engaged in dialogue directly with youth representatives and organizations. Some 18.9 per cent replied that they had been engaged in both modes. However, 83.8 per cent of respondents offered that their ESC had not promoted youth engagement in social dialogue processes or enabled youth (including marginalized groups) to voice their concerns since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, while a small share of respondents (16.2 per cent) believed that it had.

The survey also asked whether the pandemic had served as a catalyst for tackling youth-related concerns. The majority (81.1 per cent) indicated that it had not. Some 86.5 per cent of respondents claimed that their ESC work had not influenced or shaped public policy or regulation on youth issues since the outbreak of the pandemic, with a small share (13.5 per cent) claiming that it had. On social dialogue opportunities, a large majority of respondents (97.3 per cent) felt that their ESC work had not resulted in any social dialogue opportunities at other levels (for example, information exchange, consultation or negotiation between governments, employers and workers at national, sectoral, local and/or enterprise levels). Of respondents, 91.9 per cent stated that they had not seen any outcomes of their ESC activity promoting youth-related concerns since the pandemic's outbreak. Finally, on the challenges that respondents believed are the most important for motivating youth to engage in social dialogue in the coming years, the majority (86.5 per cent) cited "climate and demographic change", while very few (11.0 per cent and 2.7 per cent respectively) cited "rising inequality and digital transformation" and "increasing youth unemployment" as the most significant.

⁸³ The online survey was run from August to November 2021. Thirty-seven responses from AICESIS members ("survey respondents") were collected and analysed. AICESIS members are Economic and Social Councils (ESCs) from 73 countries in the following regions: Africa, Europe and Central Asia, Asia, Middle East, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Typically, ESCs are consultative bodies where national socio-economic and environmental policies and regulations are shaped before their adoption through governmental and/or parliamentary processes. The survey respondents do not constitute a representative sample statistically.

► Online survey: Youth Engagement – AICESIS Members

No.	Topics	Key Survey Responses
1	ESC activity on youth issues	83.8% stated that their ESC included some form of activity on youth-related issues
2	ESC engagement with youth	54.1% stated that their ESC had regular ad hoc contacts with young representatives not formally represented in the ESC 46% claimed that their ESC youth engagement was due to the existence of specialized ESC sections or committees
3	ESC in dialogue with youth	73% said that their ESC had been engaged in dialogue with youth via indirect representation of youth through social partners 8.1% stated that they had been engaged in dialogue directly with youth representatives and organizations 18.9% replied that they had been engaged in both modes
4	ESC engagement with youth since the COVID-19 pandemic	83.8% of respondents offered that their ESC had not promoted youth engagement in social dialogue processes or enabled youth to voice their concerns 16.2% believed that it had
5	COVID-19 as a catalyst for promoting youth issues	81.1% of respondents believed that the pandemic had not served as a catalyst for tackling youth-related concerns 86.5% oclaimed that their ESC work had not influenced or shaped public policy or regulation on youth issues in that period
6	SOCIAL DIALOGUE opportunities since the covid-19 pandemic	97.3% felt that their ESC work had not resulted in any social dialogue opportunities on youth issues 91.9 % stated that they had not seen any outcomes of their ESC activity promoting youth-related concerns
7	Challenges motivating youth to engage in social dialogue in coming years	86.5% cited “climate and demographic change” 11% cited “rising inequality and digital transformation” 2.7% cited “increasing youth unemployment”

Social dialogue is crucial for policies for young people and must be assured either by direct representation of youth groups in policy consultation and decision-making or through social partners. Trade unions and employer organizations can play a significant role in transforming positive pre-pandemic experiences into robust inputs and lessons that can reinforce the contributions that social dialogue can make as an institutional framework for policymaking and implementation at national, sectoral, and local levels.

The collected evidence indicates that during the COVID-19 pandemic the inclusion of young people in social dialogue processes was not as common as social dialogue actors and institutions would have wished. Several factors may account for this. One might relate to possible inadequacies in young people’s representation in social dialogue systems before the pandemic. It is also possible that the nature of the pandemic has caused social partners, particularly trade unions, to prioritize action in favour of essential and “frontline” workers, such as healthcare workers, cleaners, retail or distribution workers, and teachers, given the crucial and widely acknowledged role of such workers during this period (ILO/ACTRAV, 2021). Had youth organizations been able to attract similar attention, the momentum in favour of youth-related concerns could have been better established.

However, young people appear to be experiencing a pervasive sense of powerlessness in matters affecting their own economic and social prospects, facing persistent difficulties in accessing employment compared to their older counterparts and resulting in labour underutilization of youth compared to adults, especially in countries with rigid labour markets, few mobility options, and ineffective active labour market policies (Assmann, and Broschinski, 2021). Those with NEET status are at a higher risk of social and economic exclusion and are not automatically

included in social dialogue due to being unemployed. This may have long-term consequences for the effective functioning of our labour markets and our democracies. Young people seem to have been disconnected from the political and labour markets in many areas of the world for a long time, and in some cases have even been critical of them. Younger generations have grown more unsatisfied with democracy relative to how previous generations felt at similar periods of life, according to a University of Cambridge study that used data from 160 nations between 1973 and 2020 (Foa et al., 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic appears to have intensified institutional discontent. According to a Eurofound study (2021a), satisfaction with democracy among adults aged 18-34 dropped across all EU countries between July 2020 and March 2021. Higher rates of youth unemployment and income disparity have made it harder for younger people to establish their own lives, which has increased their "dissatisfaction" with how well democracy responds to their needs. The labour-market situation of young people has a huge impact on society as a whole, on these young people's future lives, and on the future well-being of our societies and local communities.

