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TOOLKIT FOR CONDUCTING VOLUNTARY PEER REVIEWS ON YOUTH EMPLOYMENT POLICIES



TOOLKIT FOR CONDUCTING VOLUNTARY PEER REVIEWS ON YOUTH EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team
and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia

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First published 2017

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Toolkit for Conducting Voluntary Peer Reviews on Youth Employment Policies; ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia. – Moscow: ILO, 2017

108 p.

ISBN: 9789221311706 (print); 9789221311713 (web pdf)

ILO Cataloguing in Publication Data

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Visit our website: www.ilo.org/publns or contact ilopubs@ilo.org.

Printed in Russia

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The ILO, addressing the persistent youth employment crisis, has called upon robust actions based on broad partnerships and innovative mechanisms of policy formulating and multiplication of efforts. As a significant step in this direction, and with reference to recently adopted guiding documents¹, the ILO is issuing a toolkit aimed at supporting its constituents in tackling youth employment challenge through a coherent and sound approach to macroeconomic policies, employment, skills development and other relevant issues.

Such approach is suggested to be fostered through a mechanism of voluntary peer reviews on youth employment policies, which serves as an arena for mutual learning and elaboration of policy tools and recommendations with reference to good practices.

This publication gives an overview of the peer review process - how to organize it.

The publication has been inspired and nourished by the practical experience of a comprehensive peer review process organized within the frames of the ILO Project “Partnerships for Youth Employment in the Commonwealth of Independent States (YEP CIS)”. The project has been implemented by the ILO Decent Work Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, with financial support of LUKOIL company.

The peer review process involved constituents representing nine countries from Eastern Europe and Central Asia: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. This publication has been ameliorated by original and eloquent inputs by all participating countries, which through the whole process validated the content, checking it against their concrete experiences of policy making and adequate policy change.

ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (ILO Moscow) gave overall impetus and coordinated the preparation of this toolkit. The gratitude is expressed to Gianni Rosas, ILO Rome, Olga Koulaeva and Mikhail Pouchkin, ILO Moscow, for overall supervision of the process and provision of valuable inputs to the toolkit.

¹ See resolution and conclusions of the 101st session of the International Labour Conference, Geneva (2012), “The youth employment crisis: A call for action”, p.3 (www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_norm/@relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_185950.pdf), and ILC (2014), “Resolution concerning the second recurrent discussion on employment”, p.6. www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_norm/@relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_249800.pdf

The Toolkit is developed with the technical and financial support of the Employment Policy Department of the ILO.

Support from the ILO Regional Office for Europe on promotion of the voluntary peer review mechanism and the toolkit is highly appreciated.

Development of the toolkit will not become possible without collaborative actions and support of the team of the ILO technical cooperation project “Partnerships for Youth Employment in the CIS”.

Special thanks go to the international experts - Ruth Santos and Lucy Arora for writing substantial parts of the publication, providing their insights and sharing the experience.

KEY MESSAGES FROM THE TOOLKIT

The aim of this publication is to offer practical guidance to countries that wish to conduct a voluntary peer review in the area of youth employment. It offers advice on each phase of the review process – for example, interviewing the most appropriate youth stakeholders, identifying good practices in the area of youth employment and developing questions for the review workshop.

This publication is primarily targeted at government representatives and key stakeholders (ministries of labour, employment services, employer organisations, trade unions, etc.) involved in the design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of youth employment policies and labour market programmes addressing youth.

The ILO actively supports the use of voluntary peer review to improve youth employment policies and programmes. These peer reviews are expected to contribute to better and more effective policies and measures, which support successful transitions from school to employment. Through stimulating discussion, assessment and benchmarking between countries, a voluntary peer review serves as a general means for the country under review to improve its policy-making, through the adoption of good practices and compliance with recognised standards and criteria.

Many international organisations make use of voluntary peer review as a tool of country assessment, including the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the European Commission, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Across the world, evidence shows how the voluntary peer review tool has supported improve performance and enhanced capacity not only in relation to youth employment policies and programmes, but also in areas such as development, economics, health, environment, and education.

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ACRONYMS

ALMP	Active Labour Market Programmes
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
BMZ	German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
ESL	Early school leaving
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross domestic product
GVA	Gross value added
HIES	Household income and expenditure survey
HS	Household survey (with an employment component)
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
ICLS	International Conference of Labour Statisticians
ICSE	International Classification of Status in Employment
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
ILC	International Labour Conference
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISCO	International Standard Classification of Occupations
ISIC	International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities
LFS	Labour force survey
LSMS	Living standard measurement study
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MLP	Mutual Learning Programme
NAP	National action plan

NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PES	Public Employment Services
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
SWTS	School-to-Work Transition Survey
VAT	Value Added Tax
YEN	Youth Employment Network
YEP CIS	Partnerships for Youth Employment in the Commonwealth of Independent States

INTRODUCTION

“We are facing a great test of our time: an epidemic of youth unemployment.”

– Ban Ki-moon, June 2014²

In 2014, the Secretary-General of the United Nations reflected on the stark reality facing the current generation of young people. In 2013, young people (aged 15–24) globally were nearly three times more likely than adults to be unemployed.³ The global youth unemployment rate stood at 12.6 per cent, meaning around 73 million young people were out of work.⁴ In many cases, young people face long spells of unemployment⁵ and the potential resulting knock-on effect on their future wages and career development. In many countries, young people are not only out of employment, but also not in education or training (NEET). That includes low-skilled or unskilled young people, such as early leavers from education. In many countries, low-qualified young people are at particular risk of being “left behind” as the overall level of educational attainment among young people is rising, while demand for (young) unskilled labour is decreasing. At the same time, it is increasingly common for highly qualified young people to face difficulties in seeking adequate jobs, due to their skills not matching the demand for skills in the labour market, or due to low labour demand in general.

Many young people are facing structural challenges in making the school-to-work transition and may encounter more adverse conditions than other age groups in the labour market, such as over-representation in part-time, and/or informal work, low wages, low job security and employment that does not match their skills levels. In 2012, the International Labour Conference (ILC) warned that “young people continue to suffer disproportionately from decent work deficits and low-quality jobs”. It also noted that young people in the formal sector often face difficulty in moving from part-time, temporary or seasonal work to full-time employment, and that those in the informal economy may be subject to poor working conditions.⁶ Despite the existence of international labour standards,⁷ many young people are denied the same rights as other employees in the workplace. Poor job quality appears to affect young people living in developing economies in particular, where nearly two-thirds of young people are “underutilized”, meaning they are out of work, not studying, or engaged in irregular employment.⁸

² Ban Ki-moon, 18 June 2014, speaking during a visit to the ILO: http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_247414/lang-en/index.htm

³ ILO (2013), “Global employment trends for youth, 2013: A generation at risk”.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ For example, in most OECD Member States, at least a third of young job seekers were unemployed for six months or more in 2011, according to the ILO (2013), “Global employment trends for youth, 2013: A generation at risk”. The OECD countries are: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States.

⁶ International Labour Conference (2012), “The youth employment crisis: A call for action”.

⁷ Amongst others, the Forced Labour Convention (No. 29), 1930; Minimum Age Convention (No. 138) and Recommendation (No. 146), 1973; Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111) and Recommendation (No. 111), 1958. For full details of international labour standards, see <http://www.ilo.org/global/standards/lang-en/index.htm>

⁸ ILO (2013), “Global employment trends for youth, 2013: A generation at risk”.

The unemployment, underemployment and inactivity of young people come with major social and economic costs. They represent a loss to labour productivity and GDP, but they also threaten to undermine the extent to which young people engage with society and politics. A recent study in Europe showed that young NEETs (aged 15-29) were less likely to show an interest in politics, to vote and to trust social institutions.⁹ The same study estimated that, in 2011, not fruitfully employing young people resulted in a European gross domestic product (GDP) loss of EUR 153 billion (i.e. 1.2%).¹⁰

Given the gravity of the situation, in 2012 the ILC called for “urgent and renewed action to address the crisis of youth employment”,¹¹ bringing together Governments, employers’ organizations and trade unions from 185 countries. The resolution spoke in favour of: employment and economic policies to increase aggregate demand; education and training measures to support the employability of young people; targeted labour market policies to support young people to enter the labour market; support measures for youth entrepreneurship; and a “rights-based approach” to youth employment (to ensure young people receive equal treatment and rights at work).

Youth unemployment is increasingly recognized as a global challenge, despite differences within and between countries when it comes to the level and nature of the problem. Numerous international organizations have highlighted the need for countries to work together to tackle youth unemployment, including the ILO, the Group of 20 (G20), and the European Commission. For instance, in 2012, the G20 Task Force on Employment recommended that countries explore voluntary or technical cooperation programmes in order to share “best practices” in addressing youth unemployment and underemployment.¹²

The ILO has an active role to play in supporting mutual learning and voluntary peer review in the area of youth employment, as reflected in the Oslo Declaration of 2013 and the resolutions of the ILC in 2012 and 2014 (amongst others). For instance, in 2012, the ILC called upon the ILO to take a leading role in supporting mutual learning at the national, regional and global levels, and to mobilize partnerships for overcoming the crisis in youth employment. Relatedly, in 2014, the ILC stated that the ILO should develop proposals to support voluntary peer reviews of employment policy, as well as expanding initiatives to increase understanding of “what works for youth employment”.¹³

⁹ As compared to their young counterparts in employment, education and training. See European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) (2012), Young people and ‘NEETs’ infographic: <http://eurofound.europa.eu/emcc/labourmarket/youthinfographic>

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ International Labour Conference (2012), “The youth employment crisis: A call for action”.

¹² Note that the G20 Employment Task Force has now been transformed into the G20 Employment Working Group (EWG).

¹³ See resolution and conclusions of the 101st session of the International Labour Conference, Geneva (2012), “The youth employment crisis: A call for action”, p.3 (www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_norm/@relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_185950.pdf), and ILC (2014), “Resolution concerning the second recurrent discussion on employment”, p.6.

http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_norm/@relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_249800.pdf

In response, there has been a notable increase in programmes encouraging mutual learning, multilateral cooperation, and the exchange of good practices. As part of the Partnerships for Youth Employment in the Commonwealth of Independent States and Georgia tripartite project, the ILO has established a multi-country youth employment network, with representatives from eight CIS countries and Georgia. The network exists to support the information-sharing and capacity development on youth employment amongst its members and to disseminate its work and products to wider audiences.

In the European Union (EU), there is a strong institutional recognition of the value of mutual learning as a way to improve policymaking. Voluntary peer reviews have been used as the key mechanism to help EU Member States progress jointly in achieving the set objectives and targets. In the employment area, the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion established the Mutual Learning Programme (MLP) of the European Employment Strategy.¹⁴ The Programme supports the use of voluntary peer reviews, thematic events, and learning exchanges to enable EU Member States to learn from one another on topics relevant to the European Employment Strategy, including youth employment.¹⁵ A range of mutual learning events have been held to consider various facets of youth unemployment, including apprenticeships for young adults, outreach work for young people who are unemployed and inactive, the EU youth guarantee and inter-agency cooperation at the local level.

This Toolkit is symptomatic of these shifts at the international level. It is intended to be a hands-on and practical resource, which offers additional support for mutual learning in the area of youth employment. In particular, it explains how countries can make use of the voluntary peer review mechanism, in order to increase the effectiveness and impact of national policies and programmes supporting successful youth transitions.

¹⁴ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/mlp>

¹⁵ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1047>

SECTION 1: PURPOSE OF THIS TOOLKIT



SECTION 1: PURPOSE OF THE TOOLKIT

This Toolkit aims to offer useful and practical guidance to countries that wish to conduct a voluntary peer review in the area of youth employment. It aims to elucidate, in an applied manner, how voluntary peer reviews on youth employment can be conducted so as to foster mutual learning and lead to concrete policy recommendations.



WHO IS THE TARGET AUDIENCE FOR THIS TOOLKIT?

This Toolkit aims at supporting government representatives and key stakeholders involved in the design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of youth employment policies and labour market programmes targeting youth. At the **national/regional/local level**: decision makers from ministries and implementing agencies; civil servants and analysts of ministries, practitioners involved in the implementation of active labour market programmes (ALMPs); education and training institutions; social partners (employers' and workers' organizations); youth organizations; and the academic and research community.

- At the **international level**: officials and practitioners from international organizations that deal with employment and labour issues, as well as international aid programmes that support youth-related measures.

Last but not least, although the Toolkit focuses primarily on youth employment, voluntary peer review is a mutual learning mechanism that can be applied across subject areas and regions.

1.1 SCOPE

This Toolkit has been produced specifically to support the use of voluntary peer reviews within the framework of the ILO Project, “Partnerships for Youth Employment in the Commonwealth of Independent States”. As such, it makes common reference to the ILO in its role as the “facilitating organization”, acting as the competence and knowledge provider and a “binding element” within the review process.

However, the Toolkit should also serve as an inspiration for other countries and organizations when considering how to conduct voluntary peer reviews, as it offers extensive methodological guidance for using the tool.

1.2 STRUCTURE

The Toolkit is structured in the following way:

Introduction: Explains the global challenges in tackling youth employment, as well as the use of mutual learning programmes in policymaking.

Section 1. Purpose of this Toolkit: Presents the purpose and structure of the Toolkit and explains how different actors should use it.

Section 2. The role of voluntary peer reviews: Explains the peer review mechanism in general terms and highlights the results from mutual learning experiences in different regions.

Section 3. Guidance for each stage of the voluntary peer review on youth employment: Offers guidance for each phase, focusing on the **content** of the review – for example, guiding questions for the peer review workshop, the most appropriate stakeholders to interview during the on-site visit, and support when identifying good practices in the area of youth employment.

Section 4. Improving the reach and impact of voluntary peer reviews: Demonstrates how social partners and youth organizations can be involved throughout the review, and explains methods of monitoring and evaluating the process itself.

Annexes 1, 2 and 3: Standard templates for the main reports of a peer review (background report, review report and synthesis report).

Annex 4: Checklist of responsibilities, to be used by the country under review, reviewing country and facilitating organization.

Annex 5: Sample timeline and guidance on logistical aspects of the review.

Annex 6: Glossary of key terms in relation to youth and employment.

1.3 HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

Depending on their needs and backgrounds, readers are expected to use this Toolkit in different ways. This section summarizes the relevance of the Toolkit to different readers, as well as the sections they are likely to find most helpful.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT IF YOU ARE A COUNTRY UNDER REVIEW

Relevance: This Toolkit provides guidance on the key aspects of your role as a country under review, including the data you need to collect and analyse, and additional guidelines for writing background reports, organizing on-site visits and hosting voluntary peer reviews (if applicable).

We recommend you read the entire Toolkit in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the voluntary peer review mechanism and its relevance to youth employment policies and programmes.

Toolkit sections you will find most helpful:

- Section 3: Guidance for each stage of the voluntary peer review on youth employment;
- Section 4: Improving the reach and impact of voluntary peer reviews;
- Template for the national background report (Annex 1);
- Checklist of responsibilities for country under review, reviewing country and facilitating organization (Annex 4).





HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT IF YOU ARE THE REVIEWER

Relevance: This Toolkit provides guidance on the key parts of your role as the reviewer, including guidance for forming a team of “examiners”, writing the review report and conducting on-site visits.

We recommend you read the entire toolkit, in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the voluntary peer review mechanism and its relevance to youth employment policies and programmes.

Toolkit sections you will find most helpful:

- Section 3: Guidance for each stage of the voluntary peer review on youth employment;
- Section 4: Improving the reach and impact of voluntary peer reviews;
- Template for the review report (Annex 2);
- Checklist of responsibilities for country under review, reviewing country and facilitating organization (Annex 4).



HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT IF YOU ARE THE FACILITATOR OF THE PROCESS (ILO)

Relevance: This Toolkit provides guidance on the key parts of your role as the facilitator of the process (ILO), including: offering support, competence and coordination; encouraging mutual learning opportunities at the national and regional levels in order to enable better policymaking; and disseminating the results to wider audiences.

