

France, Germany and the United States: How do these countries face youth unemployment in an era of economic decline through training and education?

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Abstract

We have found youth unemployment throughout the world. But the situation of young people in the labor market has been aggravated as the actual opportunity of labor market is quite limited. They should sometimes embrace unreasonably paid employment and should be left with vulnerable formats of formal employment which would lead to low payment in the informal sector, where legal protection would not be provided (UN Economic Commission for Africa, 2005).

This session would compare three countries: Germany, France and the United States. How do these countries confront youth unemployment by providing training opportunities and what do differences exist? By comparing the training supports for youth unemployment issues in these countries, it would be possible to make some recommendations. The situation of youth unemployment and its training and education support in each country would be sought. With this comparison, it would be able to find solutions to address youth unemployment by providing training for youth.

Proposal

Youth unemployment has worsened since 2008 because of the global financial crisis which has caused instable financial markets (Bell & Blanchflower, 2009). The global economic downturn has reduced job opportunities for youngsters and many companies have downsized themselves and these factors directly affect youngsters who do not have enough working experiences and expertise.

Under this situation, youth would be the first victim to suffer from economic downturn because of their lack of knowledge and experience. As they can't be employed, many of them would delay their marriage and results in low birth rate as well. The mismatch between the qualifications of youth and the needs of labor market exists and has brought structural economic shifts (Council of Europe, 2011). In addition, irrelevant and inadequate education and training would negatively affect youth unemployment and it would be important to improve their education and training for youth apprenticeship.

Each country would have different training supports for youth unemployment and their governmental supports must be different. I would propose a session to compare the situations of youth unemployment and training supports among three countries: Germany, France and the United States. How these countries try to face youth unemployment by providing training opportunities and what differences exist would be sought. By comparing these countries' training support for youth unemployment issues, it would be possible to make some recommendations.

In Germany, teenagers could enter a labor market as skilled workers because they would choose at least three years of training with more advanced training in the apprenticeship programs through vocational schools (Gross, 1998). The US has focused on on-the-job training at individual companies (O'Higgins, 2001). Therefore, it is hard to control the quality and success of trainings which are taken place at each company and youth may feel more difficult to receive qualified trainings in the US. In addition, France has more theoretical vocational education which is different from Germany and it is distinct when compared to the US where is exclusively work-based (O'Higgins, 2001).

After reviewing youth unemployment and related issues and then analyzing the current training and education for youngsters in three countries, possible recommendation would be suggested with participant discussion.

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