

[North Africa set to adopt 5-year plan to boost youth employment – UN labour agency](#)

27 September 2017 – With a youth unemployment rate at 28.8 per cent – twice the global average – countries in North Africa need to adopt a broader, more concerted response to tackle the crisis, the United Nations labour agency warned today.

“Arguably the [single biggest global development challenge](#) in the decades to come will be the need to integrate hundreds of millions of young people into the labour market,” International Labour Organization ([ILO](#)) Director-General Guy Ryder told a two-day international conference in Geneva, which is expected to adopt a new five-year action plan to enhance youth employability in the sub-region.

An ILO [press release](#) issued today said that in North Africa, only 16.6 per cent of young women and 46.8 per cent of young men are economically active, meaning that they are employed or seeking work.

Among those active, 29.3 per cent – 24.1 per cent for young men and 44.4 per cent for young women – are unemployed; and around 25 per cent of working youth are estimated to be living in poverty.

“In order to fill the youth employment gap in the North African region, we call on social partners, governments, workers and employers’ organizations together with development partners, to renew their commitment and action on youth employment,” ILO Deputy Director-General for Policy Deborah Greenfield said at the event, calling for a strong policy response to reverse these trends.

Young workers are three times more likely to be unemployed than adults. What’s more, North Africa has one of the largest gender imbalances in labour market participation.

At the conference, which ends today, representatives from Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia, as well as development partners and major stakeholders are expected to adopt “Roadmap for Youth Employment in North Africa.”