

Youth Employment in the Mediterranean (YEM)

Regional Forum

Thursday 8 April 2021 at 10:30 to 12:45 (Paris time) online event



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Background

Countries in the southern Mediterranean region face many challenges in political, social, and economic spheres, due to wars, civil conflicts, demographic changes and forced displacement. In addition to the challenging socio-political environment of countries in the southern Mediterranean region, the COVID-19 pandemic crisis has greatly affected economies, exacerbated socio-economic inequalities, and disrupted education and training in an unprecedented manner. With high rates of unemployment, especially youth unemployment in the region, and labour markets that are undergoing rapid changes, there is a strong need to match the training with the current and future skills needs. More robust systems for monitoring changes in the demand for labour and ascertaining employers' changing requirements for human capital, and systematic arrangements for responding to emerging skills needs are required in the region.

In this regard, the Youth Employment in the Mediterranean (YEM) project (2018-2020, extended until July 2021), funded by the European Union and led by UNESCO, is continuing the work started in the employment component of the NET-MED Youth project (2014-2018). The YEM project aims to support the beneficiary countries in effectively collecting and using information on skills needs and converting such information into relevant policy actions and programmes. YEM is supporting skills governance using complementary skills anticipation methods and enhancing the national and regional dialogue on future skills needs. In the current context of the pandemic, the YEM project intervention to alleviate youth unemployment in the region has furthermore renewed its relevance.

Activities under the YEM project are conducted under three main thematic Components:

Component 1: Strengthening national systems for skills needs anticipation and assessment, under which quantitative skills forecasting models (originally developed under the NET-MED Youth project in six countries in the region) are being updated, and qualitative approaches like prospective scenario development are being conducted. The project is also working on supporting national capacities in the development of tools for skills forecasting and assessment. Skills forecasting exercises are being conducted together with national partner institutions. The use of alternative data sources to assess skills demand, like the use of real time data or big data from online job platforms, is also being explored in some of the participating countries. These works under the YEM project are being leveraged to enhancing national and regional level dialogue on future skills needs, to strengthen stakeholder platforms, and to encourage peer learning and knowledge sharing.

Component 2: Improving quality and promoting attractiveness of TVET pathways, especially for women, under which skills anticipation results are used to better understand the changing skills needs in order to improve articulations and pathways within the TVET system and transitions to labour market, with a focus on lowering barriers for women and girls. Under this component, the focus is on mainstreaming work-based learning (WBL) approaches and digital and entrepreneurial skills in TVET programmes, which are considered to be key drivers for improving the employability of graduates and facilitating their transition into the world of work. A regional review of work-based learning approaches¹ was conducted under the YEM project by examining the national contexts, nature and extent of WBL, policies and legislations, employer and employee organizations, resources to improve the quality of WBL programmes, funding, and data on performance of WBL on employment, productivity, growth, and sustainable development. This regional study also examines WBL as a vector for access to TVET for disadvantaged groups including young women.

Moreover, a high performing online digital skills development platform, Pix has been mobilised by the YEM project. The model is currently being shared with YEM beneficiary countries through distance webinars and capacity building workshops. Based on contextualised versions of the Pix platform, this activity aims at training national actors, master trainers and curriculum designers in designing occupation-specific digital skills profiles and pedagogical scenarios for digital skills development among TVET learners.

Component 3: Developing regional cooperation in the field of TVET, under which TVET stakeholders from the YEM beneficiary countries are brought together through physical and online platforms to engage in technical discussions on the thematic areas under the YEM project to strengthen cooperation, facilitate knowledge sharing and peer learning. Various face-to-face workshops have been implemented under the YEM project on the topics of skills anticipation and assessment, work-based learning approaches, digital skills mainstreaming and entrepreneurship skills.

In addition, the online [YEM Knowledge Platform \(YKP\)](#) was launched with support from the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre to facilitate knowledge sharing on these thematic components online. This platform is being used to share relevant knowledge resources on evolving TVET systems in YEM beneficiary countries, based on skills anticipation exercises conducted; and to disseminate regional level resources and guidelines under the YEM project on the themes of work-based learning, entrepreneurship and digital skills.

The Regional Forum will bring together key stakeholders from the participating YEM countries with the following objectives:

1. To take stock of the results achieved in the countries participating in the YEM project;
2. To share and discuss recent developments, trends, and innovative practices under each thematic area of the project;
3. To discuss the way forward, future areas of cooperation, and work in the field of skills development between UNESCO and the participating countries.

¹ https://unevoc.unesco.org/pub/yem_regional_overview_work_based_learning.pdf

The working languages of the Forum will be English and translation to Arabic and French will be provided.

