



# ROUND TABLE ON THE EVALUATION OF PUBLIC POLICIES Youth policies: preparation and integration of young people to active life

*Organised by*

**The Chamber of Councillors of the Moroccan Parliament and the Parliamentary  
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**REPORT**

**Howard Williamson**

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## **BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE**

The evaluation of public policies is a prerogative of the Moroccan Parliament according to Article 70 of the 2011 Moroccan Constitution.

In the context of the new 2021-2026 legislature, the Moroccan Parliament is preparing to launch its work on the evaluation of public policies. At the Chamber of Councillors, a temporary thematic working group has been created to prepare the annual public policy evaluation session on public policies relating to youth. In particular, the evaluation will focus on public policies that facilitate the preparation and integration of young people into working life.

The round table enabled members of the provisional thematic working group and officials of the Chamber of Councillors to engage in dialogue with members of European parliaments as well as with international and national experts. The experience of other countries in the field of youth was thereby shared with the experience in Morocco.

In addition, the round table was designed to provide an opportunity to discuss the methodological aspects of the implementation of the evaluation and the training needs that the Parliament may have. This will allow to draw the roadmap for future activities that will aim to support the working group during the evaluation period.

The working languages for the round table were Arabic, French and English.

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE REPORT**

This report of the Round Table endeavours to achieve two goals. The first is to provide a detailed resumé of the reflection and observations made throughout the day. The second is to provide a more critical, but hopefully constructive, sequence of observations drawn from the rapporteur's experience not only of his youth policy review work with the Council of Europe but also of his specific involvement in youth inclusion, training and employment research, policy and practice in the United Kingdom. These observations should not impede the reading of the material presented throughout the day and are therefore presented by way of footnotes. They constitute many of the rapporteur's brief concluding remarks on the day itself but are more fully elaborated with explanation and references.

The Round Table took place on 30<sup>th</sup> March. The Programme is documented in Appendix 1. It has been funded by the European Union and implemented by the Council of Europe.

The Chamber of Councillors of the Moroccan Parliament, the second chamber in a bi-cameral parliament, has chosen 'youth' to be evaluated for the year 2022. The paramount policy objective in Morocco for its young people is to improve their preparation and integration into active and working life – to strengthen their sense of citizenship ('civic mindedness') and improve their prospects in the labour market. Young people are defined as those aged between 15 and 25. Concern has been expressed that contemporary policy and practice in the lives of young people are ineffectively dispersed and that there needs to be greater integration of youth policy, across the fields of education, guidance, training, enterprise, leisure

time, and volunteering. This vision is captured within The New Development Model<sup>1</sup> proposed in a document published in April 2021 by a Special Commission on a Development Model.

The New Development Model, designed by Moroccans, with Moroccans and for Moroccans “embodies a new way of looking at development”,

one that is more participative, involving all stakeholders, and showing that a frank and responsible debate with citizens and development stakeholders on the country’s future is possible.

The Model does not shy away from the significant challenges to be faced, but it is emphatic about the need to strengthen democracy and consolidate the rule of law. It notes the need for the “greater inclusion of youth in public affairs”, and it recognises the imperative to “restore both hope and confidence in the future”. One major transformational pillar of the Model is inclusion, with a particular emphasis on gender equality and young people: **“Morocco’s development hinges on a free, fulfilled, competent and enterprising youth”** (emphasis original):

Providing young people with the skills and opportunities to improve their future prospects, and the space for expression, civic participation, and initiative taking, thereby strengthening their civic-mindedness and attachment to the Nation’s fundamentals, as well as actively involving them to serve their country’s development, are all critical challenges for Morocco (Summary of the General Report, p.24)

To that end, the Model proposes strengthened guidance and support for labour market insertion, an integrated national youth program, and a national civic service initiative. Young people (in the Model, comprising those aged 15 to 34) make up one-third – about 13 million people - of Morocco’s population. Around one-third of them – some 4.5 million – “are inactive, neither in school, nor in training, nor in employment (NEET)”. The urgency of implementation of a response to this ‘social condition’ of young people cannot be understated.

## THE OPENING SESSION

The Round Table was opened by Mr **Abid Badil**, Chairman of the Provisional Thematic Working Group in charge of preparing the annual evaluation session on youth policy, on behalf of the Chamber of Councillors.

The Chamber of Councillors is the 2<sup>nd</sup> chamber of the bicameral parliament of Morocco, composed of 120 members elected indirectly by representatives of professional bodies, employees, the General Confederation of Enterprises, and regional and local authorities. It has chosen ‘youth’ as the theme to be evaluated in 2022. The Thematic Working Group is composed of 15 members of the Chamber of Councillors.

Mr Badil emphasised that training and job integration was a major issue for all parties and stakeholders in Morocco. For this reason, the Thematic Working Group is seeking to explore both the operational issues relating to more effective and inclusive education, vocational training and labour market integration practices *and* the methodological possibilities for rigorous, robust and credible evaluation of such policies and practice. The Thematic Working Group had not only been interrogating available data but also exchanging ideas with different

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<sup>1</sup> Royaume du Maroc (2021), *The New Developpement Model: Releasing energies and regaining trust to accelerate the march of progress and prosperity for all*, La Commission Spéciale sue le Modèle de Développement.

ministries and international experts and undertaking field visits in order to gauge experiences at the regional and local level.

This Round Table represented another opportunity for the sharing of opinions and the exchange of experience and ideas.

The Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) was represented through Mr. **Georgios Katrougalos**, a Member of the Parliament of Greece and chair of the PACE Sub-Committee on the Middle East and the Arab World. He noted the history of the Council of Europe, its current membership of 46 countries, its mission to support and defend human rights, democracy and the rule of law, and its role in exchanging good practices across member states and, indeed, beyond. Morocco had been an active partner with the Council of Europe since 2006 and was a partner for democracy through the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in Europe (CLRAE). Mr. Katrougalos emphasised the importance PACE attached to youth participation both in political affairs and in employment. In Europe and further afield, he said, young people had been the "main victims" of the global economic crisis. There was a responsibility to strengthen the tools for their integration in the labour market.

Ms **Carmen Morte Gomez**, Head of the Council of Europe Office in Morocco, expressed thanks to all those who had made the Round Table possible. She hoped that the debate would consider youth as a positive force and not as a problem to be solved, a position always taken by the Council of Europe and enshrined in its 2017 Recommendation on Youth Work<sup>2</sup>. Young people are certainly the future, and their transitions to adulthood – particularly from school to the job market - have undoubtedly become much harder<sup>3</sup>. It is important that we learn about appropriate public policy that can provide effective support and establish suitable methodologies for building the evidence to inform policy. That was the purpose of the Round Table.

Mr **Briac Deffobois**, Head of Section for Social and Rural Development at the Delegation of the European Union to Morocco, registered the fact that 2022 is the European Year of Youth. He noted that the Covid-19 pandemic had exacerbated the vulnerabilities already affecting young people, most significantly in the labour market. Young people may be the future but they are also the present and so it is important, in the here and now, to "further and foster efforts to support youth". He made specific reference to young people not in employment, education or training (NEET<sup>4</sup>), who particularly needed activation and greater participation in

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<sup>2</sup> [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2017\)4 on Youth Work](https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/-/recommendation-on-youth-work). This is certainly grounded in the Council of Europe philosophy of strengthening 'opportunity-focused' (rather than 'problem-oriented') youth policy: see <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/-/recommendation-on-youth-work>

<sup>3</sup> There is a powerfully emerging debate in the sociology of youth that takes issue with the predominance of 'Global North' (north America, Europe, Australia – English speaking) youth studies and their relevance and applicability to the 'Global South'. Western European notions of 'precarity' in employment, for example, are the commonplace lived experience for young people in most of Africa and much of Asia. See Swartz, S. et al. (eds) (2021), *The Oxford Handbook of Global South Youth Studies*, Oxford University Press, especially Chapter 4. See also: Sánchez-Montijano, E. and Sánchez-García, J. (eds) (2020), *Youth at the Margins: Perspectives on Arab Mediterranean Youth*, Routledge.

<sup>4</sup> I deplore this terminology, though I am closely associated with it. I first wrote about this group/category of young people in 1985 [Williamson, H. (1985), 'Struggling beyond youth', *Youth in Society*] when I suggested that youth work and youth policy was so preoccupied with the 'acute anxieties of adolescence' that it was failing to notice the 'emerging crisis of young adulthood'. In 1993, I did the first research on what I termed 'status zero' youth [Istance, D., Rees G. and Williamson, H. (1994), *Young people not in education, training or employment in South Glamorgan*, South Glamorgan Training and Enterprise Council], which was intended to be a metaphor for young people 'counting for nothing, and going nowhere', though originally 'status 0' was simply a statistical category, in contrast to status 1 (still in education), status 2 (in training) or status 3 (in work). The acronym 'NEET' was coined by a British civil servant in 1996, as was the basis for the YK government's youth support strategy in

public life. He noted, however, that the investment of public resources in young people had to be accompanied by robust accountability and oversight; that demanded objectivity and rigorous evaluation, strict measurement of effectiveness, visibility of data and persuasive methodology<sup>5</sup>. Evaluations took different forms: ex-ante evaluations exploring potential or prospective impact, evaluations that identified implementation challenges, and ex-post evaluations that highlight aspects of success. There were also both cascade and linear evaluations, those considering the pathways from policy aspirations to practical impact, and those concerned with policy transfer from one context to another. The acid test of public (youth) policy rested on whether or not it had led to improvement in the lived experience of young people, in the sense that they had developed new competencies and were, as a result, living more fluent and higher performing lives.

## THE MOROCCAN EXPERIENCE ON YOUTH POLICIES

### Professor Driss Guerraoui

President of the Open University of Dakhla and President of the Forum of African Economic Intelligence Associations

Professor Guerraoui recounted his distinguished experiences working on the integration of youth, suggesting that of his many lessons learned about integration and pathways to employment, he had an intimate conviction about five ‘clues’, ‘facts’, ‘realities’ or ‘root causes’.

First, there is the economic reality. He said that listeners might be surprised at a socialist defending entrepreneurship and the private sector but it was important to note that in Morocco, the simple fact is that there are not enough jobs. Business creation is weak and state intervention is limited. There is a failure to create a critical mass of economic activity, and a reluctance to take risks. The private sector remains very weak. Across a range of sectors, there is simply not the dynamic that is needed to create jobs. The public sector represents only about 8.7% of the economy and employs, in all (for example, civil servants and the military), about 1m people. The informal economy way more than the formal private sector, and then there is the social and solidary economy (associations and co-operatives), and the illegal economy including smuggling, narcotics and migration. And that is the Moroccan economy, which produces about 80,000 new enterprises a year, compared to around 600,000

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1999: Social Exclusion Unit (1999), *Bridging the Gap: new opportunities for young people not in employment, education or training [NEET]*, The Stationery Office.