For some scholars and commentators, this feeling of powerlessness may be due to actual or perceived "democratic deficits" (Norris, 2011) with young people believing that their values and interests are not reflected in mainstream policies, actors and institutions, including those in social dialogue. Another explanation may relate to a lack of preparedness among youth organizations to raise issues on their countries' policy agendas during the COVID-19 crisis or to push for their own direct involvement in decision-making. Yet another reason could be insufficient capacities among employers' and workers' organizations to develop intensive interactions with young stakeholders on youth-related issues, given disruptions or hurdles with which social dialogue is faced. These hurdles have included, for instance, the parallel operation of both formal and ad hoc social dialogue bodies during the pandemic, which at times generated coordination challenges (ILO, 2020f); or time constraints on consultation and participation during this "emergency" period which seems to have affected the quality of social dialogue and of social partners' involvement (Eurofound, 2021b).

It is also possible that, while youth concerns were addressed in some ways in the policies enacted, their prominence and importance were hampered because governments and social partners were forced to deal with erupting challenges from multiple policy areas simultaneously. Therefore, bargaining objectives and goals, for the most part, reflected the exceptional conditions and pressing realities of the time and developed as the pandemic progressed (ILO, 2020f; Eurofound, 2021b).

In the future, as crises become the new normal, Beck's 30-year-old "risk society" analysis of 1992 becomes more relevant than ever. Beck contended that the complex reflexive relationships between science, technology and social-political institutions structure outcomes over which our control and influence might now be challenged or compromised, as the omnipresence of large-scale global threats, both invisible and unseen, was the common denominator of our new epoch: "A fate of endangerment has arisen in modernity, a sort of counter-modernity, which transcends all our concepts of space, time, and social differentiation. What yesterday was still far away will be found today and, in the future, 'at the front door'" (Beck, 1995, p. 65). The question is how to be equipped to face the uncertainty and complexity of global development. Inclusive participation and representation can mitigate today's risks. The voice of young people is indispensable in this context and in addressing multifaceted global challenges and risks and shaping a better future of work. However, the challenge of unrest is increased by their lack of trust in established institutions and the scarcity of inclusive platforms which they can utilize to express their needs. Governments and social partners must create the civic and social dialogue platforms and pathways that enable young people to have a voice, and a genuine stake in determining the policies that will affect their future, as well as their chances of attaining a dignified path to economic opportunity.

► 5. Beyond the Pandemic: Social Dialogue Empowering Youth for a Better Future of Work

The June 2021 ILC's, the Global call to action for a human-centred recovery from the COVID-19 crisis that is inclusive, sustainable and resilient, emphasized the need for governments to consult with social partners on designing and implementing national recovery plans. It also stressed the need to promote social dialogue as a basis for recovery from the crisis and a means of shaping a better future of work in which young people would have access to quality education, training and decent work (ILO, 2017a, 2021b, pp. 3, 5, 9–10).

Social dialogue showed itself to be effective at maintaining jobs during the crisis (ILO, 2020f), and can also be useful for anticipating changes in the workplace. As we face the possibility of an only partial COVID-19 recovery and a future that is more uncertain (OECD, 2022), social dialogue is more vital than ever. It provides tested strategies for identifying better solutions, establishing consensus and collaboration among all actors in the world of work, and supporting smooth transitions (Rychly, 2009). This acquired knowledge and experience must be used to empower young people to help resolve some of the fundamental issues confronting humanity today.

The digital transition—risks and opportunities

The digital transition is expected to have an especially negative impact on young people. While Millennials and Generation Z are frequently referred to as “digital natives” (ITU, 2020), the majority of them may not have enough job-relevant digital skills to take up the work on offer. Technological innovation is dynamic, creating new jobs while disrupting the labour market. Estimates for the net impact of the digital revolution on employment numbers, as well as their sectoral and geographical distribution, vary widely (Arntz et al., 2016; ILO, 2019a, 2019b; Kucera et al., 2020), although labour market imbalances and skills mismatches are long-standing concerns.

The pandemic has already exposed the size of the digital gap, with four out of ten Europeans lacking basic digital skills (Cedefop, 2021). When the youth digital divide is also considered, and more than one in five (22.4 per cent) young people aged 15–24 being neither in employment, education or training (NEET), the picture becomes bleak (ITU, 2021; ILO and SIDA, 2020). Especially when one considers how technology and new business models are reshaping not just sectors but whole economies, redefining employment and skills needs and fundamentally altering what and how people learn (McKinsey Digital, 2020), prospects for the future become worrying. In a study published by WorldSkills and OECD (2019), 56 per cent of young people stated that they know what they want to do for work in the future, but do not feel supported by their education system, and 44 per cent are concerned that their skills or knowledge will not be in demand in the future. Labour market imbalances and skills mismatches are detrimental to job chances, presenting a danger not just to young workers but also to national economies and social cohesion.

Much of what happens will be determined by policies and social dialogue at sectoral, national and global levels (Bárcia de Mattos et al., 2020). Some recent responses have involved social dialogue as a fundamental component, allowing workers' and employers' organizations to facilitate the gradual adaptation of jobs and workplace practices, as well as adapt and make labour markets more resilient.

For instance, since 2016, Singapore's social partners have helped to build an approach for advancing Industry 4.0, in particular through developing social dialogue: a series of “Industry Transformation Maps” describes how digitization, automation and other technology improvements may help businesses, as well as identify where new employment is likely to be generated (ILO, 2019c). In Norway in 2017, the Ministry of Local Government, the public service workers' union Fagforbundet and the local and regional authorities' association Kommunespeilet signed a tripartite agreement on public sector digitization (Monsen, 2018). The social partners agreed to use a combination of collective bargaining, workplace consultation and collaboration to shape the digitization of local government services.