Agenda

Thursday, 8 April 2021 (10:30-12:45 Paris time)	
10:30 – 10:50	<p>Opening session</p> <p>Moderator: Mr Salim Shehadeh, Programme Specialist, UNESCO Beirut Office</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ms Hana Yoshimoto, Chief of Education, Senior Programme Specialist, UNESCO's Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States• Ms Iva Babic, Programme Manager, DG NEAR B.2, European Union• Mr Borhene Chakroun, Director of the Division for Policies and Lifelong Learning Systems, UNESCO
10:50 – 10:55	<p>Video presentation of the YEM project through testimonials from country representatives</p>
10:55 – 11:10	<p>YEM results and the remaining activities till the end of July 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation of the YEM results, by Mr Oussama Ghneim, YEM Project Team Leader

Breakout sessions: YEM project components

After the Opening Session, three parallel thematic sessions A, B and C will take place from 11:10 am to 12:10 pm. Participants will choose the session that they wish to attend by clicking on the respective links leading to the thematic sessions (A, B, or C).

After the thematic sessions, at 12:10, participants will be redirected to the plenary session to further discuss the regional collaboration under the YEM project, for the presentation of a study by the European Training Foundation (ETF) on identifying profiles and characteristics to tap into young people's potential in the region and the Closing Session.

	<p>Session A: Anticipating future skills needs- Methodologies used in YEM countries</p> <p>Moderator: UNESCO-Ramallah Office</p>
11:10 – 11:20	<p>National and international expertise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills forecasting in Palestine, results and way forward in the national context, by Mr Habib Hinn, and Mr Ali Jabbarin, MAS, Palestine
11:20 – 11:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prospective scenario development in YEM countries-Capacity building and future prospects, by Ms Veronique Lamblin
11:30 – 11:50	<p>Country level experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative skill forecasting methodology, preliminary results and lessons learned, by Mr Mohamed Yahyaoui, ONEQ, Tunisia
11:50 – 12:00	<p>The voice of a youth representative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills forecasting and its relevance for young people’s careers, by Mr Yassine Aabar, Youth Organisation in Morocco
12:00 – 12:10	<p>Discussion</p>
	<p>Session B: Digital skills and Entrepreneurial skills in TVET</p> <p>Moderator: UNESCO – Amman Office</p>
11:10 – 11:20	<p>International perspectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methodological approach to integrating Digital Skills in TVET, by Mr Benjamin Marteau and Ms Elsa Dufayard, Pix, France
11:20 – 11:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecosystem-based approach to drive entrepreneurship through institution-industry collaboration in the region, by Mr Marco Ferretti, Napoli Parthenope University, Italy
11:30 – 11:50	<p>Good practices at the country level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key initiatives in Libya on entrepreneurial learning in TVET, by Mr Mokhtar Jwaily, Global Entrepreneurial Network, Libya
11:50 – 12:00	<p>The voice of a youth representative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the Leaders project and achievements of two young entrepreneurs in the field of digital and entrepreneurial skills, by Mr Zaher Bassiouni, Leaders International, Palestine
12:00-12:10	<p>Discussion</p>

	<p>Session C: Work Based Learning in TVET</p> <p>Moderator: UNESCO – Rabat Office</p>
11:10-11:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WBL Guidelines: a methodological approach for mainstreaming WBL in TVET, including a focus on the gender issue and the COVID-19 crisis, by Mr Stephen Billet, Australia
11:30-11:50	<p>Good Practices at the Country Level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WBL and good practices in Tunisia, by Mr Amjed Mahmoud, The Ministry of Vocational Training and Employment (MFPE), Tunisia
11:50-12:00	<p>The voice of a youth representative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconstruction of Beirut after the August 2020 explosion by work-based learning trainees, Ms Samar Boulos, Safadi Foundation, Lebanon
12:00-12:10	<p>Discussion</p>
	<p>Plenary session: Enhancing Regional cooperation and Youth Involvement Session</p> <p>Moderator: UNESCO-Beirut Office</p>
12:10-12:20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The YEM Knowledge Platform, an online tool for exchange and cooperation, by Mr Max Ehlers and Mr Ruairi Gough, UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre
12:20-12:35	<p>Identifying profiles and characteristics to tap into young people’s potential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main findings from ETF’s report ‘Youth in transition in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean: Identifying profiles and characteristics to tap into young people’s potential’ by Ms Sabina Nari, European Training Foundation <p>Q & A</p>
12:35-12:45	<p>Closing session: The way forward in the final phase of the YEM project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing remarks by Mr Hervé Huot-Marchand, Chief, Section of Youth, Literacy and Skills Development, UNESCO HQ-Paris