



**ECOSOC
YOUTH
FORUM**

#YOUTH2030

8th Economic and Social Council Youth Forum

SUMMARY

SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

8 April 2019

CR 5, 4-6 p.m.

United Nations Headquarters, New York

Highlights

- The session focused on three themes:
 1. *Beyond GDP: youth perspectives on well-being, the environment, and inclusive economic growth.*
 2. *Youth transitions to decent work: education, employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in urban and rural areas.*
 3. *Rebuilding trust: increasing investment in the institutions of work.*
- Going beyond GDP implies opening scope for other measures of social and economic progress that surpass what is accounted for through GDP growth. It acknowledges work for what it is and for what it is worth, and recognizes the important contribution of work in the informal economy, domestic work, motherhood, and other important activities with large contribution to the economies. Because all jobs have value, all jobs must be measured. For instance, street vendors are under-valued whereas they should be seen as significant contributors to their countries and to their economies. There is a need to “de-growth” because life is about living well, not living better. It is essential to promote workers’ rights and to push for regulations that boost living standards.

- Youth transitions to decent work should benefit from good practices to improve their chances of success. In this context, the most marginalized need to receive greater focus, in particular young women, youth in the rural economy, indigenous youth and youth with disabilities. Policies must support young people to learn on the job, and whereas work-based learning opportunities are very important, they are more effective when they are paid, including apprenticeships and internships. Entrepreneurship and self-employment opportunities also open space for young people to transition into decent jobs and social entrepreneurship is particularly recognized as an area of great value added. Furthermore, to support successful transitions of youth into the labour market, it is important to foster collaboration among multiple actors, from governments to private sector and civil society, always valuing and encouraging meaningful youth participation.
- Because young people have lost trust in the institutions of work, there needs to be a common ground to shape the future of work in a more inclusive manner and with the meaningful participation of youth. This entails a systems approach that works across sectors and policy spectrums securing positive influence at the national level. Governments must ensure the sustainability and scale of solutions that promote decent work for youth while working with multiple partners to protect workers' rights. There also needs to be a global market for people, and not just for goods, and this must be accompanied by a strong effort to curb corruption practices.

Summary of key messages and recommendations

Progress on economic growth and decent work is far behind. We must go beyond today's obsession with GDP. We must put people at the core of progress within planetary boundaries. We must integrate what is invisible, from work that is performed in the informal economy, to volunteering, home care and parenting, which are particularly related to the contribution of women to the economy. And we must promote decent jobs for youth in the green economy.

We must creatively incentivize open and equitable stakeholder partnerships – including governments, private sector and civil society – and we must regulate all form of employment to create decent jobs for youth (work that is paid, that provides security and leads to tangible social impact.) But we must also, always, partner with youth in a meaningful way.

Better jobs for youth will come only through this collective action, policies that guarantee access to quality education, skills, markets, networks, information and technology and engage all young people from all different backgrounds and all settings, including young people in the rural economy, young people with disabilities, and young indigenous peoples.

Only through active and meaningful engagement in the governance of work and promotion of human rights can we sure a brighter Future of Work, one with social protection and respect for youth rights. Trust in the institutions of work can only be rebuilt through universal and equitable young engagement.