

International Year of Youth: 12 August 2010 – 11 August 2011

In December 2009, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the [Resolution 64/134](#) proclaiming 2010 as the [International Year of Youth](#) (IYY) to highlight the importance the international community places on prioritizing youth development issues into global, regional, and national strategies. Under the theme *Dialogue and Mutual Understanding*, the Year aims to promote the ideals of peace, respect for human rights, and solidarity across generations, cultures, religions and civilizations.

In this resolution, governments, civil society, individuals and communities worldwide are called to support activities at local and international levels to mark the event. The resolution encourages young people to engage in fostering progress, including through the achievement of the [UN Millennium Development Goals](#) (MDGs) that aim to fight extreme poverty, hunger, maternal and infant mortality, lack of access to education and health care by 2015.

ILO's role

The current economic instability has had a negative impact on the prospects of decent employment of young women and men. Today, youth are facing increasing uncertainty in their transition to decent jobs. The global economic crisis has further exacerbated their vulnerability in the labour market.

Between 2008 and 2009, the unemployment rate registered the largest annual increase on record reversing the pre-crisis trend of a declining rate since 2002. By the end of 2009, of some 620 million economically active youth, 81 million – or 13 per cent - were unemployed. This was 7.8 million more than the number in 2007 at the start of the global crisis. Today, young people are nearly three times more likely than adults to be unemployed.

The unemployment rate alone, however, does not capture the labour market problems facing young people worldwide. Many youth are working long hours for low pay, with precarious or even no contracts, limited or no job security and without a voice in their present or future. In some countries, a significant proportion of youth is trapped into a vicious circle of poverty, inadequate education and training and poor jobs. In 2008, more than 28 per cent of all young workers – or 152 million were living in households surviving on less than the equivalent of US\$1.25 per day.

The ILO will participate in the events that will take place during the Year to promote decent and productive work for young women and men through activities to be carried out at the national, regional and international levels and to advocate for action at all levels in support of a constructive dialogue and mutual understanding for the advancement of young people's position in the labour market and their full and effective participation in all aspects of society.

The main events organized during the period 12 August 2010 – 11 August 2011 are the launching of the Year during the International Day of Youth (United Nations, New York, 12 August 2010), the fifth World Youth Congress (Istanbul, from 31 July to 13 August 2010) and the World Youth Conference (Leon, Mexico from 24 to 27 August 2010). In summer 2011, a Conference of the United Nations on youth development issues will conclude the celebrations of the Year.