



THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME

***SAVING MAURITIAN YOUTH
FROM UNEMPLOYMENT CRISIS***

JANUARY 2014

FOREWORD



A year has now passed since the launching of the Youth Employment Programme (YEP) and everyone will agree that it is a resounding success.

We have placed more than 4100 persons in 12 months and this despite the fact that the world economy has not picked up as originally expected.

So much so, that the YEP has been extended for the year 2014 as well.

Embarking on a first job is not an easy step for a young woman or man. Despite having qualifications, young people are not automatically employable and are often less productive in the first year than their more experienced colleagues.

This is why many employers require prior experience and many youth find themselves in a vicious cycle when searching for their first job.

To turn this vicious circle into a virtuous circle, the Ministry of Finance has introduced the Youth Employment Programme, which was launched on the 29th January 2013 with a budget of Rs 330 million.

The Youth Employment Programme enables unemployed youth between 16 and 30 years of age to obtain a placement and training in a company for an initial period of one year, with the possibility of permanent employment thereafter.

A large number of employers from all sectors of the economy are registered with YEP. Through the programme, they benefit from skilled manpower. I would like to seize this opportunity to make an appeal to other employers who have not yet registered, to do so.

I have no doubt that the Youth Employment Programme will continue to provide an invaluable placement and training experience for our youth, helping people from all different backgrounds to achieve their aspirations.

Xavier-Luc Duval, G.C.S.K.

Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance & Economic Development

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CMPHS – Continuous Multi-Purpose Household Survey

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

HDI – Human Development Index

ILO – International Labour Organisation

ISDP – ICT Skills Development Programme

KILM - Key Indicators of the Labour Market

MOFED – Ministry of Finance and Economic Development

MoU- Memorandum of Understanding

NRF – National Resilience Fund

OECD - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

UN – United Nations

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

SWG – Skills Working Group

YEP- Youth Employment Programme

“Human capital can be a high impact accelerator to economic growth and social well-being. However, the journey from the world of education to the world of work can be difficult and we must do more to support our youth for this transition.”

Xavier-Luc Duval, G.C.S.K.

- Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance & Economic Development

"Young people should be at the forefront of global change and innovation. Empowered, they can be key agents for development and peace. If, however, they are left on society's margins, all of us will be impoverished. Let us ensure that all young people have every opportunity to participate fully in the lives of their societies."

Kofi Annan

- Ghanaian Diplomat, 7th UN Secretary-General
- 2003 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought The Elders
 - 2001 Nobel Peace Prize Winner

PLACEMENT STATUS AS AT 23 JANUARY 2014

Number of youth placed		4178
Overall percentage placed		37.60%
Gender	Male	54.20%
	Female	45.80%
Qualifications	Below SC	26%
	SC	26%
	HSC	23%
	Certificate	3%
	Diploma	5%
	Degree	17%
Number of employers who have already recruited		455
Time taken to find placement	Minimum	2 days
	Average	80 days
Sector with highest number of youth recruited		Information and Communication (including BPO)
Sector with highest number of companies recruiting		Professional and Scientific and Technical activities
University degree with greatest demand		Information Technology

1. INTRODUCTION

The term “youth” is best defined as a “*period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood’s independence and awareness of our interdependence as members of a community*” (Social and Human Sciences, UNESCO). “Youth” is much more than a fixed age-group. However, for ease of comparison at international level, “youth” is defined universally as persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years. This age-group indicates the end of compulsory education and the start of his/her first employment. Youth’s population makes up around 17% of the world’s population, which represents around 1.2 billion people.

While youth are our future, we should also care for their future. Around the globe, the young generation are at risk of many crisis, be it social or economic. The main one among them is unemployment.

In general, unemployment is defined as the population of working age, i.e. above 16 years for Mauritius, who are not working but are available and willing to work during a reference period.

Youth unemployment, more specifically, is defined as the number of youth of working age (typically 16-24 years) who are available and looking for a job, but unable to find one. The rate is calculated by dividing number of unemployed youth by the youth labour force, which comprises of employed and unemployed of the same age.

The integration of youth into the labour market has always been one of the biggest challenges facing an economy. From the developed countries to the least developed ones, youth are plagued by unemployment. Lately, in their Youth Unemployment Resource guide (2013), ILO warned of a “*“scarred” generation of young workers facing a dangerous mix of high unemployment, increased inactivity and precarious work in developed countries, as well as persistently high working poverty in the developing world.*”

Since the 2008 global economic crisis, the subject of youth unemployment has begun to increase in scale and in level of concern of all. Youth entering the labour market since 2008 have more difficulties to find a job than the older generation (Global Employment Trends for Youth 2013, ILO).

1.1. YOUTH VS. LABOUR MARKET: GLOBAL OVERVIEW

In 2007, the global youth unemployment rate stood at 11.5% but the situation worsened since 2008 economic crisis. The rate kept on increasing to reach 12.7% in 2009. After a slight decrease 2011, the figure took a rising trend again. For 2013, the ILO forecasted the youth unemployment rate to stand at 12.6 %, which is 1.1 percentage points above the pre-crisis level. This increase in percentage point represents 3.5 million more youth worldwide on the labour market, totaling around 73 million.

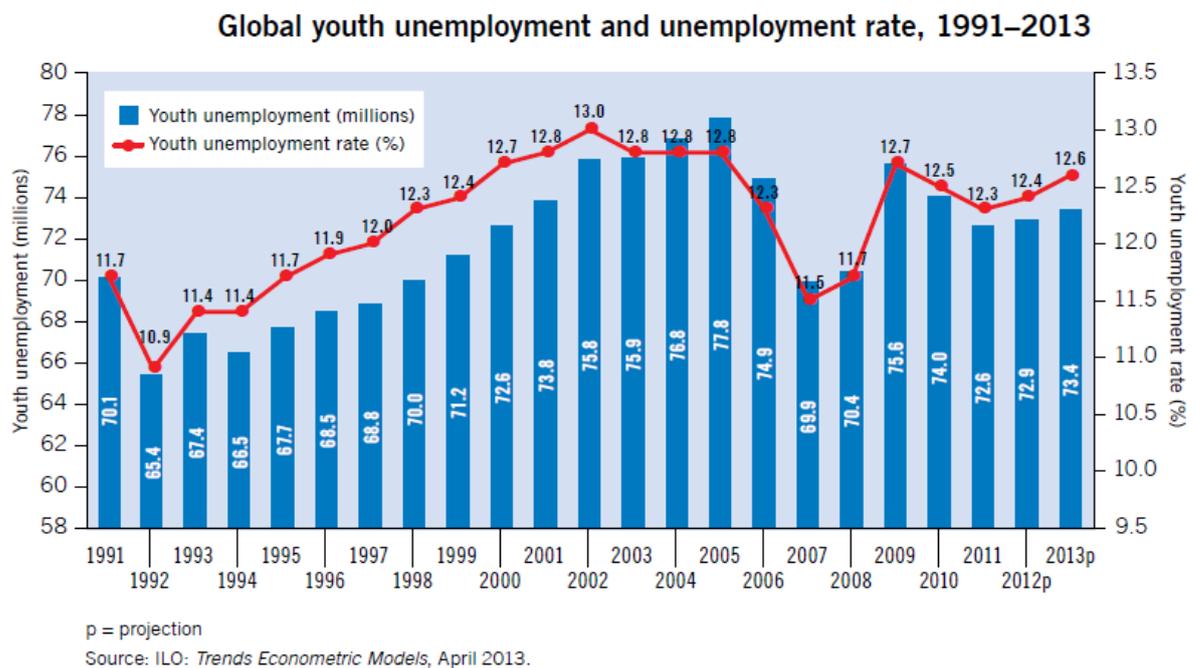


FIGURE 1 GLOBAL YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, 1991 - 2013 (SOURCE: ILO)

As we can observe from figure 1, youth unemployment follows a cyclical trend, majorly affected by economic fluctuations. According to OECD, youth unemployment rate exceeded 15 per cent in two-thirds of advanced economies in 2012 which can be attributed to the persisting Euro Zone crisis affecting many of these countries.

The phenomenon of youth unemployment has particularly affected developed economies and European Union, Middle East and North Africa, where the rate has risen swiftly since 2008. An increase of around 24.9% has been recorded in the European Union and other developed economies from 2008 and 2012.

As per ILO's projections, youth unemployment rate in these regions will not drop below 17 % before 2016.

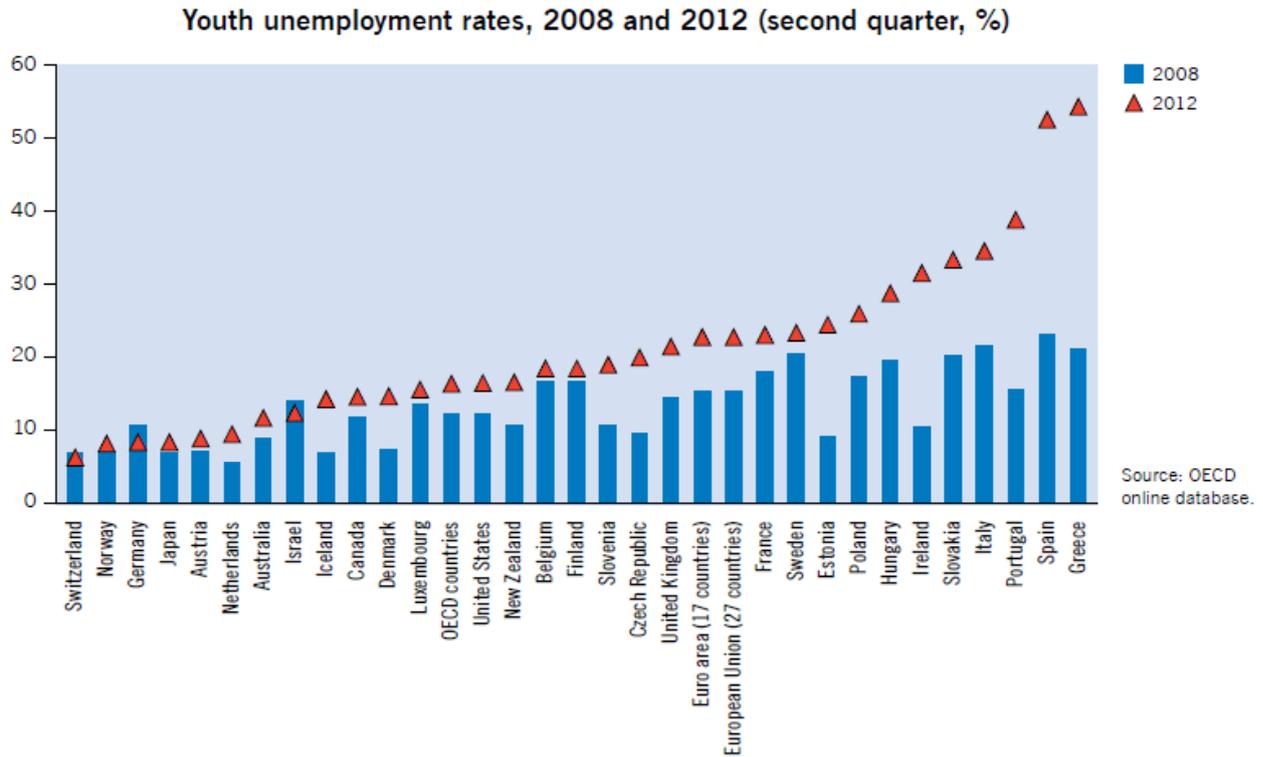


FIGURE 2 YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT RATES, 2008 AND 2012 (SECOND QUARTER, %) (SOURCE: ILO)

Only few miraculous countries namely Switzerland, Norway, Germany, Japan, Netherland and Austria have been able to maintain the youth unemployment rate below 10%. Even countries considered as most prosperous ones like Sweden, Luxembourg and Ireland have not escaped the youth unemployment crisis. We can notice two outliers, namely Spain and Greece where youth unemployment hits records. Apart from the economic crisis, increasing debt-to-GDP ratio added with bad governance have resulted in youth unemployment rate going beyond 50% in these two countries (The Youth Employment Crisis: Time for Action, 2012)

1.2. MAURITIAN UNEMPLOYMENT

Mauritius is one of the most successful and competitive economies in the African region. With a population of around 1.3 million inhabitants, real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate at basic prices is forecasted at 3.2% for 2013 by Statistics Mauritius. In the 2012 Human Development Report, UNDP ranked Mauritius 80 out of 187 countries, with a Human Development Index of 0.737, which is among high human development category.

However, with great development come also great challenges and controlling unemployment is one among them. In 2012, unemployment rate (all ages) stood at 8.1% as per Statistics Mauritius.

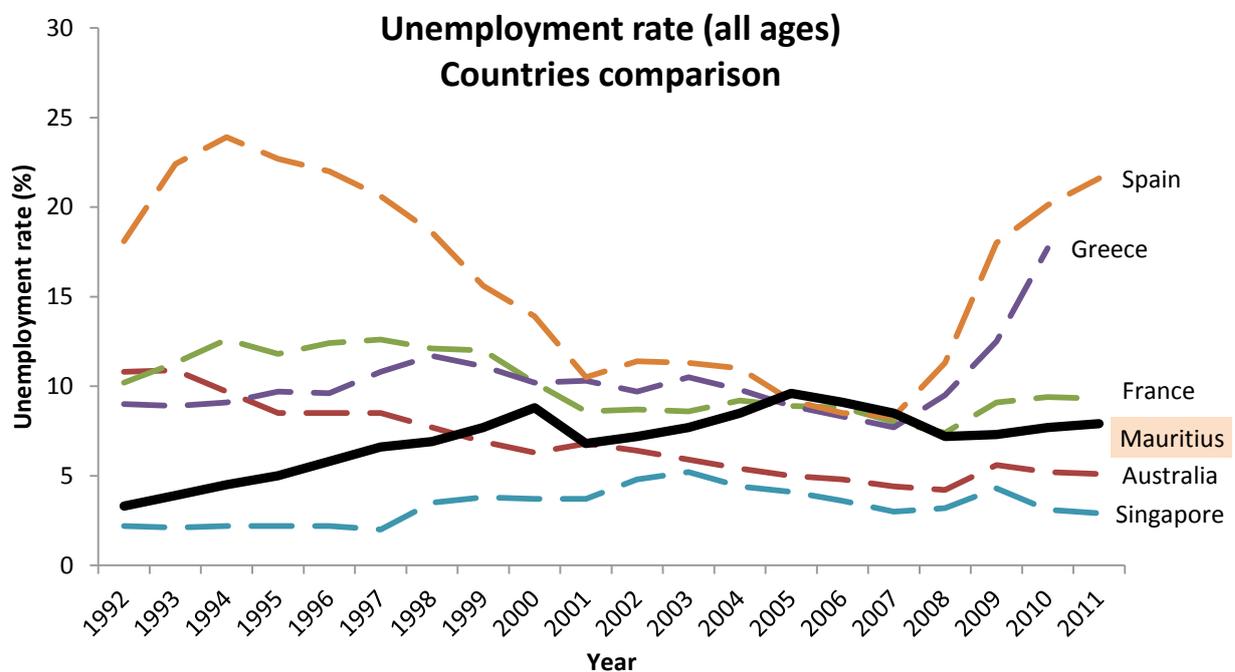


FIGURE 3 UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (ALL AGES): COMPARISON AMONG COUNTRIES (DATA SOURCE: WORLD BANK ONLINE DATABASE)

In 1992, Mauritian unemployment rate (all ages) was considerably low compared to countries like Spain, Greece, Australia and France. However, this rate kept increasing until 2000. An overall downward trend can be noted as from 2005, after which we can observe a slight rising movement. Despite great economic fluctuations, Mauritius has managed to control the rate below 10 % since 2005.