In Denmark in 2018, the on-demand cleaning firm Hilfr and the country's 3F trade union signed the first collective bargaining agreement for the gig economy (Countouris and De Stefano, 2020). The agreement improved pay,

including provisions for healthcare and a pension in an area dominated by young people: many people use platform employment to make a living, with over half of them aged 16 to 34 (Galfalvi et al., 2020). And according to a Danish government member, society, employers and employees must become more agile to maintain economic and social sustainability and inclusiveness faced with rapid technological change.

With such change intensifying skills mismatches, social partners have increasingly been recognized for their crucial role in transforming skill systems around the world (ETF, 2013; Global Deal, OECD and ILO, 2020; ILO, , 2020g). Participation of workers' and employers' groups in skills systems at a national, sectoral, company and institutional levels is critical for ensuring relevance and quality of training programmes and is an essential dynamic for reducing skills mismatches.

The picture is mixed, however. At a national level, in the Caribbean Community member states; in Chile, Malaysia, Mauritius, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tunisia and Turkey; and in several European states, even nearly a decade ago there had been substantial tripartite engagement in creating national skills certification systems (ILO, 2013b). Yet an earlier international study on national qualification frameworks in 16 countries found that a lack of social dialogue with social partners in designing, implementing and evaluating such frameworks was detrimental to social partner engagement in 15 of them (Australia aside) (Alais, 2010).

In more recent times in Germany, the relevant ministries and social partners extended the Alliance for Initial and Continuing Vocational Training 2015–2018 for 2019–21. The current version intends to bring together more young people and businesses to continue to improve the attractiveness and quality of apprenticeship training and of the system of apprenticeships and strengthen advanced vocational training programmes (Allianz für Aus- und Weiterbildung, 2022). In Spain, social dialogue is the major operation to support skills acquisition, and is conducted by the State Foundation for Training and Employment, Fundae, in the Public Employment Service of the Ministry of Labour and Social Economy.

At a regional level, the African Union Commission launched the Skills Initiative for Africa in 2019 to improve employment prospects for African youth. It funds skills development programmes that contribute to the development of job-related skills. Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Togo and Tunisia are the focus of its initiatives (SIFA, no date). Further, tripartite representatives of Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, Philippines, and Japan, together with staff members of the ASEAN secretariat and the ILO, held a Tripartite Regional Seminar to discuss the importance of skills development as a key subject of social dialogue in the context of the future of work in September 2019 (ILO, 2019d). The 9th Tripartite Regional Seminar on Industrial Relations in the ASEAN Region “Promoting sound industrial relations through social dialogue on skills development in the context of future of work” agreed on proposals to promote social dialogue on both skills development and providing skills training for marginalized groups including youth.

On a sectoral basis, the EU social partners have signed collective agreements on skills development, such as the joint Recommendation on Digital Transformation in the Workplace, which emphasizes the value of lifelong learning in coping with the digital transformation. Lifelong learning “should be understood as a must-have and not as an available option: both for companies, which need an adequately trained/skilled workforce, and employees, to remain employable and reduce their vulnerability to the risk of automation” (ECEG and IETU, 2019).

Private initiatives on a global scale involving multinational enterprises (MNEs) are important in amplifying youth perspectives and at times demonstrate the value of cross-border social dialogue. In addition to multiple business-driven initiatives developed or led by MNEs, such as [“A Global Alliance to Empower Youth in the Workplace,”](#) several Transnational Company Agreements (TCAs) signed between MNEs and Global Union Federations representing workers by sector of activity at global level promote lifelong learning and/or skills development, some with direct reference to youth (ILO, 2019e; Papadakis, 2011). For instance, an “Agreement for the Integration of Young People, 2017–2022” signed between the Safran Group and IndustriALL Europe aims to promote the employment and skills development of young employees (Safran, 2017). Similarly, a 2017 agreement between the auto MNE PSA Group and IndustriALL highlights social dialogue as an important tool for promoting lifelong learning and skills development (IndustriALL, 2017; ILO, no date).

Despite these positive examples, social dialogue has frequently been undermined and weakened by threats to freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, and by decreased reliance on consultations with unions and employers due to the growing fragmentation of industrial relations (Baccaro and Galindo, 2018; Baccaro and Howell, 2017). Social dialogue has played an essential role in the development of the modern workplace as well as the political and economic interventions that have raised the living conditions of millions of workers, notably

since World War II. Countries with a strong social dialogue system have weathered crises better than others by defying disruptions and adapting to their circumstances more flexibly (ILO, 2022c). Investments in digital and environmental transitions have the potential to create new employment opportunities for young people, but also cause significant disruption to the workplace and profoundly rattle the world of work. Social dialogue, comprising governments and business and worker representative organizations, should play a major role in ensuring that countries develop balanced policies to handle these forces of change, ensuring both sustainable economic resilience and social fairness. To that purpose, social dialogue must become more inclusive, collaborative, and youth-responsive.

The environmental transition—risks and opportunities

As governments, employers, and workers assess the lessons learned from the COVID-19 crisis and the world seeks to address its combined economic, geopolitical and energy risks, we must not lose sight of long-term priorities such as environmental and digital transformations, with the goal of creating decent jobs for youth, especially in the wake of the pandemic. It is within this context that the ILO Global Call to Action for a human-centred recovery from the COVID-19 crisis that is inclusive, sustainable and resilient (2021), calls for the opportunities provided by just, digital and environmental transitions to be leveraged to advance decent work. The transition to green and blue ('ocean') economies, and digitalization, presents downsides and upsides for young people, having profound impacts on the nature and future of work (ILO, 2022b). Against this background, it will be critical to identify and address the missing knowledge sharing and social dialogue spaces required by the emerging sectors and economies.