We recommend you read the entire Toolkit in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the voluntary peer review mechanism and its relevance to youth employment policies and programmes.

Toolkit sections you will find most helpful:

- Section 2: The role of voluntary peer reviews;
- Section 3: Guidance for each stage of the voluntary peer review on youth employment;
- Section 4: Improving the reach and impact of voluntary peer reviews;
- Template for the synthesis report (Annex 3);
- Checklist of responsibilities for country under review, reviewing country and facilitating organization (Annex 4);
- Guidance on timelines and logistical aspects (Annex 5).



HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT IF YOU ARE A SOCIAL PARTNER (I.E. A REPRESENTATIVE OF A TRADE UNION OR AN EMPLOYERS' ORGANIZATION)

Relevance: You have a key role to play in making the peer review assessment more relevant to the situation on the ground, highlighting the needs of employers and advocating the rights of employees/job seekers.

We recommend you focus on the most practical sections of this Toolkit.

Toolkit sections you will find most helpful:

- Section 3: Guidance for each stage of the voluntary peer review on youth employment;
- Section 4: Improving the reach and impact of voluntary peer reviews.



HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT IF YOU ARE AN EXTERNAL GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE

Relevance: This Toolkit highlights the benefits of mutual learning and voluntary peer review to policymakers, and explains core considerations when applying reviews to the area of youth employment.

We recommend you focus on the main sections of the Toolkit, particularly:

- Section 2: The role of voluntary peer reviews;
- Section 3, 3.2.2: Identifying and assessing “good practices” in the area of youth employment.

If you wish to get a sense of the types of information necessary for voluntary peer review assessment, you may also find it helpful to refer to the templates in Annexes 1, 2 and 3.



SECTION 2: THE ROLE OF VOLUNTARY PEER REVIEWS

SECTION 2: THE ROLE OF VOLUNTARY PEER REVIEWS



KEY MESSAGES FROM THIS SECTION

Voluntary peer reviews are expected to contribute to better, more effective and efficient policies and measures that will in turn support successful youth transitions to employment, education and training. Across the world, evidence shows how the voluntary peer review tool has supported improved performance and has enhanced capacity in different policy areas across regions, including in Europe, Latin America and Africa.

To maximize the impact of voluntary peer reviews, they should be aligned to the policymaking cycle.

Successful peer reviews typically rest on a well-defined analytical framework, clearly defined reporting procedures, mutual trust/buy-in of all parties and the availability of reliable monitoring and evaluation information.

One of the specific benefits of the voluntary peer review tool is that it enables participating countries to identify further opportunities for collaboration, such as follow-up visits and thematic events.

2.1 PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF VOLUNTARY PEER REVIEWS

A peer review is a systematic assessment of a country's performance in a particular area, carried out by one or more peer countries.¹⁶ Taking part is voluntary.

Through stimulating discussion, assessment and benchmarking between countries, a voluntary peer review serves as a general means for the country under review to improve its policymaking, through the adoption of good practices and compliance with an agreed criteria.¹⁷ The mechanism also offers the opportunity for government officials and other relevant stakeholders to share their experiences and practices on a particular issue, and to identify future channels and activities for cooperation and learning.

¹⁶ OECD (2007), "Policy Brief: Peer Review: a Tool for Co-operation and Change"; United Nations Evaluation Group (2011), "UNEG Framework for Professional Peer Reviews of the Evaluation Function of UN organizations".

¹⁷ In the YEP CIS, the ILO plays an important role in supporting countries to define these criteria, for example through tailoring the background and review reports.

WHAT PARTICIPANTS SAY ABOUT PEER REVIEWS:

“Giving us an opportunity to analyse ourselves from a different perspective ...”

“Having a fresh vision from ‘peers’ in countries with similar contexts and challenges ...”

“Identifying what others might do better, being able to compare and see other alternatives of action ...”

“Improve access to information as well as highlighting what information is needed ...”

Descriptions of the benefits of peer reviews by participants in the YEP CIS project

The “soft nature” of voluntary peer reviews may encourage greater action in a particular area than standard enforcement mechanisms, as the process represents a discussion between equals, rather than a judgement from above. Peer countries play an important role in exercising influence and pressure,¹⁸ both throughout the proceedings and with the publication of final reports.

Ultimately, voluntary peer reviews are expected to contribute to better and more effective and efficient policies and measures that will in turn support successful youth transitions from school to employment.

HIGHLIGHTING RESULTS FROM MUTUAL LEARNING IN EUROPE AND LATIN AMERICA

Europe:

In a 2013 survey of the public employment services (PES) carried out by the European Commission, the PES highlighted more than 60 concrete changes in over 22 countries, as a result of their involvement in the mutual learning programme, the PES to PES Dialogue. These reforms enhanced PES capacities with regard to: labour market integration of the unemployed; helping employers experiencing recruitment difficulties; making effective use of resources for active labour market measures; and fighting youth unemployment.

In 2014, 72 further changes were identified in 25 countries, with the changes to PES activities mainly reported in the quality and professionalism of employment counsellors, services for employers and blended service for job seekers.

Latin America:

In March 2014, representatives from eight cities in four Latin American countries met at a peer learning workshop in the Dominican Republic in order to share their experiences and practices in developing infrastructure services that are resilient to the impact of climate change. The event was conducted under the framework of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Climate Resilient Infrastructure Services (CRIS) Program.

Amongst other things, all of the city teams developed action plans at the workshop and gained greater motivation to tackle climate change and a new sense of solidarity. In a follow-up survey, around half of the respondents stated that they had been in touch with other participants from outside of their city after the event, such as members of other

¹⁸ OECD, Post-2015: “Policy dialogue, knowledge sharing and engaging in mutual learning”.

municipal groups and field experts. This was generally for the purpose of sharing analysis and technical data, as well as publicizing other events, responding to common challenges and sharing other resources.

Sources:

PES to PES Dialogue Survey 2013 and 2014, Overview of Findings:
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=12857&langId=en>

Many international organizations use voluntary peer reviews for country assessment and to improve policymaking, including the ILO, the OECD, the European Commission, the WTO and NEPAD. They have supported the assessment of performance in such areas as employment policies and programmes, development, economics, governance, health, environment, and education.



EXAMPLE: PEER LEARNING IN AFRICA

NEPAD is the main programme of the African Union to promote development, and includes the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). The APRM is guided by the principles contained within the Declaration on Democracy and Political, Economic and Corporate Governance.

As African countries are at different stages, each participating country first undergoes a basic review, which results in an action plan and serves as the basis for subsequent reviews. The APRM is one of the most relevant schemes for African governability and has improved relations between countries. It also has wide coverage – currently, the Member States represent 75 per cent of the African population, and 12 countries have undergone reviews. In 2010, Ghana and Kenya had nearly completed their action plan and were preparing for a second review.

Sources:

FIIAPP (2010), “*El aprendizaje entre pares en la elaboración de políticas públicas*”
 Partnership Africa Canada (2010), “*Reviewing Africa's Peer Review Mechanism: A Seven Country Survey*”

To maximize the impact of voluntary peer reviews, they should be aligned to the policymaking *cycle*, so that the policy recommendations from one review serve as the “benchmark” for assessing performance in the next round, and inform the design of future policies and programmes.

Although used in policymaking, the application of voluntary peer review as a method of assessment and evaluation first developed in the academic arena, particularly within scientific research. In this context, it is typically used to describe the evaluation of scientific merit and quality by fellow independent experts. The results of academic peer review continue to serve as an important foundation for decision-making in research, not least in terms of publication, recruitment choices, resource allocation and programme development.



EXAMPLE: IMPROVING PERFORMANCE WITH THE SUPPORT OF PEERS

The concept of “*Visitas*” (or the ‘visitation process’) originated in the Netherlands, but has been used in Norway since 2010. Using mutual learning, the aim of the process is to improve management within Norwegian municipalities and the “NAV offices” (joint offices for employment, social protection and welfare administration). The visitation process consists of a “peer-to-peer” visit from managers to review the state of affairs and governance structures. The objectives of the process are usually tailored to the needs identified in the office.

The visitation process is a voluntary support tool. The process starts with the request of a “visitation” implemented by a NAV office. The office meets with a team of experienced managers from other municipalities (peers), as part of a learning network. After the framework of the process has been designed, the visiting experts conduct interviews and collect data. That research can be used to present findings and to identify measures for improvement as part of a visitors’ report. At the end of the process, the report is discussed at a final workshop.

Results from the visitation processes have proven to be very promising. Not only does the visitation improve management, but also it has been beneficial for operationalizing and achieving the objectives of the NAV offices.

The visitation process has also proven to be a transferrable tool (from the Netherlands to Norway), and in Norway a range of institutions are considering using it as an instrument of learning and improvement.

Sources:

European Commission, Mutual Learning Programme, <http://ec.europa.eu/social/mlp>

More information on *Visitas* can be found at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1080&langId=en&practiceId=25>

The term “voluntary peer review” is used in this Toolkit to refer to a mechanism for mutual learning and evaluation amongst peers, although it is important to be aware that some other publications use the term “peer review” to mean a specific workshop or event. In this Toolkit, if events/workshops are being discussed, this will always be made explicit (for example, with terms such as “review workshop”, “on-site visit”, etc.).

TYPICAL STAGES OF THE PEER REVIEW MECHANISM

- 1. Inception:** The scope of the review is defined, particularly the “analytical framework”, criteria for assessment and the roles of different parties.
- 2. Fact-finding:** The country under review produces a range of data and documents to support the assessment and reports back on the national situation, guided by the analytical framework (e.g., providing data on pre-agreed statistical indicators). That information will serve as basis for critical discussion and assessment to support mutual learning.
- 3. Analysis:** The reviewers evaluate the performance in a particular area of the country under review, producing a review report. This is based on all documents provided and additional primary research.
- 4. Peer review workshop:** The country under review, reviewers, facilitator and other peer countries meet to discuss, debate and verify the conclusions of the review, particularly the policy recommendations to support the country under review. **Note:** in some cases, the workshop may be used to present the conclusions of more than one review.

2.2 HOW AND WHEN TO USE VOLUNTARY PEER REVIEWS

There are some limits to what voluntary peer reviews as a tool can offer. Whilst they provide an important international perspective for the country under review, they should **not** act as a substitute for policy monitoring and evaluation at the national level, as they are unlikely to serve as fully comprehensive evaluations, covering all aspects of a particular policy area. The success of the tool rests in proper engagement with the process and recognition of the *specific* benefits it offers, such as the demonstration of good practice and the opportunity for further collaboration with other countries.

Successful reviews typically rest on these core foundations:

- **The analytical framework is well-defined**, setting out the agreed criteria of assessment throughout the review process (specifically, the broad dimensions, precise areas, questions and indicators of the assessment);
- **Concrete policy recommendations** are delivered by peer countries;
- There are **clear procedures and timelines for reporting the results and formulating the recommendations of the process**;
- There is **mutual trust between the parties**, with an absence of hierarchy or political agendas. The process should serve as an open environment for critical discussion and assessment, enabling the country under review to feel comfortable when opening up its policies and programmes for assessment;
- **All parties demonstrate real commitment and buy-in to the process**, in particular by fulfilling the core reporting components of their roles and recognizing it is not a “token” exercise. All countries involved should be committed to review and to being reviewed;
- There are **clearly designated roles and responsibilities** for the country under review, the reviewing country[ies],¹⁹ and any other parties involved (e.g., the host country for an event, a third party facilitating organization and other key stakeholders).

Building upon these common aspects, voluntary peer reviews should be “context-specific”, meaning that they take into account the national circumstances of the country under review. For instance, it is important to consider:

- The **capacity** of the country under review to identify specific policies and measures with proven effectiveness, as well as to draw upon and interpret different sources of data (for example, international, comparative data sources and/or “proxies”). It is especially worthwhile to consider this issue in relation to countries that may lack access to data that covers a lengthy period of time and/or face difficulties in assuring the quality of their data;
- **Known issues** affecting the country in the area of performance under assessment, and ways to ensure that these topics are adequately covered by the analytical framework (e.g., requesting that relevant indicators be included);

¹⁹ Note that the reviewing country[ies] are also referred to as the “reviewers” or “examiners” throughout this Toolkit.

- ***Differences in definitions and interpretations of key concepts*** across countries, and the need to ensure the country under review and reviewers have a shared understanding of them during the process.

More generally, if a third party organization, such as the ILO, is facilitating the review process, it is important to ascertain the level of support and guidance required by the country under review at different stages of the process, including the linguistic capabilities of the country under review and necessary translation or interpretation support. In the words of the United Nations Evaluation Group, the review framework should not be “static”; instead it must be “dynamic and flexible”.²⁰

2.3 VOLUNTARY PEER REVIEWS AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

As discussed, one of the specific benefits of the voluntary peer review tool is that it enables participating countries to identify further opportunities for collaboration. Some potential channels for this include:

1. **Follow-up meetings/visits:** A limited number of representatives come together to share experiences and often make a visit to bear witness to potential good practice in a very specific area;
2. **Thematic events:** These are typically large events, bringing together multiple stakeholders to consider policymaking in a broad area, but without the element of assessment or ranking;
3. **Learning exchanges:** These generally consist in two to three countries coming together to present each of their approaches to a particular area.

²⁰ United Nations Evaluation Group (2011), “UNEG Framework for Professional Peer Reviews of the Evaluation Function of UN organizations”.



EXAMPLE: FOLLOW-UP VISIT FOR PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICES (PES)

In June 2013, Lithuania hosted a peer review on the “Approaches of Public Employment Services (PES) for low-skilled adults and young people”. During the event, many PES representatives from other countries demonstrated an interest in learning about the specific approach taken by the PES in Norway, which has formed strong partnerships with organizations in the education, health and other sectors in order to reach out to the low- skilled.

In order to learn more about how the partnerships work in practice, representatives from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Hungary, Belgium and Spain attended a follow-up visit in Norway in November 2013.

More information at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/keyDocuments.jsp?advSearchKey=pesvisitoslonov2013&-mode=advancedSubmit&langId=en&policyArea=&type=0&country=0&year=0>

During the voluntary peer review process, particularly during the workshop, it is recommended that countries keep track of any policy approaches or programmes that they find particularly interesting, in order to be able to arrange one or more follow-up activities with the country/ies in question. If a third party organization is involved in the voluntary peer review process as the facilitating organization, it may be worth considering offering support in the organization of such an event.

2.4 ALLOCATING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES DURING THE PROCESS

As mentioned, all countries within the multi-country youth employment network are encouraged to undergo review.²¹ With support and guidance from the ILO, they will have the opportunity to undergo review and to act as reviewers themselves. Through being on both sides of the review, countries develop their capacity to empathize with their peer countries; gain greater insight on how to conduct critical policy evaluation in the area of youth employment in a constructive way; increase their understanding of the concept of voluntary peer review and mutual learning; and strengthen their capacity for reviewing and improving their own policies.

²¹ In the framework of the YEP CIS.

From the outset, it is important that the country under review, the reviewing country and the facilitating organization (the ILO) have a clear sense of their roles and responsibilities. They are summarized below. For a “checklist” of the precise responsibilities of each actor, see Annex 4.

THE COUNTRY UNDER REVIEW

By committing to take part in a voluntary peer review, the country under review opens up its youth employment policies and/or programmes for analysis and assessment by its peers. In particular, the review is a chance for the country to present programmes/practices that appear particularly effective in promoting decent jobs for young people, in order to gain insights from the assessment of others, as well as to offer lessons to peer countries that may consider adopting a similar approach.

As part of the process, the country under review reports back on a wide range of aspects of the youth labour market situation. In addition, the country under review agrees to support the reviewing country as it undertakes its assessment (including an on-site visit), to aid the facilitating organization in logistical aspects, and to volunteer its feedback throughout the process. Willingness, transparency and commitment are essential characteristics of the country under review.