On overall, unemployment affects Mauritian women more than men. As at the second quarter of 2013, Statistics Mauritius estimated that 49 700 Mauritians were unemployed, out of which 31 600 were women and 18 100 were men. This represents an unemployment rate of 13.3% for females against 4.9% for males.

Unemployment by gender, Q₂ 2013

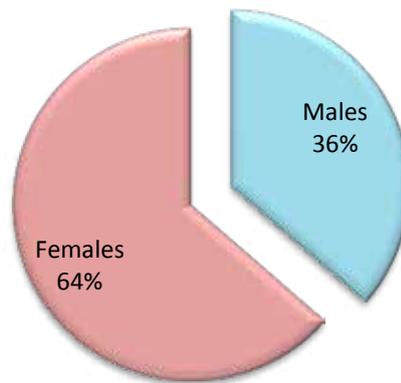


FIGURE 4 MAURITIAN UNEMPLOYMENT: GENDER COMPOSITION

For each unemployed man, we have nearly 1.75 unemployed women. This might be mainly because women are less flexible on the labour market due to marriage, childbirth and household responsibilities. (Towards Common Principles of Flexicurity: More and better jobs through flexibility and security, 2007).

In terms of education level, the population of unemployed Mauritian is composed mostly of “Below SC” level, and less of “Passed HSC” level as seen in figure 5.

Population of total unemployed by education level

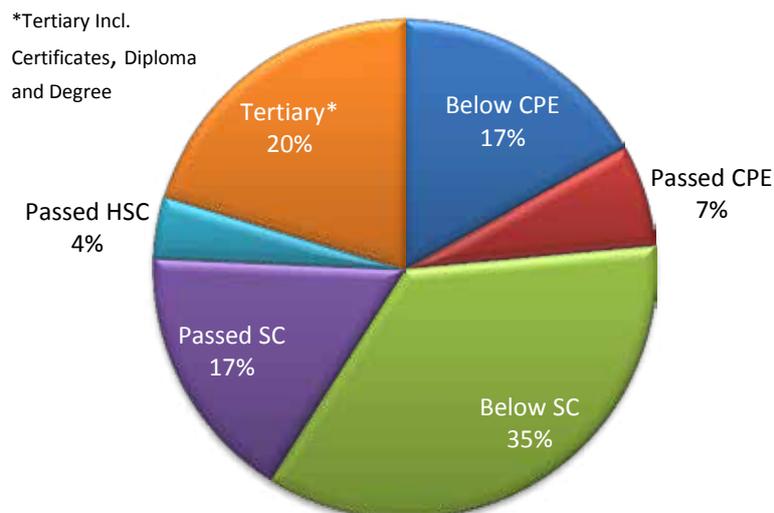


FIGURE 5 MAURITIAN POPULATION OF UNEMPLOYED TOTAL, 2012 (DATA SOURCE: STATISTICS MAURITIUS)

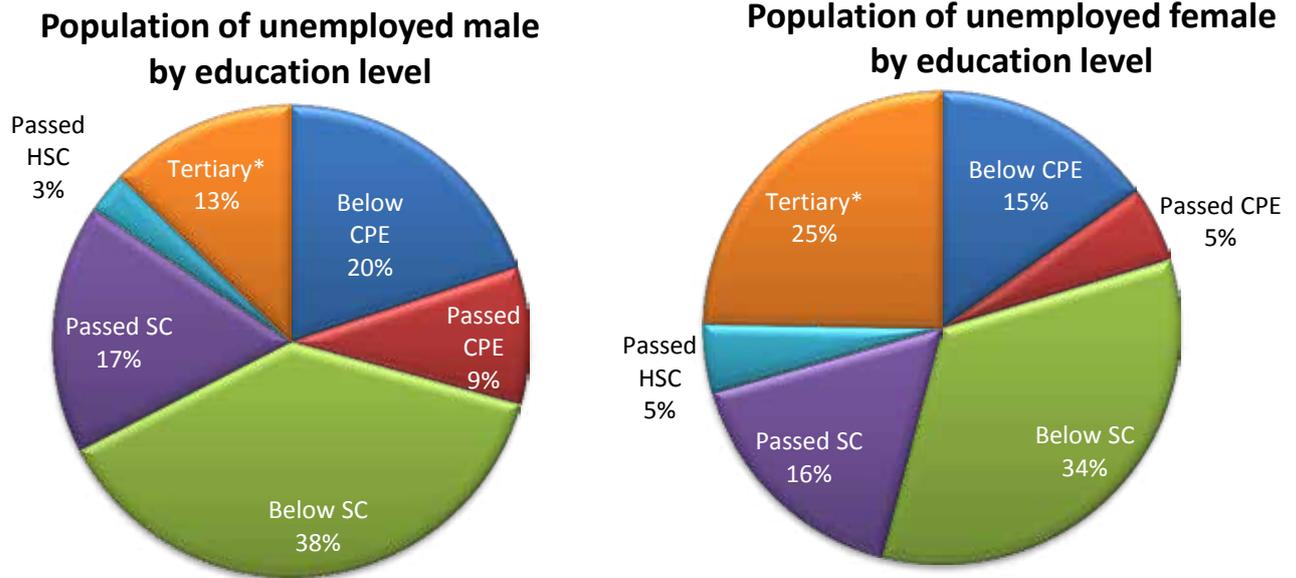


FIGURE 6 MAURITIAN POPULATION OF UNEMPLOYED MALE AND FEMALE BY EDUCATION LEVEL, 2012 (DATA SOURCE: STATISTICS MAURITIUS)

Figure 6 shows percentage of unemployed Mauritians by education attainment and gender.

Mauritians with education level “Below SC” make a major part of the population of unemployed for both genders. We can also observe that the population of unemployed females on overall tends to be more qualified than unemployed men. One quarter of population of unemployed females are those with tertiary education, and 15% below CPE, whereas unemployed male population consists of 13% of tertiary level, and 20% below CPE level.

1.3. YOUNG MAURITIANS AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Mauritius is not spared by the youth unemployment phenomenon. For the 2nd quarter of 2013, Statistics Mauritius reported youth unemployment rate at 24.4%, representing around 20 800 youth aged between 16 and 24 years, among which there are 8 200 males and 12 600 females.

In 2012, Mauritius ranked 48th among 129 countries in youth unemployment with 21.4%, behind France, Sweden and Belgium, among others. Armenia ranked 1st with a youth unemployment rate of 57.6% (Index Mundi, 2012).

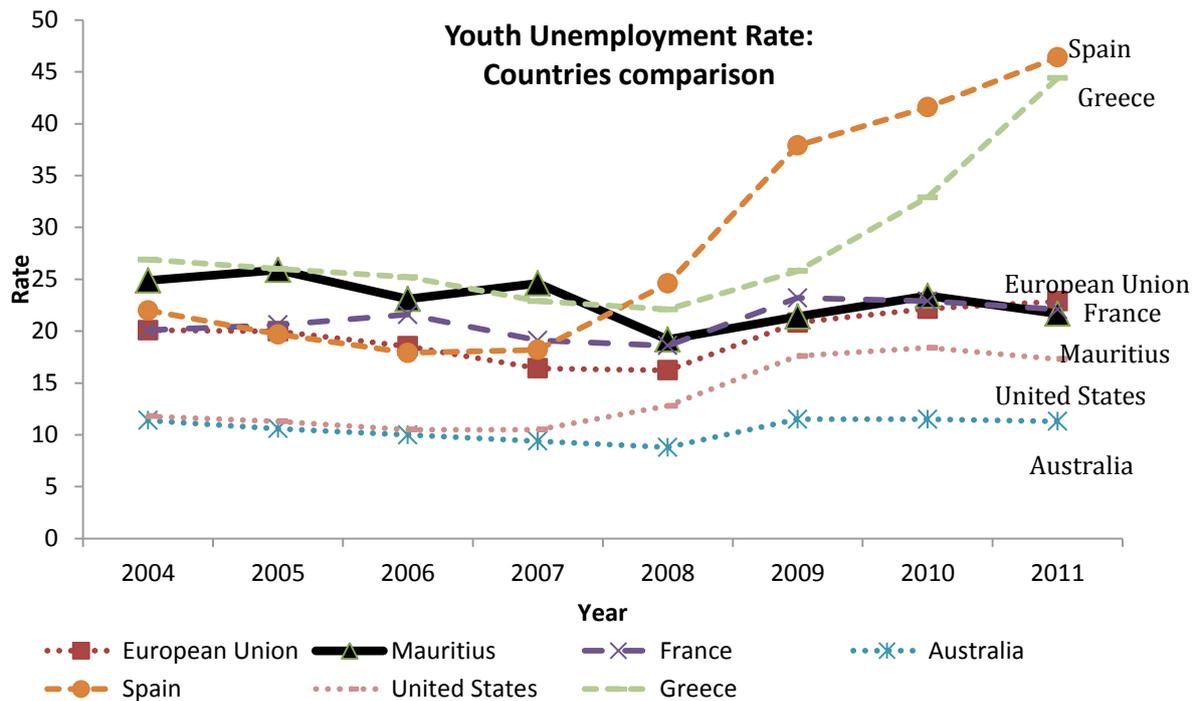


FIGURE 7 COMPARISON OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE AMONG COUNTRIES (DATA SOURCE: WORLD BANK ONLINE DATABASE)

A quick comparison among few countries shows that Mauritius is far behind countries like Spain and Greece in terms of youth unemployment, and slightly below France and even the European Union. However, United States and Australia have performed better.

1.3.1. REASONS FOR YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

There are various reasons cutting across countries for youth unemployment and some are not negative. Sometimes, youth prefer to take short term jobs to build working experience in different environment and they keep “shopping around” until a better offer is found. During their period of transition from one job to another, they are counted as frictional unemployment or voluntary unemployment.

Among various other reasons for youth unemployment, we can find:

➤ Skills Mismatch

Over-education, over-skilling, under-education, under-skilling and skills obsolescence... all form part of this phenomenon called skills mismatch. Skills mismatch can be both quantitative and qualitative. That is, not only the number of employees demanded is not equal to the supply of labour, but also the qualifications of these employees do not match the requirements of the world of work.

Olga Strietska-Ilina, Skills Development Specialist at the ILO refers to skills gaps as “*the qualitative mismatch between the supply or availability of human resources and the requirements of the labour market. Skills gaps exist when workers have inadequate skill types/levels to meet their employers’ objectives or when new entrants to the labour market are apparently trained and qualified for occupations but still lack some of the skills required.*” (National Skills Task Force, 1998).

Under-education or under-skills refers to job seekers not sufficiently qualified for specific posts. Over-education or over-skilled, on the other hand is an issue which has received wider attention since 2008 economic crisis. Due to recession, it is not surprising to see a degree holder performing jobs where only HSC or SC level is demanded. This situation is also referred to as underemployment and it can lead to frustration among the young labour force.

Skills mismatch represents an opportunity cost to an economy as it’s a loss of valuable human resources and decrease in potential productivity growth if the youth skills were employed appropriately.

Since the subject is complex, researches done on the topic can be broadly classified as follows:

1. Types
 - i. overeducation,
 - ii. underqualification,
 - iii. underutilisation,
 - iv. skill shortages and surpluses,
 - v. skill gaps, and
 - vi. skill obsolescence
2. Levels
 - i. Individual
 - ii. Organisational
 - iii. Social-wide
 - iv. Economy wide
3. Impact
 - i. Earnings
 - ii. Career patterns
 - iii. Risk of unemployment

There is no universal method to calculate skills mismatch. However, ILO developed two indicators, namely KILM 14 and KILM 15 which provide information on the extent to which the supply of skills matches the demand for skills and presents statistics on the level and distribution of the knowledge and skills base of the labour force and the unemployed.

➤ **Economic slowdown**

Youth employment is more vulnerable to economic fluctuations than experienced workers. During economic downturn, young employees are not only the “last in” but also the “first out”. This is because older workers are more costly to lay off. New workers, usually youth, are often on a temporary contract or probation period, and therefore, are not protected by permanent employees’ rights. If they are laid off, youth are typically not eligible for redundancy payments because they worked with the company only for a short period of time.

Youth unemployment rate are generally higher than all other age groups, and keeps on fluctuating. The high sensitivity of youth unemployment with respect to Gross Domestic Product growth is seen in figure 9.

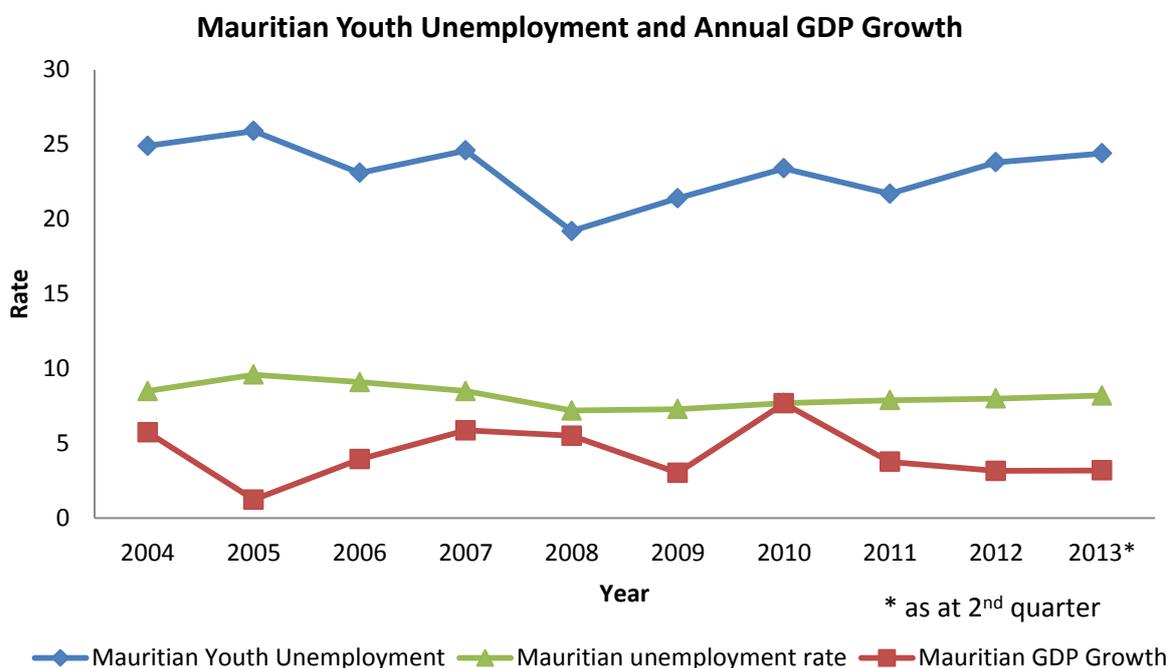


FIGURE 8 MAURITIAN YOUTH AND TOTAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE AND GDP GROWTH
(DATA SOURCE: STATISTICS MAURITIUS ONLINE DATABASE)

As it can be observed, there is an opposite relationship between GDP growth and youth unemployment. In 2005, when annual GDP growth was 1.2%, we noted an increase of 1

percentage point in youth unemployment. General upward movements in GDP growth from 2005 to 2008 resulted in an overall decreasing trend for the same period, with small fluctuations in between. However, apart from GDP growth, many other factors affect youth unemployment as mentioned.