The importance of social dialogue in addressing climate change and sustainability—a key youth concern—has been thoroughly articulated (see, for example, ILO, 2015). A recent study of 10,000 young people aged 16–25 years in ten countries found that young people were worried about climate change (59 per cent very or extremely worried, 84 per cent at least moderately worried). Over 50 per cent felt sad, anxious, angry, powerless, helpless and guilty. Over 45 per cent reported that their feelings about climate change negatively affected their daily life and functioning, and many stated a high number of negative thoughts about climate change (Marks et al., 2021). Young people have been vocal about climate change owing to a real feeling of intergenerational injustice, instability and uncertainty (Barford et al., 2021b). And so young people, who have already borne the brunt of the economic fallout of the 2008 economic recession and are now dealing with the effects of the COVID-19 and energy crisis, are finding it increasingly difficult to manage the environmental transition.

Disruption aside, the environmental transition has the potential to generate for young people considerable employment opportunities. This can be achieved notably if coherent policies across the environmental, economic, social, education/training and labour portfolios suitable policies are put in place; if issues of environmental sustainability and green career pathways are integrated in education and training systems; if active labour market policies support the enabling of young people to acquire the new skills and if the technical and scientific knowledge needed to embrace and drive the transition towards environmentally sustainable and inclusive labour markets is put in place. We must especially equip young women with the necessary skills and expertise, including STEM skills, which are critical in the developing green and blue industries but are underutilized among women, so that they may seize both short- and long-term opportunities (Alam and Sanchez Tapia, 2020). According to recent research (ILO, 2018b, IRENA and ILO, 2022), taking action to limit global warming to 2 degrees Celsius may generate new employment opportunities by 2030. While the number of jobs in the energy sector could rise to 139 million, a “business as usual” approach is likely to threaten jobs and lives. Further, we must ensure these new jobs are also decent jobs (Barford and Ahmad, 2021c). Climate issues are, thus, increasingly being placed on the agenda of social partner organizations and of tripartite discussions, with the twin crises of environmental degradation and youth unemployment occurring in tandem.

In Spain for example, social partners participate in identifying skills needed by serving on joint committees under Fundae, enabling active labour market policies to continually update training supply to meet the demands of the greening economy (CEDEFOP, 2019; Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional, 2020). “Bipartite plus” or “tripartite plus” partnerships have also been formed with social partners collaborating with other stakeholders. The involvement of BusinessEurope and ETUC, as well as sectoral social partner organizations such as those in the food processing industry, agriculture and education in the Sustainable Development Goals Multi-Stakeholder Platform (European Commission, 2017), is a concrete example of social partners working with other bodies to prepare for a sustainable future. As efforts to ensure sustainability generate new job prospects for younger generations, as in agriculture, the renewable energy and construction sectors and broader climate adaptation activities (van der Ree,

2019), as well as social dialogue, can be critical for developing national green-job strategies for youth and for managing the transition to a net-zero carbon economy (ILO/ACTRAV, 2018).

Demographic trends, beyond technology and climate driven disruptions, are projected to have an influence on labour-force demands affecting youth, primarily due to changes in demand for skills. Between 2017 and 2030, the global youth labour force is expected grow by 25.6 million, while the developing countries in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific will account for 77.0 percent of the youth labour force aged 15-24. These young people will require new jobs (ILO, 2017b). At the same time, high-income countries are ageing, resulting in a global labour force that is becoming increasingly concentrated in low- and middle-income countries (Generation Unlimited, 2020). Although there is limited evidence on labour market outcomes for youth, studies show that labour force growth outpaces employment growth in many low- and middle-income countries. For example, in Sub-Saharan Africa, 10–12 million young people enter the labour force each year, but only around 3 million jobs are generated.

While the increase in the number of young people in many developing countries implies a potential demographic dividend, integrating large numbers of young people into the workforce, which is required to realize the dividend, is a huge challenge, especially as youth migration is increasing globally. The large majority of international migrant workers (referring to usual residents in a given country who are foreign-born or foreign citizens when place of birth information is not available) consist of prime-age adults but the share of youth (aged 15–24) among international migrant workers has increased, from 8.3 per cent in 2017 to 10.0 per cent in 2019 (ILO, 2021e, p. 13). In 2020, young migrants between the ages of 15 and 24 years made up 11.3 per cent of the world's migrant population and 2.6 per cent of the world's youth population (UN DESA, 2019, 2020).

In addressing these challenges at the heart of the evolving world of work, there is a growing need to enhance the inclusiveness of collective representation at all levels and enable youth-led organizations and representative bodies to have a say in policy decisions that create youth and gender-responsive pathways to decent employment that facilitate successful work transitions and affect youth livelihoods (ILO and ADB, 2020). “This includes”, as Dasgupta et al. write (2021, p. 239), “working simultaneously on the economic, social and labour fronts, tackling climate change and the demographic megatrends and strengthening the labour market institutions (including social dialogue) to meet the youth employment challenge today and in the future”.

► Conclusion and discussion

This report has sought to further the role of social dialogue in addressing pandemic disruptions and future changes in the world of work, with an emphasis on young people. The following are the key takeaways.

The evidence from the pandemic points to inadequate youth inclusion in formal social dialogue and policymaking, as well as limited representation of youth perspectives in the key processes.