Typically, the representatives of the country under review will be civil servants or, in some cases, policymakers. However, it is also important to consider other key stakeholders, such as social partners (employers and workers’ organizations) that could contribute to the discussions and offer valuable insights on labour market issues and employment. Involving independent experts could be considered as part of the preparation of the national background report to support the analysis and the discussions.

At the end of the review, the country under review will have received clear recommendations for improving their policies/programmes in the area of youth employment, delivered by its peers. The country is also likely to develop its capacity to identify good practices and to interpret and analyse data in this area (for example, the main data sources and indicators, ways of reporting on its youth labour market, etc.).

THE REVIEWING COUNTRY

It is the role of the reviewing country/ies to analyse and assess the policies, institutions and/or practices of the country under review, in relation to young people. As the starting point, it examines the national report prepared by the country under review, although it also reviews a range of other sources and conducts an on-site visit to inform its

assessment. In undertaking this work, the reviewers are guided by the evaluation criteria defined within the analytical framework.

Typically, the reviewing country is either chosen on a rotating basis or due to the expertise of government officials or demonstrated good practices in particular areas (for example, reducing early school leaving, tackling precarious employment of young people, etc.). Countries under review might want to request particular reviewing countries, because they have similar experiences or completely different ones. In carrying out their work, it is imperative that the reviewers take an objective and fair approach, avoiding any political agenda towards the country under review and taking into account the context in the country when formulating their recommendations.

It is strongly recommended that one to two countries take lead responsibility for carrying out the analysis and on-site visit. All peer countries will have the chance to contribute to the assessment at the review workshop itself. The reviewers should “do their homework” and prepare for the visit, in a way that they are able to ask specific questions and make requests of places to visit/people to interview/data to access.

The size of the review team depends on the scope of the review in question. Involving both independent experts and government representatives may support a more critical reflection of the country under review, and could be recommended as part of the youth employment voluntary peer reviews.

THE FACILITATING ORGANIZATION (ILO)

The ILO identifies and supports mutual learning opportunities in the area of youth employment policies and programmes, in order to support more effective policymaking. The ILO’s synthesis report generalizes the experiences (policies and practices) explored by the review for future global use and emphasizes the ILO’s role as a competence and knowledge provider and disseminator.

It has a central role in guaranteeing the integrity and independence of the voluntary peer review process, as well as defining the analytical focus. In addition, the ILO handles all logistical aspects of the review (for more details, see Annexes 4 and 5).

2.5 RESPONDING TO COMMON CHALLENGES OF VOLUNTARY PEER REVIEWS

The peer review process may lead to challenges as well as opportunities. These are discussed in turn below, as well as some ways of responding to them:

Challenge: Countries may believe they have **limited resources and time to undergo or carry out a review.**

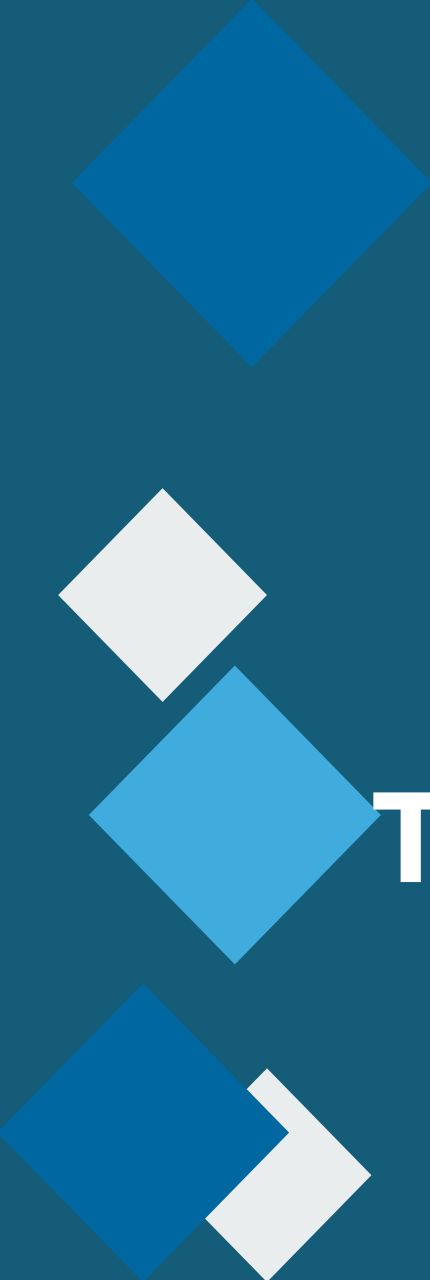
➤ **Response:** It is common for third party international organizations, such as the ILO, to take an active role in facilitating and organizing the process. It is important to emphasize the high level of support, both organizational and financial, that they can offer to the country under review, the reviewers and the workshop's host country (if the country under review is not the host). In addition, it is important to *make the case* to participating countries of how they stand to benefit from the process, ideally by demonstrating results from previous reviews and other forms of mutual learning. Raising awareness about "success stories" can be particularly effective.

Challenge: Countries may face **linguistic difficulties during the process.**

➤ **Response:** Where possible, extend the interpretation and translation services available throughout the whole review process. In addition to the main language[s] of the assessment, it may be valuable to provide interpretation services at the review workshop, particularly to ensure the contribution of key stakeholders, or to translate a shortened version of the report into the national languages of different countries.

Challenge: Some countries may feel **"defensive"** if they see other countries as rivals or if they believe they have nothing to gain from the process.

➤ **Response:** For a voluntary peer review to be effective, it is essential that there is mutual trust between all parties involved. It is not intended to serve as a "judgement", but rather as an open environment for exchange and critical reflection. When identifying participating countries, it is the role of the facilitating organization to make that clear. It is also worthwhile to ensure that all countries have the chance to contribute their feedback throughout the process, either as part of the reviewing team or during the review workshop.



SECTION 3: GUIDANCE FOR EACH STAGE OF THE VOLUNTARY PEER REVIEW ON YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

SECTION 3: GUIDANCE FOR EACH STAGE OF THE VOLUNTARY PEER REVIEW ON YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

The main phases normally involved in the ILO's voluntary peer reviews on youth employment are outlined in the box below.



- 1. Inception phase:** During this phase, the ILO identifies participating countries and, subsequently, supports them in defining the precise scope of the peer review, as well as the timelines, roles and composition of the teams.
- 2. Preparatory desk analysis:** This represents the first stage in the assessment, during which the country under review provides a range of data and documentation on their youth labour market and overall framework/specific practices. It also produces a national background report.
- 3. Initial analysis:** During this phase, the reviewing country examines the national report and all of the accompanying data and documentation. On that basis, it begins to draft the review report and prepares for the on-site visit.
- 4. On-site visit:** The reviewing country conducts an on-site visit of the country under review, in order to meet government representatives, interview key stakeholders in the area of youth employment and visit key sites of interest (e.g., job centres, enterprises, etc.). Organizers should plan approximately three days for this visit.
- 5. Finalizing the analysis:** The reviewing country incorporates findings from the on-site visit into the review report, providing recommendations for the country under review. The ILO supports the reviewing country to finalise the report, before circulating it more widely among peer countries.
- 6. Peer review workshop:** Both the country under review and the reviewing country present the findings of their reports to the peer countries and ILO. The event is an opportunity to debate the core recommendations, leading to the approval of the review report.

7. **Follow-up:** the ILO prepares a synthesis report to bring together the findings from the national report, review report and the review workshop. Amongst other things, this reflects on the findings of the reviewing country, the main debates and conclusions at the workshop, and the final recommendations for the country under review.

Section 3 offers guidance for each phase of the review process, focusing on key steps relating to the content of the review – for example, guiding questions for the review workshop, the most appropriate youth stakeholders to interview during the on-site visit, and support when identifying good practices in the area of youth employment.

For more details on the **organizational aspects** of the review process (for example, sample timelines, advice for making reservations, etc.), see Annexes 4 and 5.

3.1 INCEPTION PHASE

During this phase, the ILO identifies participating countries and, subsequently, supports them in defining the precise scope of the peer review, as well as the timelines, roles and composition of the teams.

Key steps for this phase:

- Defining the analytical framework for the review;
- Agreeing on the reporting requirements.

3.1.1 DEFINING THE ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE REVIEW

All reporting within the framework of the youth employment peer review focuses on the following “core” dimensions:

- The **broader economic situation in the country under review**, i.e. the macroeconomic situation of the country and the ways in which the economic policies of the country address employment;

- The **youth labour market**, i.e. the position and challenges faced by young people in the labour market;
- The **overall youth employment policy framework**, i.e. how the country's policy provisions (e.g., strategies, action plans) in the areas of employment, youth employment and other relevant social and economic areas (e.g., social, housing, education and business promotion policies) affect youth employment and accompanying objectives, targets and performance indicators;
- The **“institutional framework”**, i.e. the institutions responsible for formulating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating employment and labour market policies and programmes, and for providing employment services relevant to young people (e.g., the ministry of labour, the PES, etc.), and their overall relevance (e.g., responsiveness to the labour market situation) and efficiency;
- The **labour market programmes for young people**, i.e. interventions aimed at supporting young people to overcome *“the specific barriers and disadvantages they face in entering and remaining in the labour market”*.²² Building upon these core aspects, the analytical framework defines the precise areas of the assessment of the voluntary peer review, as well as the questions to guide the assessment and the relevant data sources/indicators. Having a well-defined framework also supports a more productive review workshop. An example of how to customize the framework is given in the box below, considering the youth labour market.

MAKING THE ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK “CONTEXT SPECIFIC” TO THE YOUTH LABOUR MARKET

The “analytical framework” **defines the indicators** on which the country under review will report. The youth labour market across (and within) countries varies widely, as do the most appropriate indicators for reporting thereon.

A “typical” indicator of the youth labour market is the **youth unemployment rate** (i.e. the number of unemployed young people, divided by the youth labour force (i.e. the sum of unemployed and employed people). Unemployed people are those who fulfil these criteria: i) did not work in a particular reference period; ii) were available to work in the reference period; c) actively sought work in the past 30 days.

²² ILO (2008), “Guide for the preparation of national action plans on youth employment”, p.9.

This will be of limited relevance in some countries. For instance, in many low-income countries, there are not comprehensive systems of unemployment benefits and social security, meaning most people are forced to enter some form of work, even if precarious or informal. As a result, one can only draw limited conclusions from the youth unemployment rate, as the youth employment challenge is likely to relate to poor job quality or underemployment, as opposed to the lack of a job.

To make the framework “context specific”, it should include indicators on **job quality**, so that the reviewers will be able to reflect on this aspect of youth employment (for example, using the ILO’s school-to-work transition survey (STWS)). In addition, in countries where social security institutions are less developed and young people are less likely to seek work through employment services, it may be worth reporting the “relaxed” unemployment rate. In contrast to the standard unemployment rate, the relaxed rate is a broader measurement of youth unemployment, in that it also includes “discouraged youth”, i.e. those who were “without work in the reference period”, “available to work and [who] would accept work if offered” but who did not seek work during the reference period.

Key questions to consider: What are the known issues affecting young people in the labour market (over-qualification, employment in the informal sector, etc.)? How will these issues be captured in the indicators?

For more information, see the detailed learning resources, available in Annex 4.

It is strongly advised that, during the inception phase, the facilitating organization and the country under review work together to define the analytical framework and to tailor the templates for the national and review report (Annexes 1-2) accordingly. It is recommended that they follow a similar line of logic to that in the example above when reflecting on the other aspects of the reports (broader economic situation, policy framework, institutional framework, employment policies and labour market programmes for young people).

3.1.2 IDENTIFYING AND MAKING CLEAR THE DATA SOURCES

Countries are likely to differ when it comes to the level and type of data available on the youth labour market and interventions targeted at young people. Data for the “typical” indicators of the youth labour market will generally come from a national Labour Force Survey or from the administrative data collected by the responsible ministry (e.g., normally the Ministry of Labour) and/or the Public Employment Services. If data is not available through these sources, it may be possible to populate the data using household surveys, living standard measurement surveys, or international data sources.

As a rule, reports should:

- **Make clear the definition of “youth” in use.** According to the standard United Nations definition, youth are those aged between 15 and 24 years old. However, definitions of youth and the precise age brackets differ widely across individual countries, as do the broader perceptions of and towards young people in relation to their entitlements, roles, capabilities and responsibilities;
- **Label clearly the source and coverage of data provided.** For example, when data comes from administrative records, it is important to ensure that unemployment rates are labelled as “registered unemployment rates”, given that not all unemployed people will be registered with the PES and, vice versa, not all registered unemployed persons are actually without a job.

Indicating the scope of data is extremely important in the context of an international peer review, in order to ensure the peer countries are able to interpret it correctly. Many aspects of unemployment statistics differ across individual countries, such as the data source, age group covered, categorization of different groups of workers, and criteria for the “active job search” component.

WHY BREAK DOWN DATA ON YOUNG PEOPLE?

Young people are a diverse group, with varying challenges and needs in the labour market. This should be taken into consideration when formulating, implementing and properly targeting interventions to support them.

Given the heterogeneity of young people, where possible, it is important to provide disaggregated data on young people within the reports of the peer review, in order to assess the position of different groups.

Possible levels of disaggregation include data by age cohort (for example, 15–19, 20–24, 25–29), sex, educational attainment (ideally following International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) classifications), labour market status (employed, unemployed, inactive) and status in employment (employee, employer, own-account worker, member of cooperative, helping family member) (where possible), disability status, geographical location (urban/rural), formality/informality of employment, type of contract, full vs. part-time employment, etc.

THE ILO'S SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION SURVEY (SWTS)

If young people are known to suffer from poor job quality, it is advised that countries consider making use of the ILO's SWTS in their reports. The SWTS is a household survey of young people, developed in order to shed light on additional aspects of job quality, such as wages, qualifications, satisfaction, stability and formality. Furthermore, the SWTS adopts new analytical categories to enable a more nuanced analysis of the youth labour market. Whereas the traditional divisions of economic activity are “employed”, “inactive” and “unemployed”, the SWTS distinguishes between “regular employed”, “inactive students”, “inactive non-students”, “relaxed unemployed” and “irregular employed”.

The SWTS applies a stricter definition of “transited to stable employment” than other surveys, in that young people currently employed in a temporary and non-satisfactory job are considered to be “in transition”, rather than “transited”.

For more information on SWTS:

http://www.ilo.org/employment/areas/%20youth-employment/work-for-youth/WCMS_191853/lang--ja/index.htm

3.2 PREPARATORY DESK ANALYSIS: THE FIRST STAGE OF THE ASSESSMENT

This represents the first stage in the assessment, during which the country under review provides a range of data and documentation on their youth labour market and overall framework/specific practices, and produces a national background report.

Key steps for this phase:

- Production of the national review report;
- Identifying and assessing good practices in the area of youth employment;

- Delivery of additional data and documents for the reviewing country.

3.2.1 PRODUCING THE NATIONAL BACKGROUND REPORT²³

The national background report (up to 20 pages) offers the country under review an opportunity to reflect on i) the country's most pressing needs and challenges in the area of youth employment, and ii) the success of its employment and labour market policies, programmes and employment services in fulfilling the needs of young people.

Bringing all the relevant information together will require good coordination and cooperation with those institutions/organizations that are responsible for the collection of data and statistics. It is essential that these organizations understand the value and purpose of this exercise. Evidence from the YEP CIS project shows that, in some instances, the exercise revealed gaps in data and lack of statistics. That highlighted the need to improve what information is collected as well as the need to strengthen the evaluation culture to identify what works and why.

Note: Further tailoring of the template may be necessary, in light of the defined scope of the voluntary peer review assessment.

²³ The full template for the national background report is available in Annex 1. Additional learning resources are presented in Annex 4.

