

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 has 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 the COVID-19 and economic recovery that are intertwined with other 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. UNESCO estimates that 24 million learners from pre-primary to tertiary education remain at risk of not returning to study (among them 5.3 million in sub-Saharan Africa) due to the socio-economic impact of COVID-19, and the ILO reported that 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. The crisis has also 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 others will become obsolete. Additionally, the intensification of extreme weather events and associated natural disasters are 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 should enable young people to create long-term social, environmental and economic well-being for themselves, their families, and their communities¹.

The crises also require positioning the learner at the core of education provision that is 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

¹ *Ibid.*

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 to respond and rebuild from current and future crises. This means investing in people's capabilities, enabling them to acquire skills, and access opportunities to reskill and upskill and supporting them through the various transitions they will face over their life course².

Objectives

The celebrations of 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.

On World Youth Skills Day 2022, the impact of current crises on youth across the world will be analysed, and options for young people to quickly adapt to the demands of an ever-changing world will be debated. More particularly, the event will bring together youth, governments, UN agencies, the private sector, and civil society representatives, around the following objectives:

- Discuss the best ways to support young people in their transition from education in 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 the importance of equipping young people with the skills and competencies needed to leverage technology for collective and personal aims, while ensuring sustainable development;
- 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

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.

Connection Details

The event will be held at the ECOSOC Chamber, United Nations Headquarters with the option to attend online. Please register [here](#), by Wednesday, 13 July, if you want to participate virtually. The event will also be livestreamed on [UN Web TV](#).

² *ibid.*