<sup>5</sup> This is not my experience of policy making. Indeed, when presented with ‘hard’ data, political decision-makers often ask for stories; if given stories, they want data! Research ‘evidence’ gathered in different ways often suggests different policy measures. Researchers are not neutral automatons and often impute their own policy interpretations to their data, while others might interpret the data differently. ‘Facts’ do not speak for themselves. Politicians often seek out ‘research’ that squares with their ideological preferences or, conversely, overlook or reject research data that does not. Sometimes really good research never attracts policy attention. Researchers are not always good at presenting their work in policy-meaningful (and politically meaningful) ways. Furthermore, there can be significant policy ‘leakage’, where the result is that final practical action is very different from initial policy aspiration. As Karen Evans (1998, *Shaping Futures: Learning for Competence and Citizenship*, Ashgate) has suggested, youth policy needs to be considered at three stages – when it is *espoused* (expressed) by government, when it is *enacted* by officials, and when it is *experienced* by young people. Finally, it is worth suggesting that there can be formative or illuminative evaluation, as well as categorical or conclusive evaluation – qualitative insight may be suggestive of issues that are not captured in quantitative surveys. Youth labour market policy research is in fact notorious for *not* capturing such nuances, especially if the most significant output/outcome measure is securing ‘sustainable employment’, at the expense of other more subjective measures of success (or failure).

in France. It is simply not enough. So, it is going to be very difficult to implement enough economic growth for the full employment of young people. There will have to be more dynamism, more entrepreneurial activity<sup>6</sup>, across all sectors if new occupational pathways are to be created for youth.

Secondly, the education system needs radical reform if it is to equip young people with the competencies and skills that are needed in today's labour market. Employers complain that they cannot hire even university graduates because they lack appropriate skills<sup>7</sup>. There is a significant gap between education and training, and the skill needs of the economy. Education, from the basic level to the higher level, needs review and adaptation if it is to produce more 'entrepreneurial' young people<sup>8</sup>.

Third, more attention needs to be given to a national system of *innovation*. Know-how becomes obsolescent more and more rapidly as technological change accelerates. Morocco needs to mobilise initiative more quickly if it is to keep pace and remain economically competitive.

Fourth, there is the question of *governance*. Today's system does not allow the liberation of enterprise and initiative. There is too much monopoly and too much inequality of opportunity. It must be recognised, however, that too much regulation and state oversight run up against what might be called the 'global problematic' because if there is too much, then companies will simply move elsewhere.

The fifth reality has to do with culture. Moroccan young people have developed certain forms of behaviour and attitudes in relation to work. We have been used to giving and they have become used to receiving. There is a limited interest in risk-taking, in taking control and

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<sup>6</sup> I have written about 'the fourth side of the triangle', suggesting that the normal enterprise triangle (of business plan, start-up finance and business mentoring/support) needs, in addition, in the case of young people, attention to their resilience and capacity to handle the ebbs and flows of income and expenditure. There can be a risk, otherwise, of setting up young people to fail. Indeed, early research in the UK on youth and enterprise concluded exactly that: see MacDonald, R. and Coffield, F. (1991), *Risky Business? Youth and the Enterprise Culture*, Routledge.

<sup>7</sup> This has been a recurrent mantra across the world. Young people are never good enough! But 'employers' are no more homogeneous than 'young people'. Different employers want different competencies – different blends of knowledge, skills, attitudes and physical attributes (such as strength). Employers do not necessarily want 'enterprising' young people; they want compliance. Indeed, a major challenge for contemporary education – and I lectured about this as long ago as the mid 1980s – is to equip young people with the capacity to assess different labour market contexts to know when they need to display initiative and when they need to be compliant. If they get it wrong, they will be excluded or they will be left behind.

<sup>8</sup> There is no doubt that classical forms of 'instruction' are no longer fit for purpose as education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, though there is little consensus of precisely what should replace it. There is, however, a general view that more 'active learning' methodologies are needed. In the UK, these were first pioneered under the banner of 'enterprise education' in 1986, when every secondary school was required to support a 'mini-enterprise in schools' project. This was sufficiently flexible to appeal to teachers from a range of disciplinary backgrounds, pedagogical approaches and political persuasions. It required groupwork and the cultivation of 'soft' skills such as decision-making, problem-solving and communication. It brought the world of work into the classroom, including physically through the presence of 'anyone other than a teacher' (an AOT). There were weaknesses in the programme, not least 'false profits', but it was a different form of learning that gave students more control. In my role as UK Parliamentary specialist adviser on education (1998-2002), I argued for a stronger blend of academic, vocational and citizenship education, without specialising exclusively in any of these. In Wales, a new curriculum is currently being implemented through which young people will acquire different clusters of knowledge and skills through engagement with different ALEs – Areas of Learning and Experience. The Council of Europe uses 'competencies' as an umbrella term that covers knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and critical understanding.



responsibility for their destiny and fate. This needs to be transformed, so that young people themselves are centrally involved in *searching, finding and creating*<sup>9</sup>. Young people need to become actors in their own integration. And, in Morocco, this will require no less than a cultural revolution in family and community life. There will need to be a quantum leap in how Morocco treats its children and young people.

Professor Guerraoui then went on to suggest four paths that Morocco needed to follow. First, there needed to be *upstream investment* in children and young people. Education and socialisation by both parents (notably mothers) and teachers needed to change to ensure stronger levels of literacy and a wider framework of learning. Only when women and teachers were better prepared for these roles would more active children and more enterprising youth emerge.

Secondly, there is the need to *unleash youthful energies* through better regulation, greater fairness and equal opportunities. The law has to enshrine the values of meritocracy and competence. Public policy needs to incentivise youth engagement and participation. Third, there should be a *national initiative for youth* that is integrated, holistic, and serves as a transition platform for active life. Young people need to be transformed from a position of marginalisation and despair into national heroes!

