

World Youth Skills Day 2022: Transforming Youth Skills for the Future

ECOSOC Chamber, United Nations HQs
Hybrid global event
15 July 2022, 10.00 am – 12.30 pm (EDT)

Background

In 2014, the United Nations General Assembly declared 15 July as [World Youth Skills Day](#), to celebrate the strategic importance of equipping young people with skills for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship. Since then, World Youth Skills Day events have provided a unique opportunity for strengthening the dialogue between young people, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions, firms, employers' and workers' organizations, policy makers and development partners. Its observance led to the ever-increasing recognition of the need for skilling and re-skilling as the world is transitioning towards a sustainable model of development.

2022 World Youth Skills Day takes place amidst concerted efforts towards socio-economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that are intertwined with other interconnected challenges, such as climate change, conflict, persisting poverty, rising inequality, rapid technological change, demographic transition and others. The initial shock of the pandemic led to global school, training centre and workplace closures. The consequent unprecedented recession has severely affected young people: as 24 million learners from pre-primary to tertiary education remain at risk of not returning to study due to the socio-economic impact of COVID 19 (5.3 million in sub-Saharan Africa) and the youth employment fell by 39 million in 2020.

Young women and girls, young persons with disabilities, youth from poorer households, rural communities, indigenous peoples, and minority groups, as well as those who suffer the consequences of violent conflict and political instability, continue to be excluded due to a combination of social, economic, cultural, and political factors. Besides, the crisis has accelerated several transitions the world of work was already undergoing, which add layers of uncertainty regarding the skills and competencies that will be in demand after the pandemic is overcome. Many of the skills developed today are unlikely to align with those that will be demanded in the future and many will become obsolete. Additionally, the intensification of extreme weather events and associated natural disasters are also preventing young people from accessing quality education and acquiring new skills.

Within this context, ensuring the right of young people to quality, relevant, and inclusive education and lifelong learning opportunities is more important than ever. Education should equip young people with the skills and knowledge needed to face the challenges characterising modern fast-changing societies and economies. Increasing and diversifying learning opportunities and skills provision offers a privileged opportunity to navigate these challenges equipping individuals with the relevant competences they need to conduct decent work and life. Learning and training for youth should be geared to enable young people to create long-term social, environmental and economic well-being for themselves, their families, and their communities¹.

¹ *Ibid.*

The crisis also requires positioning the learner at the core of the education provision oriented towards common purposes. Support for those directly experiencing labour market transitions must also be increased. Education and training systems must provide individuals with the skills needed to rebalance our relationships with the planet, including the ability to transition to sustainable models, where young people are equipped with relevant skills to become informed, critically literate, socially-connected, ethical and engaged global citizens.

As outlined in [Our Common Agenda](#) report and the [UN system-wide youth strategy, Youth2030](#), young people are pivotal agents of change. Empowering young people to reach their full potential and access emerging opportunities is critical to achieve the world envisioned in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and respond and rebuild from current and future crises. This means investing in people's capabilities, enabling them to acquire skills, reskill and upskill and supporting them through the various transitions they will face over their life course².

Objectives

The celebrations of the World Youth Skills Day will highlight the ongoing focus on the [Transforming Education Summit](#) (19 September 2022 - TBC), and contribute to the work being done under its Thematic Action Track "Learning and skills for life, work, and sustainable development". The Summit is a Youth-inspired global event of major importance for the future of millions of young people; it is prepared by, with and for youth.

The World Youth Skills Day 2022 will analyse the impact of current crises on youth across the world, and discuss how young people can quickly adapt to the demands of an ever-changing world. More particularly, the event will bring together youth, Governments, UN agencies, private sector and civil society representatives, around the following objectives:

- Discuss the best ways to support young people in their transition from education to contributing to their communities and societies according to their potential;
- Draw on lessons learned on how to foster deeper learning and the development of civic competency, and on recent research on the development of skills for life and work;
- Debate on the importance of equipping young people with the skills and competencies needed to leverage technology for collective and personal aims;
- Reflect on how TVET stakeholders can join forces to improve their ability to foresee future crises, and be better prepared to support youth reskilling and upskilling.
- Gather young people's views and recommendations on transforming skills for the future.

Organizers

The World Youth Skills Days is co-organized by the Permanent Missions of Portugal and Sri Lanka to the United Nations, together with UNESCO, ILO and the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth.

² *ibid.*

Agenda

<p>10.00 – 10.35 am (35 minutes)</p>	<p><u>Moderator:</u> Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake, Secretary-General’s Special Envoy on Youth (in person, 3 minutes)</p> <p><u>Opening Session</u></p> <p>Co-Chairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• H.E. Ms. Ana Paula Baptista Grade Zacarias, Permanent Representative of Portugal to the UN, introducing a video statement of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal, Prof. João Gomes Cravinho (in person with video message, 6 minutes)• H.E. Mr. Peter Mohan Maithri Pieris, Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the UN (in person, 5 minutes)• Ms. Martha E. Newton, Deputy Director-General for Policy, ILO (through conference call, 5 minutes)• Mrs. Maki Katsuno-Hayashikawa, Director of Division for Education 2030 Support and Coordination, UNESCO (in person, 5 minutes) <p>High Level Speakers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• H.E. Abdulla Shahid, President of the General Assembly, UN (video message, 4 minutes)• H.E. António Guterres, Secretary-General, UN (written message read by moderator)
<p>10:35 – 12:05am (90 minutes)</p>	<p><u>Interactive discussion: “Transforming Youth Skills for Work, Society and Planet”</u></p> <p>Moderator: Brighton Kaoma, SDSN Youth Global Director (in person)</p> <p><u>First segment: Learning and skills for life – 25 minutes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- H.E. Mrs Vanessa Frazier, Permanent Representative of Malta to the UN (in person)- Ms Daniella Reyes, Employers Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP), (through conference call)- Ms Naria K. Santa Lucia, General Manager, Digital inclusion and US Community Engagement, Microsoft Philanthropies (in person)- Ms Tetiana Tarenkova, young expert on the Recognition of Prior Learning (through conference call)

	<p>Q&A - Governments and other stakeholders are invited to make statements from the floor – 20 minutes</p> <p><u>Second segment: Sustainable development – 25 minutes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- H.E. Mrs Paula Narváez Ojeda, Permanent Representative of Chile to the UN (in person)- Jacqueline Tanzer, entrepreneur and Graphic Designer, World Skills Champion (through conference call)- Froilan Enverga, member of UNESCO SDG4Youth Network (through conference call)- Eliane El Haber, youth/student representative at UNESCO SDG4Youth Network (through conference call) <p>Q&A - Governments and other stakeholders are invited to make statements from the floor – 20 minutes</p>
12:05 – 12:15 (10 minutes)	Moderator closes the session and event