SHORT TEMPLATE: NATIONAL BACKGROUND REPORT (UP TO 20 PAGES)



Chapter 1. The economic and social context

Describes briefly the current economic and social situation in the country, including macroeconomic growth and trends, as well as levels of poverty and social exclusion.

Chapter 2. The youth labour market

Analyses the youth labour market situation and trends in the context of overall labour market developments in the country (for example, national demographic trends; youth employment, unemployment and inactivity rates; trends in educational attainment, discussion of school-to-work transitions).

Concludes by assessing the country's pressing needs and challenges in the area of youth employment.



SHORT TEMPLATE: NATIONAL BACKGROUND REPORT (UP TO 20 PAGES) - CONTINUE

Chapter 3. Labour market policies and public employment services (PES) for youth

Describes the employment and unemployment policies and PES for promoting employment of young people (e.g., youth employment policy framework, current ALMPs for young people, unemployment benefits and social assistance schemes, institutional framework for labour market policies, activities and quality of functioning of the public employment services).

Concludes by assessing the achievements and shortcomings of labour market policies and employment services.

Tip: When reporting back on the impact of employment policies and programmes, the country under review should aim to provide data on both outputs and outcomes. Outputs serve as the quantitative measure of the programme/intervention, such as the number of beneficiaries. For example, outputs for an ALMP could include the number of training workshops conducted and the amount of funding allocated to the programme. Outcomes represent the longer-term changes the programme achieves, such as a transformation of behaviours, attitudes and skills levels, as well as the number of persons finding regular employment after completing the programme.

Tip: Ideally, national youth employment objectives should be accompanied by target outputs, outcomes and performance indicators, so that there is a clear framework against which the reviewing country can measure “progress” towards the implementation of policies. When writing the background report, countries are encouraged to report back on any such targets, as these will support the reviewing country when drafting its review report.

Chapter 4. An effective labour market programme or employment service for youth

Presents a labour market programme, practice or service available through the PES that the country considers powerful and effective (i.e. a “good practice”) in promoting youth employment, improving the quality of youth employment and combating youth unemployment and involuntary inactivity. The good practice will be subject to special attention and assessment by the reviewing country and then – during the voluntary peer review – by all participating countries.

Tip: See guidance below on identifying good practices in the area of youth employment.

List of sources

Note: The full template for the national background report is available in Annex 1. The selection of effective programmes/services (Chapter 4) should follow the criteria outlined in section 3.2.2.

3.2.2 IDENTIFYING AND ASSESSING “GOOD PRACTICES” IN THE AREA OF YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

The reviewed country is requested to present one (or more) effective labour market programme(s) or associated practices in Chapter 4 of the national background report. Good practices, developed and implemented to promote decent work opportunities for youth, are an important asset to be analysed and possibly shared with other countries.

WHY IDENTIFY GOOD PRACTICES?

Many young people find employment directly without any assistance, while others may need job search assistance provided by public or private employment services/agencies. However, some groups of young people enter into employment only after participating in ALMPs, which help them overcome disadvantages, such as low or obsolete education, living in rural regions with decent employment deficits, having disabilities, etc. In designing ALMPs, it is particularly important to consider young people who need special, more complex employment promotion programmes.

ALMPs can help to overcome specific disadvantages faced by youth in the labour market and lead to better matches between the unemployed and available job opportunities. At the same time, they come with some risks, such as possible “creaming” (i.e. they support those not genuinely in need of assistance); “deadweight” (the results would still have occurred without the programme); “substitution” (subsidized participants substituted for non-participants) and “displacement” (subsidized employment crowds out non-subsidized employment due to lower labour costs as a result of subsidies, which are reflected in lower prices of produced goods and services).

As such, it is necessary to evaluate and reflect critically on ALMPs for young people. The importance of good practices lies in identifying success factors of labour market programmes and employment promotion measures, demonstrating what *really works* for young people entering the labour market or experiencing difficulties in adapting to it.

There are some barriers to transferring good practices between countries, including the legal and political context, industrial relations, social security, tax and financial systems. As such, it is important for the peer review to have a clear focus on the *transferable aspects* of the practice, and the conditions critical to their success.



LESSONS FROM EVALUATION: WHAT WORKS FOR YOUTH?

Type of programme	Advantages	Disadvantages
Skills and labour market training and related work-experience measures	Works better with broader technical and employability skills that are in demand and includes work experience as well as employment services.	May produce temporary solutions and if not well targeted, may benefit those who are already “better off”. Training alone may not be sufficient to increase youth employment prospects.
Employment services (job search, career guidance and labour market information)	Can help youth make realistic choices and match their aspirations with employment and training opportunities; improve information on job prospects as well as efficiency, effectiveness and relevance of initiatives.	May create unrealistic expectations, if not linked to labour market.
Employment subsidies	Can create employment, if targeted to specific needs (e.g. to compensate for initial lower productivity and training) and to groups of disadvantaged youth.	High “deadweight” and “substitution” (if not targeted); employment may last only as long as the subsidy.
Public employment (e.g. public works and community services)	Help young people gain labour market attachment and improve physical and social infrastructure and the environment - especially if combined with development and sectoral strategies - and enhance employability, if combined with training.	Low labour market integration; young workers may become trapped in a carousel of programmes; often gender-biased; displacement of private sector companies.
Entrepreneurship promotion	Can have high employment potential and may meet young people’s aspirations (e.g. for flexibility, independence); more effective if combined with financial and other services, including mentoring.	May create “displacement” and may have high failure rates. Often difficult for disadvantaged youth, owing to lack of networks, experience, know-how and collateral.

Source:
ILO, Youth Employment Programme; www.ilo.org/youth ²⁴

²⁴ Gianni Rosas, currently Youth Employment Coordinator for Europe, International Labour Office, Presentation on “Piloting Youth Guarantee on the Ground: Experiences from the European Parliament Preparatory Action”, Brussels, 8 May 2015.



EXAMPLE FROM THE EU: WHAT WORKS IN TACKLING YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

In November 2013, the peer review on “Youth unemployment: How to prevent and tackle it?” was held to enable EU Member States to consider the best ways of supporting young people to enter into the labour market or further training. Addressing this issue was particularly pressing at a moment of high average youth unemployment and inactivity across the EU.

The Dutch approach to youth policies was of special interest. When compared with the rest of the EU, the country had the lowest rate of young people not in employment, education or training (less than 5 per cent in 2012, against an EU-28 average of 13.4 per cent) and one of the lowest youth unemployment rates. The Netherlands also ranks consistently high in international comparisons of the skills levels of young people. This positive performance seems largely to be the result of long-term policies leading to human capital formation and sustainable economic growth.

The key policy messages for preventing and tackling youth unemployment were:

1. Youth unemployment is a structural issue that requires a strategic, long-term approach.
2. Prevention is better than cure. Where possible, integrated datasets should be in place in order to track and approach those at risk of early school leaving (ESL) (e-registers, good administration systems, etc.) as well as ensuring a good transfer of data.
3. Support should be targeted at those who are most at risk of becoming NEET (individuals or families), such as the very low-skilled, the disabled, young people with special health or family issues. The success of early intervention also depends on offering person-centred, holistic approaches to counselling, on the setting-up of individual action plans and case management.
4. Good cooperation is required at the local level to tackle this issue; there must be strong partnerships between local agencies so that young people are quickly directed to the right services and there is less chance of someone “falling through the net”. Local stakeholders should exchange best practices around youth employment/reintegration.
5. Governments should work with social partners to foster the creation of apprenticeships, work placements and skills validation schemes, as well as to boost their status.

More information at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1070&newsId=1989&furtherNews=yes>

In the context of this Toolkit, a good practice is defined as:

*“A specific policy or measure that has proven to be **effective and sustainable** in the field of [youth] employment, demonstrated by **evaluation evidence and/or monitoring** and assessment methods using process data and showing the **potential for replication**. It can cover both the formulation and the implementation of the policy or measure, which has led to positive labour market **outcomes over an extended period of time**”.*²⁵

A good practice is typically:

- A measure, programme or service, already functioning in a country, which has been in place for a long enough period to assess and prove its effectiveness;
- Accompanied by positive evaluation evidence, which accounts for possible risks (creaming, deadweight, etc.). Ideally this will be from an external evaluation, although internal evaluation can also provide lessons;
- Coherent with the existing national policies and strategies, with shown results in line with national indicators for economic growth and social development;
- Possible to replicate in other contexts;
- Acknowledged by national or regional/local authorities and (preferably) by social partners as a successful tool to be applied on labour market, particularly in the field of youth employment.

A good practice should positively affect the quality and/or quantity of youth employment, strengthening the capacity of institutions providing employment, educational or other services for youth, and contributing to the improvement of such services.

The suggested criteria for assessing good practices are: **relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, innovation, efficiency, and replicability**. These are presented below, accompanied by their key aspects and guiding questions. If answered properly and in a detailed manner (when required), these criteria can provide insight into possible good practices, how they work and why.

²⁵ European Commission (October 2013), “Mutual Learning Programme: Database of national labour market practices - Step-by-Step Guide”, p.2
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=14033&langId=en>

THE SUGGESTED QUESTIONS MAY GUIDE THE REVIEWED COUNTRY IN PRESENTING SUCH A PROGRAMME AND THE REVIEWING COUNTRY IN ASSESSING IT.



RELEVANCE

Key aspects	Guiding questions
The specific situation of the beneficiaries has been analysed properly and their problems have been identified.	• Has the socioeconomic context of the targeted youth been adequately described and analysed? • Are the analysis and description provided coherent with stated programme objectives and challenges addressed? • Is the programme design based on the findings of a prior youth employment situational analysis (either own analysis or external analysis)?
The programme's activities are adequate to address the identified problems and contribute directly or indirectly to the promotion of decent jobs for youth.	• To what degree do the strategies, approaches, activities and/or methods represent a feasible option to address the above-mentioned challenges and achieve the stated objectives?
The programme's design is in line with or part of governmental youth employment strategies or policies.	• Is the programme in line with governmental youth employment strategies or policies?
Links, coordination and dialogue among different stakeholders are facilitated and strengthened.	• Has the programme been successful in strengthening links, coordination and dialogue among different stakeholders working towards youth employment? • To what extent has the programme managed to involve different stakeholders working towards youth employment in specific activities of the programme or other relevant actions?

EFFECTIVENESS & IMPACT

Key aspects	Guiding questions
Programme results and achievements are measured based on rigorous methods.	• What methods were used to measure the results and achievements? • How rigorously were results and achievements measured and evaluated?



**THE SUGGESTED QUESTIONS MAY GUIDE THE
REVIEWED COUNTRY IN PRESENTING SUCH A
PROGRAMME AND THE REVIEWING COUNTRY IN
ASSESSING IT - CONTINUE**

EFFECTIVENESS & IMPACT - CONTINUE

Key aspects	Guiding questions
The programme has proven positive results with regard to its desired outcomes.	• What were the outcomes of the programme and how did they compare with its initial aims and objectives? • What evidence is there that the programme actually has made this difference, i.e. that these results and achievements can be attributed to the programme?
The programme contributes directly to the overall aim of improving the quality and/or quantity of work for youth.	• Are the dimensions of the quality and/or quantity of work for youth that have been improved clearly described? • What evidence is there that it is the programme that has made this difference, i.e. that the improvement in quality and/or quantity of work can be attributed to the programme?
Positive (or negative) effects of the programme on a broader scale are known and can be attributed to the programme.	• Does the programme have any intended or unintended positive side effects on the targeted youth (e.g., entrepreneurial training may also improve chances to find formal employment)? • Does the programme have any positive effects on the targeted youth besides improving quality and/or quantity of work (e.g., increased self-esteem, improved health, higher socioeconomic status)? • Besides the targeted youth, do any other people benefit directly or indirectly from the programme and its achievements (e.g., families, the community)? • Does the programme have any unintended negative side effects on the targeted youth, other people or the environment?



**THE SUGGESTED QUESTIONS MAY GUIDE THE
REVIEWED COUNTRY IN PRESENTING SUCH A
PROGRAMME AND THE REVIEWING COUNTRY IN
ASSESSING IT - CONTINUE**

SUSTAINABILITY

Key aspects	Guiding questions
The benefits of the programme for targeted beneficiaries will last or continue after finishing their participation (immediately, after one year, after three years). The programme is going to continue due to its support in legislation and/or key strategy/policy document. The benefits of a small-scale, experimental programme are achieved even if the programme is expanded. The benefits and/or activities of a programme are going to endure after the programme has ceased.	• How likely is it that benefits for the target youth are going to last or continue? • Has the programme been endorsed by the government, i.e. been converted into a legal instrument, policy, or strategy?

INNOVATION

Key aspects	Guiding questions
The programme tackles pressing, but largely unaddressed topics in youth employment and/or has integrated innovative practices or approaches into programme delivery.	• Has the programme included unconventional approaches or components? Does the programme use an approach that is new or different, or at least not so well known? • What is special or innovative about the approach or programme that makes it of potential interest to others? • What kind of innovations do the programmes put forward in the technical/organizational/institutional fields?



**THE SUGGESTED QUESTIONS MAY GUIDE THE
REVIEWED COUNTRY IN PRESENTING SUCH A
PROGRAMME AND THE REVIEWING COUNTRY IN
ASSESSING IT - CONTINUE**

INNOVATION - CONTINUE

Key aspects	Guiding questions
	• Does the programme tackle a dimension that is less often considered with respect to youth employment? • Does the programme have strategies in place on how to integrate new knowledge, methods, etc., in the roll-out of the programme? • Has the programme developed an environment of learning with regard to youth employment?

EFFICIENCY

Key aspects	Guiding questions
The input-output relationship seems reasonable.	• Is the programme able to describe the allocation of funds to different budget components adequately? • Taking into account the programme's objectives and activities, as well as its context, does the allocation of funds to the different budget components seem reasonable and adequate? • Do the total costs in relation to the actual number of direct and indirect beneficiaries seem reasonable? • Have resources (human, financial, material) been used in an efficient manner? • Are programme costs/expenditures higher or lower compared to other programmes implemented in similar contexts with similar target groups and objectives?



**THE SUGGESTED QUESTIONS MAY GUIDE THE
REVIEWED COUNTRY IN PRESENTING SUCH A
PROGRAMME AND THE REVIEWING COUNTRY IN
ASSESSING IT - CONTINUE**

EFFICIENCY - CONTINUE

Key aspects	Guiding questions
The programme coordinates its activities with other relevant actors in the field in order to increase efficiency through the use of partnerships.	• Is the programme implemented through partnerships and alliances? • Are programme activities coordinated in collaboration with other actors working in similar fields?

REPLICABILITY

Key aspects	Guiding questions
The programme or parts of it have already been replicated or have the potential for replication in other geographical settings and/or in other contexts.	• Does the programme or components of the programme have a high potential for replication in other geographical areas/countries or in other contexts? • Has the programme or parts of it already been replicated in other geographical areas/countries or in other contexts? • Is there a good description of how and to what extent the programme has already been replicated?
Key criteria and conditions for the programme to be successful are clearly described.	• Are key conditions and criteria for the programme's success clearly described? • Does the description seem convincing enough to inform other organizations that wish to replicate the programme? • How easily can the programme be replicated in terms of its structural viability and its adaptability to different geographical and socioeconomic contexts?
Lessons learned from a first implementation phase are identified, documented and accessible.	• Are lessons learned documented and accessible enough to help other organizations to replicate the programme in other geographical areas/countries or contexts?

The facilitating organization should provide guidance and highlight potential examples, whilst leaving the country to choose the final practice.

A wide range of measures can be mentioned, including measures targeted at disadvantaged groups of young people²⁶ and the long-time unemployed; strategies and programmes promoting occupational and geographical mobility; and strategies to increase quality and applicability of vocational education and training.