➤ **Lack of experience**



in the “no job-no experience and no experience-no job” cycle

Youth are at risk of chronic unemployment as growing numbers are graduating well-educated, but with no work experience. Employers are less willing to invest in inexperienced workers. Without experience, youth are unable to penetrate the labour market, and are more likely to be caught

I can't get a job because I don't have experience because I can't get a job because I don't have experience

➤ **Youth very selective**

Sometimes youth are supported financially by their parents and are able to wait longer before accepting a job. As such they are also less mobile and more selective than their older counterparts meaning that they remain unemployed for a longer period of time. This prolonged unemployment period results in higher risk of future unemployment, as it creates negative perception of youth who have been without employment for a long period of time. Discouraged youth gave up looking for work altogether and are in danger of feeling useless and alienated from society.

1.3.2. MAURITIAN YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN FIGURES

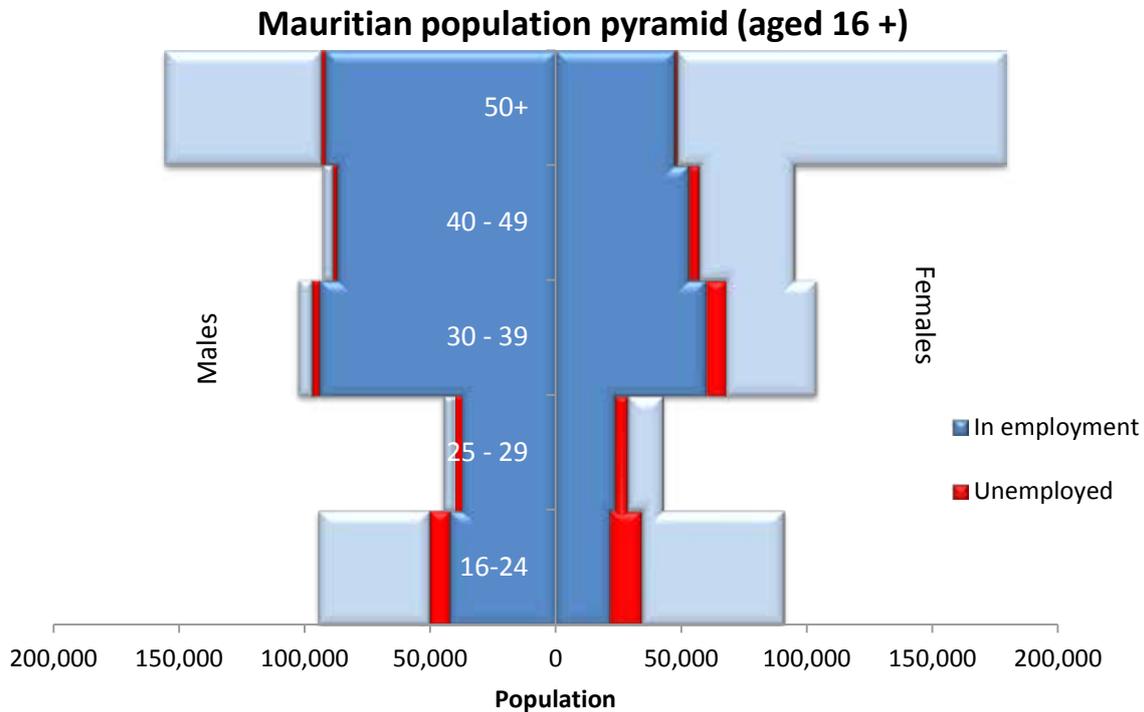


FIGURE 9 MAURITIAN POPULATION PYRAMID (ABOVE 16 YEARS) (DATA SOURCE: STATISTICS MAURITIUS ONLINE DATABASE)

Figure 9 shows the composition of the Mauritian population above 16 years old, by age category and work status.

As per Statistics Mauritius:-

- The employed population consists of Mauritian above 16 years who have worked for pay, profit or family gain for at least one hour during the reference week of a month. It includes those who are temporarily absent from work for reasons such as leave with pay, leave without pay and temporary disorganisation of work (bad weather, break down of equipment, lack of order, etc.).
- Unemployed population comprises all Mauritians aged above 16 who are not working but who are looking for work and are available for work during the reference period.
- Inactive population includes all Mauritians aged 16+, not forming part of the labour force for reasons such as attendance at educational institutions, engagement in household duties, retirement, old age and infirmity/disablement.

From the population pyramid above, it can be observed without surprise, that Mauritians aged between 16 and 24 are more affected by unemployment. Out of total young male population,

8.7 % are currently unemployed compared to 2.5% for all other age groups. For females, 13.9% youth out of total young female population are unemployed, compared to 4.5% for all other age groups. In general, we can also note that despite being fewer in the labour force, the female labour force consists of more unemployed as compared to men.

Unemployed Mauritian by age group

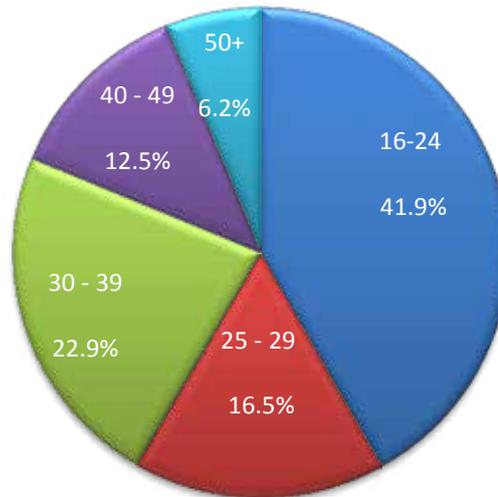


FIGURE 10 UNEMPLOYED MAURITIANS BY AGE GROUP

If we look at figure 10, it can be observed that almost two third of the total unemployed population consist of Mauritian aged between 16 and 29 years.

Unemployed Male by education level (%) (16 - 25 yrs)

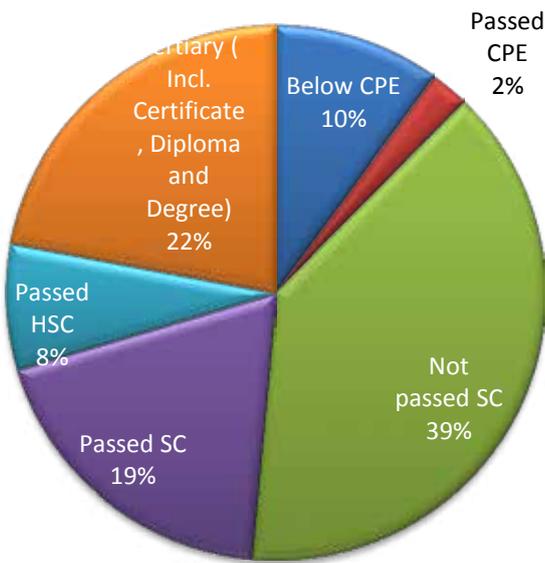


FIGURE 11 YOUNG UNEMPLOYED MAURITIAN MALE BY EDUCATION LEVEL, 2012

Unemployed female by education level (%) (16 - 25 yrs)

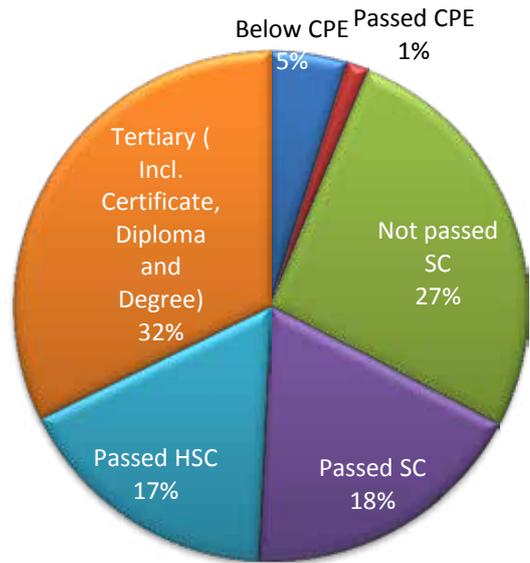


FIGURE 12 YOUNG UNEMPLOYED MAURITIAN FEMALE BY EDUCATION LEVEL, 2012

For Mauritian youth as well, we can observe the same pattern in education attainment as for other age groups. The population of unemployed female youth tends to be more qualified than their male counterparts.

Young unemployed male population consists of more “Not passed SC” level whereas female consists of more “Tertiary” level. It should be noted that Statistics Mauritius’ figures for Tertiary level includes that of Certificates, Diploma and Degree holders.

TABLE 1 UNEMPLOYED POPULATION WITH TERTIARY EDUCATION BY AGE AND SEX IN MAURITIUS (SOURCE STATISTICS MAURITIUS, CMPHS 2012)

Educational Attainment	16-24 yrs			25 -30 yrs			All ages		
	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes
Certificate	800	1,000	1,800	100	300	400	1,000	2,100	3,100
Diploma	500	600	1,100	600	200	800	1,300	1,100	2,400
Degree & above	600	1,600	2,200	800	900	1,700	1,500	2,600	4,100
Total	1,900	3,200	5,100	1,500	1,400	2,900	3,800	5,800	9,600

2. TACKLING YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT CRISIS

To fight unemployment among the youth, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development has administratively set up in November 2012 the Skills Working Group (SWG) in 2013, a joint public-private initiative, to implement the Youth Employment Programme (YEP). The ICT Skills Development Programme (ISDP) has also been set up under the aegis of the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology to address the issue of youth unemployment. The objective of both programmes is to promote work placement and training for the youth aged between 16 and 30 years.

While the YEP targets private companies from all sectors of the economy, the ISDP concentrates on ICT sector only.

Percentage of unemployed youth by education level and gender for year 2012

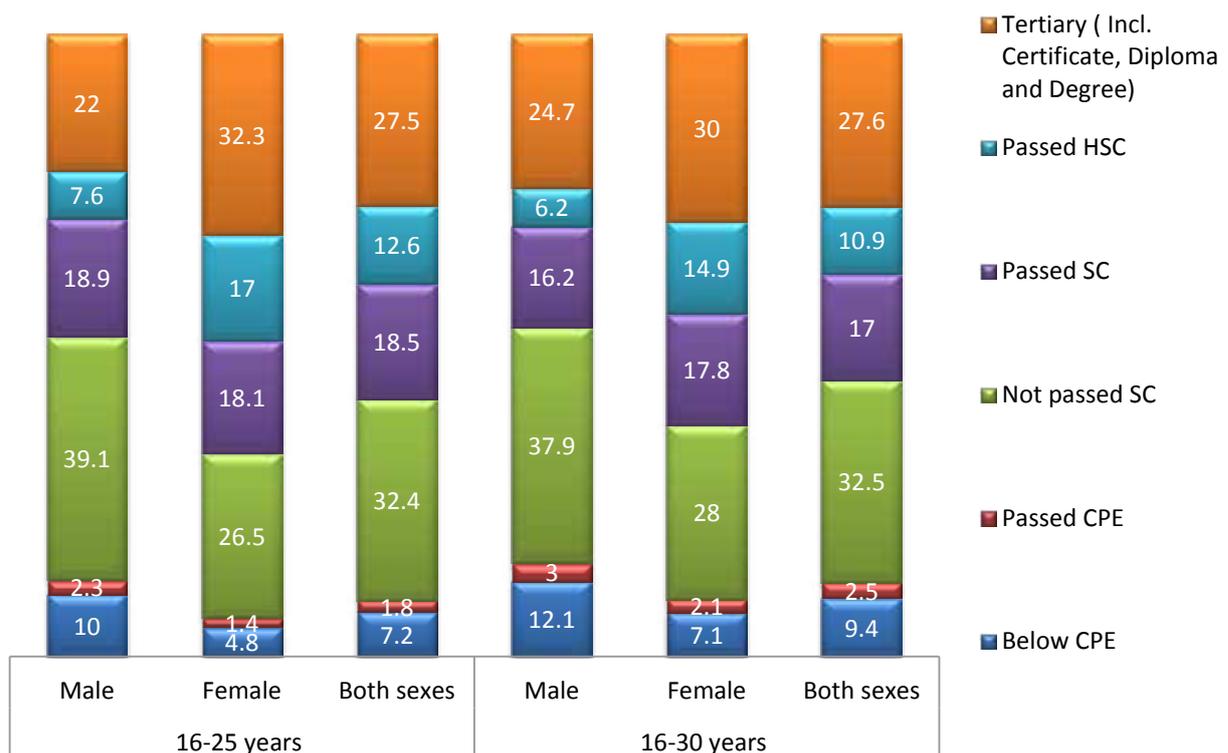


FIGURE 13 COMPARISON OF EDUCATION LEVEL BETWEEN AGE GROUPS 16 - 25 YEARS AND 16 - 30 YEARS BY GENDER, 2012 (DATA SOURCE: STATISTICS MAURITIUS)

As mentioned earlier, the term “youth” is not defined as a fixed age limit. If universally, “youth” refers to the age category 15 – 24 years, it should be noted that the upper age limit refers to the start of first unemployment (as per ILO). However, this age has been increasing

given unemployment keeps increasing worldwide, and also youth remain longer in period of dependency due to tertiary studies. As such for the purpose of the YEP, the Government has redefined youth as persons aged between 16 and 30 years, to include more youth who have completed their tertiary studies and to assist them until their first job.

2.1. OVERVIEW OF YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME (YEP)

2.1.1. INTRODUCTION

One of the key measures of the 2013 National budget was the set-up of the Skills Working Group to provide tailor made and practical solutions to put the youth to work.