The COVID-19 crisis has underlined the need to bring young people into policymaking, build relationships with existing social dialogue actors, and capitalize on good practices, as well as their exchange across countries, to reduce inclusiveness deficits. As it was highlighted during the consultations at the High-Level Meeting on “Social dialogue With and For Youth” held in Geneva in November 2022 - with the participation of Government representatives, social partners, delegates of youth organizations, and experts - young people aspire towards high quality education and skills to enter the labour market, and also decent, stable, and secure job opportunities. In that respect, youth involvement at multilateral and domestic levels is vital for greater ownership, a key ingredient for improving the effectiveness of policy strategies and interventions. This point resonates with the findings of other studies, which also identify the need for governments and social partners to ensure a youth-inclusive recovery (OECD, 2022; EYF and People Dialogue and Change, 2021; EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership, 2021; Our World in Data, 2021; UNICEF and ETF, 2020).

And so it is crucial to increase young people's opportunities to engage with employers' organizations, join workers' groups or national youth employment coalitions, and participate in the design, implementation, and monitoring processes of policies and programmes. Equally critical is the creation of opportunities that enable young people to be successfully engaged in developing social dialogue outcomes, and in implementing policy objectives or commitments pertinent to them—in short, delivering policies with them for them.

The lack of connections between young people and policymaking at all levels suggests that there is still unresolved thinking about how youth agency can be understood and supported for participation in policy design and implementation, including formal social dialogue structures.

In several countries, social partners seem inadequately equipped to support these functions. It is characteristic that in 102 countries across all regions between 2020-2021, 381 social dialogue outcomes, such as joint statements and agreements, were reached. They sought to provide immediate relief and assist businesses and workers in adjusting to the virus's continued spread (ILO, 2020f; 2021f). Some of these outcomes addressed the specific circumstances of young people during the COVID-19 crisis, but direct engagement with them has been rare. Despite the fact that “the potential value of youth as active citizens may appear self-evident” (Dunne et al., 2014, p. 1), there is an observed uncertainty about how to best achieve this in the world of work and especially in contexts of crises as well as how to understand, connect with and promote youth agency throughout the policy cycle and in relation to social dialogue processes (Barber, 2009). As a result, the “youth disconnect” is becoming a persistent challenge, particularly as young people return to insecure jobs following COVID-19 (Powell, 2022), and as the fabric of the labour markets is threatened by the effects of multiple crises, particularly those involving energy and food, geopolitical risks, and macroeconomic risks (ILO, 2022b).

Difficulties often strengthen the potential for innovating and experimenting. Proposals in the literature have for a long time emphasized the power of “connective action” (for example, Bennett and Segerberg, 2012), a term used to describe digitally personalized public participation (Carneiro and Costa, 2020). While remaining distant from formal procedures, many young people take part in virtual communities on social media, sign petitions, upload blogs, disseminate “nanostories” via hashtags, and take part in activism on online channels, often strengthening their sense of civic duty (Moeller et al., 2018).

Strategies for increasing the outreach and power of youth organizations through digitally enabled collective action have been emerging. These strategies range from organizing at a grassroots level to building coalitions while tying labour challenges to a wider social and environmental justice agenda (see, for example, Vandaele, 2018; EPSU, 2019; Bessa et al, 2022), including in the gig economy (Johnston and Land-Kazlauskas, 2018; Mexi, 2019; Bonvin, et al, 2023; Hadwider, 2022).

Activists using digitally enabled mobilization tend to distance themselves from the traditional collective union representation and labour activism, preferring instead to direct their organized efforts around human-rights non-governmental organizations or broader social movements (Mundlak, 2012, 2020). As recent research has highlighted, an essential step in bridging the disconnect between young people and social partners is for the latter to adopt digital technologies and adapt their social dialogue practices (Eurofound, 2021c). This demands greater communication and wider sharing of digital tools (uptake and use) within and across countries (Eurofound, 2021c).

Increasingly complex and varied forms of youth participation require the adaptation of traditional bipartite or tripartite social dialogue systems, and the creation of opportunities for more youth-friendly social dialogue in the future. For example, effective youth engagement may require that social partners adapt to youth-driven hybrid forms of mobilization that blend spontaneous protest and advocacy action with representation in formal social dialogue approaches (Mundlak, 2016). And, given the evolving and interconnected challenges, there is a need for increased collaboration between social partners and representatives of youth-led groups, beyond the strict purview of the labour agenda (Gumbrell-McCormick et al., 2013; Skovdal and Benwell, 2021), so as to better respond to disruptions cutting across environmental, economic and social aspects.

Our research shows that the pre-pandemic experience of 73 countries around the world (Appendix I)—where youth organizations were integrated into national employment policymaking—underlines the importance of “youth engagement roadmaps” that reflect firm commitments to engage young people. Setting up tools to regularly collect evidence of the substantive outcomes of these mechanisms would increase their usefulness for social dialogue. Youth representation and engagement in social dialogue practices should be viewed as an interactive process that strengthens the capacity of voiceless groups of young people to direct their destinies. In practice, as the evidence shows, such potential may be undermined by a lack of resources (primarily financial) both to support youth engagement and empowerment, and to provide youth representatives with the necessary knowledge and skills to take part in social dialogue and other public consultations.

Several key preconditions may determine the effectiveness of efforts to incorporate youth-related concerns in social dialogue.

Besides the importance of freedom of association and collective bargaining rights, four other preconditions appear crucial:

- Strong political will on the part of all parties to prioritize youth issues and engage in meaningful dialogue with young people to discuss youth realities and prospects;
- Increased capacity of social dialogue institutions, as well as employer and worker organizations that deliver with and for young people, by improving and expanding existing modalities for dialogue, cooperation, and partnerships with youth-led organizations, movements, and networks;
- Clear standards for governments and social partners to assess and monitor how they engage young people in effective and efficient collaboration; and
- Sufficient resources and the existence of strong youth structures, such as youth advisory boards or committees as well as networks of and for young people within social partner entities to provide a channel for listening to young people and reinforcing their engagement with the work of social partners while ensuring systematic attention to youth issues.

