



Module 5

Disseminating survey results

ILO school-to-work transition survey:

A methodological guide

Module 5

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International Labour Office

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ILO school-to-work transition survey : A methodological guide

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Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Foreword | v |
| Acknowledgments | vii |
| Purpose and organization of the guide | ix |
| 5.1 Introduction | 1 |
| 5.2 Organizing a report for disseminating SWTS findings | 3 |
| 5.2.1 Generic table of contents | 3 |
| 5.2.2 Output tables | 6 |
| 5.3 Organizing a post-survey workshop | 11 |
| Box | |
| 5.1 Following the example of the synthesis analysis of eight SWTSs | 4 |

Foreword

The transition into adulthood is an exciting time for many young women and men, bringing with it the prospect of social and economic independence. For some youth, however, the challenge of finding employment, let alone satisfying employment, can be daunting, and the inability to prove oneself as a productive member of society can overshadow all else to create a sense of frustration and negativity during a time that is meant to be full of hope. It is hard to feel positive about one's future prospects when one becomes blocked at the entry level.

But we should not paint too gloomy a portrait. Many transitions to adulthood, from school to work, are successful from the point of view of the young person and from the point of view of society as beneficiary of their productive contribution. Certainly there must be value in defining a "successful" transition and making the distinction between these and "difficult" ones, i.e. situations in which the young person has little option but to take up unproductive, low-paid and insecure work or drop out of the labour force to wait for rosier times. At least such was the assumption behind the creation of the ILO school-to-work transition survey (SWTS) and the analytical framework, as described in the pages of this Guide, which has been developed around it.

The Guide in itself does not answer the big questions: for instance, why are some transitions difficult and some not; are lengthy transitions an inevitable consequence of a national environment characterized by low levels of job creation; and perhaps most importantly, can governments, working with employers', workers' and youth organizations, do anything about it? What it does do, however, is introduce a holistic methodology that can guide countries to find the answers for themselves. It sets the framework for gathering information on the characteristics and labour market attachments of young people as well as on the enterprises that could absorb them. As stated in Module 1, the data in itself is not unique. What are unique as outcomes from the implementation of the SWTS are the development of indicators that define the stages of transition and the quality of transition and the application of "decent work" as a concept to be integrated into the analytical framework built around the SWTS.

The ILO is committed to helping governments and social partners identify main employment issues and design and implement integrated policy responses. This Guide toward implementation of the SWTS is offered to our constituents as a means to enhance the capacity of national and local-level institutions to undertake evidence-based analysis that feeds social dialogue and the policy-making process. There is a sense of urgency in many countries in addressing the challenge of youth employment.

We recognize that large shares of youth in transition have yet to attain decent employment. Unless they succeed yet another generation of productive potential will remain underutilized and a cycle of poverty and decent work deficits will continue. Clearly, there is still substantial room for action to bring about progress toward the goal to “achieve decent work and productive employment for all, including women and young people” (Millennium Development Goal 1B). It is our sincere hope that this Guide can aid the process and help countries to broaden the information base from which they can address the specific challenges associated with enabling their young populations to reach their full potential.

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Executive Director
Employment Sector

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Purpose and structure of the guide

This guide is intended to help anyone interested in running an ILO school-to-work transition survey. The modular design means that it can be used in full – as a package to advise users from the point of conception of the project through production of an analytical report and workshop to present the findings – or in part, according to the specific needs of the user. Certain modules can be used outside the scope of the school-to-work survey; the module on sampling (Module 3), for example, can guide the design of sampling frameworks of any survey. Likewise, the module on tabulation (Module 4) contains instructions for producing standard labour market statistics, such as the unemployment rate, that researchers can use for any number of purposes, including training on labour market information and analysis.