YOUTH ~~UN~~EMPLOYMENT

The 2013 National Budget has provided Rs. 330 m to assist Mauritian youth to obtain employment. Due to the “inspiring success” in 2013, with more than 4000 youth placed in private companies, the programme has been further extended with the provision of Rs. 275 m in the 2014 National Budget.

2.1.2. MISSION

The Youth Employment Programme (YEP), launched on the 29th of January 2013 by Hon. Xavier-Luc Duval, G.C.S.K, Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Economic Development, has been designed as part of the Government's 4 point Action plan to fulfill this commitment.

With the setting up of the YEP, the government wishes to facilitate the transition of youth from education to employment and to provide them with the core skills required by different sectors of the economy

2.1.3. OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the Youth Employment Programme are:

- i. To enable unemployed youth to obtain training/placement for an initial period of one year, with the possibility of permanent employment thereafter on condition of satisfactory performance;

- ii. To ensure that appropriate training is provided to youth to promote the development of necessary skills in the labour force;
- iii. To assist employers in obtaining appropriate skilled manpower.

2.1.4. INCENTIVES

The Youth Employment Programme goes above and beyond a simple recruitment service; it is an innovation in any government. In order to encourage private companies to employ youth with basically little or no work experience, the programme offers various incentives. Firstly, a subsidy given on the stipend paid to the youth during his/her first year of placement/training. The NRF Management Committee will refund 50% of the youth's monthly stipend subject to a maximum of Rs. 4,000 per person for non-degree holders (including diploma holders). For individuals holding a degree from a tertiary education provider accredited by the Tertiary Education Commission, or such equivalent qualification overseas, the maximum monthly refund is Rs. 7,500 per person.

Should the youth's stipend exceed Rs. 8,000 for non-degree holders, and Rs. 15,000 for degree holders, the amount refunded will not exceed Rs. 4,000 and Rs. 7,500 respectively.

Secondly, registered employers can either recruit directly, or use the SWG database to select youth that satisfy their requirements. The database provides the opportunity for youth to specify their fields of interest.

Thirdly, employers are also encouraged to provide training where this is desirable. The NRF Management Committee will subsidize the cost of MQA approved training up to 50% (not exceeding Rs. 7,500 per person during the course of the year of placement).

An independent consulting group carries out the monitoring and evaluation of the programme and provides feedback to the SWG on a regular basis.

2.1.5. ELIGIBILITY OF YOUTH

Youth eligible for this programme must

- be unemployed for 90 days or more upon registration
- be aged between 16 and 30 years;

- not be subject to any possible conflict of interest (parental/personal relations or ex-employees);
- be registered on the SWG Database, or
- not be registered on the SWG Database (in which case, after recruitment, the Employer must ensure that the youth completes his/her registration).

2.1.6. CONDITIONS FOR EMPLOYERS

The Employer shall:

- Provide placement/training to selected candidates for an initial period of one year;
- Where 10 or more youth have been recruited by an employer, maintain at least 50% of them for not less than 12 months after the initial one year period;
- Ensure that the youth works under supervision;
- Ensure the availability of relevant tools and equipment;
- Provide an insurance cover;
- Submit a return on the progress of each youth after every 6 months of placement/training or during the employment period following the initial placement/training period.

2.1.7. MONITORING

The SWG monitors the progress of the youth through regular visits to the work premises. The visits may be scheduled without prior notice to the Employer and the youth. The SWG officers or any officers duly authorised by the SWG shall be granted access to the relevant documents and sites in relation to the placement/training of the youth.

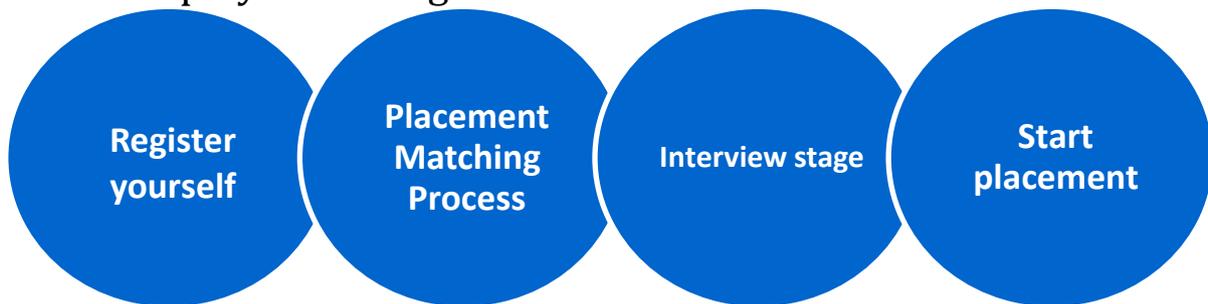
In case of premature termination of the placement/training, the Employer informs the SWG in writing of such termination, its effective date and the reasons thereof, in the shortest delay. The same will apply where employment of the youth is terminated in the period following the initial year of placement/training.

2.1.8. NSF AND NPF CONTRIBUTIONS

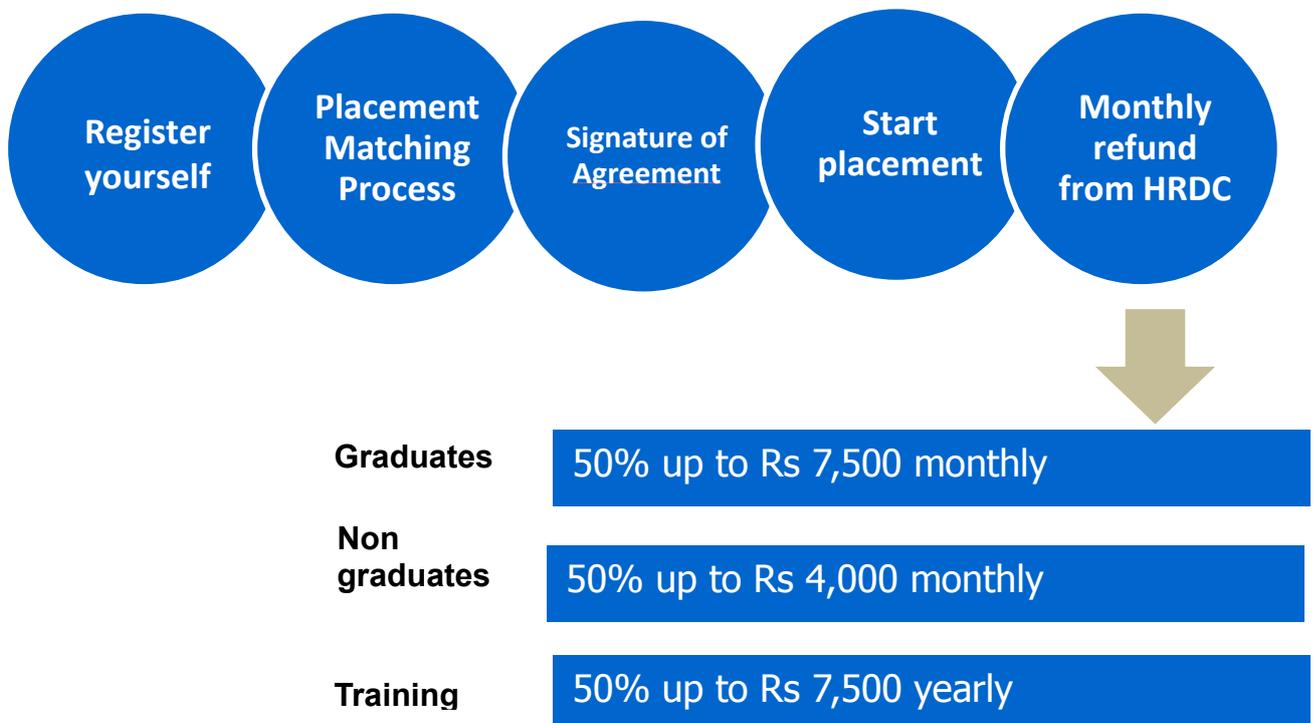
The provisions regarding payment of NSF and NPF will not apply in respect of youth participating in the YEP.

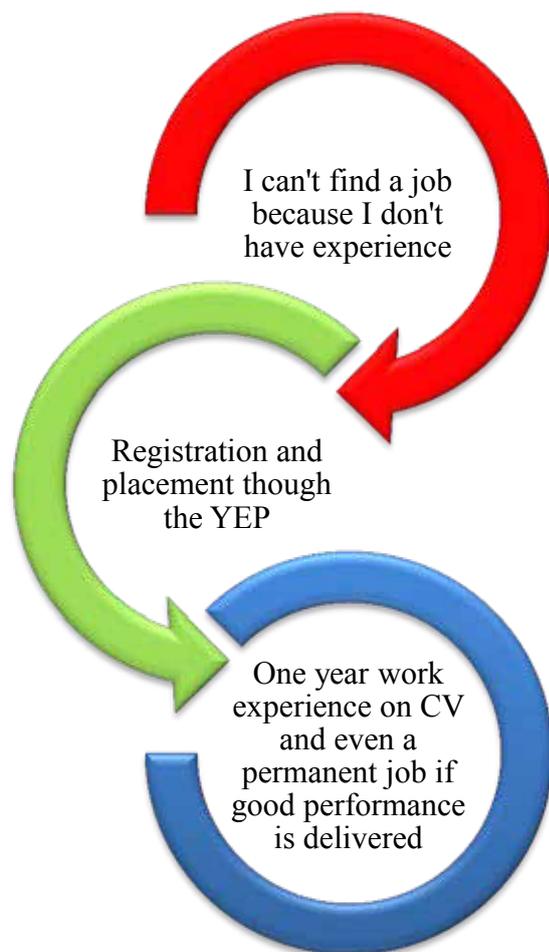
2.1.9. HOW IT WORKS?

Youth Employment Programme: For Youth



Youth Employment Programme: For Employers





By giving an incentive to employers to recruit inexperienced youth through the YEP and get partly refunded for their stipend, the vicious cycle of “no experience-no job and no experience-no job” can be broken

2.2. OVERVIEW OF ICT SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (ISDP)

2.2.1. INTRODUCTION

Set up in October 2012, the ICT Skills Development Programme (ISDP) promotes training and work placement initiatives to cater for the increasing demand of manpower in the ICT/BPO industry.

This is in line with Government vision to develop the ICT Sector into a key pillar of the economy and make of Mauritius a regional ICT hub. It is estimated that the ICT Sector would require an additional workforce of 15 000 persons in the next few years.

The ICT Skills Development Unit has been set up at the National Computer Board (NCB) to manage the programme.

2.2.2. SCHEME

The Training and Work Placement Scheme whereby ICT/BPO companies are encouraged to offer unemployed youth having an SC, HSC, Diploma and/or Degree a work placement for a maximum period of 12 months.

Trainees having an SC, HSC, or Diploma will receive a monthly stipend of up to Rs. 8,000 while Degree Holders will receive up to Rs. 15,000.

The Training and Work Placement Scheme will entitle ICT/BPO companies to claim the refund of 50% of the stipend paid to trainees (up to a maximum of Rs. 4,000 for non-degree holders / Rs. 7,500 for Degree holders). Those companies offering training on an MQA-led course can claim 50% of the training costs (up to a maximum of Rs. 7,500).

ICT/BPO companies should commit to offer employment to at least 50% of the trainees following the placement period and those trainees should remain in employment for at least one year.

To benefit from the scheme, ICT/BPO companies will be required to enter into an agreement with the ICT Skills Development Programme Steering Committee.

3. SWG ACHIEVEMENTS & CHALLENGES

Based on market demand, the SWG had targeted to place 4000 youth in the private sector within one year. The success of this programme was such that the target was achieved within 10 months only.

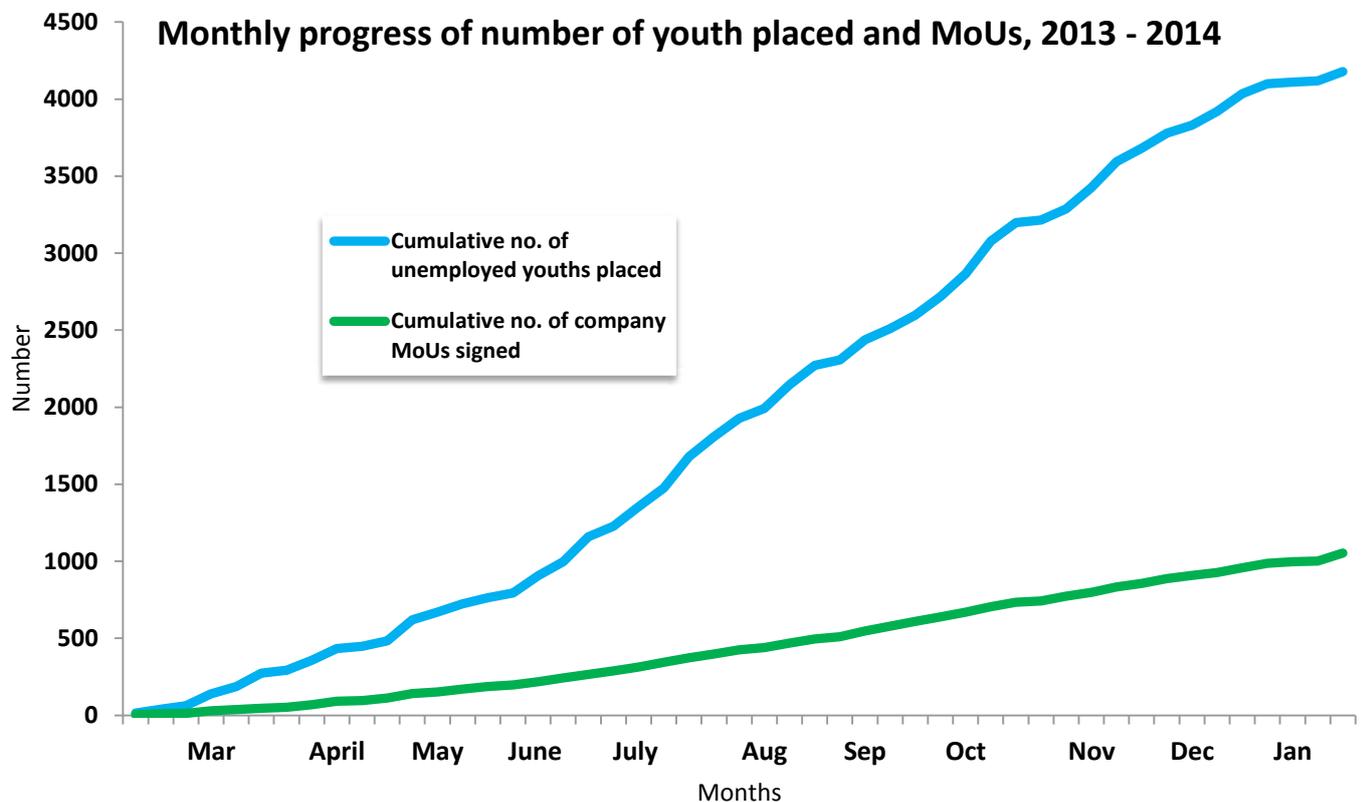


FIGURE 14 WEEKLY PROGRESS OF NUMBER OF PLACEMENTS AND AGREEMENTS SIGNED

3.1. YOUTH

As at 23 January 2014, 11 097 eligible youth were registered on the YEP and ISDP. Since the signature of the first Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on 5th February, 1 053 MOUs/Agreements have been signed and 4 178 youth have been placed in private companies as shown in figure 14. In addition, around 18 200 interviews have been organised for the unemployed youth by the SWG.