What is needed – the fourth path - is ten large economic projects across the sectors of water, energy, pharmaceuticals, vegetable and animal products, digitalisation, green and blue economy, wastewater management, and the management of disasters and emergencies. We need young people to ‘elevate ambition’ across these sectors. And then there is the banking and financial sector, and stock exchange activities, where Morocco is some 20 years ahead of comparable countries. The fifth large project is infrastructure, such as roads and housing. Morocco is once again ahead of comparable countries. These are projects that can ‘onboard’ youth. A sixth large project is the solidarity economy and a seventh is the climate agenda, that can provide an active life agenda for young people. Then, an eighth project would be advanced regionalisation, through turning the 12 regions of Morocco into centres and hubs of job creation and the creation of economic value: they could be the locomotives of the national vision. The ninth project is about intangible capital, particularly to do with Morocco’s heritage in arts and culture. Lastly, the tenth project, there is Morocco’s road map for Africa on behalf of the Arab world, through modernisation and engaging with Europe and the rest of Africa.

In conclusion, Professor Guerraoui identified the need for a clear will to modernise, with dates and timelines, a programme of job creation for young people through expanding the scope of ambition, and the resultant diversification of productivity and job opportunities. The impact would be a new middle-class in Morocco within 20 years, and a society characterised by stability, mobility, and inclusion.

## REVIEWING YOUTH POLICIES: THE EXPERIENCE OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

### **Professor Howard Williamson**

Professor of European Youth Policy, University of South Wales and international expert  
(*via videoconference*)

Professor Williamson provided an account of the experience of the Council of Europe international reviews of national youth policy, which had been conducted between 1997 and

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<sup>9</sup> A seminal pamphlet in the history of British youth work was written in 1979: Smith, M. (1979), *Creators Not Consumers*, National Association of Youth Clubs. It was a simple story about the planning and execution of an ice-skating trip. Smith facilitated, he did not organise and deliver. Young people did it for themselves.

2018 (see Table 1). Methodologically, the first seven reviews had been rather *ad hoc*, though all drew on a national report compiled from disparate sources<sup>10</sup>. After seven reviews, however, a framework for exploring ‘youth policy’ was adopted for the next seven international reviews. The methodological imperative was to ensure that all eight areas of youth policy (see Table 2) were covered.

**Table 1: The youth policy reviews conducted by the Council of Europe**



**Youth Policy Reviews  
1997-2016**

Finland	Lithuania	Hungary
Netherlands	Norway	Albania
Spain	Malta	Moldova
Sweden	Slovakia	Belgium
Romania	Cyprus	Ukraine
Estonia	Armenia	Greece
Luxembourg	Latvia	Serbia

Williamson, H. 2002, 2008, 2017 – *Supporting Young People in Europe* Vols 1-3

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**Table 2: A framework for understanding and exploring ‘youth policy’**



**A framework of understanding**

Conceptualising ‘youth’ and ‘youth policy’  
 Political commitment & resource allocation  
 – legislation and budget  
 Structures for delivery  
 Domains of youth policy  
 Cross-cutting issues  
 Enabling foundations  
 – research, dissemination, training  
 Research and evaluation

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<sup>10</sup> For example, the first review of Finland was anchored in a national report that had four sections: one produced by the statistical authority, a second by the government, and third by the association of local authorities, and the fourth by the Finnish Youth Research Society. They were not always consistent in their analysis of youth issues, but they provided the international team with a strong basis for inquiry and a baseline of ‘evidence’.



Each review sought to provide ideas for development to the host country as well as to provide the member states of the Council of Europe (47 – now 46) with innovative and experimental ideas *from* the host country. The idea was not to establish some kind of European blueprint for youth policy, but to strengthen policy thinking and practice in the field of youth.

To that end, first one needed to understand how a country conceptualises the idea of ‘youth’ and, indeed, the idea of ‘youth policy’. These vary considerably and sometimes significantly between countries. Secondly, policy aspirations carry little weight or value without strong political commitment (usually reflected in specific legislation and budgetary allocations). Looking at political championship, it is important to determine the level of cross-party support; looking at financial commitments, it is important to consider not only the volume of resources being made available but also how it is likely to be distributed between problem-oriented interventions and more opportunity-focused possibilities and experiences. Third, there are always questions about ‘structures for delivery’ – how exactly do policy aspirations reach both the ground and the right groups of young people? There are myriad ways of doing this, but there have to be effective ways.

Fourth, youth policies rarely address or touch all aspects of young people’s lives. It is therefore important to consider which domains are explicitly addressed within youth policy, which may be implicitly addressed or referenced even if wider public policy retains responsibility for it, and which appears to be afforded little or no policy attention. Every country has a youth policy because doing nothing is a policy, but youth policy can be through neglect, default or intention. The strength of intent needs to be gauged, in relation to what the policy reviews referred to as the *domains* of youth policy, of which the five that predominate are invariably education, training and employment, health, housing and crime. Beyond those distinct and discrete domains, however, a fifth area of interest is what is known as ‘cross-cutting’ issues – those ideas that command the contemporary political high ground – whether nation-building, gender equality, youth participation or social inclusion. These are likely to inform ways of thinking about aspirations within *and across* youth policy domains.

Youth policy is generally enabled and ensured through a trio of rather different factors that comprise the sixth line of consideration and reflection. Youth research contributes to suggesting directions of travel for youth policy. The dissemination of good practice – through media, conferences and publications - enables its spread. And practitioners in the youth sector need appropriate training to maximise the efficacy of policy aspirations. Finally, the seventh line of inquiry is that of research and evaluation, exploring that efficacy and perhaps deficiencies in the styles of intervention and the distribution of human and financial resources.