The guide is organized as follows:

- Module 1** Basic concepts, roles and implementation process
- Module 2** SWTS questionnaires
- Module 3** Sampling methodology
- Module 4** Key indicators of youth labour markets: Concepts, definitions and tabulations
- Module 5** Disseminating survey results

5.1

Introduction

As stated in Module 1, the objective of the SWTS is to collect in-depth information concerning the labour market situation of young men and women and to quantify the relative ease or difficulty of labour market entry of young people as they exit school. The analysis of data should reveal strengths and weaknesses in the youth labour market and point to the main challenges to be addressed by policy-makers through the formulation of youth employment/development policies and programmes. The latter is key. If the survey results do not reach policy-makers to offer at least the possibility of influencing youth employment policy decisions, then the overall effort has not achieved its goal. The SWTS is not intended to be research for its own sake. It is the sincere hope of the ILO that this guide can help to ensure that it is information that is being gathered with a practical end: that of improving the transition of young men and women as they enter adulthood as productive members of society.

The purpose of this module is: first, to offer guidance on disseminating SWTS findings in an analytical report (section 5.2); and second, to reiterate the importance of disseminating survey findings among national stakeholders as a means to provoke an evidence-based discussion of youth employment in the country that is geared toward consensus-building policy-making. To the latter end, section 5.3 offers some advice on organizing a national post-survey workshop where the objective is to present and discuss survey results and provoke policy recommendations.

5.2

Organizing a report for disseminating SWTS findings

The following section contains an outline for what an SWTS report could look like. It is purposefully left vague in the hope that report writers will be flexible and creative in their outlines and contents. The outline for the report should be agreed upon by the project manager and the report writer (and members of a Steering Committee or Advisory Group if one exists) before the work is begun in order to ensure that the general direction is one that suits all parties.

5.2.1 Generic table of contents

Executive summary and main findings

Introduction

Chapter 1: Overview of the labour market and survey methodology

- 1.1 *The socio-economic context*
- 1.2 *The labour market in __*
- 1.3 *Youth in the national labour force in __*
- 1.4 *Survey objectives and methodology*

This chapter sets the scene by placing the youth employment situation in a broader national context. It should draw evidence from the latest available national labour market statistics (population, labour force, labour force participation rates, unemployment rates, etc.), first at the national level (in section 1.2) and then for youth specifically (in section 1.3). The section should identify policies and programmes that impact the employment situation and explain the institutional arrangement for youth employment issues at the national level (the division of labour among ministries, etc.). Finally, section 1.4 explains the objectives of the SWTS and the methodology applied, including the questionnaire development and design of the sampling frame.

Chapter 2: Characteristics of youth in the sample survey

- 2.1 Individual characteristics of youth
- 2.2 Household characteristics of youth
- 2.3 Aspirations and life goals
- 2.4 Educational achievement
- 2.5 Preparation for school-to-work transition (characteristics of youth still in school)
- 2.6 Characteristics of employed youth
 - 2.6.1 Wage employment
 - 2.6.2 Self-employment
- 2.7 Unemployment
- 2.8 Outside of the labour force (inactive youth)

This chapter presents the most important background characteristics of the youth surveyed in order to set the conceptual framework for the subsequent analysis of the transition from school to work.

Box 5.1 Following the example of the synthesis analysis of eight SWTSs

Module 1 mentions the synthesis of survey results from eight countries that was completed in 2009. (S. Elder and M. Matsumoto, “Characterizing the school-to-work transitions of young men and women: Evidence from the ILO school-to-work transition surveys”, Employment Working Paper (Geneva, ILO, 2009)). The intent of the report was “to demonstrate the depth of data made available with the SWTS tool and to showcase the unique schema for classifying transitions, one which adds greater meaning for policy-makers who note the insufficiency of traditional labour market indicators when attempting to discern youth employment challenges”. It is a rich report and one that demonstrates both simple analytical techniques to show, for example, the breakdown by current activity status and characteristics of unemployed and employed youth, and more complex techniques for more in-depth analysis on topics such as the job search in relation to characteristics of the potential and actual supply of labour and the relationship between expected and actual earnings of young people and the determinants of the latter.

The synthesis report can be used as a model for the type of analyses and presentation of analysis that can follow from the SWTS results. For this reason, writers of future SWTS reports are encouraged to review it to gain ideas to shape their own analytical efforts.

The following is an excerpt (non-inclusive) of the main findings of the report:

Long and never-ending transitions become a common occurrence.