3.1.1. GENDER

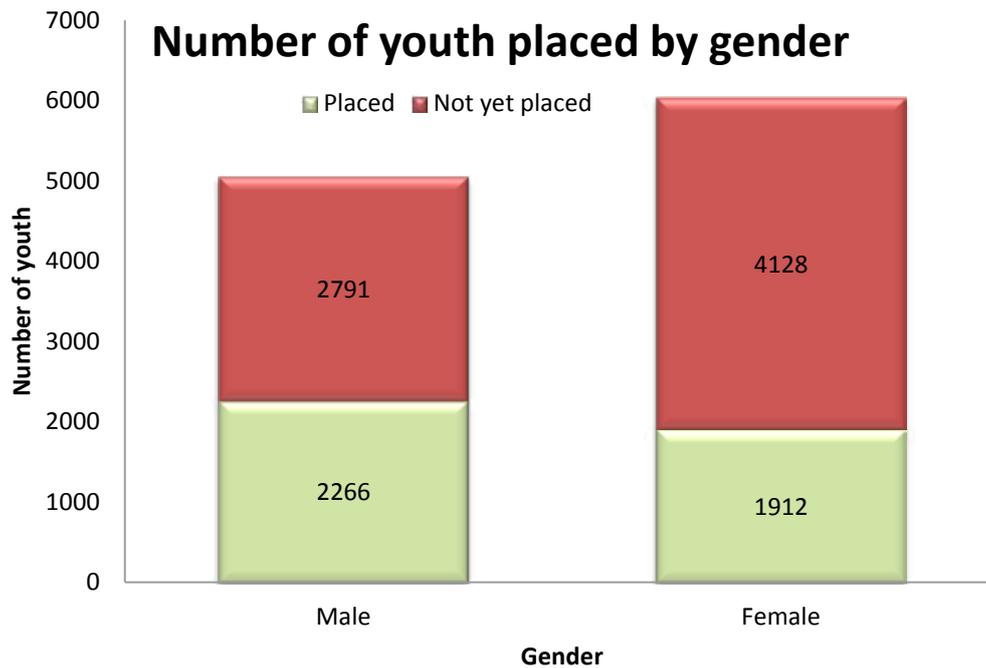


FIGURE 15 REGISTERED YOUTH (PLACED AND NOT YET PLACED) BY GENDER

Out of the total number of youth registered, 45.6 % are males and 54.4% are females. We can observe that 983 more young females than males have registered themselves. This can be explained by the increasing number of women entering the labour force. However, only 31.7% out of total females have been placed compared to 44.8% for males. Gender inequality in the labour market is more present in the lower age group as per Statistics Mauritius, and this is reflected in SWG statistics.

3.1.2. AGE CATEGORIES

The YEP and ISDP targets young unemployed between 16 to 30 years.

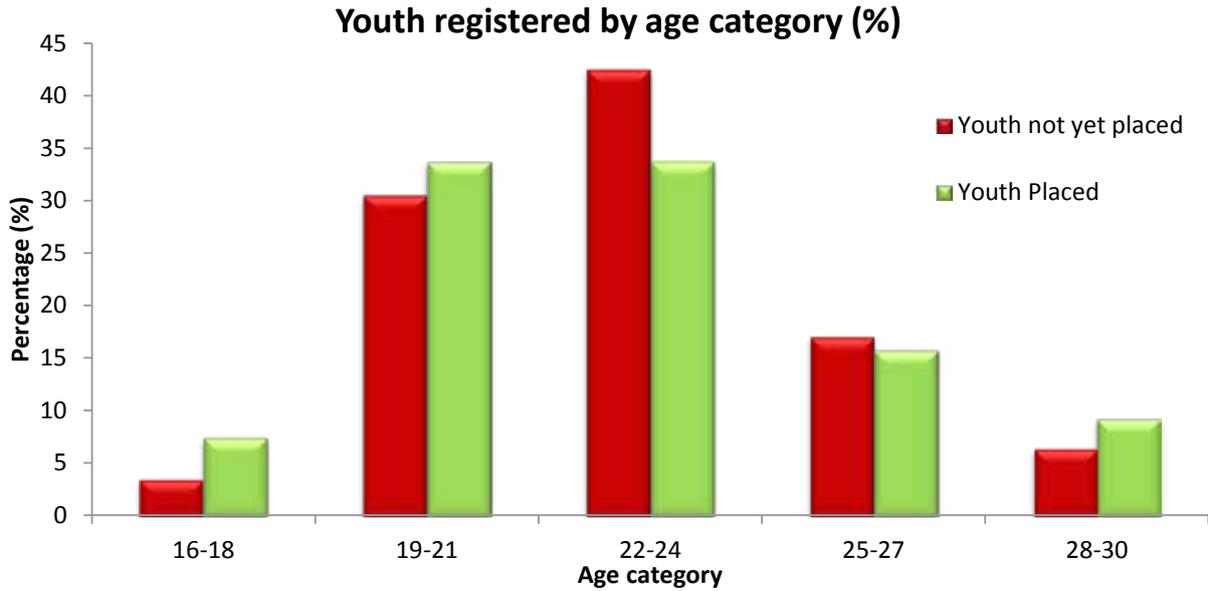


FIGURE 16 REGISTERED (PLACED AND NOT YET PLACED) YOUTH BY AGE GROUP

The SWG database is made up of 31.7 % and 39.1 % of youth aged between 19 – 21 years and 22 – 24 years respectively. Eventually, the numbers of youth both placed and not placed are dominated by these two age categories. The placed youth are mostly aged between 19 – 21 years and 22 – 24 years whereas not yet placed ones are mostly around 22 – 24 years.

3.1.3. DISTRICT

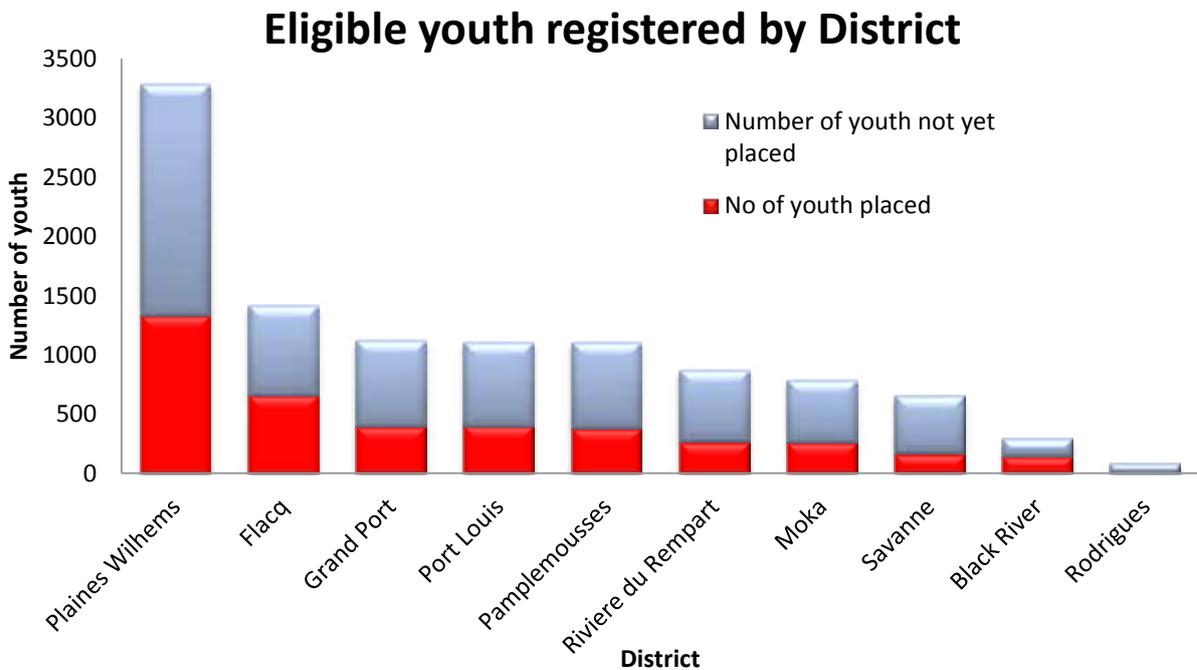


FIGURE 17 REGISTERED YOUTH BY DISTRICT

Table 2 below shows the percentage of youth placed out of the number registered from each district.

TABLE 2 PLACEMENT BY DISTRICT (%)

District	Percentage placed
Plaines Wilhems	40.5
Flacq	46.6
Pamplemousses	35.5
Grand Port	36.4
Port Louis	34.8
Riviere du Rempart	31.0
Moka	33.5
Savanne	25.8
Black River	48.8
Overall percentage placed	37.6

Youth registered on the YEP and ISDP are mostly from the district of Plaines Wilhems, followed by Flacq and Pamplemousses. The striking high number of registration and placement in Plaines Wilhems can be explained by the fact that this district is at the same time the most populated one, and the one with the highest business activity rate in Mauritius (28% as at 2012 as per Statistics Mauritius). Among the companies registered with the SWG, around 42 % are located in the district of Plaines Wilhems.

3.1.4. QUALIFICATIONS

The YEP database is made up of youth from no education to doctorate level. They are broadly classified as “Below SC”, “SC”, “HSC”, “Certificate”, “Diploma”, “Degree”.

Youth placed by Education Level

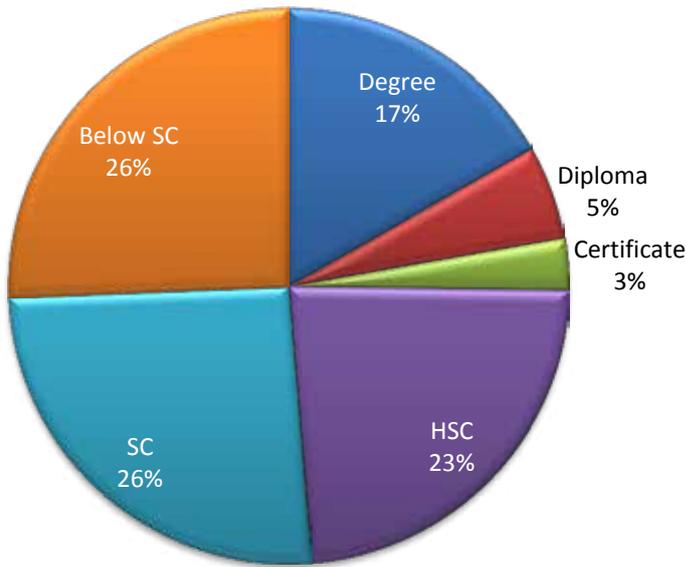


FIGURE 18 YOUTH PLACED BY EDUCATION LEVEL

Number of youth placed is more or less equal among the Below SC, SC, HSC and Tertiary (incl. Certificate, Diploma and Degree holders). When disaggregated, we find that youth with certificate are least represented. On overall, youth with SC and below SC education level are slightly more demanded on the labour market.

However, we can see that youth with HSC made up to 34% of those not placed since they usually register themselves temporarily till they secure a place at the University. From interview feedbacks obtained from employers, it is often found that companies are less willing to employ HSC holders knowing that they might end the placement to pursue their studies. Degree holders are the second one which has more difficulties to find a job. This can be explained by the fact that they usually want to find a job exactly matching their field of study and this makes it harder for them to be placed.

Youth not yet placed by Education Level

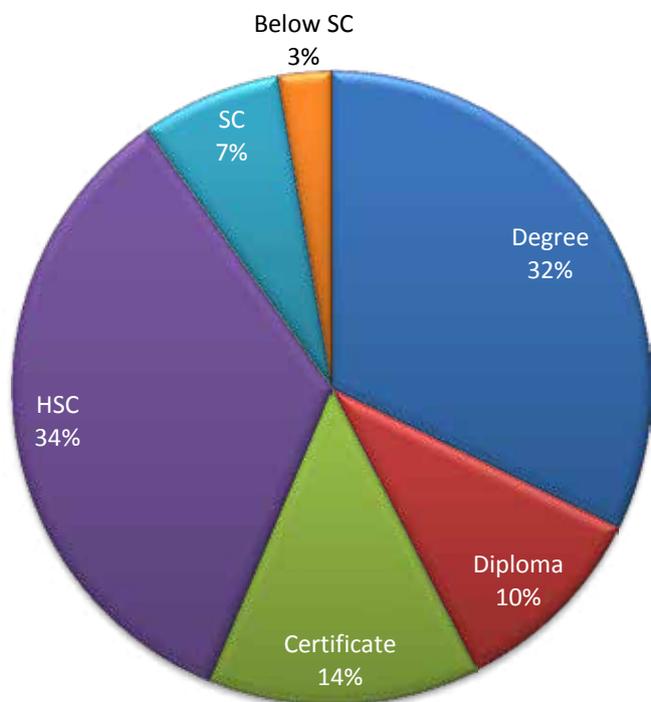


FIGURE 19 YOUTH NOT YET PLACED BY EDUCATION LEVEL

3.1.5. STIPEND RANGE

The SWG recommends that a non-degree holder receive a range of Rs. 6,000 to Rs. 8,000 as stipend, and a degree holder, a minimum of Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 15,000. However, it should be noted that many of the YEP trainees earn much more than the recommended range, depending upon their qualifications and job description.

