Aspirations of youth
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Rome, 28 May 2019
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Decent Jobs for Youth // the global initiative for action
There are 1.8 billion young people in the world.
Half the world is under 30 and nine in ten of these young people live in developing countries.
This is the largest youth population there has ever been.
ASPIRATIONS

Aspirations capture the personal preferences of individuals (preferences/goals), their beliefs about opportunities available to them in society (opportunities/pathways), and their expectations about what they can achieve through their own effort in an uncertain future (self-efficacy/agency).

New empirical literature

“The capacity to aspire is the ability to navigate social life and combine wants, preferences, choices and calculations with the circumstances to which you are born into”

Appadurai (2004)
Achieving our aspirations

Source: Authors’ adaption of conceptual framework by Boateng and Löwe, 2018
YOUTH ASPIRATIONS
AND THE FUTURE OF WORK
Surveys: youth aspirations
Family, purpose, love

Figure 6.9. What Motivates Youth Today?
Which 3 motives (both internal and external) drive you the most in life?

Source: YouthSpeak, powered by AIESEC.
What are the three most important criteria for considering job opportunities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>Sub-Saharan Africa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sense of purpose / impact on society</td>
<td>1237 (Female)</td>
<td>396 (Female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1160 (Male)</td>
<td>575 (Male)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1143 (Other + NA)</td>
<td>1143 (Other + NA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-life balance</td>
<td>1150 (Female)</td>
<td>431 (Male)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1228 (Male)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>869 (Other + NA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary / financial compensation</td>
<td>852 (Female)</td>
<td>369 (Female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>887 (Male)</td>
<td>305 (Male)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company culture / quality of colleagues</td>
<td>818 (Other + NA)</td>
<td>183 (Male)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>749 (Female)</td>
<td>394 (Male)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1237 (Male)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth / career advancement</td>
<td>353 (Other + NA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>207 (Female)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own elaborations based on Global Shapers Survey (2017).
Biggest concerns about job prospects when applying for a job?

Europe

- Lack of experience: Female (49%) 1106, Male (49%) 1006, Other + NA (2%) 106
- Too much competition: Female (49%) 831, Male (49%) 713, Other + NA (2%) 100
- Luck plays a big role: Female (49%) 587, Male (49%) 676, Other + NA (2%) 100
- Good jobs don’t get advertised: Female (49%) 556, Male (49%) 606, Other + NA (2%) 100
- Not enough jobs: Female (49%) 601, Male (49%) 503, Other + NA (2%) 100

MENA

- Discrimination by employers: Female (55%) 301, Male (45%) 230, Other + NA (<1%) 100
- Not enough jobs: Female (55%) 297, Male (45%) 205, Other + NA (<1%) 100
- Lack of experience: Female (55%) 247, Male (45%) 171, Other + NA (<1%) 100
- Too much competition: Female (55%) 209, Male (45%) 173, Other + NA (<1%) 100
- Good jobs don’t get advertised: Female (55%) 195, Male (45%) 179, Other + NA (<1%) 100

Source: Own elaborations based on Global Shapers Survey (2017).
How do aspirations match with labour demand?

Panel A: Self-employment

Source: Figure excerpted from OECD (2017). OECD’s calculations are based on SWTS 2012-2015 data.
Panel B: Public sector

Panel C: Private sector
Aspiration failure (UK)

- What did 16 to 21 year olds want to be?
- What 22 to 29 year olds do those jobs?

- Artistic, Literary & Media (e.g. writer, actor, producer)
- Teaching and Educational
- Health Professionals (e.g. pharmacist, dentist, vet)
- Protective Services (e.g. police officer and firefighter)
- Nursing and Midwifery

All top 5 aspirations showed a decline when compared with actual numbers of people in those occupations.

Source: Excerpted from United Kingdom Office for National Statistics blog
YOUTH ASPIRATIONS
AND THE FUTURE OF WORK
Thank you.

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