In short, injecting a youth perspective requires increasing the ability of all actors in the world of work to collaborate, and rectifying deficiencies in reaching young people.

The evidence highlights the need for making special efforts to engage hard-to-reach young people—notably rural youth, minority groups, young people with disabilities, and single parents coping with and surviving in very difficult job markets.

Different groups of young people have different needs in different situations, which should be acknowledged in the outcomes reached through social dialogue. Gender perspectives are typically disregarded in youth empowerment and engagement activities, and there has been a general lack of policy attention on gendered dimensions of the pandemic's impact (ILO, 2020h;; Barford et al., 2021a). It is therefore critical to recognize the agency that young women and men may demonstrate in such activities while also taking into account the structural factors that restrict and condition their capacity to exert influence.

Designing capacity-building programmes among youth and non-youth stakeholders for improving social dialogue without first recognizing (and addressing) young people's gendered disparities risks reproducing stereotypes and subordination. Without addressing the question of gender, particularly issues of access and defined needs, young women in the post-COVID-19 period risk being barred from participation in social dialogue.

“Young people are citizens now, rather than citizens in preparation” (Smyth, 2012, p. 8), which means that their perspectives, concerns and needs must be integral to current processes, and their participation rights and opportunities should be promoted and safeguarded.

The extent to which young people are empowered to engage in social dialogue processes and institutions, as well as political institutions, has a significant impact on their agency as civic actors. Youth civic participation and institutional trust have weakened in developed democracies throughout the world (OECD, 2020a). Pre-pandemic, studies demonstrated a decline in young people's satisfaction with democracy (see, for example, Gallup, 2019). In the early 2000s, many youth movements lamented such things as having a vote, but no voice (Borge and Mochmann, 2019). The literature has identified factors in political disengagement among young people (Giugni and Grasso, 2020) and in their general distrust of public institutions (OECD, 2022b). Disengagement from social dialogue and its institutions does not occur in a vacuum—it is part of this larger process entailing lack of opportunities for economic, societal and political participation that, if left unaddressed, could even destabilize political and economic systems altogether in the context of growing democratic backsliding (Freedom House, 2022; Kwak et al, 2020).

Young people's voices are indispensable for ensuring a more equitable and inclusive future of work during the COVID-19 recovery and beyond. Meaningful youth involvement is a means of achieving positive changes in young people's lives and of building an engaged society and world of work.

Working with young people must be at the heart of future efforts, so as to develop a strong trusting relationship responsive to their needs guided by principles of openness and fairness; to improve their capacity and skills to successfully advocate for their interests; and to encourage them to constructively take part in social dialogue and labour governance in ways that considerably improve opportunities for young and older workers to collaborate, think, create and connect productively. Removing age-based barriers and other inequities (UN, 2021b), ensuring how young people from diverse backgrounds, perspectives and employment, personal, and family trajectories (Chacaltana and Prieto, 2020) can have spaces for meaningful participation as well as how social partner organizations can be more supportive to diversity, are also critical. Not only in terms of guaranteeing that policy solutions and labour standards are updated to respond better to the evolving realities of young people. This is particularly vital in preventing further disengagement of young people from social dialogue processes and for effectively utilizing the leverage offered by effective collective action and representation of interests. Young people's engagement concerns us all. Investing in social dialogue social dialogue with and for young people is as much about identifying the agents of transformation as it is about articulating new ideas. It is, above all else, about people and their aspirations for a future of work which takes a big turn for the better.

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► Appendix 1

► Social partners' inclusion in the youth employment strategy, policymaking stages (pre-pandemic evidence)

		Stage of youth employment policymaking					
Country	Youth Employment Strategy (e.g. national action plan for youth)	Formulation	Development	Implementation	Assessment	Monitoring and evaluation	Awareness-raising and promotion
Americas							
1. Barbados	National Development Strategy/Plan (addressing youth employment) 2005–2025	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")
2. Ecuador	"Red Socio Empleo"—Job opportunities, Public Investment Project "Youth Employment" (Empleo Joven), Public Investment Project "My First Job" (Mi Primer Empleo)	✓ Employers "Fully Involved" ✓ Workers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Fully Involved"	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Employers "Fully Involved" ✓ Workers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Fully Involved"
3. Brazil	National Employment System (SINE), 2018 law on "professional apprenticeship", 2019 National Qualification Strategy for Productivity and Employment	✓ Employers "Fully Involved" ✓ Workers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Employers "Fully Involved" ✓ Workers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	n/a	✓ Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")

		Stage of youth employment policymaking					
Country	Youth Employment Strategy (e.g. national action plan for youth)	Formulation	Development	Implementation	Assessment	Monitoring and evaluation	Awareness-raising and promotion
4. Chile	2018 National Training and Employment Service (SENCE)—Youth Employment Subsidy and On-the-Job Training programmes	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	n/a
5. Colombia	TransFórmate Programme, Lineamientos para la generación de oportunidades para los jóvenes	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”
6. Dominican Republic	National Employment Service—Strategy Plan and the National First Job Plan	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Employers “Fully Involved” ✓ Workers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)
7. El Salvador	National Training for Employment through Apprenticeship Programme, My First Job National Programme, Guidance and Skills Training for Work Plan, Territorial Control Plan—Opportunities	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers “Fully Involved” ✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	n/a	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Employers “Fully Involved” ✓ Workers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”
8. Grenada	National Action Plan for Youth Employment—Strategic Action Plan and Implementation Strategy to support the Youth Employment policy 2015–2020	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	n/a	n/a	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)