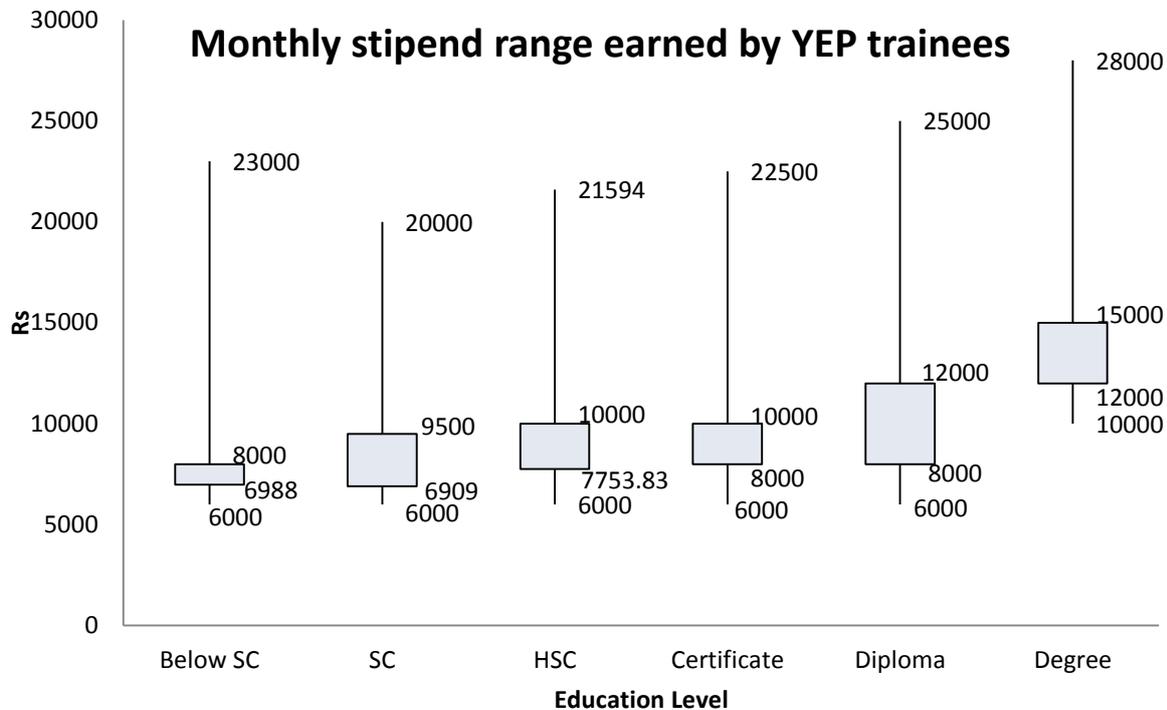


FIGURE 20 MONTHLY STIPEND RANGE EARNED BY YEP TRAINEES

Those youth with low qualifications earning Rs. 20,000 and above, usually have work experience prior to their placement.

TABLE 3 STIPENDS EARNED: STATISTICS

Statistics	Below SC	SC	HSC	Certificate	Diploma	Degree
Minimum	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	10,000
Lower Quartile	6,988	6,909	7,753.83	8,000	8,000	12,000
Median	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,846.5	10,000	15,000
Average	9,190.40	8,447.07	8,700.25	8,000	8,000	15,000
Mode	8,000	6,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	15,000
Upper Quartile	8,000	9,500	10,000	10,000	12,000	15,000
Maximum	23,000	20,000	21,594	22,500	25,000	28,000

3.1.6. TIME TAKEN TO FIND PLACEMENT

On average, the time taken for a youth to find a placement through the YEP is around 80 working days, the minimum being 2 working days. However, when the youth wants to be placed in a specific position, the wait might be a little longer.

3.1.7. YOUTH PLACED BY SECTOR

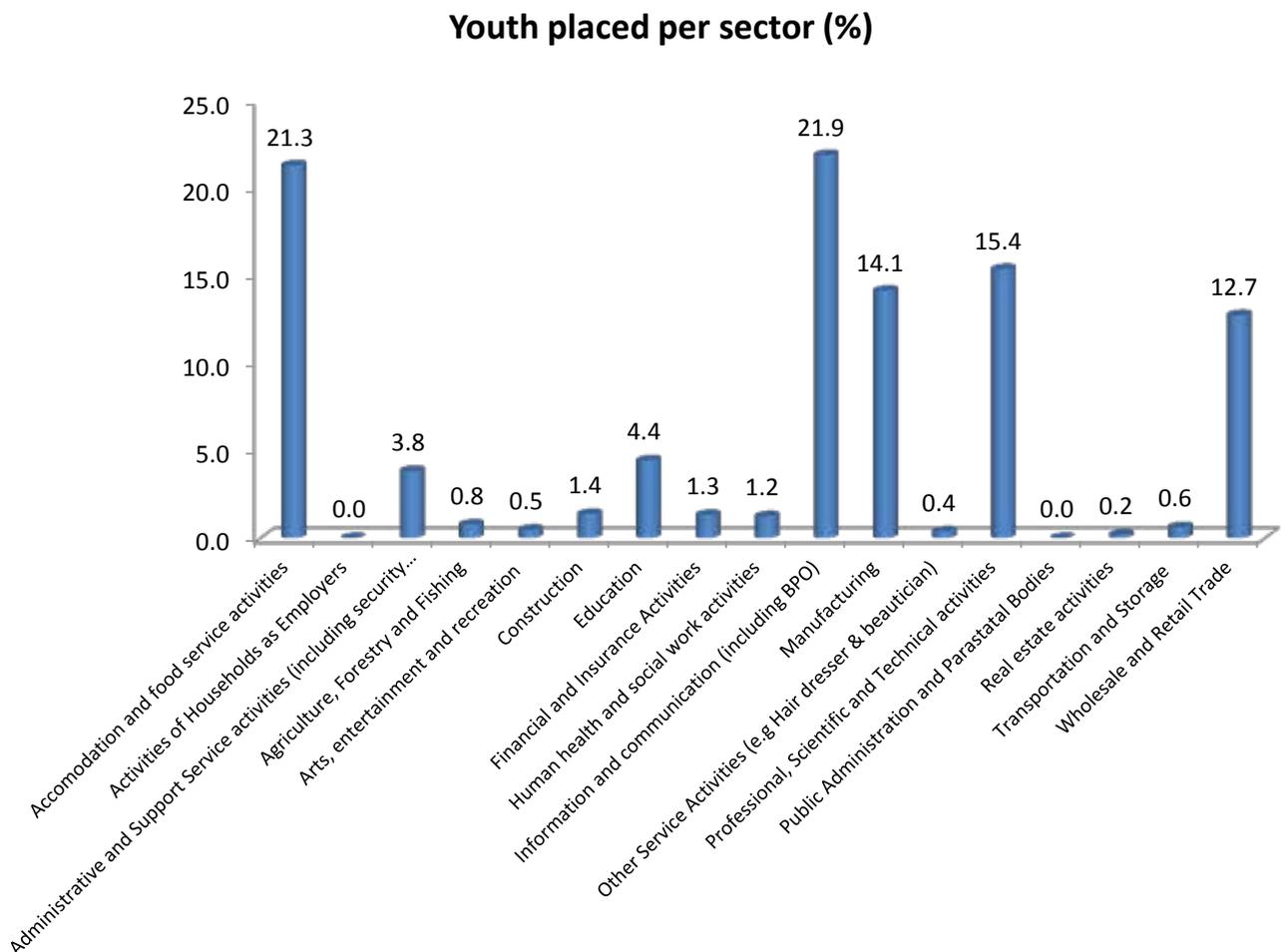


FIGURE 21 YOUTH PLACED PER SECTOR

The major sectors where youth have been recruited are in ICT, accommodation and food services activities (hotels and restaurants), professional, scientific and technical activities, manufacturing, and wholesale and retail trade. Since the SWG considers only private companies which can provide their Business Registration Certificates, number of youth placed in sectors like activities of households as employers and public administration and parastatal bodies is nil.

3.1.8. TESTIMONIALS FROM YOUTH

Marie Pauline Christelle LEBREF, 28years old, SC

« Je suis placée actuellement comme secrétaire administratif dans une compagnie à Mont Roches sous le contrat du YEP.

J'étais au chômage pendant plus d'un an. Je suis passée par des nombreuses agences de recrutements afin de trouver un travail mais malheureusement toutes mes applications étaient rejetées et j'étais sans espoir.



De nos jours le marché du travail est très difficile même si nous sommes expérimentés ou certifiés dans certains domaines. Grâce au YEP je peux dire que j'ai été sauvée. Dès que j'ai entendue parler du YEP, j'ai fait mon application et au bout de 15 jours j'ai été contactée par des employeurs enregistrés au YEP pour des entretiens et recrutement par la suite.

En plus mon employeur n'a aucun souci à se faire durant mon placement au niveau de mon salaire car 50% de ma base de salaire lui est remboursé par la HRDC tous les mois.

Je peux dire que l'équipe de YEP a toujours été là pour m'aider dans des forts moments et je les remercie énormément.”

Reshma Goolab, 30 years, HSC

« Around a year ago, I registered on the Youth Employment Programme maximising my chances to obtain a job. In the meantime, I have applied in many companies wherever I saw a vacancy suitable to my qualifications. After six months, I got a call from an insurance company for an interview and they specified that I have been selected from the programme. The interview went well and I am now part of the team.



Being appointed under this programme does not necessarily mean that after one year of internship, there will be another hunt for job. Personally, I have adapted to my working environment quite fast. In a way we can say that the programme has helped me to better understand my capabilities and identify my weaknesses. Bearing in mind that I am a YEP recruit, I have doubled my efforts in overcoming my professional weaknesses and giving the

best of my potential towards my working environment; be it in my work or with my colleagues.

Moreover, I can say that the programme has developed my self-confidence as I am aware that I am not only answerable to the authority of the company but there is also the responsible ministry of the program towards which I have to abide by its rules and regulations. It also gives a feeling of reassurance that the concerned ministry is not only listening but doing the maximum for youth to be employed. This will encourage more youth to be part of it and increase their chances of finding a job.

The Youth Employment Programme has helped me in not only securing a job but it is still helping me in growing up professionally. I am very much confident that it has positively played an important part in the lives of a lot more of youth as well.”

Kovani Naidu Tirvengadam, 24 years,

“I am currently working at PIONEER Consulting & Technologies Ltd as a functional consultant since 16th September 2013 and I followed a course on Introduction to Business Process Management using an IT tool IPMS (Integrated Performance Management System).

I found that the Youth Employment Programme is very efficient in helping me to get an on-the-job training in a very short span of time since I registered on the programme that is after 2 weeks.

The job that I am currently doing at PIONEER Consulting & Technologies Ltd is currently helping me a lot to understand the various tasks and responsibilities involved while dealing with other staff and clients of the company.”

3.2. EMPLOYERS

Presently 828 companies are registered with the YEP and ISDP, out of which 53.9% are actively participating, and 14.9% are in process of recruitment. The remaining has notified their intention to recruit later in the year. The companies which have already recruited are from different economic sectors as shown in figure 22.

3.2.1. EMPLOYERS RECRUITING BY SECTOR

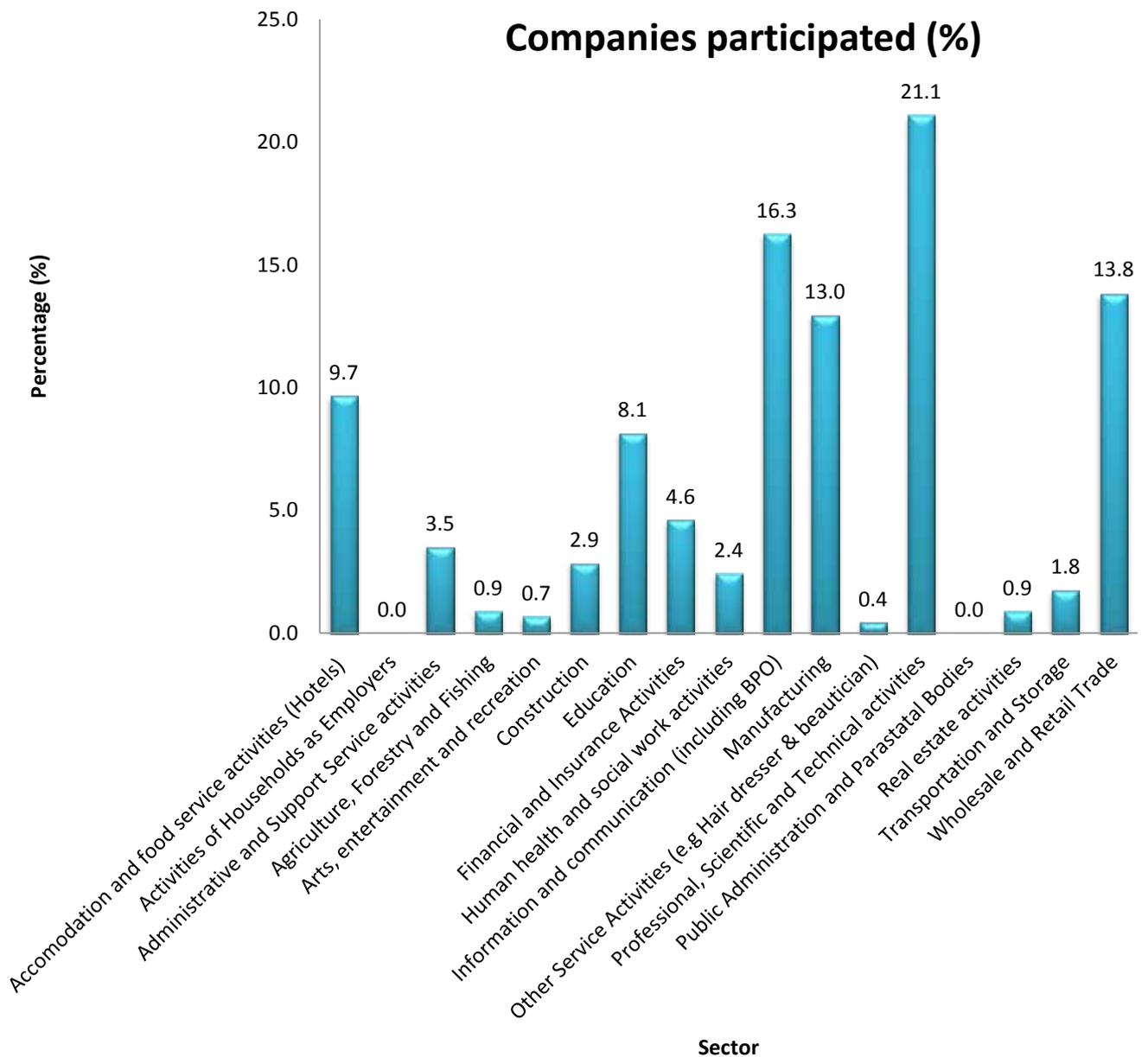


FIGURE 22 PERCENTAGE OF COMPANIES PARTICIPATING PER SECTOR

Among the sectors actively recruiting, we can find professional, scientific and technical activities, information and communication, manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade and accommodation and food service activities.

3.2.2. APPRAISAL OF YEP TRAINEES BY EMPLOYERS

After every 6 months of placement/training, employer shall submit a return on the progress of each youth during the employment period. Around 300 youth have been assessed on the following criteria:

I. Punctuality of trainees at work

It is required that punctuality of trainees is checked through the attendance management sheet.