3.2.3 ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS AND DATA TO BE PROVIDED BY THE COUNTRY UNDER REVIEW

As well as writing the national background report, the country under review should make available a range of additional policy documents for the reviewing country, including:

- Overarching policy frameworks (national poverty reduction or development strategies);
- Specific policy documents (mid-term fiscal strategy, employment policy, education policy, social protection policy, youth development policy, national action plan on youth employment, etc.);
- Legislative instruments (annual government budget law, employment promotion law, labour code, etc.);
- Publications of the responsible ministries and other relevant national institutions;
- Analyses and research (including evaluation and assessments) conducted by experts, international organizations, development banks, etc.;
- Reports on donor funded projects and initiatives;
- Other relevant documentation.

When providing these documents, the country under review should draw the attention of the reviewers to the areas they are likely to find most relevant (e.g., the policy provisions with an impact on youth employment). Furthermore, the country under review should make clear additional sources of **relevant statistical data** not covered in the national background report.

²⁶ Disadvantaged groups will differ depending on the national/regional context, but may include young people with disabilities, young women, individuals from ethnic minority communities and young people from households at risk of poverty.

3.3 INITIAL ANALYSIS BY THE REVIEWING COUNTRY

During this phase, the reviewing country examines the national report and all of the accompanying data and documentation. On this basis, it begins to draft the review report and prepares for the on-site visit.

Key steps for this phase:

- Drafting the review report.

3.3.1 DRAFTING THE REVIEW REPORT

The review report (up to 15 pages) is the chance for the reviewers to assess the coverage, relevance and adequacy of employment and labour market policies and programmes for youth in the country under review, as well as the coherence and consistency of the policy/institutional framework. It should be based upon their analysis of the country under review's data and documents and identify new lines of investigation for the on-site visit.

When drafting this report, it is important to be sensitive to the situation of the country under review, recognizing the level of trust and commitment it has demonstrated through engaging in the voluntary review process in the first place. Whilst the examiners should report the results in an independent and objective way, they should also offer the country under review the opportunity to comment on the findings, both to check factual accuracy and to prepare for the discussions at the review workshop.



SHORT TEMPLATE: VOLUNTARY PEER REVIEW REPORT (10-15 PAGES)

Chapter 1. Assessment of the employment and labour market policies for youth

Assesses the coherence and consistency of the youth employment policy framework in the country under review, as well as the coverage, relevance and adequacy of employment and labour market policies and programmes (active and passive) for youth.

Chapter 2. Institutional capacity of the reviewed country in terms of design and implementation of the employment and labour market policies

Critically assesses the institutional framework for youth employment (ministries, public employment services, etc.), particularly its responsiveness to the labour market. Also considers the quality and effectiveness of the PES for youth, such as the adequacy of their resources and their success in reaching out to diverse groups of young people.

Chapter 3. Assessment of the effectiveness of labour market programmes or employment services for youth (good practice)

Assesses the relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, innovation, efficiency, and replicability of identified good practices in either promoting youth employment, improving the quality of youth employment and/or combating youth unemployment and involuntary inactivity.

Tip: Make use of the criteria for assessment outlined above in section 3.2.2.

Chapter 4. Conclusions and recommendations

Summarizes the findings and recommendations for overcoming challenges identified during the review. The recommendations should be as realistic and feasible as possible. They should also be affordable and proportional to the resources the reviewed country is already allocating to the employment and labour market policies.

List of sources

Note: The full template for the voluntary peer review report is available in Annex 2.

3.4 ON-SITE VISIT: ENRICHING THE ASSESSMENT

In the next stage, the reviewing country conducts an on-site visit to the country under review, in order to meet government representatives and social partners, interview key stakeholders in the area of youth employment and visit key sites of interest (e.g., job centres). Organizers should plan approximately three days for this visit.

Key steps for this phase:

- Identifying and interviewing stakeholders.

3.4.1 IDENTIFYING AND INTERVIEWING STAKEHOLDERS

The on-site visit represents a chance for the reviewing team to “fill the gaps” in their understanding of youth employment in the country under review, including the most salient features of the youth labour market, the employment and labour market policies affecting youth and/or the aspects of a particular practice. During the visit, the reviewing country interviews key stakeholders, makes visits to sites of interest (e.g., employment centres, training centres, schools) and clarifies any outstanding issues.

The precise stakeholders for interview will depend on the needs of the review country and the recommendations of the country under review. Apart from the ministry in charge of labour and employment and the public employment services, they may include representatives from:

- The ministry of education and/or schools, vocational educational colleges, training providers and universities;
- Other relevant ministries in charge of policies that can have an impact on youth employment, such as the ministry of the economy or finance;
- Research/academic community (independent experts);
- Career guidance and advisory services for young people;
- Employers’ and workers’ organizations;
- Youth organizations and other civil society organizations working with and representing young people;
- National statistical offices with responsibility for data on youth employment;

In addition, if the country under review identified a good practice in relation to young people in their background report, the reviewing team will need to speak to representatives of that programme or service.

When defining questions for different stakeholders, the reviewers are advised to ensure that their questions are:

- **Targeted to the stakeholder in question.** For instance, representatives of the public employment services may be well placed to comment on strategies of outreach for young people who are inactive or unemployed, but they are unlikely to be able to answer questions on the details of overarching policy frameworks, such as national policies for development or poverty reduction;
- **Relevant to the overarching review process**, in other words related clearly to one or more of the areas of assessment within the analytical framework and/or report;
- **Specific**, i.e. making clear the information expected, and either avoiding or defining key terms that the stakeholder may not know;
- **Open-ended.** Generally, questions should be open-ended in order to enable the stakeholder to elaborate and to provide space for any unexpected findings.

More generally, it is recommended that the reviewers make use of *semi-structured interviews*.²⁷

Ideally, if the reviewer is interviewing stakeholders and conducting visits relevant to an identified good practice, each question should focus on one or more of these aspects: relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, innovation, efficiency, and replicability (see step 3.2.2 for more information, “Identifying and assessing ‘good practices’ in the area of youth employment”).

Whilst completing the on-site visit, the review team should **take note of the results**, as well as any new findings they had not expected.

²⁷ See Robert Woods Johnson Foundation, “Qualitative Research Guidelines Project”, <http://www.qualres.org/HomeSemi-3629.html>

3.5 FINALIZING THE ANALYSIS

The reviewing country incorporates findings from the on-site visit into the review report, providing clear recommendations for the country under review. The ILO supports the reviewing country in finalizing the report, before circulating it more widely among peer countries.

Key steps for this phase:

- Finalizing the report and developing policy recommendations for the country under review.

3.5.1 FINALIZING THE REPORT AND DEVELOPING POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE COUNTRY UNDER REVIEW

Having reviewed all of the available evidence and conducted an on-site visit to the country under review, the reviewing country must now finalize and submit the review report.

Given that the voluntary peer review mechanism should support participating countries to improve their policymaking, the recommendations in the report are particularly important. They bring together the conclusions from the review, and serve as the foundation of discussions at the review workshop. There is value in considering the provision of not only strategic recommendations but also those of a more practical nature (for instance, sharing examples of quality standards for access and provision of services, if a country under review does not have them).

ASPECTS TO CONSIDER WHEN DEVELOPING POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Amongst others, authors may wish to consider:

- Whether there are any means of improving the coherence and consistency of the youth employment policies and/or the institutional framework;
- The degree to which the country's youth employment policies are accompanied by target objectives, outcomes and indicators, **as in the example below;**
- Improvements to the design and implementation of ALMPs for youth;

- Ways to alter the balance between active and passive labour market policies/programmes and change the ALMP mix (e.g., shifting the emphasis from public works to training, internships or subsidized employment);
- Ways to alter the balance of resource allocation;
- Ways to target measures more efficiently to particular groups and/or areas;
- Methods to boost the quality and effectiveness of the public employment services for young people, particularly when it comes to outreach and labour market forecasting;
- Particular groups of young people in need of greater attention, such as those from disadvantaged households, within the policy framework;
- Key actors in need of capacity development (public employment services, local authorities, youth organizations, etc.);
- Ways of improving macroeconomic policies for growth.



EXAMPLE: CLEARLY DESIGNED OUTCOMES AND INDICATORS FOR YOUTH EMPLOYMENT OBJECTIVES

Box 9. Youth employment outcomes and indicators

To achieve the objectives and meet the targets set out in the NAP of Sunshine, the NTT has shaped the following outcomes and performance indicators:

Outcomes and indicators linked to Objective 1

Objective 1: To improve access to and increase relevance of the VET system

OUTCOME 1.1: VET system reformed to provide equal access to vocational training for young women and men.

Indicators:

- The rate of enrolment of young women in VET is equal to that of young men by the year Y.
- The rate of young female graduates in VET is increased by 25 per cent by the year X.
- Young women's participation in training in non-traditional trades is 35 per cent by the year Z.

OUTCOME 1.2: VET policy revised to flexibly respond to labour market requirements, including through the provision of work experience.

Indicators:

By the year Z:

- 70 per cent of VET programmes are designed on the basis of labour market forecasts and of the needs identified by enterprises.
- 85 per cent of VET programme delivery is competency-based.
- 60 per cent of VET programmes incorporate work experience components, including through public-private partnerships.

Sources:

ILO (2008), Guide for the preparation of National Action Plans on Youth Employment.

3.6 REVIEW WORKSHOP

Both the country under review and the reviewing country present the findings of their reports to the peer countries and the ILO at the review workshop. The event is an opportunity for countries to learn from one another, to focus on transferable elements of practice and to debate the core recommendations of the review report. Amongst other things, it leads to the approval of the review report and informs the findings of the synthesis report.

Key steps for this phase:

- Defining the structure and content of the voluntary peer review workshop;
- Deciding the number and types of participants;
- Choosing the peer countries.

3.6.1 DEFINING THE STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE REVIEW WORKSHOP

The review workshop generally lasts around one and a half days, and represents an opportunity for peer countries and the country under review to discuss and validate the findings of the review process thus far. As part of this, both the country under review and the reviewing country should be invited to present the main findings of their reports. Furthermore, the issue of youth employment should be placed in the wider policy context.

The review should have a clear focus on *transferable* aspects of practice, and conditions critical to their success. Ideally, the content should be based on what the countries have to offer in terms of good practices, or else wider policy priorities for youth in a particular region.

To frame the agenda and help stimulate discussion, it is strongly advised that **each day** of the agenda focus on three to four key questions in relation to the precise area of assessment, in order to guide the discussion. These key questions are a core element of the learning process as they challenge participants to think further on good practices, what works and what does not, and to think about issues and opportunities around specific themes. The questions should aim to take the discussion beyond what it is already known in a subject area. These questions should be directly incorporated into the final agenda sent to the participants, and frame the facilitation during the event.



EXAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR THE PEER REVIEW WORKSHOP

Which policies do countries pursue to facilitate the transition of young people from the informal to the formal economy?

Which policies do countries pursue to facilitate a smooth school-to-work transition of young people?

Which policies do countries pursue to reduce the number of early school leavers? Are there financial incentives involved? If so, how are these incentives designed?

What is the role/estimated impact of vocational upper secondary education in supporting successful labour market integration for young people?

What methods are being used to reach out and engage with young people, particularly those who are NEET?

What is the role of social partners (trade unions and employer organizations), youth organizations, public employment services, municipalities, education institutions and voluntary organizations, in supporting successful transitions?

How can the capacity and resources of employment services and their partners be enhanced to better target young people, particularly those hardest to reach?

The precise format of the review workshop can be decided by the facilitator of the process, taking into account the input of countries reviewing/under review. As a guiding principle, the agenda should enable interaction and critical debate, as opposed to being dominated by long, formal presentations. In particular, it may be useful to divide the participants into smaller groups (depending on the total number of participants) to help engage them in the debate and to explore particular issues of youth employment in greater depth (e.g., job quality, education and training systems).



EXAMPLE SUBTOPICS FOR A VOLUNTARY PEER REVIEW WORKSHOP

- Provision of quality apprenticeships and traineeships;
- Reducing early school leaving;
- Streamlining and personalizing employment services for young people;
- Promoting youth entrepreneurship;
- Tackling labour market segmentation (supporting young people at risk of being trapped in precarious employment, with less on-the-job training, lower wage levels and weaker long-term employment and career prospects).

In order to ensure the workshop results in concrete policy conclusions, **facilitators** are advised continuously to draw out the key messages throughout the event. They must also be sensitive to the fact that the language of the event may not be participants' native language, taking care to repeat core questions, encourage quieter participants to offer their insights and make use of visual aids/slides, etc. to foster greater understanding and active engagement.

3.6.2 DECIDING THE NUMBER AND TYPES OF PARTICIPANTS

One of the main challenges when supporting youth transitions and ensuring sustainable employment is that youth integration is a complex and multidimensional issue, which is even more challenging when young people face multiple disadvantages. Innovative and strategic partnerships help to connect services in a more coordinated and effective way; the most effective policies are normally based on collaborative work. As such, it is important that multiple stakeholders contribute to the review process, particularly at the review workshop.

The invitation to the review workshop should make clear its purpose and the types of individuals who stand to benefit the most.

GIVING SOCIAL PARTNERS A PROMINENT ROLE

Social partners (employers' and workers' organizations) should be given a prominent role with the review workshop, in order to enrich participants' perspectives and awareness of the situation "on the ground". Setting up particular sessions, such as roundtables or panel discussions, are worthwhile ways of ensuring that partners' experiences are related and taken into account.

It is highly beneficial for participants to include senior government representatives with direct responsibility for designing and implementing youth employment policies. These individuals are well-placed to make informed and in-depth contributions to the event, as well as to spread awareness of the conclusions and (potentially) instigate changes within their own countries. It is worth bearing in mind that the responsibility for youth issues may lie with different government departments (e.g., economy, health, welfare, industry, education and training, employment, youth affairs, trade, finance). The focus of the event and circumstances in the country under review have an effect on which departments are the most relevant to invite.

It will also be important that representatives of the service providers (e.g., the PES, education and training providers) attend. These individuals can provide not only an insight into the delivery of youth programmes on the ground, for example, possible data for monitoring outcomes, outreach schemes for reaching unregistered young people, etc., but also have the responsibility of implementing youth programmes and policies.

3.6.3 CHOOSING THE PEER COUNTRIES FOR THE WORKSHOP

It is voluntary to take part in a review workshop. The ILO will invite a range of countries to attend in order to support a variety of perspectives and to enrich the peer assessment. In some cases, it may be necessary for the facilitating organization to recruit more actively, for example if it appears that interest is low or that there will be a limited range of policy experiences represented. Ideally, countries should be facing common issues in the area of youth employment and there should be some representation of countries considered to be "good performers" in the particular area of assessment. Pursuing this form of active recruitment will strengthen the learning process by enabling a more rounded discussion.

There is no "rule of thumb" as to the number of peer countries to invite. From a logistical perspective, it may be worth establishing an upper limit for peer countries.

3.7 FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

As a follow-up to the review process, the ILO prepares a synthesis report to bring together the findings from the national report, review report and the review workshop. Amongst other things, this reflects on the findings of the reviewing country, the main debates and conclusions at the workshop, and the final recommendations for the country under review. It also plays a role in generalizing the experiences explored by the voluntary peer review for future global use.

Key steps for this phase:

- Developing the synthesis report;
- Communicating the results of the review process.

3.7.1 DEVELOPING THE SYNTHESIS REPORT

Drafted by the facilitating organization, the synthesis report (20-25 pages) should add value to the national and review reports, by building upon the findings of the reviewing country and the conclusions of the review workshop to provide targeted and developed policy recommendations for the country under review.

The main role of the report is to transfer the peer countries' experience into the global context, i.e. to generalize the experiences (policies and practices) explored by the review for future global use. The ILO has a core role to play as a provider and disseminator of competence and knowledge.



