

**Forum:** SISMUN – Youth  
**Issue:** Improving the youth workforce employment and occupational mobility  
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**Position:** President of SISMUN – Youth

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## Introduction

Accompanying various economic and political issues, the global occupational mobility of the current youth workforce is being increasingly focused on the issues of the job market, and with the total population of youth being 1.2 billion, the issue is further being put in the spotlight of interest. youth employment is closely turning into a global crisis, and youth occupational mobility is being limited by current economic issues. High occupational mobility for youth offers them opportunities to improve their personal or financial stance, creating a spontaneous and free atmosphere within workspaces and further leading to positive impacts on engagement and productivity. Conversely, occupational immobility could be detrimental to both the youths' futures and the job market and economy.

Occupational immobility is often accompanied by and results in a high rates of unemployment. Unemployment in youth causes long-lasting negative effects on their future careers, having fewer growth opportunities, lower wages, and lacking prospects for their further futures. With COVID-19 striking and harming the job market, the employment rate and occupational mobility for youth have been plummeting downwards. Although the job market is still in recovery along a slowing but continuing pandemic, the economy with high inflation and growing government debt is still challenging youths to find their way through job markets and transition between occupations.

Having morphed over the years, occupational mobility has always been steadily exhibiting an upwards growth. Now, new concepts of occupational mobility are emerging outwards, while in the past only vertical mobility was highlighted, and more situations of horizontal mobility are taking place. The intergenerational transitions in occupational positions can often be ascribed to increasing requirements for young employees in various occupations, along with the increasing disregard for the importance of agricultural and craft-related occupations. In a rapidly transforming world, the job market is constantly altering, challenging youths to find a place in a maze of occupations.

## Definition of Key Terms

### Occupational mobility

Occupational mobility in terms of labor refers to the ability to move factors of production which are the resources that produce the output, between different types of productive activity. Shortly put, the different degrees of occupational mobilities can be explicated as the ease in the movement of factors of production, in this case, occupations. For example, in a case with high occupational mobility, a person that was previously an accountant could easily switch their job to the field of computer programming. Along with geographic mobility, it is the main type of labor mobility. Factors can either be highly mobile and easily switched or immobile, thus not easily switched. High occupational mobility leads to high productivity and economic growth.

## Youth

Although there is universally no standard definition for the youth age group, the United Nations (UN) for statistical purposes defines youth as an age group of 15~24 years. There are 1.2 billion youths today.

## Horizontal and vertical occupational mobility

Occupational mobility can be divided into two types, horizontal mobility and vertical mobility. Horizontal mobility refers to the movement of one occupation to another, the occupations usually having the same level or grade. It is vertical mobility when a worker or employee moves to an occupation with a higher grade or status.

## Structural unemployment

Structural unemployment is defined as a type of unemployment caused by the mismatch in the skills that the unemployed population has, and the available jobs. This often occurs when the workers lack the required skills for the particular job, or because certain jobs aren't available in their region.

## Background Information

### Factors that affect occupational mobility

There are various factors that can affect the degree of occupational mobility, including education, training, social background, environment, developments, trade, advertisement, transportation, communication, and outlook.

#### *Education and Training*

Depending on the level of education or training a person has received, more or fewer opportunities can be given to the person in terms of occupations in various areas and fields. This is because most companies and businesses prefer employees that are well educated and

trained. Acquiring diverse knowledge and skills also provides a wider range of choices for a person and allows people more competitive in the vast job market.

### ***Social background***

Occupational mobility could also be limited by a certain country's social set-up, such as the presence of caste systems. A society dominated by a caste system often lacks occupational mobility, whereas those exclusive of caste systems or certain limits offer greater opportunities to switch between occupations with fewer restrictions. As such, the social background affects the degree of occupational mobility to a great extent. Another aspect of the effect on occupational mobility from the social background is that if society lacks peace and security, the people's desire to move from their present occupations would also be greatly decreased. In this case, as much as the environment is insecure, workers would rather prefer to stay where there are at as a stable position than move to different workplaces where they will have to take the time to adapt as well as choose the right occupation.

### ***Environment***

As much as the degree of occupational mobility differs between different countries and regions, the environment plays a big role in determining the available occupational mobility. Different countries and regions in those countries provide different ranges of available occupations, and the general approach toward occupational mobility in regions would differ. Countries and regions could also encourage people's mobility in occupations by introducing more employment opportunities, mostly through public work such as commencing industrial centers, estates, and dams, but also with the exchange of occupations, etc. However, besides the geographic aspect, the educational background of a worker could be also influential in determining one's occupation and sometimes could even limit the worker from moving from one occupation to another, resulting in structural unemployment. Since different industries require different levels of education, and different areas offer different kinds of occupations as well as different overall levels of education, depending on a particular area, certain occupations might be lacking workers.