		Stage of youth employment policymaking					
Country	Youth Employment Strategy (e.g. national action plan for youth)	Formulation	Development	Implementation	Assessment	Monitoring and evaluation	Awareness-raising and promotion
9. Guatemala	National Decent Employment Policy (2017–2032)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)
10. Jamaica	National Youth Policy 2017–30	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	n/a	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)
11. Mexico	Youth Building the Future Programme (YFCP) (Jovenes Construyendo el Futuro)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”
12. Uruguay	Youth Employment Act, Promotion of Youth Entrepreneurship Act	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”
Arab States							
13. Jordan	Jordan’s National Employment Strategy 2011–2020, The Jordan National TVET Strategy 2014–2020, Executive Development Program, MoL Strategic Plan 2017–2021, National Human Resources Development 2018–2022, Jordan Economic Growth Plan	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)

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		Stage of youth employment policymaking					
Country	Youth Employment Strategy (e.g. national action plan for youth)	Formulation	Development	Implementation	Assessment	Monitoring and evaluation	Awareness-raising and promotion
17. Cambodia	Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency, 2018–2023, National Strategic Development Plan, 2019–2023, National Employment Policy 2015–2025, Industrial Development Policy 2015 – 2025, National Policy on Cambodia Youth Development 2011, National TVET Policy 2017–2025, Modernize TVET Strategic Action Plan 2019–2023	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Employers “Fully Involved” ✓ Workers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)
18. China	Middle- and Long-Term Plan for Youth Development 2016–2025	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Employers “Fully Involved”
19. Indonesia	Annual Government Work Plan/National Medium Term Development Plan 2015–2019	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)
20. New Zealand	Youth Employment Action Plan 2019, New Zealand National Employment Strategy 2019	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	n/a	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)
21. Pakistan	11 th and 12 th five-year plan, Vision 2025, Kamyab Jawan (Youth Employment) Programme 2019	✓ Employers “Fully Involved” ✓ Workers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ n/a	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)

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		Stage of youth employment policymaking					
Country	Youth Employment Strategy (e.g. national action plan for youth)	Formulation	Development	Implementation	Assessment	Monitoring and evaluation	Awareness-raising and promotion
26. Timor-Leste	National Employment Strategy (2017–2030), Timor-Leste Technical and Vocational Education and Training Plan 2011–2030	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Employers “Fully Involved” ✓ Workers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”) ✓ Employers “Fully Involved”
27. Viet Nam	Viet Nam Youth Development Strategy 2011–2020	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)
Europe							
28. Azerbaijan	National Employment Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2019–2030, Azerbaijani Youth 2017–2021 State Program	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)
29. Belarus	State Program on Social Protection and Employment Promotion for 2016–2020	n/a	n/a	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	n/a	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)
30. Bosnia and Herzegovina	Employment strategy of Republika Srpska 2016–2020	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”

		Stage of youth employment policymaking					
Country	Youth Employment Strategy (e.g. national action plan for youth)	Formulation	Development	Implementation	Assessment	Monitoring and evaluation	Awareness-raising and promotion
31. Czech Republic	Employment Strategy Policy 2020, Implementation Plan for the Czech Youth Guarantee Programme	✓ Workers & Employers "Fully Involved"	✓ Workers & Employers "Fully Involved"	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")
32. Germany	Alliance for Further Training 2019–2021, National Implementation Plan to Establish the EU Youth Guarantee in Germany	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Fully Involved"	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")
33. Greece	Greek Youth Guarantee Action Plan 2018–2020	n/a	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	n/a
34. Hungary	Youth Guarantee Action Plan 2014–2020, National Youth Strategy (2009–2024) and its biennial action plans, Youth Guarantee Action Plan, National Employment Policy Laying down the foundations of employment policy development objectives for the period between 2014–2020, National Youth Strategy 2009–2024	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Fully Involved"	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Fully Involved"

		Stage of youth employment policymaking					
Country	Youth Employment Strategy (e.g. national action plan for youth)	Formulation	Development	Implementation	Assessment	Monitoring and evaluation	Awareness-raising and promotion
35. Italy	Italian plan for the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, National operational program (PON) Youth Employment Initiative (IOG) 2014–2020, National operational program (PON) Active Policies for Employment Complementary Operational Programme	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	n/a	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)
36. Latvia	Youth Guarantee Implementation Rules (Cabinet of Ministers Regulation), The National Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan 2014–2018, Youth Guarantee Programme 2014–2020	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
37. Malta	National Youth Policy Towards 2020: A shared vision for the future of young people, The National Employment Policy	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”
38. Republic of Moldova	National Employment Strategy for 2017–2021	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)

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		Stage of youth employment policymaking					
Country	Youth Employment Strategy (e.g. national action plan for youth)	Formulation	Development	Implementation	Assessment	Monitoring and evaluation	Awareness-raising and promotion
44. Spain	Spanish Employment Activation Strategy, Youth Employment Shock Plan 2019–2021, Youth Guarantee- Youth Employment Operational Programme (YEOP) 2014–2023	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)
45. Tajikistan	State Program for Employment Promotion in the Republic of Tajikistan, 2018–2019, National Program for Youth Social Development of the Republic of Tajikistan, State Program for Employment Promotion in the Republic of Tajikistan, 2018–2019 (with separate section on youth employment), State Strategy for Youth Policy in the Republic of Tajikistan until 2020	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Informed”	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)
46. Turkey	National Employment Strategy 2014–2023 and Action Plans 2017–2019, Tenth Development Plan	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”
47. Turkmenistan	State Programme on Employment Promotion and Job Creation 2015–2020, State Programme for Youth Employment 2018–2020	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)”	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)

