



L20 Priorities on Transitions from School to Work

The Italian Presidency of the G20 has focussed on the extreme impact of COVID-19 on both the economy and labour. The L20 welcomes that in times of extreme challenges for youth, transitions from school to work will be at the core of the joint goals of Labour and Education Ministers. There is an urgent need to **ensure that a generation of young people are not excluded from the labour market**, have access to quality jobs and do not end up in precarious work and underemployment. We must make sure **no one is left behind without proper education and training, including apprenticeships with minimum living wages and collective bargaining rights**. This requires support programmes that enable youth to (re-)enter education, training, and work with appropriate incentives including income support and policy instruments based on Youth guarantees.

The **gender divide** must be addressed, with women and girls being overrepresented in more insecure forms of traineeships, apprenticeships, and employment. Governments need to dedicate policy attention and resources to overcoming this divide, as well as **addressing other inequalities** based on characteristics such as race, religion, political opinion, national extraction, social origin, disability, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

Support should be extended to quality traineeships and apprenticeships, providing lifelong learning opportunities to enhance decent work, productivity, resilience, transitions and employability, and meet current and future labour market needs. Governments need dedicated investment for vulnerable and marginalised communities to ensure they are not excluded from education, training, and opportunities for decent work. All people, regardless of education levels and citizenship should have the capacity to be contributing and active citizens who can support their families, communities, and society. This goal needs to be backed by a **lifelong learning guarantee**.

Technical vocational education and training (TVET) is at the centre of effective transitions from school to work and plays a key role in achieving social justice and labour market integration. The L20 welcomes the dialogue between Labour and Education Ministers as an occasion to **promote access to quality TVET**.

Starting with vulnerable communities it is essential that every individual has the resources and ability to pursue a lifelong learning pathway based on their own aspirations and capabilities. If equity is to be achieved education systems must be funded and enabled to act early, consistently, and decisively. OECD work has shown that strong investment in quality Early Childhood is the first opportunity society has to close educational divides.

As young people pass through the education system, they need a broad curriculum that enables them to experience a range of learning and knowledge bases, set on the foundation of a common core in which every student develops literacy and numeracy skills. Opportunities to learn should not be limited, and flexibility between pathways should open academic journeys to vocational learners and vice versa.

To develop 21st century skills students need to be able to access learning across the curriculum and acquire the social and emotional capabilities to be resilient and engaged citizens who care about their communities and their planet. A holistic learner lifecycle needs to be developed with a matching of career possibilities to an individual's aspirations so that young people have options and choice. Social and collaborative tools should be developed to support this process.

Awareness around the need for quality apprenticeships and traineeships has grown following long-standing calls of G20 social partners. It is clear we need to improve training and support systems in the transition to work and beyond. The ILO's work supports this. Employers should ensure continuous professional development is available for apprentices.

Without proper investments and collective agreements, we risk seeing apprenticeship numbers drop – as we saw following the Global Financial Crisis. Apprentices and learners need to access appropriate training and work-based learning opportunities with fair wages. The best examples are where social partners are engaged on this.

For those people who are neither in education nor employment (NEETs), tools are required that go beyond the census and follow every student from birth to 25 ensuring they have not disappeared from the system. The funneling of students into TVET institutions must include deliberate policy interventions that identify NEETs and ensure there are pathways back for them into sustainable and dignified work and to further study.

Working across government departments has not always helped in the development of a consistent TVET system. G20 countries should consider establishing a national TVET authority that has a purview of how to make access and training more equitable as well as developing strong TVET institutions that can broker pathways to work within their communities.

Active labour market policies should stipulate ratios of apprentices to employed workers, and government procurement policies should be used to ensure that large contracts include an appropriate number of apprenticeships.

An effective and successful framework for quality apprenticeships requires the effective participation of the social partners and rights at work, including freedom of association and the right to organise and collectively bargain. Regulatory frameworks should be established

through social dialogue, and apprentices and trainees should receive at least the minimum living wage, based on evidence of the cost of living.

Further work needs to be done on developing digital literacy skills as the pandemic has made all too clear, building a healthier and greener digital society. Students and educators should have access to diligently selected digital tools, have the right to determine how their own data is used and to disconnect. This must be achieved with a conscious link between student wellbeing, teacher wellbeing, and general considerations on data governance in education systems and at work. Trade unions should have information and consultation rights on that, and social partners should be part of steering the introduction of new systems.

The digital infrastructure needs to be strengthened within countries with a whole of government framework for digital investment that ensures equity through connectivity and affordable access to internet and digital tools. For many TVET institutions, moving training delivery online has further exacerbated educational divides. In some occupations and for some programmes, work-based content remains quintessential. Training strands should avoid atomised one off courses which make it harder for students to achieve real qualifications that provide real pathways to decent work. The proposed voucher scheme is likely to drive just such an atomisation and is to be discouraged.

TVET educators and institutions need to be given more certainty, in line with the ILO's Decent Work Agenda, ensuring quality terms and conditions of employment in this sector. Quality education and training happens in many forms but works best when driven by learning dynamics between qualified teachers and their students. Flexible pathways are critical, and training educators so that they are aware of the most up to date options for each student will assist this flexibility. That requires dedicated investment in both initial teacher education and continuous professional development.

Further work is needed on building professional connections with SMEs and business in general, fostering social dialogue to provide for the right foundation and range of work-based learning opportunities.

The L20 welcomes future work and collaboration with the G20 on the topic of school-to-work transitions, lifelong learning guarantees and work-to-work transitions to fulfil the ILO Decent Work Agenda. It is time to dispense with the notion of people as human capital and focus on a more appropriate construct around the productive and human capabilities that need to be developed for all our youth and nurtured through their lifetimes as in the ILO Commission report on the [Future of Work](#). Just transitions and a secure future require public investment and strong labour market institutions.