### ***Agricultural or industrial developments***

Different circumstances of rapid development could affect occupational mobility on a large scale. In this case, agricultural developments and industrialization exhibit different effects in the direction of occupational mobility. In circumstances with agricultural developments, the occupations move towards agricultural settings. However, in circumstances with industrial developments, often more occupations could be created, and in this case, more people would be

able to move between different occupations to work in factories. Industrialization can be immensely helpful in improving employment rates and occupational mobility. Industrialization, closely tied with urbanization allows workers to move toward large cities and industrial occupations. Furthermore, not only does it create a large number of jobs, but also factory work created by industrialization often requires similar skill sets which allow workers to move between different factories with relative ease.

### ***Trade and advertisement***

Trade and advertisement are crucial to a company or business's development, but it is also a major component towards the increase of occupational mobility. Because trade or advertisement of the company or the business spreads their presence of institutions and offices in different countries and regions, more people have access to those opportunities that are spread out through trade and advertisement of the company. With the development and increase of importance in advertisement and trade, more workers could move from one place to another in order to work in occupations related to marketing, trade, advertisement, etc.

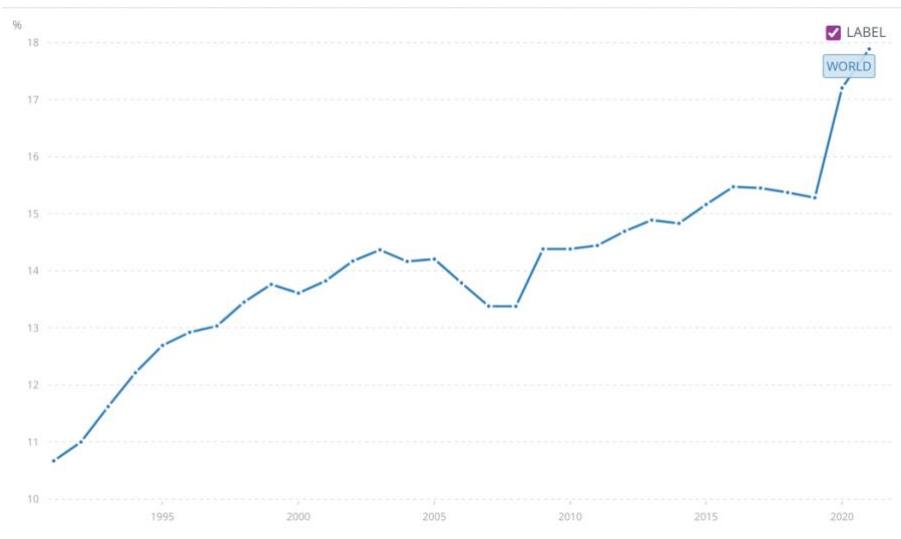
### **Occupational immobility**

While the presence of occupational mobility means that occupations are easily transferred in between similar or different fields, occupational immobility occurs when there are certain barriers present to the mobility of factors of production in between different sectors. This leads to a large-scale unemployment or inefficiency. Reasons behind experiencing occupational immobility could be the lack of specific skills that are needed in current growing industries, economic backwardness, lack of transport, communications, and opportunities; however, it could also be small differences within people, for instance, religion, language, habits, custom, interest, illiteracy, poverty, attachment, etc.

### **Youth workforce**

The employment rate has a close relationship with the occupational mobility, and high employment rates are often found with high occupational mobility. For example, in the U.S., the youth unemployment rate has been consistently increasing, with an increase between 2019 to 2020. Every April and July, the youth employment rates take on a sharp increase, mainly from the search of jobs. During this period high school and college students search for summer jobs, and graduates enter the job market in search of permanent employment. In the summer of 2021, the youth workforce increased by 11.7 percent, specifically 2.4 million. However, over the past years, the COVID-19 pandemic had a large impact on the youth employment rate. The rate in 2021 has significantly improved with a percentage of 54.4%, compared to 2020 when the pandemic emerged (46.7%), however it is still on the progress of recovering. The pandemic decreased the youth employment rate by 9.5% in the U.S. itself. Globally,

compared to 2019 when the pandemic was yet to arrive, in 2020, 2% of the whole youth employment rate decreased, even while consistently decreasing over the few decades.



**Caption #2: Global Youth Unemployment Graph**

## Major Countries and Organizations Involved

### European Employment Services (EURES)

Also an agency of the European Union (EU), EURES is a cooperation network formed by public employment services. Taking on a significant role in facilitating occupational mobility among the EU member states, EURES additionally acts as a database for the exploration as well as the employment of jobs. EURES strives to achieve “mobility for young employees”.