SHORT TEMPLATE: SYNTHESIS REPORT (20-25 PAGES)

Chapter 1. Main social, economic and labour market developments

Provides an overview of the main developments in the country under review, in relation to the economic situation, social situation, demographic composition of the population and the labour market situation. In particular, this chapter should cover both supply-side factors (e.g., the structure and development trends of employment, unemployment and inactivity of the population) and demand-side factors (job creation by sector, occupations in demand, vacant jobs and their skill requirements).



SHORT TEMPLATE: SYNTHESIS REPORT (20-25 PAGES) - CONTINUE

Chapter 2. Youth labour market situation

Considers the situation of young people in the labour market in the country under review, challenges faced by them, including the relative ease/difficulty with which they can find work and secure/stable employment conditions. Also considers the situation of young people in wider society, e.g., levels of in-work poverty and social engagement, etc.

Chapter 3. Youth employment policies and programmes: Key youth employment challenges

Summarizes the main policies and actions taken to promote quality youth employment in the country under review, as well as the institutional framework and any issues undermining the effectiveness of particular programmes. Discusses the key challenges in relation to improving the youth employment situation in the country under review, for example challenges in creating decent employment, closing gender gaps, facilitating the transition from the informal to the formal economy, etc.

Chapter 4. Main findings and recommendations from the reviewers. Summary of review workshop discussions

Summarizes the main messages of the reviewing country, both in general and in relation to the good practice[s] identified by the country under review (e.g., most effective elements, limits in reach, etc.) as well as the main themes of discussion during the review workshop, particularly the key debates and the conclusions on policies/programmes considered most effective for tackling youth employment. Based on the results of the review, recommends possible measures to be introduced in the country under review (and perhaps transferred to other countries).

Chapter 5: Policy recommendations

Arguably the most important chapter of the synthesis report, this brings together the core policy recommendations for the country under review in the area of youth employment, based on the findings of the voluntary peer review process.

Tip: Further guidance on the development of policy recommendations is given in section 3.5.1.

List of sources

Note: The full template for the synthesis report is available in Annex 3.

In order to provide greater focus to the policy recommendations, the facilitating organization and the country under review may wish to work together to develop an “action point plan” (one to two pages), focusing on the operational actions that would support their policy recommendations. In particular, the facilitating organization should endeavour to guide this process and ensure quality. It is the choice of the country under review whether to make this plan internal to the labour ministry/employment services, or to share it more widely with stakeholders in order to gain their commitment and cooperation.

In general, it is important that the facilitating agency work closely with the country under review to ensure that the outputs from the review suit their needs.

3.7.2 COMMUNICATING THE RESULTS OF THE VOLUNTARY PEER REVIEW PROCESS

Communicating effectively the results from voluntary peer reviews represents an opportunity to maximize their potential impact, both in the short and long term. Arguably, making findings and recommendations **publicly available** is one of the best ways of exerting “peer pressure” and ensuring future rounds of review have access to the “benchmarking criteria” from the previous review. Prompting a public discussion may also lead to the engagement of multiple stakeholders, including youth representative groups.

At the same time, when deciding which information to make public, there is a need to be sensitive to the frankness of discussion at the meeting itself, as well as the identity of individual commentators. On its website, the ILO may choose to be selective in what it publishes, for example, disseminating the main findings and recommendations of the synthesis report. The possibility of hosting a press conference with the country under review should also be considered.

When good practices are identified, it may be useful to consider publishing them as part of an online database of good practices in the area of youth employment, either through an existing or a new database. This can be an effective way of giving visibility to the country under review and supporting wider learning.

Some examples of such databases are given in the box below.



EXAMPLES OF DATABASES OF POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Youth Employment Inventory: Brings together examples from across the globe, along with evaluation results of approaches to promoting youth employment. It is a collaborative effort of the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), the International Labour Organization (ILO), World Bank and Youth Employment Network (YEN): <http://www.youth-employment-inventory.org/>

YouthPOL eAnalysis: Serves as the ILO's global database on youth employment policies: <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/youthpol/en/f?p=30850:1001:0::NO::>

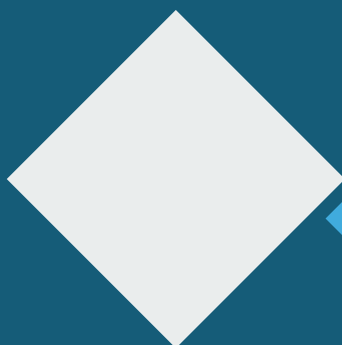
Database of national labour market practices: Brings together European examples of national employment policies and practices judged to be effective: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1080&langId=en>

WEESP: Webtool for Evaluated Employment Services Practices is an online repository gathering evidence of evaluated practices and interventions across the EU: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1030&langId=en>

There are additional ways of communicating the findings from the review process. Organisers at the review workshop should encourage participants to share the findings within their own organizations, for example by asking participants to forward materials to colleagues or to give presentations within their place of work. This is important, as voluntary peer reviews should be a two-way learning process, offering peer countries the chance to build the policy lessons into their own youth employment policies and programmes.

SECTION 4:

IMPROVING THE REACH AND IMPACT OF VOLUNTARY PEER REVIEWS



SECTION 4: IMPROVING THE REACH AND IMPACT OF VOLUNTARY PEER REVIEWS

4.1 INVOLVING SOCIAL PARTNERS AND YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS

When carrying out a voluntary peer review on youth employment, it is particularly important to involve social partner organizations²⁸ in order to gain a more rounded and critical perspective. For instance, employers' organizations can explain the skills needs in particular sectors of the labour market (supporting an effective transition from school to work); and trade unions play an active in supporting and defending the rights of workers in general.

²⁸ ILO, C122 - Employment Policy Convention, 1964. Article 3: "In the application of this Convention, representatives of the persons affected by the measures to be taken, and in particular representatives of employers and workers, shall be consulted concerning employment policies, with a view to taking fully into account their experience and views and securing their full co-operation in formulating and enlisting support for such policies". Countries that have ratified this Convention are therefore expected to ensure active participation and consultation of social partners in voluntary peer review activities and to contribute to more effective policies.



THE ILO AND SOCIAL PARTNERS

The ILO is the only tripartite United Nations agency with government, employer, and worker representatives. This structure makes it a unique forum for governments and social partners to freely and openly debate and elaborate labour standards and policies. It i) enables all parties to actively pursue issues of mutual concern; ii) creates a balance between economic, political, and social concerns; and iii) takes into account the specific knowledge and interests of each of the three parties, potentially leading to broader consensus in decision making as a result.

Therefore, the ILO strongly supports the active involvement of employer and worker representatives in the voluntary review process.

The involvement of youth organizations is also critical to ensure the reach and relevance of the activities implemented. In practice, they can play a role in providing advice, advocacy, conveying feedback from young people, mentoring and outreach. In the case of young people who are inactive, they are essential to identify and reach those who are outside the system. Youth organizations represent a more authentic voice of young people in the review process. Another important point is that involving youth organizations in mutual learning activities will build their own capacity.

Possible methods of engaging social partners and youth organizations include: organizing separate panel sessions during the review workshop; ensuring they have a prominent role in the on-site visit; requesting data/documentation from these bodies as part of the review; or providing a position paper identifying challenges and proposals on concrete topics.

To facilitate participation, it is essential to inform social partner and youth organizations in advance and to manage expectations from all sides. In the case of social partners, it would be interesting to consider having representatives of both parties (workers and employers) contribute to discussions, as well as to consider visiting individual companies that might have interesting practices/experiences to share. It should be possible for these stakeholders to submit any written communication on particular issues or topics of relevance that could then be shared with the reviewers prior to the on-site visit or when preparing the review report.

4.2 MONITORING THE PROCESS AND MEASURING IMPACT

Evaluating the voluntary peer review process itself represents an opportunity for all parties to: draw and share lessons, identify strengths and weaknesses, consider the efficiency of resource use (for example, time and budget), demonstrate value and consequences, and improve the design of the process over time. Ideally, a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan should be in place to continuously monitor performance in the implementation of the voluntary peer review process, building data and evidence to support an evaluation and identify areas for improvement.

To enable a proper evaluation of the process, it is important to collect monitoring data at different stages. The channels for collecting this data should be defined at the very beginning of the process, as should the individuals responsible for collecting them. The M&E plan can be revised over time so as to avoid any additional burden on participants (for example, avoiding overly long or complex questionnaires).

Amongst other things, this monitoring data could include:

- **Short online surveys** of the stakeholders who were interviewed during the analysis stage, exploring their overall understanding of the voluntary peer review process and any challenges they encountered during the interview. These surveys should be sent to stakeholders soon after their interviews (i.e. following the on-site visit), so that they are able to recount their experiences in more depth;
- **Evaluation forms** for all participants at the review workshop, in which they provide feedback on the content and delivery of different sessions, as well as on overall organization and individual learning. These can be provided as part of the delegates' packs and collected in the final sessions of the event or, alternatively, can be sent electronically straight after the event;
- **Short interviews with representatives of the examiners (from the reviewing country)**, which explore any challenges they faced in writing the review report, particularly in terms of obtaining data and documentation. These interviews should be conducted soon after the review workshop itself, once the recommendations for the country under review have been finalized;
- **"Follow-up"** questionnaires to reinforce the importance of sharing information within participants' organizations and with relevant parties to promote organizational and policy change. This questionnaire focuses on the potential follow-up actions and changes since the organization of the activity. This questionnaire is sent a few months after the activity to allow for sufficient lead-in time;
- **Annual web-based survey** with all participants to identify any potential results from the activities and thus measure the impact of the process. This could be complemented with a selected number of follow-up in-depth interviews.

It is likely that the facilitating organization – the main body coordinating the voluntary peer review process – will assume the main responsibility of collecting monitoring data. In defining which data to collect, it is important to ensure that all parties have the opportunity to provide feedback at some point in the process, in order to gain a wide range of perspectives as to how it could be improved.

In addition to supporting evaluation of the entire review process, collecting data can be a way of prompting participating countries to reflect on the effectiveness of their own policies and measures and on how they could use the lessons to support policy improvements directly. Data collection will also encourage participating countries to adopt an "evaluation culture", which will help them to concretely report on their progress in addressing youth employment issues.

ANNEXES & REFERENCES



ANNEX 1.

TEMPLATE FOR THE NATIONAL BACKGROUND REPORT

To be prepared by the country under review, with support from the ILO.

Participants are strongly advised to refer to Methodology for Conducting Youth Labour Market Analysis, in conjunction with this Annex, which provides additional ILO resources for writing this report.

Guidance on length: Whole report (excluding Annex) should be approximately 20 pages.

The paper should have four chapters, and all sources (statistical data, policy information and analytical findings, etc.) should be clearly stated. The analytical framework affects the indicators and information provided in this report.

If countries provide extensive data tables, it is suggested that these are included in the national background report as an (optional) Annex, with the main body of the text providing the analysis of key trends.

Note: Further tailoring of the template may be necessary, in light of the defined scope of the voluntary peer review assessment.

CHAPTER 1. THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

Purpose of chapter: Describes briefly the current economic and social situation in the country.

Guidance on length: 2–3 pages.

Core topics to cover in Chapter 1	Example indicators to populate
• Macroeconomic development; • Development of main economic sectors; • Impact of economic growth on job creation and employment; • Social context, including levels of poverty and social exclusion, as well as the most vulnerable groups; • Impact of poverty on the working population.	• Annual GDP growth rate; • Growth by broad economic sector (agriculture, industry and services); • Labour force participation rate, disaggregated by sex, age, educational level and region; • Employment-to-population ratio, i.e. the share of people working out of the total of working age population, broken down by sex, age, educational level and region; • Level of national poverty line (if established); • Share of poor population and population at risk of poverty and social exclusion, disaggregated by age and sex, and (ideally) region, ethnicity, educational level; • The share of in-work poverty (i.e. the share of employed population whose earnings/income are below the national poverty line); • Gini index (measuring the extent to which income distribution amongst individuals or households deviates from a perfectly equal distribution).²⁹

²⁹ <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI?page=6>

CHAPTER 2. THE YOUTH LABOUR MARKET

Purpose of chapter: Analyses the youth labour market situation and trends in the context of overall labour market developments in the country. In other words, sheds light on the *particular* situation and needs of young people in the country.

When writing this chapter, countries are encouraged to draw upon the results of the ILO's SWTS and the ILO's youthSTATS database (if available), which bring together a comprehensive set of labour market indicators on young people and provide an insight into the stability and security of employment.³⁰

Guidance on length: 4–5 pages.

Core topics to cover in Chapter 2	Example indicators to populate
1. National demographic trends, including sociodemographic characteristics of young people. 2. Trends in educational attainment; - Structure of total and young population by level of education; - Quality and relevance of education; - Skills shortages in the labour market. 3. Youth labour market; - Changes to overall labour force participation and that for young people (also considering young women and men separately); - Youth employment trends, including their: – Main sectors of employment; – Status in employment (employees, employers, family business, etc.); – Contractual status and job security (i.e. type of contract, lack of contract, full-time/part-time, etc.); - Youth unemployment and youth inactivity, with data provided by both labour force surveys and by administrative data on registered jobseekers collected by the PES.	- Share of young people in total population (ideally 15–24 year olds, but can also be from 15 to another age, based on the national definition of youth); - Highest educational attainment of the working age population by age, sex and labour market status; - Labour force participation rate (economically active population as a share of the working age population), disaggregated by sex and age (and ideally also region, educational level, etc.); - Youth employment by sector (using ISIC, Rev. 4),³¹ status in employment, occupation (ISCO classification)³² and (if available) type of contract and its voluntary or involuntary acceptance; - Youth unemployment rate, broken down by sex, age, education level, region, sector of last job and duration of unemployment (e.g., long-term unemployment); - Youth inactivity, disaggregated by sex, age, educational attainment, geographical region (at least urban/rural) and reason for inactivity; (Estimated) Share of informal employment as a share of total employment and youth employment; - Results of the ILO's SWTS for the country under review (if available); - Average monthly wages overall and by sex and age group; - Wage gap (by sex and age group); - Share of workers with wages below 2/3 of the median wage by age group, sex and educational attainment.

³⁰ http://www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/wcnaw_defaultSelection?_afriLoop=427156755571679&_afriWindowMode=0&_afriWindowId=null#%40%40%3F_afriWindowId%3Dnull%26_afriLoop%3D427156755571679%26_afriWindowMode%3D0%26_adf.ctrl-state%3Dlmcjg3ja_554

³¹ International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities, Rev. 4. A high-level aggregate of these activities is: i) agriculture, forestry and fishing; ii) manufacturing, mining and quarrying and other industrial activities; iii) construction; iv) wholesale and retail trade, transportation and storage, accommodation and food service activities; v) information and communication; vi) financial and insurance activities; vii) real estate activities; viii) professional, scientific, technical, administrative and support service activities; ix) public administration and defence, education, human health and social work activities; x) other service activities. See United Nations (2008), International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC), Rev. 4 for more information.

³² International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO).

Core topics to cover in Chapter 2	Example indicators to populate
4. Discussion of school-to-work transitions for young people, in order to show the typical paths for school graduates towards the labour market and decent employment. 5. Wages and working conditions for the whole population and young people specifically. 6. Conclusions on the country's most pressing needs and challenges in the area of youth employment.	

CHAPTER 3. LABOUR MARKET POLICIES AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICES (PES) FOR YOUTH

Purpose of chapter: Describes the employment and labour market policies and services for promoting the employment of young people, and assesses their achievements, outcomes and challenges.

Guidance on length: 4–5 pages.

Core topics to cover in Chapter 3	Example information to provide
Youth employment policy framework and responsible institutions.	- Main goals, targets and policies within the national (youth) employment strategy (or equivalent); - Bodies responsible for formulating and implementing the national (youth) employment strategy (or equivalent); – In particular, whether there is a body responsible for coordinating the actions of different ministries and agencies in the area of youth employment; – The role of youth organizations within the strategy.