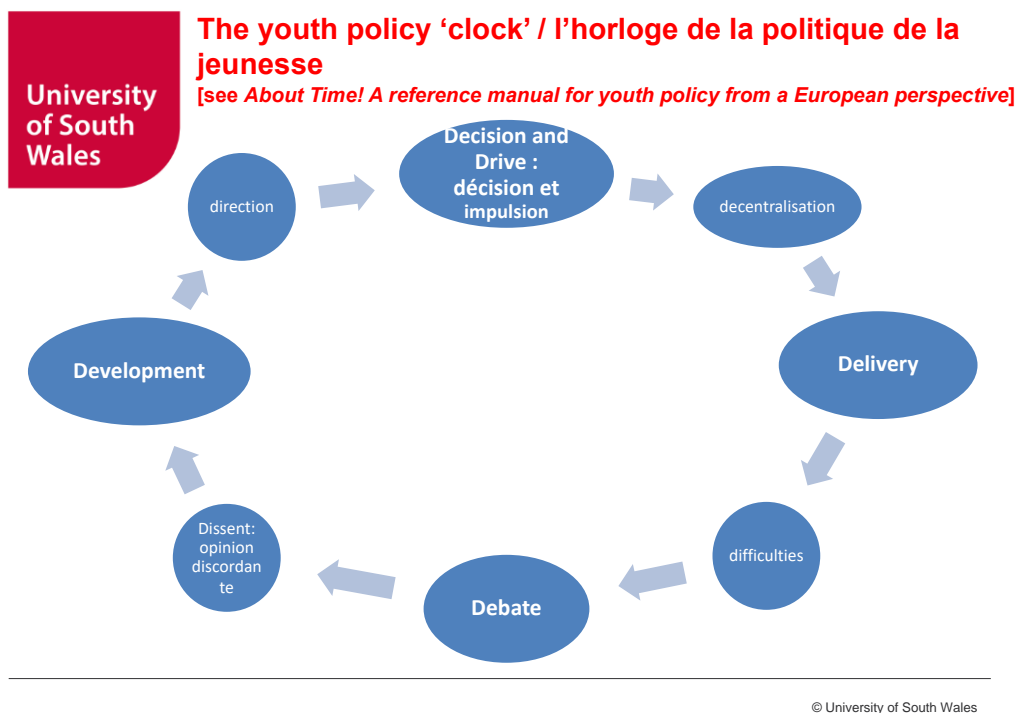
By the time of the final seven youth policy reviews, the scope of this framework of understanding had ballooned to unmanageable (perhaps even unimaginable) proportions, taking into account policy areas such as family policy and social security, and attending to the influence of, for example, military service and religious controls. It became clear that the Council of Europe could not provide expertise throughout this mosaic of youth policy. For the final reviews, the methodology changed to probing the top youth policy concerns of the host country and a limited number of issues and concerns to the international team. Invariably, youth employment was part of this package, and so particular attention was extended to themes such as careers guidance, vocational training, work experience and job subsidies. Even these were not, however, central concerns for the core business of the Council of Europe and, as a result, a working group concluded that the expertise it should offer member states should be focused on just six key themes: participation, information, access to rights, youth work, social inclusion and mobility.

All but one of the youth policy reviews involved two team visits to the host country, one to learn about central aspirations on the part of government and NGO headquarters, the other to visit towns and villages to explore how youth policy was working out in practice. This approach was

topped and tailed, first by an initial exploratory visit by the co-ordinator of the review, to conduct some reconnaissance of the 'lie of the land', and afterwards through both a national hearing and then an international hearing, when the review team's conclusions were presented first to a domestic audience of key stakeholders (at minimum all those who had contributed to the review) and then to an international audience of governmental representatives and youth organisations.

It is not necessarily clear whether the youth strategies that have evolved, in part at least, through these reviews remain fit for purpose as the world is overtaken by the crises of economies, climate, health, energy and conflict, though this would seem to reinforce the imperative of supportive and inclusive policy measures for young people. What has been learned, however, is that there is always a metaphorical youth policy 'clock', one that – unlike a real clock – can stop and start at any time and can tick along at variable speeds, according to the momentum secured or the obstacles encountered. What is not in question is that, as the 'clock' approaches 12 (see Diagram 1<sup>11</sup>), political championship (Decision and Drive) is essential if policy measures are to be sustained. Research knowledge, professional skill, and the needs of youth are always subordinate to that.

**Diagram 1: The 'dynamics' within the youth policy 'clock'**



Finally, a useful model for considering youth policy questions is presented in Diagram 2. This presents three pairs of questions, two pairs concerned with research and a final pair concerned with policy. The first pair (1 & 2) address the scale of any issue and the ways in which those who fall into this category may be usefully differentiated. After all, not all young people in particular situations (such as 'NEET' or offending behaviour) are there for the same reasons, nor will one kind of policy response be equally meaningful and relevant to all. The second pair of questions (3 & 4) are those concerned with causes and consequences. How

<sup>11</sup> The diagram is derived from Williamson, H. (2002), *Supporting young people in Europe: principles, policy and practice*, Council of Europe. It has been reproduced most recently in Williamson, H. et al (2020), *About Time! A reference manual for youth policy from a European perspective*, European Commission/Council of Europe Youth Partnership.

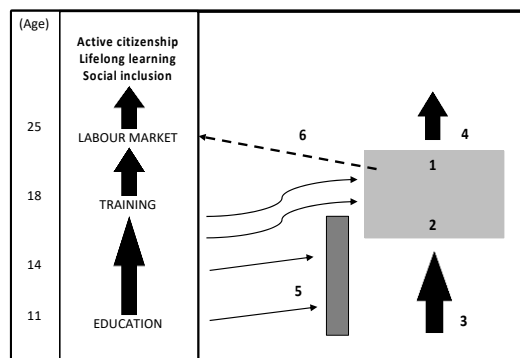
did young people end up in situations of exclusion rather than remain on a positive pathway through education and training to labour market activation and citizenship? And what is likely to happen to them later in their lives as a result of their exclusion in their youth? This can be a critical question at the political level when arguments are being made for ‘upstream investment’ and early intervention. The final pair of questions (5 & 6) are key policy questions about barriers and bridges. How might young people be prevented from slipping to the edge? And how can opportunities be provided and presented to encourage young people to return to the mainstream at the earliest opportunity?