		Stage of youth employment policymaking					
Country	Youth Employment Strategy (e.g. national action plan for youth)	Formulation	Development	Implementation	Assessment	Monitoring and evaluation	Awareness-raising and promotion
48. United Kingdom	The Good Work Plan 2018, Social Mobility Action Plan	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")
49. Uzbekistan	State Program YOSHLAR-KELAJAGIMIZ	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Fully Involved"	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Fully Involved"	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")
Africa							
50. Benin	Growth Programme for Sustainable Development (PC2D) 2018–2021, National Employment Policy 2019–2025, National Development Plan Strategy (NDP) 2018–2025	✓ Workers & Employers "Fully Involved"	✓ Employers "Fully Involved" ✓ Workers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Fully Involved"	✓ Workers & Employers "Fully Involved"	✓ Employers "Fully Involved" ✓ Workers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Employers "Fully Involved" ✓ Workers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")
51. Botswana	National Development Plan 11 April 2017–March 2023	✓ Workers & Employers "Fully Involved"	✓ Workers & Employers "Fully Involved"	✓ Workers & Employers "Fully Involved"	✓ Workers & Employers "Fully Involved"	✓ Workers & Employers "Fully Involved"	✓ Workers & Employers "Fully Involved"
52. Cameroon	National Action Plan for Youth Employment (PANEJ) 2016–2020	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")
53. Central African Republic	National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan (RCPA) 2017–2021, National Youth Policy and its operational action plan	✓ Workers & Employers "Fully Involved"	✓ Workers & Employers "Fully Involved"	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")	✓ Workers & Employers "Partially Involved" ("informed and consulted")

		Stage of youth employment policymaking					
Country	Youth Employment Strategy (e.g. national action plan for youth)	Formulation	Development	Implementation	Assessment	Monitoring and evaluation	Awareness-raising and promotion
54. Congo	National Development Plan (PND 2018–2022); human capital development component	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	n/a	✓ Workers “Fully Involved” ✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)
55. Egypt	The Sustainable Development Strategy: Egypt Vision 2030, The Employment strategy 2018–2030, Egypt Vision 2030	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”
56. Equatorial Guinea	Plan “Horizonte” 2020, National Employment Policy Act	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)
57. Ethiopia	Ethiopian National Youth policy, GTP-II: Growth and Transformation Plan II (GTP II) (2015/16–2019/20)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)
58. Gabon	National Employment Policy 2018	✓ Employers “Fully Involved” ✓ Workers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Employers “Fully Involved” ✓ Workers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Employers “Fully Involved” ✓ Workers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)
59. Gambia	National Development Plan 2018–2021, National Employment Policy and Action Plan 2019–2024	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”

		Stage of youth employment policymaking					
Country	Youth Employment Strategy (e.g. national action plan for youth)	Formulation	Development	Implementation	Assessment	Monitoring and evaluation	Awareness-raising and promotion
60. Ghana	Coordinated Program For Social Economic Policy Development 2017–2024	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)
61. Liberia	Pro Poor Agenda For Prosperity & Development 2018–2023, Strategic and Operational Plan 2018–2023	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)
62. Madagascar	Five-Year Action Plan (QAP) for the implementation of the NPC 2018–2022, National Youth Policy (NYP)	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	n/a	n/a	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)
63. Morocco	National Employment Strategy for 2025, 2015–2025, National Plan for the Promotion of Employment by 2021, 2017–2021	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	n/a
64. Nigeria	Economic Recovery and Growth Plan(ERGP) 2017–2020, National Youth Policy 2019–2023	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)
65. Rwanda	National Youth Policy 2015–2019, 7 Years Government Programme: National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) 2017–2024, National Skills Development And Employment Promotion Strategy 2019–2024	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Employers “Fully Involved”

		Stage of youth employment policymaking					
Country	Youth Employment Strategy (e.g. national action plan for youth)	Formulation	Development	Implementation	Assessment	Monitoring and evaluation	Awareness-raising and promotion
66. Sao Tome and Principe	e-jovem 2022–Creation strategy for youth employment	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”
67. Senegal	Operational Action Plan for Youth Employment 2018	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Employers “Fully Involved” ✓ Workers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Employers “Fully Involved” ✓ Workers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	n/a	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)
68. Seychelles	National Youth Policy 2018–2023, National Employment Policy and Strategies 2014–2029, Seychelles National Development Strategy 2019–2023, National Human Resources Development Strategy 2018–2022	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)
69. Sierra Leone	National Development Plan 2019–2023	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)
70. South Africa	Status of Youth Report 2018, National Youth Policy 2015 (NYP2015 to 2020), Integrated Youth Development Strategy (IYDS 2020)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Employers “Fully Involved” ✓ Workers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)

		Stage of youth employment policymaking					
Country	Youth Employment Strategy (e.g. national action plan for youth)	Formulation	Development	Implementation	Assessment	Monitoring and evaluation	Awareness-raising and promotion
71. Tunisia	National Entrepreneurship Strategy (SNEt) implemented (2017–2021), Reform of the national vocational training system (in progress—2016–2020; National Employment Strategy (NES, under development—2020–2030)	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”) ✓ Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”
72. Zambia	National Employment and Labour Market Policy 2030, Seventh National Development Plan 2017–2021	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	✓ Employers “Partially Involved” (“informed and consulted”)	n/a
73. Zimbabwe	Transitional Stabilization Programme (TSP) 2018–2020	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	n/a	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”	✓ Workers & Employers “Fully Involved”

Note: n/a = data not available. ‘Partially involved’ refers to social partner involvement only for some elements of the youth employment strategy, and it includes the categories “Informed” and “Consulted”

“Fully Involved” (Workers & Employers)
 “Partially Involved” (Workers & Employers)
 Employers and/or Workers Fully Involved and/or Partially Involved

Source: ILO Employment Policy Gateway, Youth Employment Strategies, <https://www.ilo.org/empolgateway/#youth-employment:9>; pre-pandemic data.

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