### International Labor Organization (ILO)

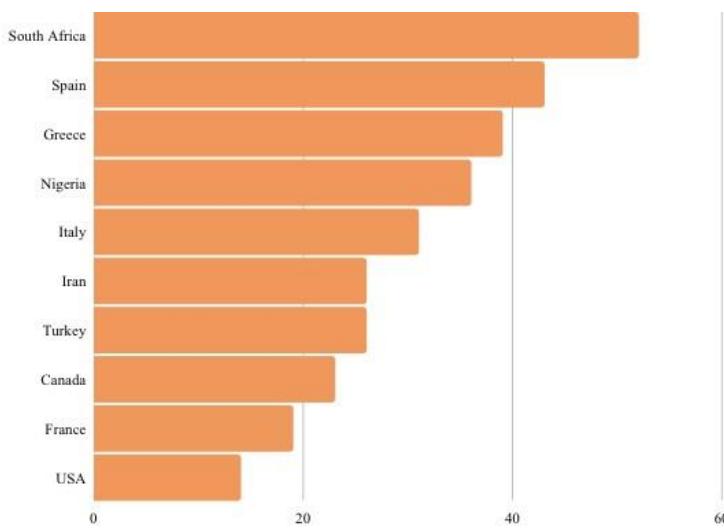
ILO is a United Nations (UN) agency devoted to promoting labor peace, by contributing labor statistics, standards, laws, and policies. It serves the need to bring governments, employers, and employees together in order to set labor policies and standards including improving working conditions, promoting employment and ensuring training.

### U.K.

The U.K is one of the countries with the highest youth occupational mobility, along with Nordic countries such as Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Norway, and Iceland. Along with the organization Youth Employment U.K., which aims to improve youth employment, the U.K. also implemented a Youth Mobility Scheme Visa, which allows youths from certain countries to enter U.K. for living and working.

## South Africa

South Africa has been ranked as the country with the highest rate of youth unemployment, with a record-high percentage of 52.8%. Accompanying a harsh economic recession and a shortage of professionals, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country had plummeted, causing such numbers.



**Caption #1: Youth Unemployment Rate Ranking by Country (Spectator Index)**

## Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
1919	As part of Treaty Versailles, the ILO is created
	The EURES network is created through the decision of the European Commission with a mission to allow the free mobility of workers in the European Economic Area.
1993	
June, 2013	The European Council agrees to gather efforts to improve the mobility of youth workforce across the EU through EURES, European Social Fund, etc.
2019	The population of youth reaches 1.2 billion
2020	The youth unemployment increases by 1.9%
2022	The general labor force participation rate reaches 59.3%

## Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development : report of the Main Committee, 10 March 1995 (**A/CONF.166/L.3/Add.5**)

- Mobility : report of the Secretary-General, 27 February 2018 (**A/72/767**)
- Promoting youth employment : policies and programmes, May 1988 (**UNRISD(05)/D4/No.3**)
- World youth report 2012 : youth employment : youth perspectives on the pursuit of decent work in changing times, 2013 (**ST/ESA/338**)
- The access of youth to work and participation in public life, Constinesti (Romania), 28 May-5 June 1979 : report, 1980 (**[ST/ISOA/ESDP/1979/2]**)

## Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

### European Council

As a collegiate body that outlines the priorities and political direction of the European Union, through EURES the European Council agreed to increase efforts toward improving the mobility of young workforces. The council strengthened initiatives like “Your First EURES job” in EURES. “Your First EURES job” strives to offer more job opportunities and increased occupational mobility to young Europeans. The European council member states are further invited to use financial resources from the European Social Fund to achieve mobility schemes across borders. The Program for Employment and Social Innovation is another instrument to support the voluntary occupation labor schemes among European youths.

### United Nations (UN)

The UN previously gathered forces for a dynamic and global workforce, focusing on mobility for the reform efforts of the staffing system. To achieve this, the organization offered its staff additional opportunities for career growth and allow for the developed acquisition of skills, knowledge, and experience. Moreover, through UNU-WIDER projects, UN further contributed to measuring and analyzing the occupational mobility of developing nations.

## Possible Solutions

### Invest in creating new opportunities for employment

The foremost measure towards improving the occupational mobility for youths, in which most of them, newly enters the job market would be to invest in creating new opportunities for employment. This could be in the form of commencing public work that would not only create numerous job opportunities to move around but also contribute to the public's development or betterment. Furthermore, investing in

various different fields such as agriculture would increase the diversity of choice and opportunity for the youth and create a balance of workforce in between the occupations.

### **Creating training schemes**

As much as the amount of education and training is crucial for one's high occupational mobility, organizing schemes involving these components would be vital for the youths to heighten their human capital. This would equip them with new skills as well as acquirement of knowledge that would widen the range of their opportunities. Along with general training, further vocational training may be subsidized by sector firms to close the gap between the youths' skill levels and the expected skill levels of the companies.

### **Facilitating occupational transitions**

Ensuring clear and precise transitions between occupations is a vital step toward improving occupational mobility. Without this, moving occupations could come as a disadvantage for the workers, especially for youth workers who often have few experiences of work. Policies or regulations could be applied in order to facilitate occupational transitions, or employers and organizations could be responsible for ensuring a smooth transition as well. Several things that could be done would include supporting the workers to be able to find a fitting occupation and contributing to safeguarding the process of transition so that the worker can experience a smooth transition as well as the ease of adapting to the new workspace.

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## Appendix or Appendices

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