## Diagram 2: Six simple questions that require careful thinking



### In conclusion - six simple questions....

Figure 6.1: Simple questions, complex answers



Source: Williamson (2000)

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The attraction of this model is that it can be applied at any level of public policy and on any issue or cluster of issues.

## NATIONAL YOUTH POLICIES – THE EXPERIENCE OF GREECE<sup>12</sup>

Mr **Georgios Katrougalos**, Member of the Parliament of Greece and Chair of the PACE Sub-Committee on the Middle East and the Arab World, provided a political overview of the situation of young people in Greece since the economic crisis of 2008 and through the pandemic of 2020/21.

Living conditions had, to that point, been measured against the European Social Model, within which there was a commitment to youth employment and broader ideas about transitions to autonomy. Popular representations of youth had recently, however, moved from positive images of Generation X and Generation Y<sup>13</sup> to concerned images of ‘boomerang kids’. Canadian data points to a huge increase of young adults still living with their parents, following

<sup>12</sup> For more background on youth policy in Greece, see <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/greece>; also Petkovic, S. and Williamson, H. (2015), *Youth Policy in Greece*, Council of Europe.

<sup>13</sup> The latest ‘Generation’ depiction is Generation Z: see Katz, R. et al. (2021), *Generation Z, Explained: The Art of Living in the Digital Age*, University of Chicago Press.

the global economic crisis of 2008<sup>14</sup>. This has increased further on account of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Those crises compounded the ‘tectonic shifts’ in the application of the European Social Model, which up to the 1970s had developed an approach to social and economic organisation that had reasonably balanced the power of labour and capital, established social rights, ensured regulation and, as a result, limited the level of inequality. Through such tripartite agreements between employers, trade unions and governments, there had been ‘three decades of glory’.

The oil crisis of the 1970s changed all that, leading to ‘stagflation’ and the implementation of monetarism as an economic and political ideology, reducing public expenditure and taxation, and deregulating the economy. In the UK, from 80%, only 20% of the labour market is now covered by collective agreements.

The economic crisis in Greece in 2010 revealed a huge deficit and debt. The response – to reduce wages and pensions – was dictated by the International Monetary Fund. The demand was for ‘readjustment’ (as part of the Eurozone, Greece could not devalue its currency, which would have been the conventional response), because public debt was considered too great at 120% of GDP. What is it now? 260%. Through readjustment, Greece lost one quarter of its national wealth, and its people had to endure widespread suffering and hunger.

As Minister of Labour in 2015-2016, Mr Katrougkalos was a member of a government presiding over a general unemployment rate of 26% and a youth unemployment rate of around 60%. Its consequence was a massive brain drain. Active labour market programmes made some difference (youth unemployment reduced from 60% to 33%) but were largely a ‘drop in the ocean’<sup>15</sup>.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, often dismissed and described by free market economists as a moral hazard, the massive tax evasion [avoidance] by multinationals through the use of tax havens and low tax regimes has been exposed. This points to the need for global tax measures: the OECD should be taxing multinationals at 21% or more, in the interests of economy and equality. Otherwise, there will be further rises in absolute poverty and inequality. Oxfam has called Covid the ‘inequality virus’. So, we cannot escape the need for more structural measures, to be applied on a transnational basis. That would be of mutual benefit to the ageing societies of Europe and the youthful societies in many other parts of the world.

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<sup>14</sup> The concept of ‘boomerang kids’ has in fact been around for quite some time, referring to young people who do leave home, for various reasons, but then return.

<sup>15</sup> Mr Katrougalos cited a range of measures (incentivising the return of scientists, public sector work experience, special training programmes, and job subsidies) and their costs. There is some suggestion that most public (youth) policy interventions in the labour market make, at most, only a marginal difference, once the three elements of *deadweight* (would have happened anyway), *displacement* (replacing older workers with younger workers) and *substitution* (taking on a young person attracting a subsidy at the expense of one who does not) are taken into account. This does not mean that such measures should *not* be adopted: the ‘scarring effects’ of prolonged exclusion from the labour market in youth extend over a lifetime: see Bell, D. and Blanchflower, D. (2011), ‘Young People and the Great Recession’, *Oxford Review of Economic Policy* 27:2 , <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxrep/grr011>

**Dr Ruggero Cefalo**

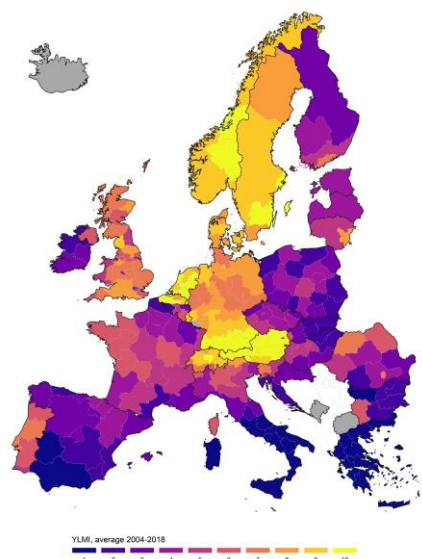
Department of Sociology, University of Vienna

Dr Cefalo started by noting that the transition from school to work is characterised both by risk and opportunity. The study being reported reveals, however, clear *territorial disparities*. In some countries, and significantly regions within countries, transitions go reasonably smoothly and produce greater integration; in other places, it is the reverse. The role of institutions and public policy may be significant.

