

# EMPLOYMENT Seminar on “Youth Employment and Covid-19: Some lessons from the crisis”

21 October 2021

14:30 to 16:30 CEST

The COVID-19 crisis has inflicted a triple shock on young people. It is destroying their employment opportunities and pushing them into poorer quality jobs; disrupting their education and training; and placing major obstacles in the way of those seeking to enter the labour market or to move between jobs. The crisis has also further enhanced existing structural inequalities and fragilities in society and in the world of work, and has had a major impact on the aspirations of young people. Young people were already in a perilous situation in the labour market prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Work as we know it is changing rapidly. The COVID-19 crisis is pushing many decision makers to take measures. The challenge from a policy perspective is to make sure that social justice and equality prevails.

This seminar aims to present a picture of the situation of youth employment today as well as the policy responses that have been put in place during the COVID-19 crisis.

## Agenda

**Welcome:** Sangheon Lee (ILO, Director/EMPLOYMENT)

### ***The global impact of the COVID-19 crisis on young people***

Presentation: Niall O’Higgins and Sher Verick (ILO/EMPLOYMENT/EMPLAB)

Discussants: Bernd Muller (ILO Focal point Africa IDAG) and Juan Chacaltana (ILO/EMPLOYMENT/DMCU)

Q&A

***Youth labour market resilience during COVID-19 in low and middle-income countries***

Presentation: ILO – Young Lives (YL) Project Study: Marta Favara, (Deputy Director YL Project - Oxford University)

Discussants: Maria Prieto (ILO/EMPLOYMENT/EMPLAB) & Francesco Carella (ILO Focal point LAC/IDAG)

Q&A

***Youth Employment in Times of COVID; A global review of COVID-19 policy responses to tackle (un)employment and disadvantage among young people***

Presentation: Adam Coutts, Anna Barford, and Garima Sahai (Cambridge University)

Discussants: Kostas Papadakis (ILO/DIALOGUE) and Christina Behrendt (ILO/SOCPRO)

Q&A

**Closing remarks:** Sukti Dasgupta (ILO/EMPLOYMENT/EMPLAB) & Sangheon Lee (ILO/EMPLOYMENT)

**Biography of presenters**

**Sher Singh Verick, ILO**

Sher Singh Verick is Head of the Employment Strategies Unit in the Employment, Labour Market and Youth Branch in the ILO, Geneva. Prior to this role, he held positions with the ILO in Turin and New Delhi. He has also worked for the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and various research institutions in Europe and Australia. He holds a master's degree in development economics from the Australian National University and a doctorate in economics from the University of Bonn. Since December 2004, he is a Research Fellow of the Institute for Labor Economics (IZA). He has published on labour

market issues in a range of journals, including the Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics, Journal of African Economies and International Labour Review, and has authored or edited a number of volumes, including Transformation of Women at Work in Asia: An Unfinished Development Agenda (2016).

### **Niall O'Higgins, ILO**

Niall O'Higgins is Senior Research Specialist in the ILO's Employment Analysis Unit and Professor of Economics at the University of Salerno. He holds degrees from Trinity College Dublin, York and Sheffield Universities and a Ph.D. from the European University Institute in Florence. His main research interests cover various aspects of labour and experimental economics. Previously, Senior Researcher in the ILO's Youth Employment Programme, he is one of the main authors of the ILO's biennial Global Employment Trends for Youth. Amongst his other recent publications are books on internship and on youth employment policy and articles in the European Economic Review, the Cambridge Journal of Economics, the Journal of Institutional Economics and the B.E. Journal of Economic Analysis and Policy.

### **Marta Favara, Young Lives at Work - Oxford University**

Marta Favara is Deputy Director and Co-Principal Investigator of Young Lives at Work. She has been in Young Lives since 2015 leading the quantitative research team. Her main research interests include gender economics, labour economics and behavioural economics. Before joining Young Lives, she worked as an economist at the World Bank. She holds a MSc in Economics from the University of Leuven (Belgium) and a PhD in Economics from the University of Essex.

### **Adam Coutts, University of Cambridge**

Adam Coutts is Senior Research Fellow at Magdalene College, University of Cambridge, Research Associate in the Department of Sociology, University of Cambridge and Weatherhead Scholar, Harvard University (2021-2022)

His research focuses on the social and political determinants of health looking at how non-health sector public policies such as active labour market

programmes (ALMPs) and social protection policies affect health and well-being. His current work looks at how to design ALMPs to protect the mental health of the unemployed and support them into work. Based on three years embedded within the Work and Health Unit of the Department for Work and Pensions, UK government he is writing a book exploring how and why ALMPs work, who is most responsive and what are the active elements that generate changes in health, well-being and job search behaviours. The book details how health and well-being outcomes can be better integrated and tangibly measured in order to complement existing methodologies of assessing policy effectiveness; and how a large scale social policy interventions and experimental evaluation is implemented by government and what are the key challenges.

#### **Dr Anna Barford, University of Cambridge**

Dr Anna Barford is a social and economic Geographer. She is currently researching how work and livelihoods intersect with environmental problems and solutions. Her main focus is living wage and circular economy transitions in lower- and middle-income countries. She also studies how the crises of climate change and COVID-19 intersect with young people's livelihoods in Uganda, Nepal and Indonesia. Anna is a Senior Research Associate and the University of Cambridge.

#### **Dr Gamira Sahai, University of Cambridge**

Dr Garima Sahai is a post-doctoral research associate and a bye-fellow at the University of Cambridge. She is currently working to build a Commission on youth and work in the Global South along with Prof. Bhaskar Vira, Dame Barbara Stocking and Prof Pauline Rose.

She completed her PhD from the University of Cambridge where her doctoral work focussed on young women's entry into the labour market in India and drew out implications for policy that aim at expanding the occupational choice set of young women.

Previous to the PhD, she worked for three years at the World Bank as an Economist and as a Labour and Gender Specialist, and before that at Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative. This had followed an MPhil in International Development at the University of Oxford and an MA and BA in Economics from Jawaharlal Nehru University (India) and Delhi University (India) respectively.