... The review of the survey results points to some harsh realities facing youth in developing countries, namely that a substantial number of youth in developing countries may never complete the transition, at least not until adulthood. The large shares of youth in transition will become adults in transition and yet another generation of productive potential will remain underutilized as the cycle of poverty and decent work deficits continues.

Successful transitions are often correlated with gender.

There are serious gaps in participation rates and transition outcomes between young women and men. ... Many young women are not free to pursue the possibility of working outside of the home and, for others, the lack of outside demand for productive work by women, due to social or cultural reasons, is enough to discourage them from engaging in the job search. Most young women who do enter the labour market face a lengthy job search before finally settling into an unsatisfactory job where they will be paid less than men.

Better education does not mean easier/faster transition.

Contrary to popular belief, attainment of higher education levels among youth is evidently not enough to improve their chances for an easier and more successful transition. In most of the surveyed countries, the largest share of successfully transitioned youth had finished their education at the secondary level only. Assuming that the scope of formal job creation in these countries continues to be limited in forthcoming years (or possibly becomes even more limited given the current global financial crisis), young people who want (or need) to work will continue to take up whatever work is made available to them, work characterized by informality, low productivity and low wages.

Social networks are the dominant labour market institutions used to match the supply and demand for labour, but they do not generate better labour market outcomes.

The survey results clearly showed that informal social ties constituted the predominant labour market intermediation mechanism in all the countries covered. ... In spite of being predominant labour market channels, informal social ties did not perform well in terms of getting youth satisfactory jobs or jobs with some contractual security. The only positive pay-off seems to be that youth get jobs faster through social networks. ... Also, returns to work were poorer if the young person got the job through social ties. This provides good justifications for either directing much more public resources into expanding formal labour market institutions and/or revising the existing public institutions.

Determinants of higher earnings varied from country to country.

In the end, was there any conclusive evidence about what characteristics or actions brought about higher earnings? Yes. Being male, having a university degree and having engaged in on-the-job training were all associated with higher earnings. The size of the establishment at which the young person worked was also positively related to earnings.

The grey zone of inactivity and discouragement.

In relation to inactivity and discouragement, young men were less likely to be inactive and less likely to be discouraged than young women in all three countries presented (Azerbaijan, Mongolia and Nepal). ... Having a university degree unambiguously and significantly lowered the probability of becoming discouraged. At the same time, higher estimated income per household member was positively associated with inactivity and discouragement, which supports the premise that only youth who can rely on the financial support of the household can afford to be inactive.

Chapter 3: Stages of transition

- 3.1 Youth who have not yet started the transition
- 3.2 Youth in transition
- 3.3 Characteristics of a successful transition
- 3.4 Length of transition for those who have transitioned and those still in transition

This chapter begins the analysis of sampled youth by stage of transition and attempts to identify the main determinants of each transition stage.

Chapter 4: Creating jobs for young people: The employers' perspective

- 4.1 *Characteristics of enterprises*
- 4.2 *Recruitment of young people*
- 4.3 *Matching expectations*
- 4.4 *Education and training*
- 4.5 *Work experience requirement*

The importance of this chapter is to analyse results of the employers' survey in order to determine the demand characteristics for young labour.

Chapter 5: Summary, conclusions and recommendations

- 5.1 *Summary and conclusions*
- 5.2 *Policy recommendations*

This chapter attempts to summarize findings and draw lessons on: 1) where blockages exist that prevent young people from finding decent employment; 2) where supply and demand do not match, and why; and 3) who are the most disadvantaged youth, meaning those likely to face the most difficult transitions. This chapter should attempt to identify and analyse the factors that are behind the youth employment problem based on the survey results. Some of the important factors to look at include: a) demographic factors; b) macroeconomic factors; c) labour market institutions; d) labour market reservations; and e) organization and voice. Policy recommendations should cover both supply- and demand-side measures that aim to ensure more and better jobs for young people. These recommendations do not have to be concrete; rather, they can serve as the basis for discussion by tripartite participants at the workshop which will follow the dissemination of the SWTS results.