Core topics to cover in Chapter 3	Example information to provide
• Current active labour market programmes for young people, as well as their reach, resources and outcomes; – In particular, involvement of social partners and youth organizations in shaping and providing these.	• Details of general ALMPs for young people; – For example, training, subsidized employment, subsidized internships, public works, promotion of self-employment, measures for persons with disabilities, mobility measures, etc.; • Number of beneficiaries in each programme (as a percentage of total registered jobseekers and, if possible, for young people specifically); • Young participants in ALMPs by sex, age cohort (e.g. 15–19, 20–24, 25–29) and ideally region; • Resources devoted to ALMPs for young people (e.g. % of GDP devoted to these programmes); • Monitoring data (<i>outputs</i> and <i>outcomes</i>) collected by the programmes (e.g., number who entered into regular employment, non-completion rates, etc.); • Financing and funding of active labour market programmes, including the involvement of any international organizations; • Evaluation evidence (if available) for individual programmes, including possible creaming, deadweight, displacement or substitution effects.
• Unemployment benefits and social assistance schemes for unemployed people; – In particular, (estimated) coverage of young unemployed people by unemployment benefits and social assistance.	• Eligibility, level and duration of unemployment benefits; • Percentage (estimated) of unemployed youth receiving unemployment benefits and social assistance, by sex and age cohort; • Eligibility of unemployed young people for other benefits, e.g. housing allowance.
• Institutional framework for employment and labour market policies, and employment services in general.	• Bodies in charge of payment of unemployment benefits and social assistance; • Bodies responsible for formulation and implementation of employment and labour market policies (e.g., ministry in charge of employment and labour/ public employment service/labour and employment departments of regional/ local government?);

Core topics to cover in Chapter 3	Example information to provide
	• Differences in the roles of local/regional/national governments in shaping employment and labour market policies; • Level of centralization/decentralization of provision of employment services and labour market programmes to the clients; • Resource allocation to employment and labour market policies and programmes in general and among regions; • Use of labour market outlooks to support the design of policies and programmes; • Role of social partners and social dialogue in policy formulation and implementation.
• Data for assessing the quality of the public employment service, particularly the services they provide to young people.	• Employment services provided by the PES/alternative bodies (including regional variations). Could include: job matching, job placements, outreach to non-registered jobseekers and services offered to them, career/vocational guidance, forecasting of national/regional/labour market situation, providing benefits, creating databases on job seekers and vacancies, etc.; – In particular, the assessed quality of such services; • Performance data on the PES, such as the job placement rate of jobseekers, share of job placements by the public employment service (vs. alternative channels), available human resources in PES (the proportion of jobseekers to job counsellors and to all staff of the public employment service), equipment and online technology in use by the PES (e.g., national or regional database of jobseekers, channels for online registration); • Formation of partnerships with other bodies (e.g., private employment agencies, social partners, youth groups).
• Conclusions on the achievements and shortcomings of employment and labour market policies and employment services for young people.	

CHAPTER 4. AN EFFECTIVE LABOUR MARKET PROGRAMME OR EMPLOYMENT SERVICE FOR YOUTH (OPTIONAL)

Purpose of chapter: Presents a labour market programme or employment service/practice that the country considers powerful and effective (i.e. a good practice) in promoting youth employment, improving the quality of youth employment and/or combating youth unemployment and involuntary inactivity. The programme or practice will be subject to special attention and assessment by the reviewing country and then at the review by all participating countries.

In particular, the country should consider whether this programme or practice is transferable, and under what conditions, to other countries. The selection of an effective programme/service should be based upon the criteria outlined in section 3.2.2 of this Toolkit (Identifying and assessing “good practices” in the area of youth employment).

Guidance on length: 3–4 pages.

CHAPTER 5. LIST OF SOURCES

Purpose: Lists all sources used to write the report.

Guidance on length: 0.5–2 pages.

(OPTIONAL) ANNEX. BACKGROUND DATA TABLES

Purpose: The body of the national background report should analyse the key trends suggested by the data, as opposed to presenting data on its own and without critical analysis. However, countries that wish to provide the detailed data underlying their analysis are encouraged to include this information in an Annex.

Guidance on length: Depends on the level of data; no more than 8 pages.

ANNEX 2.

TEMPLATE FOR THE REVIEW REPORT

To be prepared by the reviewing country, with support from the ILO.

Participants are strongly advised to refer to Methodology for Conducting Youth Labour Market Analysis, in conjunction with this Annex, which provides additional ILO resources for writing this report.

Guidance on length: whole report should be between 10 and 15 pages.

Note: Further tailoring of the template may be necessary, in light of the defined scope of the review assessment.

CHAPTER 1. ASSESSMENT OF THE EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKET POLICIES FOR YOUTH

Purpose of chapter: Assesses the coherence and consistency of the youth employment policy framework in the country under review, as well as the coverage, relevance and adequacy of employment and labour market policies and programmes (active and passive) for youth.

Guidance on length: 3–4 pages.

Core topics to cover in Chapter 1	Guiding questions
Coherence and consistency of the youth employment policy framework .	• Are the applied employment policies consistent with and supportive to the implementation of the national (youth) employment strategy (if such a strategy exists)? • Do the policy documents provided support one another? Consider specific policy documents (e.g., employment policy, education policy), overarching policy strategies (national economic and social development strategy, national poverty reduction strategy, etc.) and (if relevant) legislative instruments. • How would you assess the adequacy of the focus of the reviewed country on employment policies and labour market programmes for youth? Are relevant policies well coordinated and mutually supportive? • Are youth employment objectives accompanied by expected outcomes and quantifiable performance indicators? If so, how would you assess the country's success thus far in meeting its youth employment objectives? • Are young jobseekers sufficiently covered by active labour market policies and programmes? • What challenges do young people face in accessing ALMPs (e.g., lack of information on these programmes, limited capacity of programmes due to low level of financial resources, administrative problems, etc.)? What would you suggest to address these challenges?
Coverage, relevance and adequacy of active labour market policies and programmes for youth.	

Core topics to cover in Chapter 1	Guiding questions
	• How relevant are available ALMPS for addressing the needs of different groups of young jobseekers? How well are these programmes designed and targeted? Do they provide the expected outcomes? • Would you suggest any changes in the range of active labour market programmes, such as new programmes, closure of non-performing programmes, prioritizing certain programmes, changing the design of some programmes (targeting, financing etc.)? • Is there clear evidence that active labour market policies and programmes are reaching disadvantaged groups of young people, such as early school leavers, those with literacy/numeracy difficulties, young people with disabilities, young people living in remote districts, rural areas, areas with poor infrastructure, etc.? What are the mechanisms that enable ALMPS to reach these groups? • Does the reviewed country have a system for monitoring the outcome and evaluating the impact of active labour market policies and programmes? For example, what types of monitoring data are collected by the programmes on the outputs and outcomes for beneficiaries? • Which institution coordinates the monitoring and evaluation system? If available, what are the outcomes of monitored programmes and the results of their evaluations (last 3-5 years)?
Coverage, relevance and adequacy of passive labour market policies for youth.	• Are young jobseekers adequately covered by unemployment benefits and social assistance? Does this include disadvantaged groups of young jobseekers? What challenges do you see in this area (e.g., limited eligibility, administrative problems, etc.) and what would you suggest to improve their coverage? • Do you consider the level and duration of unemployment benefits and social assistance sufficient to protect jobseekers, in general, and young jobseekers, in particular, against poverty and social exclusion? • Do you consider the level and duration of unemployment benefits and social assistance sufficient to motivate unemployed young people to register at the PES, seek their job placement assistance, undertake skills training or participate in any other suitable ALMP, and to accept new jobs? • Would you suggest any changes with regard to the level and duration of unemployment benefits and social assistance, so that they can provide income support more effectively during the active search for a job? • How do active or passive labour market programmes influence or contribute to the transition from school to work in the reviewed country? Is this influence measurable?

CHAPTER 2. INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY OF THE REVIEWED COUNTRY IN TERMS OF DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKET POLICIES

Purpose of chapter: Critically assesses the institutional framework for youth employment, particularly its responsiveness to the labour market. Also considers the quality and effectiveness of the employment services for youth, such as the adequacy of their resources and their success in reaching out to diverse groups of young people.

Guidance on length: 3–4 pages.

Core topics to cover in Chapter 2	Guiding questions
Institutional framework for youth employment, particularly: – The degree to which it analyses and responds to labour market developments.	• To what extent do labour market assessments (employer surveys, skill needs outlooks, etc.) inform the design of related policies and programmes? • How well informed are the institutions responsible for providing employment services about the labour market situation in their region and the needs of young jobseekers and employers? • How well informed are the institutions responsible for designing and implementing labour market programmes about the labour market situation in their region and the needs of young jobseekers and employers? • Do the employment services have comprehensive and reliable information on the labour market? To what extent does this inform the provision of employment services, ALMPs and income support to unemployed people (particularly young people)? • Do the employment services regularly survey enterprises in their region as to the needs of the current and future workforce? Are these findings reflected in vocational guidance for youth and jobseekers? Do these findings inform the design of active labour market programmes?
Quality and effectiveness of the public employment services for youth.	• Do public employment services have sufficient staff members, technical equipment and financial resources to provide relevant employment services and implement labour market programmes for young jobseekers and employers in their region? • How effective is the public employment service in reaching out to youth that are NEET? • How effective is the public employment service in reaching out to young informal workers, offering them job search assistance or the opportunity to participate in appropriate labour market programmes? • How well do the PES cooperate with local employers and screen suitable job candidates for them? In turn, how well do employers provide information on vacant jobs and recruit job seekers reported by the PES? Do the PES organize training of job seekers in line with the needs of concrete employers who then commit to hire such persons?

Core topics to cover in Chapter 2	Guiding questions
	• How well do the PES cooperate with other relevant stakeholders (such as governments at different levels, social partners, youth organizations and other civil society) to coordinate the provision of employment services and to design and implement labour market policies for young job seekers and employers? • Do international organizations provide support in the development, facilitation or monitoring of the labour market policies to the national institutions responsible for the labour market?

CHAPTER 3. ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LABOUR MARKET PROGRAMMES OR EMPLOYMENT SERVICES FOR YOUTH (GOOD PRACTICE)

Purpose of chapter: If the country under review selected a good practice in its national background report, the reviewing country should assess its **relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, innovation, efficiency, and replicability** in either promoting youth employment, improving the quality of youth employment and/or combating youth unemployment and involuntary inactivity.

The assessment of programmes/services should follow the criteria outlined in section 3.2.2 of the Toolkit (Identifying and assessing “good practices” in the area of youth employment).

Guidance on length: 2–3 pages.

CHAPTER 4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Purpose of chapter: Summarizes the findings and recommendations for overcoming challenges identified during the review. The recommendations should be *as realistic and feasible as possible*. They should also be affordable and proportional to the resources the reviewed country is already allocating to the labour market policies. Consider how the measures proposed to improve identified shortcomings could be presented and institutionally anchored, and what possible short- and longer-term policy interventions might be proposed as a result of the review.

Guidance on length: 2–3 pages.

CHAPTER 5. LIST OF SOURCES

Purpose: Lists all sources used to write the report.

Guidance on length: 0.5–2 pages.

ANNEX 3.

TEMPLATE FOR THE SYNTHESIS REPORT

To be prepared by the ILO (facilitating organization), taking into account the findings of the national report and review report, as well as the proceedings of the review workshop.

Participants are strongly advised to refer to Methodology for Conducting Youth Labour Market Analysis, in conjunction with this Annex, which provides additional ILO resources for writing this report.

Guidance on length: whole report should be 20–25 pages.

CHAPTER 1. MAIN SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND LABOUR MARKET DEVELOPMENTS

Purpose of chapter: Provides an overview of the main developments in the country under review, in relation to the economy, demographic composition of the population and the labour market. In particular, this should focus on *supply*-side factors (e.g., nature of the population seeking work) and *demand*-side factors (e.g., types of sector in which jobs are concentrated).

Guidance on length: 3–4 pages.

Core topics to cover	Details of content
Economic and social developments	• GDP growth rate and expected employment growth; • Brief analysis of macroeconomic policy and its effects on macroeconomic stability, business development and job creation; • Development of main economic sectors and their job creation capacity; • Income distribution of the population and the share of population with incomes under the poverty line; • Other developments relevant to the labour force (e.g., migration, wage setting mechanisms, etc.).
Demographic developments	• Composition of the population by age, sex, educational attainment and geographical region, e.g., population (in thousands) of women and men, within different age groups; • Composition of the labour force, by age, sex, geographic region, etc.; • Other demographic trends relevant to the labour force (e.g., average life expectancy, household composition, educational levels of the population).

Core topics to cover	Details of content
Labour market developments	• Labour force participation, employment and unemployment rates, by sex, age, level of education, geographical region; • Main <i>types</i> of employment: – Sector distribution, covering the main economic activities covered in the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC), Rev. 4;³³ – Contract type (e.g., prevalence of “irregular employment”); – Emerging sectors; • Job vacancies.

CHAPTER 2. YOUTH LABOUR MARKET SITUATION

Purpose of chapter: Considers the situation of young people in the labour market in the country under review, including the relative ease with which they can find work and secure/stable employment conditions. Also considers the situation of young people in wider society, e.g., levels of in-work poverty and social engagement etc.

Guidance on length: 1–2 pages.

Core topics to cover	Details of content
Employment patterns of young people	• Rates of economic activity, employment and unemployment for youth (according to national definition), urban youth, rural youth, young men, young women; • Rates of economic activity, employment and unemployment for different youth cohorts, if possible (e.g., 15–19, 20–24, 25–29); • Rate of economic inactivity of youth (if possible also for different youth cohorts) and reasons for inactivity.
Situation of “at-risk youth”	• Analysis of youth rates (economic activity, employment, unemployment, etc.) broken down by different characteristics (e.g., sex, age, geographical region, ethnicity, educational attainment, disability status, etc.); • Discussion of “risk” factors affecting labour force participation of youth.

³³ See previous footnote on ISIC for more information.

Core topics to cover	Details of content
Other facets of the youth employment challenge	Other particular challenges for young people in the labour market, for example: • Overrepresentation in informal and/or irregular employment; • In-work poverty relative to other workers (e.g., sub-standard wages and working conditions); • Gender gaps; • Non-registration with the public employment services; • Below-average levels of social engagement.

CHAPTER 3. YOUTH EMPLOYMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES: KEY YOUTH EMPLOYMENT CHALLENGES

Purpose of chapter: Summarizes the main policies and actions taken in the area of youth employment in the country under review, as well as the institutional framework and any issues undermining the effectiveness of particular programmes. Discusses the key challenges in relation to youth employment in the country under review, for examples challenges in creating decent employment, closing gender gaps, facilitating the transition from the formal to the informal economy, etc.

Guidance on length: 5–6 pages.

Core topics to cover	Details of content
National policy priorities in the area of youth employment	• Priorities within the national (youth) employment strategy and/or other relevant policy documents (e.g., national economic and social development strategy, national poverty reduction strategy, social protection policy, youth employment action plan, etc.).
Institutional framework for youth employment	• Responsible ministries and bodies providing employment services and employment promotion programmes to young people (e.g., PES, but also institutions that provide support to young persons wishing to start or expand their business); • Details of any <i>specific</i> division/unit/coordinator that deals with youth issues.

Core topics to cover	Details of content
Coverage of employment programmes and services for youth	• Overview of employment programmes and services for youth; • Total number of unemployed persons and number/share of unemployed youth; • Total number of registered unemployed persons and number/share of registered unemployed youth; • Total number of unemployed and number/share of unemployed youth in individual programmes; • Any other issues identified by the reviewing country and voluntary peer review workshop, e.g., low levels of PES registration, non-completion rates of individual programmes, difficulty reaching at-risk youth, etc. <i>See example table below</i>
Assessment of good practices	• Brief descriptions of good practice(s) chosen by the country under review.

Note: Core topics to be based on the findings of the national background report (particularly chapter 2) and the voluntary peer review workshop.