The study developed a composite index constructed from regional data on multiple dimensions that illustrates the continuum from the best performing (Germany, Austria and the Nordic countries) to the worst performing (southern Europe) parts of Europe (See Diagram 3). The picture is not static: things have been getting worse in southern and eastern Europe.

**Diagram 3: Youth labour market integration across Europe: regional disparities**

**YLMi**  
**composite index score**  
*Le resultat de l'index*  
*composé YLMi*  
 (average: *moyenne* 2004-2018  
 in deciles @NUTs2)



There are significant policy implications arising from this study, given its attention to the importance of local contextual conditions and the resultant ‘unequal geography of opportunity’<sup>16</sup>. The overarching policy message is the need for a *place-sensitive approach* and the case for a regulatory framework, addressing criteria and resources, for the equalisation of opportunities in diverse contexts<sup>17</sup>. This is what the study refers to as ‘calibrated and positive subsidiarity’.

<sup>16</sup> This is not a particularly new story, though the innovative methodology is powerful, plausible and persuasive. A ‘16-19 Initiative’ Economic and Social Research Council youth research programme in the UK at the end of the 1980s, that focused on four different areas (Swindon, Liverpool, Sunderland and Kirkaldy) showed that young people with identical skills and qualifications had very different prospects for labour market integration, depending on the region in which they lived. See Banks, M. et al. (1992), *Careers and identities: Adolescent attitudes to employment, training and education, their home life, leisure and politics*, Open University Press.

<sup>17</sup> This is not dramatically different from the albeit more individualised philosophy for youth policy in Wales at the turn of the millennium. In essence, it acknowledged that young people had different access to a range of personal development resources and services (experiences and opportunities). Public policy needed to ‘level the playing field’ by ensuring that all young people had such access through extending the ‘package of entitlement’ to those young people who would not receive it by other means (private sector, committed parents, schools

Dr Cefalo went on to illustrate his point with a comparison of neighbouring countries Austria and Italy, the former providing multi-track transitions that accommodated both school-based and work-based learning, the latter where learning was much too school-based, with weak links with employers and the labour market<sup>18</sup>.

## DISCUSSION AND COMMENT

Morocco, it was noted, remains too dependent on traditional sectors of the economy. The statistics provide some valuable insight into regional disparities, and they demonstrate the need for such figures: 'what happens when we don't have facts?'<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, it was clear that the critical policy message was that 'If we want to get results, we need to act upstream'. This took the discussion back to earlier remarks by Prof Guerraoui about the need to deal with the 'root causes' – the education and health of women, and the training of teachers. Both were critical to the preparation of young people for active life.

There were other needs, such as the management and efficiency of public policy, which was often weakly implemented. Information systems needed to be integrated, reliable and relevant.

It was noted that young people today are not like young people in the past. They are more demanding and more connected, though they remain differentiated in their aspirations and expectations<sup>20</sup>.

Mr Katrougalos supported the contention that the role of women is critical. The Nordic countries may well have a better success story as a result of public services for children. In Greece, the solution was once care by grandmothers, which is now no longer the case. The point is that social policies must be seen in the round, in how they connect to each other. And

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with broad-based curricula). See National Assembly for Wales (2000), *Extending Entitlement: supporting young people in Wales*, National Assembly for Wales.

<sup>18</sup> This research argues forcefully for an *institutional* response to promoting labour market insertion and integration. The *individual* response, however, should not be overlooked, in terms of what different young people consider to be meaningful and relevant transition opportunities. Sometimes poor so-called 'training' opportunities with employers may be valued because they provide genuine stepping-stones into work; conversely, work experience opportunities that offer little prospect of future employment in that sector may still be valued by young people for more intrinsic reasons. Care needs to be taken in constructing evaluation criteria and defining 'successful' outcomes. See Williamson, H. (1981), *Chance would be a fine thing: twelve stories from the Youth Opportunities Programme*, National Youth Bureau.

<sup>19</sup> Throughout the meeting there was considerable reification of 'research', as if data speak for themselves. A cautionary note is that, when the first research was done on young people not in employment, education or training [NEET], in 1994, UK government statistics put the rate at between 1.5%-3.5%. It was a defensible position, when a range of factors were taken into account. A different methodology, however, produced some very different statistics, indicating a prevalence of young people in 'NEET' situations at any one time as between 16% and 23%. This latter statistical range was never rebutted and indeed the new Labour British government acknowledged, in 1999, that the numbers were around 161,000, which approximated to just under 20% of those aged 16 and 17 who were outside of schooling, work or training programme. This was a very different figure than that advanced on the BBC 'unequivocally and categorically' by the Conservative Employment Minister in 1994 – 144 (the basis of the 1.5%-3.5%)!

<sup>20</sup> This is an important observation. A great deal of political rhetoric, and indeed demands from organised youth, is about enabling greater *autonomy*. Autonomy to some young people, however, can appear to be abandonment. As one book suggested, "freedom, to the adolescent, can look suspiciously like neglect" (Pitt-Aikens, T, and Thomas-Ellis, A. (1989), *Loss of the Good Authority: The Cause of Delinquency*, Viking). Young people may have changed in many ways, but most still usually request, require and value advice, guidance and support.



as young Europeans are being failed by the withdrawal of state support, they are turning to the extreme right<sup>21</sup>. There needs to be renewed attention to how societies respect principles and values, especially those of equity, equality and fundamental social rights, as well as political and civil rights. Migration has become a key issue, though it is exploitation for some<sup>22</sup> and opportunity for others. Regrettably, the EU has failed to establish an overall strategy that recognises important inter-connections.