Statistical annexes (either additional information on survey methodology or additional result tables)

5.2.2 Output tables

Note that these table lists are not meant to be comprehensive or mandatory; report writers may wish to use alternative tables. In addition, report writers should select among these which to place within the text and which to include in an annex.

Chapter 1

- Characteristics of the sample by sex, age group, geographic location, marital situation, education level and current activity status
- Key economic indicators
- Labour force, employment, unemployment (numbers and rates; total working-age with national coverage)

- Population by education status and sex
- Employed population by economic sector (national)
- Employed population by occupation (national)

Chapter 2

These tables begin the analysis of the sample; tables should provide percentage distributions but also raw numbers. Disaggregation according to the characteristics discussed in Module 2 (namely, sex, age group, urban/rural and educational attainment) is recommended wherever possible:

- Distribution of youth by activity status
- Distribution of out-of-school youth by activity status
- Household characteristics: average size of household and number of siblings
- Educational attainment of youth by activity status
- Educational attainment of youth's mothers and fathers (distribution of education levels of mothers/fathers as % of total)
- Level of education of respondent in comparison to parents'
- Share of early school leavers and reason for leaving school
- Primary life goals of young respondents by current activity status
- Employed by sector
- Employed by status
- Employed by occupation
- Share of employed in informal employment
- Employed by type of contract and average hours usually worked per week
- Access to benefits/entitlements (share of wage & salaried working youth)
- Self-employed by reason for self-employment
- Unemployed by job search activity
- Unemployed by duration of job search
- Unemployed by type of job sought (grouped according to general skills level required)
- Unemployed by main obstacle to finding work
- Share of unemployed youth who had refused a job and reason for refusal
- Share of employed youth who had refused a job and reason for refusal
- Inactive youth by reason for inactivity
- Inactive youth by plans to work in the future

Chapter 3

- Distribution of youth population by stage of transition
- Stage of transition by educational level
- Stage of transition by household average monthly income
- Youth who have not yet started their transition by sub-category (“in-school” or “inactive with no future plans to work”)
- Youth in transition by sub-category (employed in a temporary and non-satisfactory job, wage & salaried worker with no contract, self-employed and unsatisfied, unemployed, inactive with an aim to work later)
- Stage of transition of youth who had started the transition (transited and in-transition)
- Transited youth by sub-category (in regular and satisfactory job, in regular but non-satisfactory job, in temporary but satisfactory job, self-employed and satisfied)
- In-transition youth by sub-category and job search method
- In-transition youth in temporary or non-satisfactory employment with plans to change jobs and reason
- Distribution of transited youth by path of transition (tables by education level, by occupation, by sector, by status, by formal/informal employment, by job search method)
- Average length of transition for transited youth
- Average current length of transition for youth still in transition

Chapter 4

- Employer by sector and number of employees
- Employer by type of enterprise and number of employees
- Recruitment methods
- Average number of vacancies
- Preferred hiring age by industry and occupation
- Preferred hiring sex by industry and occupation
- Preferred level of education by occupation
- Assessment of skills required by young employees or young job applicants
- Most important factor in hiring worker

Other possible tables for inclusion:

Youth characteristics

1. Distribution of youth by marital status
2. Distribution of youth who are married by average age at first marriage
3. Share of youth who moved from original residence by area of previous residence and reason
4. Share of unemployed youth who would consider moving for employment purposes
5. Distribution of non-student, female youth population by current activity status
6. Job search method by employed, unemployed and in-school youth
7. Share of employed youth by union membership
8. Distribution of employed youth by company size
9. Distribution of employed youth by monthly income and background characteristics
10. Distribution of employed youth by duration of current occupation
11. Distribution of employed youth by job application rate and interview rate
12. Distribution of employed youth registered with public employment services (PES) by kind of assistance received
13. Distribution of employed youth who have a contract by type of contract
14. Distribution of employed youth by satisfaction with current job
15. Distribution of employed youth by receipt of job-oriented training
16. Distribution of self-employed youth by background characteristics
17. Distribution of self-employed youth by duration of business operation
18. Distribution of self-employed youth by problems in running the business
19. Distribution of unemployed youth by duration of unemployment and background characteristics
20. Distribution of unemployed registered youth with the PES by kind of assistance received
21. Distribution of unemployed youth by job application rate and interview rate
22. Distribution of unemployed youth by main obstacle to find a job
23. Distribution of unemployed youth by rating of education relevance
24. Distribution of in-school youth by highest educational attainment expected and preferred educational field
25. Distribution of in-school youth who started searching for a job by method of job search