CHAPTER 4. MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE REVIEWERS. SUMMARY OF REVIEW WORKSHOP DISCUSSIONS

Purpose of chapter: Summarizes the main messages of the reviewing delegation, both in general and in relation to the good practice(s) identified by the country under review (e.g., most effective elements, limits in reach, etc.) as well as the main themes of discussion during the review workshop, particularly the policies/programmes considered most effective for tackling youth employment. Also provides some (short) detail on participating country delegations and the location of the event. Based on the results of the review, recommends possible measures to be introduced in the country under review.

Guidance on length: 3–4 pages.

Note: Core topics to be based on the findings of the review report (particularly chapter 4) and the review workshop. In addition, core topics to be based on the proceedings and agenda of the review workshop. It is important to focus on the key *debates* and *conclusions* from the discussions, as opposed to providing long descriptions of each exchange. Authors should take care not to associate individual comments with particular individuals, and to exclude sensitive information provided in confidentiality.

CHAPTER 5. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Purpose of chapter: Arguably the most important chapter of the synthesis report, this brings together the core policy recommendations for the country under review in the area of youth employment, based on the findings of the voluntary review process.

Guidance on length: Up to 4 pages.

Policy recommendations	Guiding considerations
The precise recommendations should be based upon the review report and the results of the review workshop. Each recommendation should be explained in some detail (i.e. at least a paragraph).	Amongst others, authors may wish to consider whether there are any: • Means of improving the coherence and consistency of the youth employment policy framework and/or institutional framework; • Improvements to the design and implementation of active labour market programmes (ALMPs) for youth; • Ways of altering the balance between active and passive labour market policies/programmes and changing the ALMP mix (e.g., shifting the emphasis from public works to training, internships or subsidized employment); • Ways of altering the balance of resource allocation; • Ways of targeting measures more efficiently to particular groups and/or areas; • Methods of boosting the quality and effectiveness of the public employment services for young people, particularly when it comes to outreach and labour market forecasting; • Particular groups of young people in need of greater attention within the policy framework; • Key actors in need of capacity development; • Ways of improving macroeconomic policies for growth.

CHAPTER 6. LIST OF SOURCES

Purpose of chapter: Lists all sources used to write the report.

Guidance on length: 0.5–2 pages.

ANNEX 4.

CHECKLIST OF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR COUNTRY UNDER REVIEW, REVIEWING COUNTRY AND FACILITATING ORGANIZATION

The specific responsibilities of the country under review, reviewing country and facilitating organization are outlined in the boxes below. Although the country under review is the host country for the on-site visit, it is not always the host country for the review workshop. The review workshop can be conducted in any place/country, with the organizational support of the ILO.

The country under review:

- Produces a draft background report on the national situation in relation to youth employment, as well as provides feedback for the final version (see Annex 1 for template);
- Identifies good practice/s in the area of youth employment, as part of the national report;
- Provides the reviewing country with all necessary documentation and information during the analysis phases;
- Provides the contact details of stakeholders to the reviewing country and facilitates the organization of interviews and visits;
- Receives the delegation of the reviewing country for an on-site visit;
- Contributes feedback to the findings and recommendations within the review report;
- Communicates regularly with the facilitating organization (ILO) to develop the background report and support the organization of the on-site visit;
- Delivers a presentation on the national situation as part of the peer review workshop.

Optional actions for the country under review:

- Engages in additional activities to disseminate the results of the review, such as the preparation of a good practice for an online database and press conferences (see section 3.7.2 Communicating the results of the voluntary peer review process).

The reviewing country:

- Forms a team of examiners, generally made up of government representatives and social partners working in the field of youth employment;
- Conducts an in-depth review of the youth employment policies and programmes within the country under review, analysing the national report and a range of additional documentation and data;
- As part of the investigation, attends an on-site visit and conducts interviews with stakeholders in order to gather information on a range of aspects of the youth employment situation and policies/programmes;
- Evaluates the good practices identified by the country under review, if provided, using the criteria defined in section 3.2.2 of this Toolkit (Identifying and assessing “good practices” in the area of youth employment);
- Based on the investigation, produces a review report assessing the youth employment policies/programmes within the country under review, and provides recommendations for improvement (see Annex 2 for template);
- Attends the peer review workshop, where it presents the key findings and policy recommendations for the country under review, and contributes actively to the discussions that follow;
- Based on the peer review workshop, supports the finalization of the review report with the ILO, including policy recommendations.

The facilitating organization:

- Works with the country under review to define the precise scope of the voluntary peer review, particularly the analytical framework (see section 3.1.1, entitled “Defining the analytical framework for the review”) and the national background report (see Annex 1);
- Guides the country under review when producing the background report, providing tools and templates, as well as taking on a particular role in finalizing the text;
- Organizes the logistical aspects of the on-site visit and voluntary peer review meetings, including inviting participants, circulating materials, making hotel reservations, organizing catering, etc. (see Annex 6);
- Liaises with peer countries attending the review workshop;
- Attends and guides the on-site visit and the review;
- Assists the host country to develop the content and agenda of the voluntary peer review workshop;
- Covers the costs of on-site visits and the review workshop;

- Supports the reviewing country/ies when producing the review report, providing templates and taking a particular role in finalizing the text;
- Ensures the quality of the background report, review report and all other materials arising from the review process;
- Takes a facilitation role during the on-site visit and the voluntary peer review;
- Prepares synthesis report, which summarizes the findings from the voluntary review process, particularly the policy/programme recommendations for the country under review.

(Optional actions)

- Supports capacity development by offering training and coaching, if requested;
- Publishes key findings and recommendations from the review on its website, if agreed;
- Engages in additional activities to disseminate the results of the review, such as press conferences, social media sharing, etc., if agreed;
- Works with the country under review to develop an operational action plan (1–2 pages) in order to support the implementation of the policy recommendations (if requested).

ANNEX 5.

GUIDANCE ON TIMELINES AND LOGISTICAL ASPECTS

It is estimated that, from start to end, the entire process will last for between five and seven months. The time frame of the voluntary review process can be flexible, depending on countries' needs and availability. For instance, countries with limited resources may wish to consider the possibility of “condensing phases” or of limiting the scope of the assessment to particular areas.

The sample time frame below gives a sense of the length of the various phases, although, in practice, it is recommended that the precise timeline be agreed during the inception phase of a given review process.

It is worth bearing in mind that the inception phase may take longer than five weeks, due to the level of notice required by countries in order to commit to undergo the review. It is strongly recommended that the first draft of the national background report is ready **no later than six weeks prior to the on-site visit**, and that the final draft is shared with the examiners **no later than four weeks before the on-site visit**.

Sample time frame for the voluntary peer review process:

Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Phase	Inception phase					Preparatory desk analysis				Initial analysis				
	Identification of participating countries (the ILO)					Collection of data and documents (country under review)				Review of policies and data (reviewing country)				
	Definition of the scope (the ILO, country under review, reviewing country, host country*)					Background national report (country under review)				Draft review report (reviewing country)				
	Ongoing logistical steps (the ILO)					Examination of data; gaps analysis (reviewing country)				Agreement of agenda and interviewees for on-site visit (the ILO, country under review, reviewing country)				
						Ongoing logistical steps (the ILO)				Ongoing logistical steps (the ILO)				

Week	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Phase	ON-SITE VISIT	Finalizing the analysis					PEER REVIEW WORKSHOP		Follow-up phase			
	Interviews and visits of country under review (by reviewing country, the ILO)	Finalization of review report (reviewing country, country under review, the ILO) Final preparation for peer review workshop (the ILO)					Debate of review report; questions and assessment by peer countries Approval of review report Collection of feedback data		Communication of results (the ILO, country under review) Publication of synthesis report Further opportunities for mutual learning			

The ILO will handle all logistical aspects of the voluntary peer review and the organization of the on-site visit and review workshop, including the dates, accommodation and catering. The host countries for the visit and the workshop should provide some information to support this process, such as local recommendations.

In dealing with different logistical aspects, it is recommended that, as a minimum, organizers ensure that they consider all the aspects outlined below.

Financing and expenses:

- From the outset, define clearly the funding responsibilities for different aspects of the voluntary peer review. For example, the facilitating organization may take primary responsibility for accommodation and travel, whereas the host country may be in charge of organizing the catering and refreshments and providing the meeting rooms throughout the events;
- Expect some last-minute registrations and cancellations, culminating in changes to the number of people expected to attend the on-site visit and the review workshop. Consider setting some limits in this regard, for example: “no-show” participants will need to fund part or all of their expenses themselves, unless there are exceptional circumstances. The facilitating organization should exercise discretion in this area.

Delivery of materials:

- Adhere to the timelines agreed during the inception phase for preparing and sending out different materials.

Language requirements:

- Define the working language of the voluntary peer review process from the outset, and find out whether it is necessary to arrange interpretation or translation services. Ideally, interpretation services should be provided only for targeted sections of the event (e.g., contributions from key stakeholders) as opposed to continuous provision of interpretation, due to the amount of time and resources involved.

Staffing requirements:

- The facilitating team should include senior experts in the area/s of (youth) employment promotion, with the capacity to review the national and the review reports critically, as well as to produce a synthesis report from the voluntary review process/es;
- The team should also include individuals with experience in events management and logistics;
- Both experts and technicians should attend the review workshop, in order to facilitate the discussions and also to provide general support to participants (registration, directions, etc.).

Hotel reservations:

- Consider carefully the choice of the hotel (e.g., distance from the venues of the on-site visit and the review workshop, quality/reviews, prices/discounts, business services on offer and cancellation policy);
- Negotiate flexibility into the contract with the hotel, to account for last-minute cancellations;
- Ensure that the hotel has been visited prior to making any reservation.

Catering:

- Request details of participants' dietary requirements well in advance;
- Offering an evening reception is optional, and is normally the responsibility of the host country.

Venues:

- When organizing venues, consider carefully the size, services, location and cost. For example, will participants be able to separate into smaller rooms for group discussions? How will the main rooms will be laid out? Does the venue meet the audiovisual requirements? Are there technicians to provide support in the event of technical issues?

Tip 1: U-shape meeting rooms are particularly conducive to discussion.

Tip 2: It can be useful for the host country to use their own facilities, in order to show participants where they work. The minimum requirements are: a room large enough to fit everyone during plenary sessions and “break-out” rooms for discussions in groups.

Transport:

- Arrange the event so that there is minimal need for transport, unless in the event of a “study visit”.

Liaising with the country under review, reviewing country and peer countries:

- Establish a single contact point or (ideally) a shared email address for communicating with the other parties involved in the review process;
- Define regular “milestones” throughout the review process at which point information updates may be provided to the various actors. It can be useful to explain the “steps” to participants at the beginning of the process, so that they know what to expect when;
- Avoid sending out multiple materials in a single email; aim to “stagger” the level of information provided at different moments.

ANNEX 6.

GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

GENERAL:

Youth: According to the standard ILO definition, youth are those aged between 15 and 24 years old. Definitions of youth and the precise age brackets differ widely across individual countries, as do the broader perceptions of and towards young people in relation to their entitlements, roles, capabilities and responsibilities. The age bracket 15–29 matches the national definitions of the majority of the CIS countries.

Voluntary peer review: A peer review is an examination and assessment of a country's performance in a particular area, carried out by one or more peer countries.³⁴ Such reviews should be voluntary and based on mutual trust between all parties.

Good practice: “A specific policy or measure that has proven to be **effective and sustainable** in the field of employment, demonstrated by **evaluation evidence and/or monitoring** and assessment methods using process data and showing the **potential for replication**. It can cover both the formulation and the implementation of the policy or measure, which has led to positive labour market **outcomes** over an extended period of time.”³⁵

At-risk youth: This concept refers to “young people who, due to certain problems (e.g., long-term unemployment, drug abuse, juvenile delinquency) are likely to be excluded from society.”³⁶

EMPLOYMENT-RELATED:

Economically active: The economically active population includes all people who make up the supply of labour for the production of goods and services, during a specified time-reference period (i.e. the sum of the employed and unemployed population). This includes the production of individual or collective goods, which are supplied, or intended to be supplied, to units other than their producers.³⁷

Employment: The employed are all those who performed some work during a specified brief period (either one week or one day), for pay, profit or family gain, as well as the number of persons who are temporarily absent from their jobs. “For pay” applies to any person who performed some work for wage or salary, in cash or in kind (wage and salaried workers); “for profit” covers workers who are self-employed; and “for family gain” allows for the inclusion of contributing family workers who worked in a family establishment or land-holding.³⁸

³⁴ OECD (2007), “Policy Brief: Peer Review: a Tool for Co-operation and Change”; United Nations Evaluation Group (2011), UNEG Framework for Professional Peer Reviews of the Evaluation Function of UN organizations.

³⁵ European Commission (October 2013), “Mutual Learning Programme: Database of national labour market practices - Step-by-Step Guide”, p.2 <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=14033&langId=en>

³⁶ ILO (2008), “Guide for the preparation of national action plans on youth employment, p.28.

³⁷ Note that the economically active population is the same as the labour force. ILO (2015), <http://www.ilo.org/ilostat>

³⁸ ILO (2015), <http://www.ilo.org/ilostat>

Unemployment: Unemployed people simultaneously fulfil three criteria: they must be “without work”, “currently available for work” and “seeking work” during the reference period. However, some use a relaxed definition of unemployment, and include among the unemployed those who are “without work”, or “currently available for work” but not actively “seeking work”³⁹.

Underemployment: Persons in time-related underemployment are those who, during the reference period, were “willing to work additional hours”, were “available to work additional hours”, and whose actual hours of work during the reference period fell below a nationally- determined threshold.⁴⁰

Overemployment: This covers situations in which a person’s actual hours of work “exceed the desired hours of work”. To fulfil this criterion, the respondent should have “expressed a willingness to decrease working hours even if it means less income”. Such circumstances generally arise when workers lack sufficient bargaining power or employers are ignorant of the “long-term consequences of overwork.”⁴¹

Informal economy: This covers “all economic activities by workers and economic units that are – in law or in practice – not covered or insufficiently covered by formal arrangements”. However, it does not cover illicit activities, such as the trafficking of drugs and firearms.⁴² It is found in all sectors of the economy.

Paths of transition: The ILO defines the following paths of transition:

1. “Direct transition” – a young person’s first experience after leaving school is being hired at a satisfactory or regular job.
2. Spells of employment with no spells of unemployment or inactivity:
 - a) Regular or satisfactory employment;
 - b) Temporary/self-employment and non-satisfactory employment or no-contract employment.
3. Spells of unemployment with or without spells of employment and inactivity.
4. Other – no economic activity was undertaken before current post; the young person was, for example, engaged in home duties or travelling”.⁴³

Vulnerable employment: This covers contributing family workers and own-account workers. This is because these groups are employed under relatively precarious circumstances. They are less likely to have formal work arrangements, or to be able to access benefits or social protection programmes. This places them at particular risk to economic cycles.⁴⁴

³⁹ ILO (2015), <http://www.ilo.org/ilostat>

⁴⁰ This is based upon the “Resolution concerning the measurement of underemployment and inadequate employment situations” adopted by the 16th ICLS. See Ralf Hussmanns (ILO Bureau of Statistics) (2007), “Measurement of employment, unemployment and underemployment – Current international standards and issues in their application”, p.18.

http://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/WCMS_088394/lang-en/index.htm

⁴¹ ILO (2009), “Key indicators of youth labour markets: Concepts, definitions and tabulations”, pg. 11.

⁴² 104th ILC session (12 Jun 2015), Recommendation concerning the transition from the informal to the formal economy, Geneva. http://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/104/texts-adopted/WCMS_377774/lang-en/index.htm

⁴³ ILO (2009), “Key indicators of youth labour markets: Concepts, definitions and tabulations”, pg. 19.

⁴⁴ ILO (2009), “Key indicators of youth labour markets: Concepts, definitions and tabulations”, pg. 4.

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