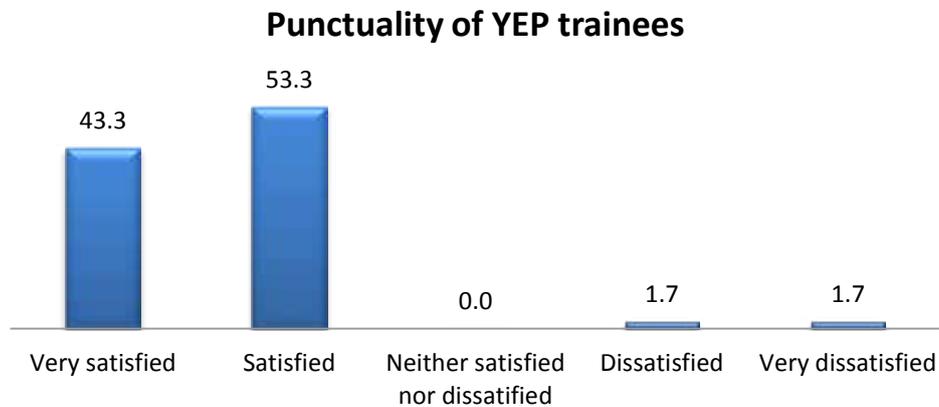


FIGURE 23 PUNCTUALITY OF YEP TRAINEES AT WORK

- 43.3 % of the companies who participated in the survey said that youth who have been placed in their companies are very punctual and have never been late or absent since the beginning of their placement six month ago;
- 53.3 % are satisfied by the youth punctuality, and noted an insignificant number of lateness or absences during last six month;
- 1.7 % said that they dissatisfied by youth punctuality as they noted several number of lateness and absences;
- 1.7% noted regular absences and lateness from the trainees placed in their respective companies.

II. Willingness of trainees to participate in company's development

The companies assessed the youth placed in their companies on whether they are committed to the company.

Willingness of YEP trainees to participate in company's development

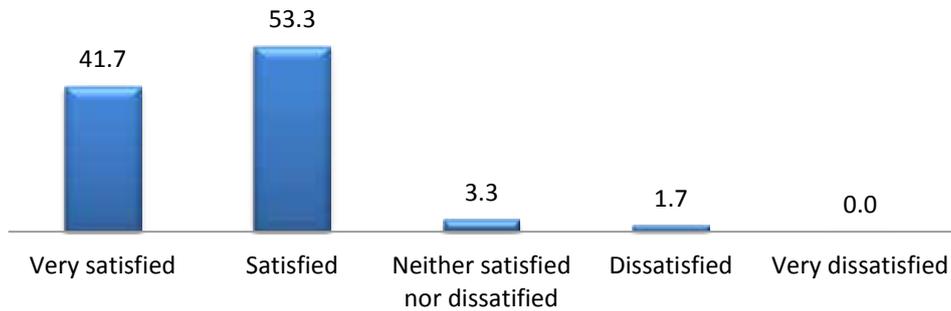


FIGURE 24 WILLINGNESS OF YEP TRAINEES TO PARTICIPATE IN COMPANY'S DEVELOPMENT

- 41.7% are very satisfied by the trainees and found that they are highly motivated, willing to help in the development of the company keeping the vision and mission of the company in mind;
- 53.3 % are satisfied as the trainees are eager to learn;
- 3.3 % said that they trainees showed neither particular interest nor disinterest for the company's objectives;
- 1.7 % found that the trainees showed very little/no interest in their tasks;
- None has shown complete disinterest in their work

III. Attitude of trainees

The attitudes of the trainees are assessed on their behaviour towards colleagues and superior, their overall performance on assignment given and whether trainees received warnings.

Attitudes of YEP trainees

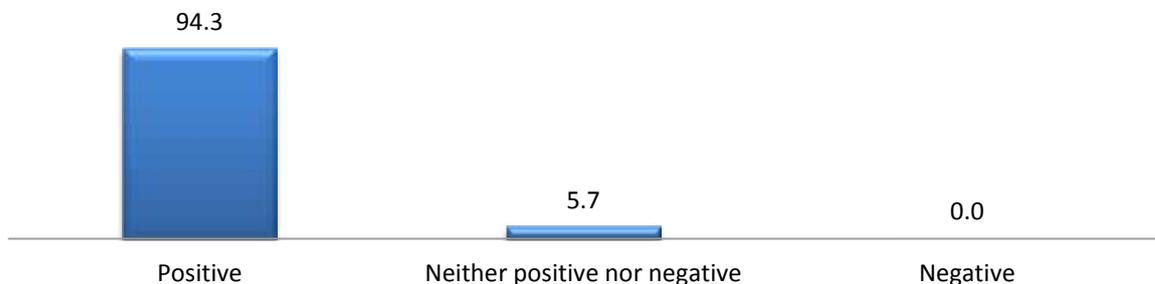


FIGURE 25 ATTITUDES OF YEP TRAINEES AT WORK

- 94.3% companies found that attitudes of trainees placed in their respective companies are positive on the workplace. They are communicative, proactive and responsible.

- 5.7% found that the attitudes of the youth are neither positive nor negative as the employers found an insignificant number of issues with the trainees
- None of the trainees have received warnings or have misbehaved on workplace.

IV. Progress of trainees

The progress of trainees has been examined through their training plan and status of each task given. It has also been identified whether trainees have been able to cope with deadlines set by their reporting person.



FIGURE 26 PROGRESS OF YEP TRAINEES

- 42.9 % said that the trainees performed excellently with respect to the deadlines and have progressed significantly in their jobs.
- 40% found that the trainees are learning at their own pace but the progress is satisfactory overall.
- 17.1 % said that the trainees lack efficiency in the learning process.

Positive feedbacks from employers

The youth recruited:

- Have well adapted to the organization and are likely to secure employment following the year of placement
- Adapt easily to the changing business environment
- Have good potential and have achieved a lot for the company
- Are fully cooperative and hard working
- Have good team spirit

Negative feedback with respect to:

i. Trainees

- Underperformance from certain youth; They cannot write reports without mistakes
- Youth have poor communications skills. They cannot express themselves properly. They cannot speak either French or English satisfactorily
- Not well prepared for the work environment with respect to professional attitude, work expectation and office work
- An insignificant number of youth recruited have resigned in a very short period

ii. Youth

- Youth do not turn up for interviews
- Youth not interested to perform assigned duties and responsibilities proposed by employers
- Youth not prepared to travel long distances to go to respective companies
- Youth are still University students while some others are requesting short term internships before resuming University
- Some youth are already working
- Some youth are not willing to work beyond 16.30 or to work on shift systems as needed by Call Centers/BPO

3.2.3. APPRAISAL OF SWG

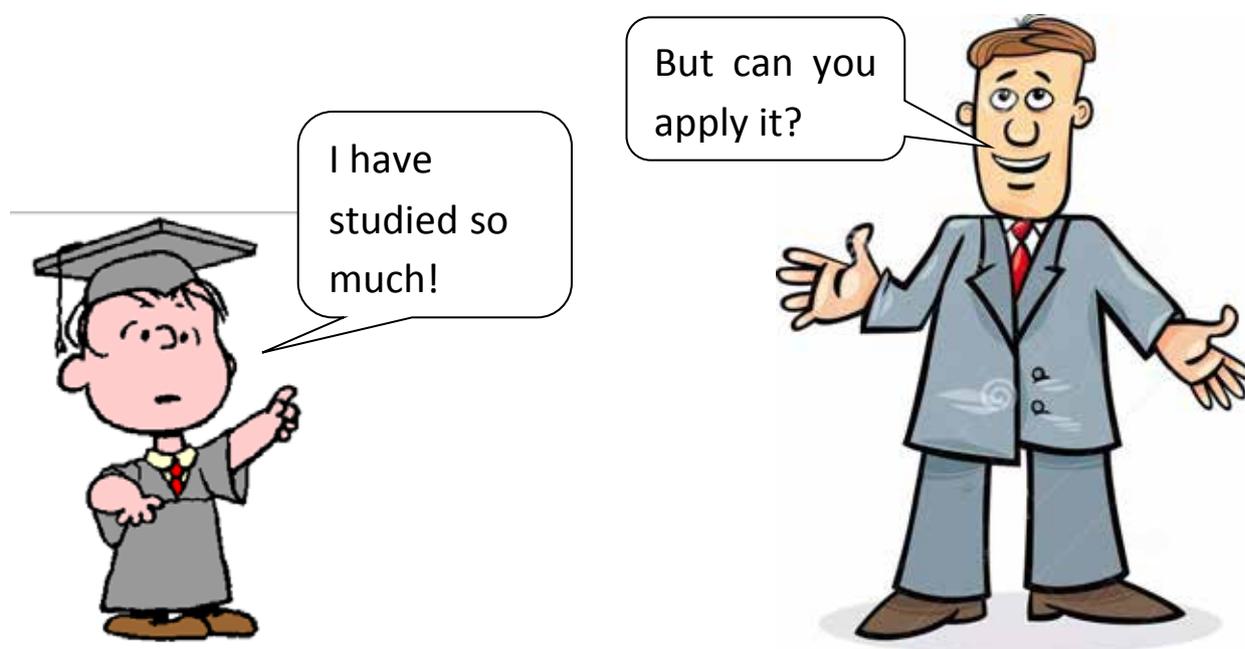
Employers were also polled on the performance of the SWG secretariat, i.e., on the responsiveness to queries and requests, and professionalism. SWG secretariat scored 100 % success as all employers were very satisfied by the rapidity and professionalism of the SWG secretariat in assisting them before and during the placement of trainees in their companies.

Few comments from Employers regarding SWG:

- “Fully satisfied with the responsiveness and availability of the SWG officers”
- “Very friendly and helpful”
- “Very comprehensive and collaborative”
- “Officers at SWG have been efficient all along the process and very much involved with regular communications and follow up”

4. IT IS NOT EASY TO BE A FRESH GRADUATE ON THE LABOUR MARKET!

The oversupply of degree holders combined with a widening gap between fields of study and labour market requirement decreases the chance of finding a job for fresh graduates. Skills demanded by employers are usually not supplied by youth qualifications. Being more educated does not necessarily mean more employable. Around the world, the education system is often not adequately tailored to the needs of the labour market, which means that firms are unable to hire the skills they need. Nowadays, having a degree is not enough. Modern technology and management innovation resulted in higher demand for a wider range of working skills and improved productivity.



4.1. DEGREE HOLDERS PLACED AND NOT YET PLACED FIELDS OF STUDY

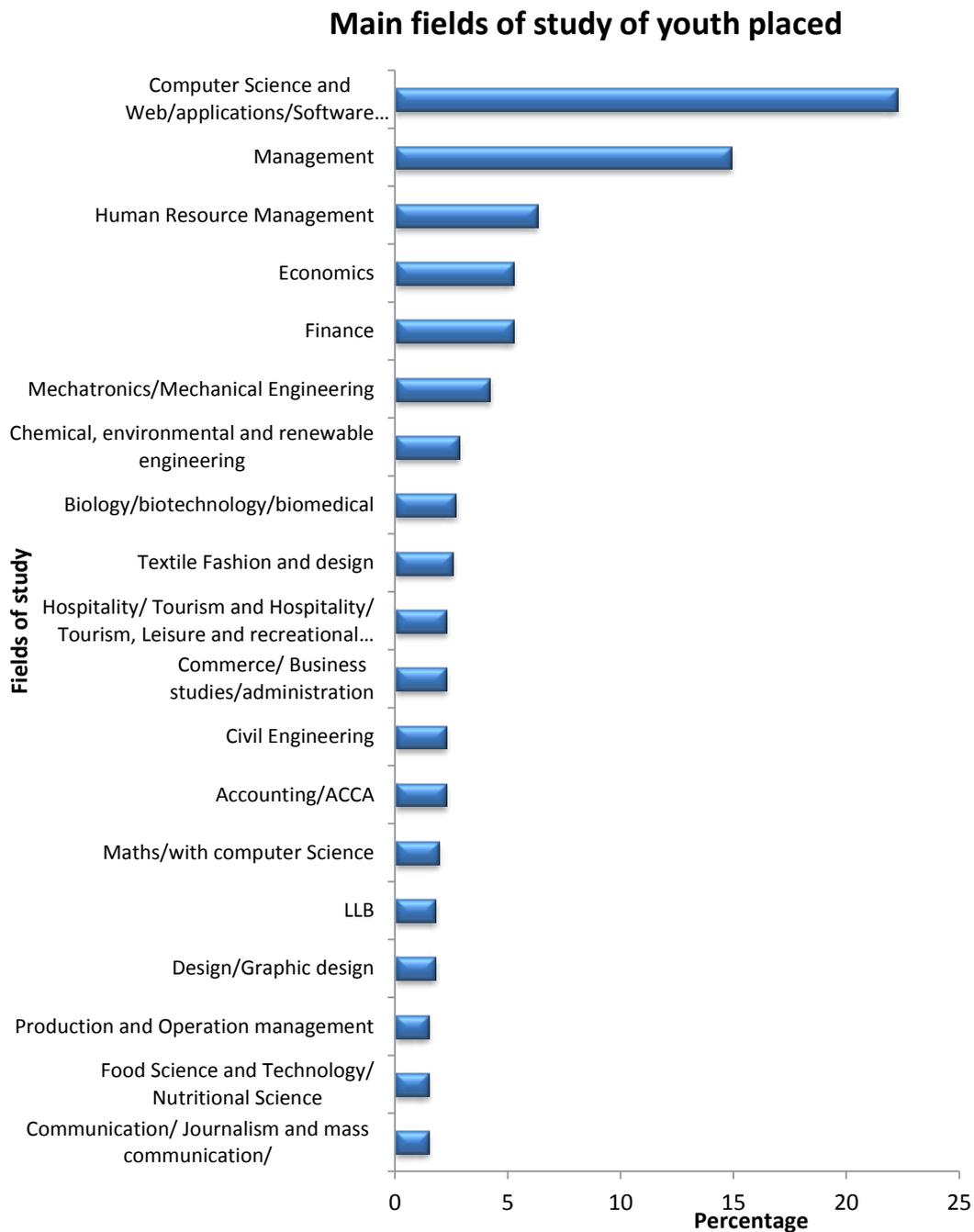


FIGURE 27 DEGREE HOLDERS PLACED BY FIELD OF STUDY

Degree holders in the field of Computer Science and Information Technology, Management and Human Resource Management are among those who have been mostly recruited.

