

Call for Papers

**The Global Youth Employment Crisis in a Comparative Perspective**

Cairo, Egypt

February 3-4, 2013

Youth employment challenges are a central global policy issue. High unemployment rates, lack of job security and underemployment are more likely to impact young entrants to the labor market. Stable jobs with decent wages are increasingly difficult to find in both developed and developing economies. There is also a growth in the size of young people who are detached from the labor market and are not in education or training. Some of these young people, particularly in developing economies, are discouraged from searching for employment, having given up the hope to find a job. While, regional variations exist, the Middle East and North Africa region has one of the highest rates of youth unemployment in the world.

Underemployment and job informality are other major characteristic to youth employment in MENA. However, no region in the developing and developed world is immune to the youth employment crisis. In Southern Europe, youth unemployment rates have shot up upon the Euro-zone crisis. The situation of youth employment in Sub-Saharan Africa is also very complicated with high unemployment rates combined with informality and vulnerable employment. Work conditions and labor market outcomes continue to be gendered worldwide. Female youth are more likely to be unemployed, out of the labor force, or trapped in low-income low-productively jobs. The gender gap in youth labor force participation is known to be highest in the Middle East, the region known for one of the lowest female labor market participation rates in the world.

How can the research agenda address the inter-connected multi-faceted issues related to youth employment? What cross-regional lessons can be drawn? What successful models need to be highlighted amidst this global crisis?

The School of Global Affairs at The American University in Cairo and the Munk School of Global Affairs at University of Toronto are organizing a workshop to tackle such questions. This workshop will seek to bring together inter-disciplinary research addressing youth employment issues, policies and programmatic interventions and to draw on cross-regional and cross-country models to address this global crisis. Six separate panels will be convened with focus on the following questions:

1. What is the nature of the youth employment crisis on the regional and country levels: its characteristics and challenges?
2. Young people around the world are more educated than their parents and are more likely to have attended a tertiary education institution. What models of reform should we seek in the education system in order to better equip youth to enter the labor market?
3. What are the labor market policies needed to address youth employment challenges?
4. What is the role of entrepreneurship and self-employment in meeting the youth employment challenges?



5. With the increasing lack of job stability worldwide, what measures should be taken to provide social protection to workers under these conditions?
6. How can youth be actual partners in the process of seeking solutions?

Please send abstracts to [employconf@aucegypt.edu](mailto:employconf@aucegypt.edu) by **November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2012**. Abstracts should not exceed 500 words describing the research focus, approach, and methodology.

Participants are responsible for their own travel expenses and health insurance. A limited number of travel grants may be awarded based on research originality and geographic location.

Further details on conference registration and logistics will be posted on the conference website [http://conf.aucegypt.edu/youth\\_employment](http://conf.aucegypt.edu/youth_employment)