Employer's characteristics

1. Distribution of employers by formal or informal sector
2. Distribution of employers according to most important constraint in enterprise operations
3. Distribution of employers according to their opinion about young workers' expectations

5.3

Organizing a post-survey workshop

In order to link survey findings to policy design, it is crucial to run a post-survey workshop involving all stakeholders with the goal of promoting youth employment. This is the venue for bringing together policy-makers, employers, trade unions and youth representatives in order to discuss survey results and generate practical steps on how to move forward on revised or new youth employment policies and programmes which aim to overcome specific challenges facing young people as identified in the SWTS.

The workshop may be stand-alone – organized around the SWTS only – or may be part of a forum on a broader topic of a youth employment agenda. If a Steering Committee exists, its members should be involved in shaping the list of participants and the agenda of the workshop. An organization involved in the Steering Committee may even step up to host the meeting and cover its costs.

Possible participants

- Members of relevant government institutions
- Project manager and other relevant members of his/her institution
- Representatives of trade unions, employers' organizations, youth organizations
- SWTS report writer or member of survey implementation team responsible for analysis
- Members of survey implementation team responsible for methodology and implementation
- Members of other NGOs, etc., interested in the topic of youth employment
- Members of the research community

Sample agenda

A tentative agenda for a one-day meeting is as follows:

| | |
|---------------|---|
| 9.00 – 9.15 | Opening remarks |
| 9.15 – 10.30 | Introduction to the school-to-work transition survey – objectives, key concepts, and methodology (survey implementation team) |
| 10.30 – 11.00 | Coffee break |
| 11.00 – 12.30 | Presentation of SWTS main findings and general conclusions (report writer) |
| 12.30 – 14.00 | Lunch |
| 14.00 – 15.15 | Panel discussion on policy recommendations |

The composition of the panel will differ with each workshop but could consist of a representative of the leading government agency, the project manager, report writer or member of the survey implementation team, and another stakeholder (a political figure, respected researcher or member of a youth group, for example). Panel members are intended to take the generic recommendations of the SWTS final report, discuss their feasibility, make alternations to existing recommendations or propose others. These “new” recommendations should then form the basis for a broader debate with other participants in the subsequent session. *By the end of the evening, time permitting, policy recommendations on youth employment policies and programmes (with specifics on who, how, etc.) should be adopted by the group.* If there is no time for adopting policy recommendations, the project manager should resume responsibility for piecing together draft recommendations for circulation to participants at a later date, receiving comments, making amendments, etc., until final recommendations are agreed by all stakeholders (or Steering Committee members, if applicable).

| | |
|---------------|--|
| 15.15 – 15.30 | Coffee break |
| 15.30 – 16.30 | Open debate on policy recommendations |
| 16.30 – 17.00 | Approval of policy recommendations and closing remarks |

This example is a sample meeting agenda only. It should be amended to fit the situation at hand. If the meeting is longer than one day, discussions and presentations around specific youth challenges/themes can be added. It is likely that the country at hand would prefer to fit the presentation and discussion of SWTS results and recommendations into a workshop/meeting on a broader theme. In Mongolia, for example, the SWTS was discussed at the National Employment Forum. If a meeting surrounding the design of a National Action Plan for Youth Employment is envisioned, the discussion of the SWTS could easily fit in there. The danger with the

latter approach, however – discussing the SWTS in a meeting where objectives are numerous – is that it is possible that not enough time would be devoted to ensuring the understanding of results and their impact on policy design. The objective to produce practical policy recommendations for youth employment, arrived at through a tripartite debate of participants, could easily get lost. On the other hand, if the SWTS is used as input into the process of building a national action plan for youth employment (in a workshop/meeting) then the necessary linkage between the SWTS and policy-making would also be made, albeit less overtly.