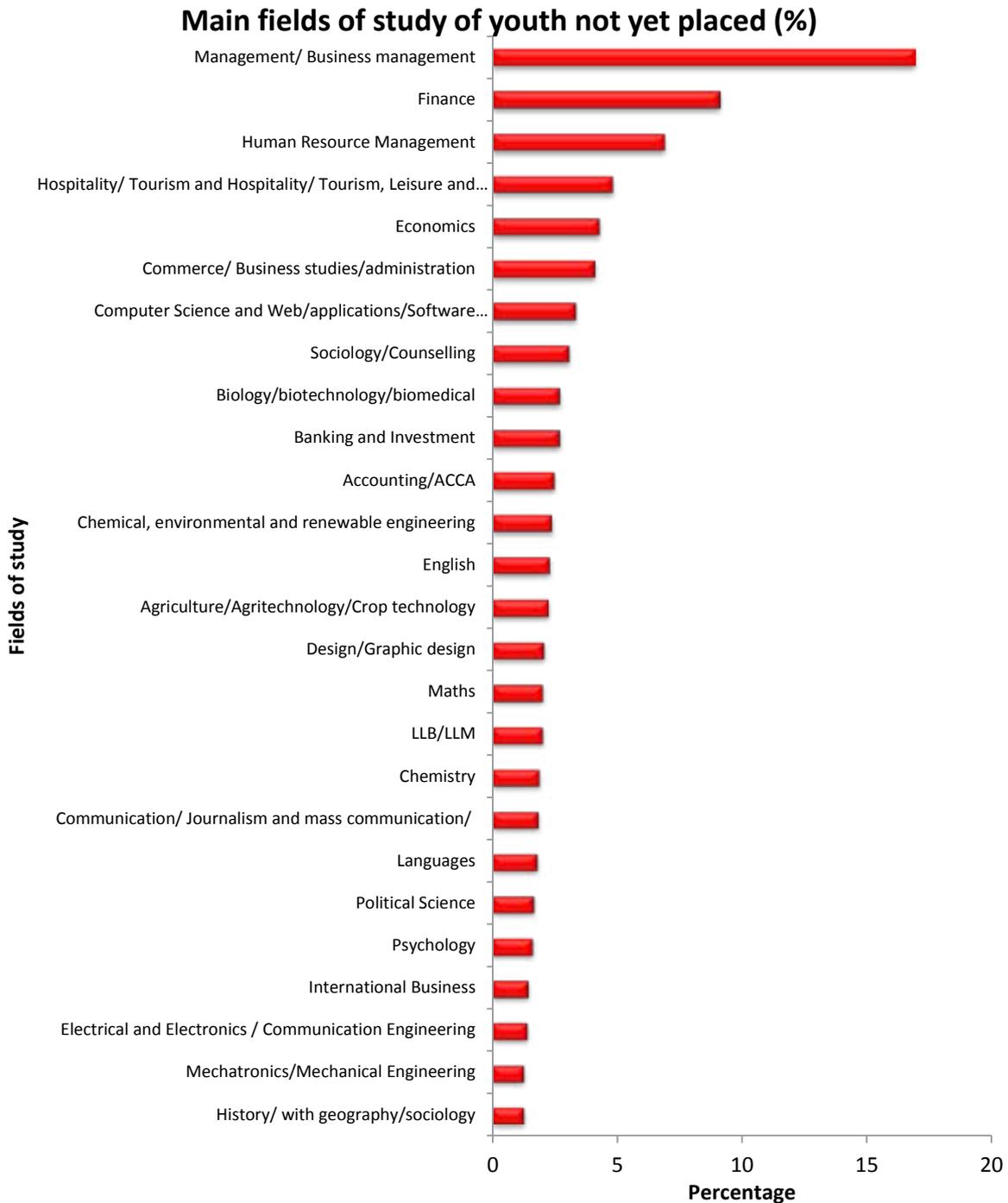


FIGURE 28 DEGREE HOLDERS NOT YET PLACED BY FIELD OF STUDY

Degree holders here include Doctorate, Master’s degree and Bachelor degree. Degree holders in Management (incl. minors) made up of nearly 20% of the youth not yet placed. Finance and Banking and Human resource management ranked 2nd and 3rd respectively among qualifications where youth have not been placed yet.

Despite the fact that Management and Human resource management are among the fields with highest number of youth placed, they also contain the highest number of unemployed

youth, showing an oversupply of graduates in this field, and probably saturation in the near future.

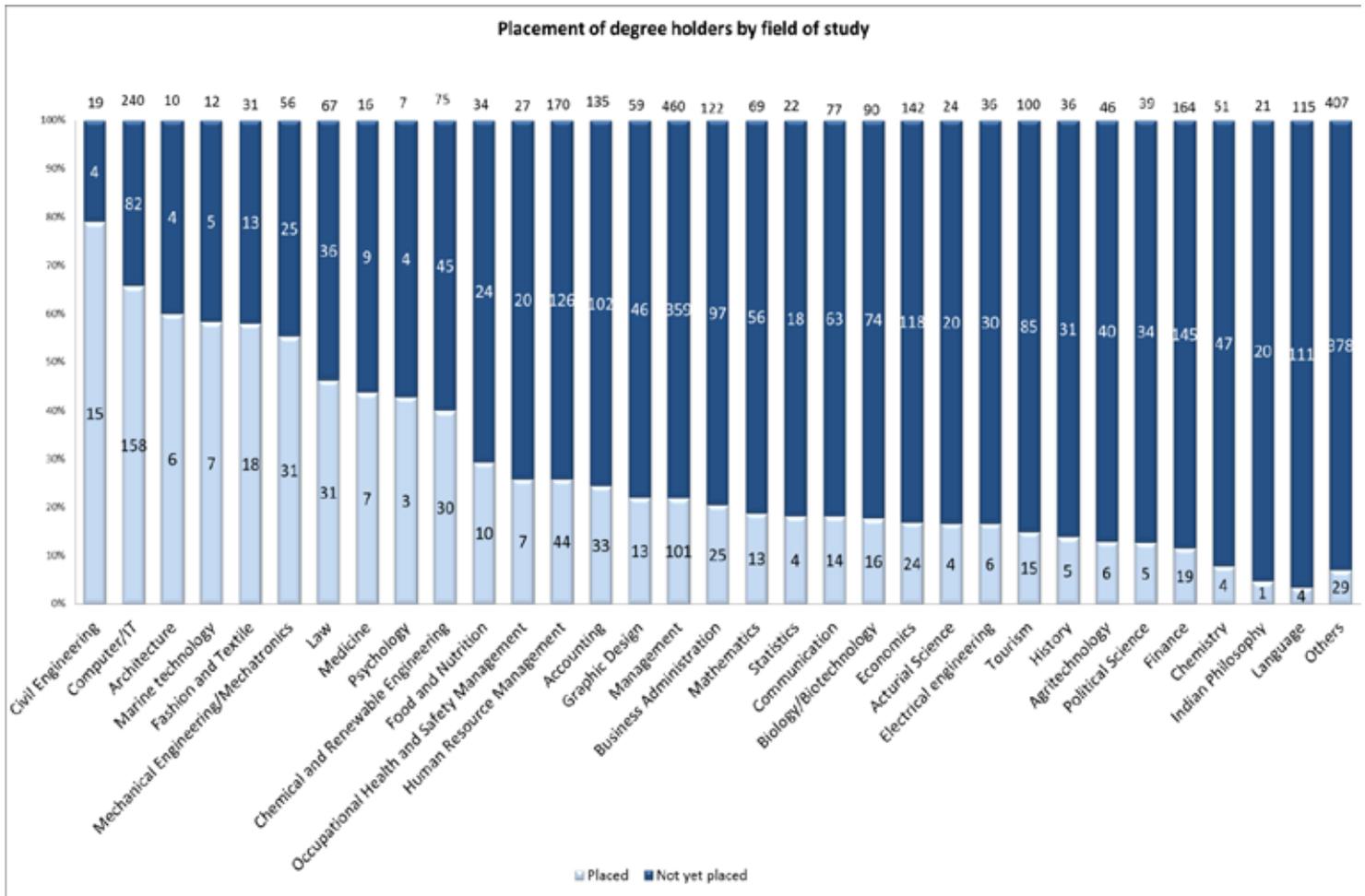


FIGURE 29 PLACEMENT STATUS BY FIELD OF STUDY

As it can be observed in figure 29, placement of young graduates in the fields of civil engineering, computer studies, architecture, marine technology, fashion and textile, mechanical engineering reached around 50 %. However, we are faced with a serious oversupply of graduates in the fields of languages, Indian philosophy, chemistry, and finance among others, as seen above.

4.2. WAITING TIME BY UNEMPLOYED GRADUATES FOR PLACEMENT (MONTHS)

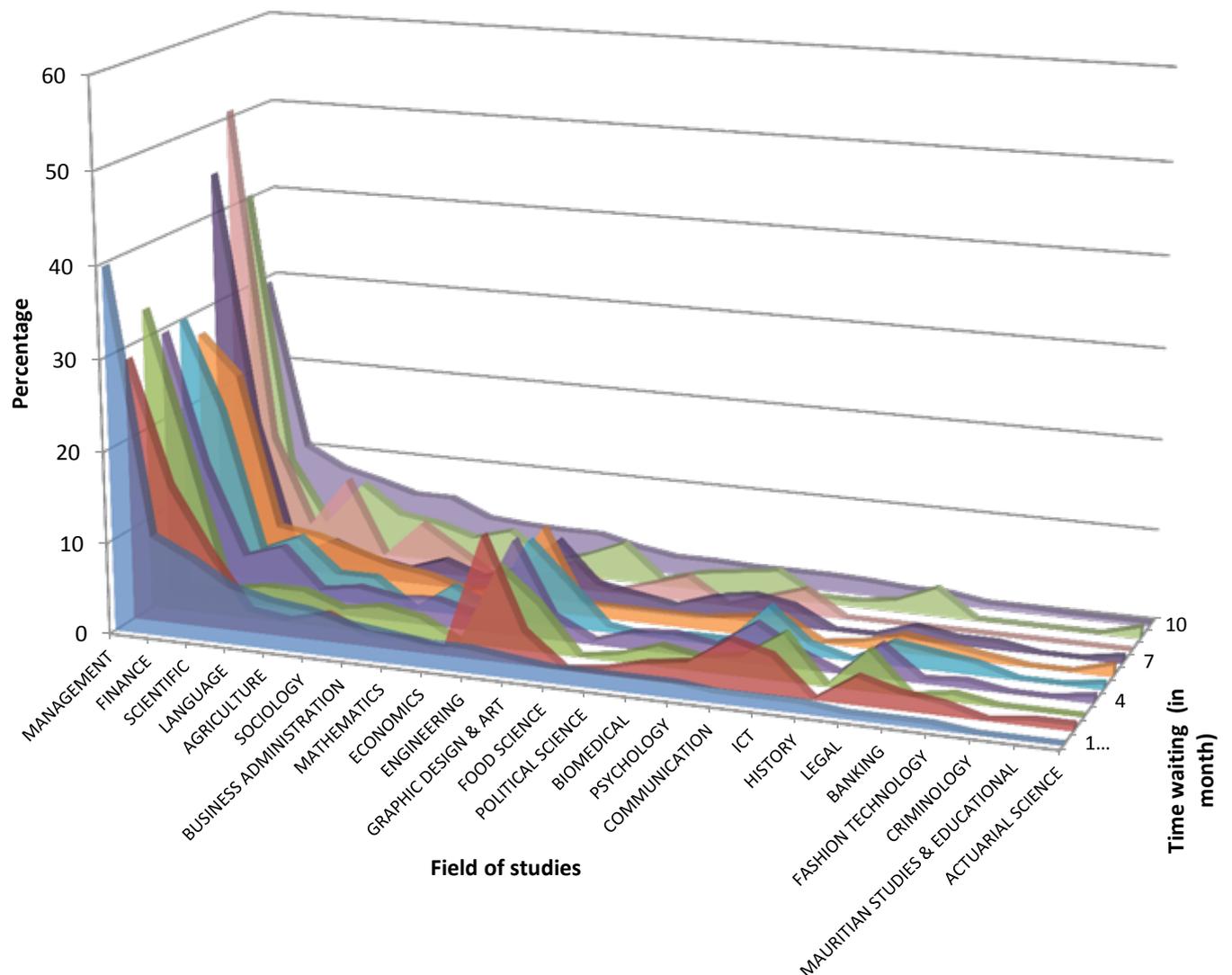


FIGURE 30 FIELD OF STUDY OF GRADUATES BY NUMBER OF MONTHS REGISTERED

In figure 30, the area of each shape represents 100 per cent of graduates registered in the reference month.

Around 2060 degree holders registered have not yet placed. On overall, it can be observed that field of study have an impact on the time taken to find a placement. Number of graduates still on the waiting list has been dominated by degree holders from Management and Finance

fields every month. We also noted an increase in the number of graduates registered and not yet placed from the field of engineering seven months ago.

5. PROJECTS COMING UP

To continue the battle against the youth unemployment crisis and unemployment in general, the YEP is being further extended. In addition, other projects will be implemented during the course of 2014, namely:-

5.1. TRAINING IN EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

With a view to addressing the skills gap, MOFED is mounting a "service-focused employment preparation" training program that would improve the "soft skills" of the youth so that they are more effective in the work place. These skills may include interview skills, communication skills, teamwork, personal branding / interpersonal skills, analytical / critical thinking, self-management, etc.

5.2. WOMEN BACK TO WORK

The female unemployment rate in Mauritius has traditionally been much higher than for males. To address this gender gap, the Skills Working Group and the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment will implement a "Back to Work" Programme for women who wish to rejoin the labour force. This will consist of special training schemes to prepare them for at least 15 occupations.

5.3. CAREERS GUIDANCE / JOB FAIRS

Careers guidance will be meaningful only if there is an effective sharing of information on future job prospects between the business community, students and educational institutions. Given that YEP is working closely with companies and young job seekers and has developed a close proximity with business and the youth, it could provide career guidance. The organisation of two job fairs is being proposed in this respect for the year 2014. Moreover, two six-monthly Employment Trends Surveys will be published to inform the youth on career opportunities.

5.4. FRAMEWORK FOR AFRICA

The existing mismatch between the requirements of employers and the profiles of the unemployed youth in Mauritius may lead to great difficulties for most of the degree holders to find a job in the present circumstances. On the other hand, emerging African Countries are finding it hard to have professionals to satisfy their growing economy. A few Mauritian

professionals are already working on the African continent and are doing very well. It is therefore proposed to explore the possibility of absorbing the increasing number of professionals coming onto the labour market every year. Hence, there is need to develop a strategy that will facilitate these professionals to take up employment therein.

5.5. APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME/DUAL TRAINING PROGRAMME

The Apprenticeship Scheme will be extended to the Diploma and Degree level in trades and fields as per demand from industry with a view to eliminate the so called mismatch and ensure production of Graduates who are immediately employable. A Dual Training Programme (DTP) is being introduced wherein Employers would enter into an agreement with the National Resilience Fund Management with a view to select, recruit and sponsor youth to follow DTPs that would meet their immediate needs with the necessary award (diploma or degree) by an accredited awarding body at the end. Youth can be recruited from the YEP database or directly by employers. DTP courses will be selected and designed on sectoral basis. Industry Associations and Training Institutions (Universities or other Tertiary Institutions) would together design and develop Diploma/Degree courses to be offered on a dual basis, which would satisfy the accreditation criteria of the Tertiary Education Commission.

5.6. FILM INDUSTRY

To empower our young people to develop a career in the film industry, the Youth Employment Programme will design targeted courses for the film industry. The operationalisation of the system would require a close collaboration between the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and the Board of Investment (BOI)

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