Dr Scandurra agreed with the need for data though he also pointed to the importance of the role of institutions in both the public and private sector. The effective dual systems that prevail in Germany and Austria<sup>23</sup> involve Chambers of Commerce that provide local knowledge. The important point is to develop a set of 'integrating indicators' that can constitute the robust data to inform 'place-sensitive' policies, though it has always to be acknowledged that there are weaknesses in all data<sup>24</sup>.

Other commentators reiterated the need to maintain open dialogue on the issues in question; invariably, in whether or not policy is implemented effectively, the devil is in the detail. Dr Ruggero endorsed this point, noting that Italy had had limited success in its efforts to reform apprenticeships<sup>25</sup>.

The discussion concluded with Ms Saara-Sofia Sirén, a Member of Parliament in Finland, stressing once more the importance of the role of women. Finland has a long and strong track record of advancing and defending gender equality and equal opportunities. Finland is a happy country!

## NATIONAL YOUTH POLICIES – THE EXPERIENCE OF FINLAND<sup>26</sup>

### Ms Saara-Sofia Sirén

Member of Parliament in Finland

Ms Sirén was elected in 2015 at the age of 28. She queried whether or not that counted as 'young'? With a background in civil society, youth organisations and international affairs – and a commitment to democracy, equality and co-operation – she was first part of the government (as a member of the EPP national coalition) but was now in opposition, though still presenting the policies of the current government. Finland is a relatively small country, demographically, with 5.5 million people, but it is geographically relatively large, with a dispersed population beyond the capital and its hinterland. Its fundamental, indeed foundational, belief is that 'to succeed, everyone must be included'. Finland has had 100 years of voting for all and political

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<sup>21</sup> Not just young Europeans: see Nilan, P. (2021), *Young People and the Far Right (Alternatives and Futures: Cultures, Practices, Activism and Utopias)*, Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>22</sup> See Briggs, D. (2020), *Climate Changed: Border Stories and the Business of Misery*, Routledge.

<sup>23</sup> And in the German-speaking Community of Belgium that connects to the North Rhine-Westphalia economic region and has far greater success in labour market insertion and integration than the other parts of Belgium (the French Community and the Flemish Community). See Pudar, G. et al. (2013), *Youth Policy in Belgium: it's more complex than you think*, Council of Europe.

<sup>24</sup> The classic problem is being 'data rich but information poor'!

<sup>25</sup> Speculatively, this may have been for a well-rehearsed reason: apprenticeships, in their classical form, required lengthy time serving before individuals became skilled and qualified for (usually) employment that was well-paid and secure. Governments have continued to use the terminology, but the 'promise' of apprenticeships is no longer guaranteed. Young people see through the veneer, and choose not to take them up, however assertively they are promoted.

<sup>26</sup> See also Williamson, H. (2000), *Youth Policy in Finland*, Council of Europe.



independence. Equal opportunities, including gender equality, is very special to Finland. Ms Sirén is currently President of the National Council for Women.

For the Round Table, Ms Sirén offered ten lessons for public policy, especially that related to youth:

1. **Equal opportunities for all.** This requires early investment in children, and an education policy that incorporates the right to learn and the aspiration for all individuals to realise their full potential.
2. **Consensus and Continuity.** There is a government programme every four years, that is shaped by the specific characteristics and ideas of the political parties in power, but the 'big picture', what might be called the basics of public and youth policy, are already across the political spectrum.
3. **Quality in early childhood education.** Though formal schooling does not start until the age of 7, there is childcare or day care much earlier, which is available to all, in response to needs and with costs determined according to ability to pay.
4. **Teachers are trusted.** A political distance is maintained from education. Teachers are well qualified (with a Master degree in their subject specialism and in pedagogy) and trusted. Though teachers are required to follow a planned curriculum, they have methodological freedom with respect to its delivery. There are no inspections, no testing, and there are no private schools. Public education is of the highest quality.
5. **Accessibility.** Most public services are free of charge and so accessible to all<sup>27</sup>. It is of a good quality and made available to Finland's dispersed population through e-learning and good and affordable transport systems.
6. **Guidance and counselling.** Advice, guidance and counselling in Finland is embedded in transition pathways for young people and tailored to learners' needs. One important aspect is making opportunities visible to young people so that they can consider them.
7. **Continuous learning.** This terminology is preferred to lifelong learning. It is about the need for recurrent upskilling and reskilling, the upgrading of knowledge and skills in a comprehensive and systematic way. This demands close links between policy makers and the world of work, supporting the possibility of learning in the workplace, and developing non-formal and informal learning<sup>28</sup>. Youth policy for 15-29 year olds incorporates youth work and is guided by the National Youth Council<sup>29</sup>.
8. **Youth involvement.** This is important for understanding and fostering positive attitudes to work. Recent research suggests that young people in higher education tend to be more anxious about their prospects in the labour market than other young people. Young people in Finland are generally keen on the idea of entrepreneurship<sup>30</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup> This reminded me of a message I once gave to EU Commissioner Vassiliou – EU youth programmes were not much good if young people were unaware of them or could not access them. Too much of the debate presumed some level of participation, and so too much debate was about recognition, certification and parity with formal qualifications as currency for future possibilities in life and work. I suggested that in front of Action, Accreditation and Advancement, there needed to be greater attention to Awareness and Accessibility.

<sup>28</sup> Such terminology has proved very confusing in some parts of Europe, and beyond. In the past, the EU has tended to favour 'non-formal education', while the Council of Europe has preferred 'non-formal learning'. A World non-formal education conference, held in Brazil in December 2019, asked me to provide a short video explaining what I chose to call 'non-formal education and learning', maintaining that it was a large space between formal education (namely schooling, colleges and universities) and informal learning (in the family and community). Those working in this space – youth workers and others – sometimes are more like teachers and sometimes are more like facilitators of learning. See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUT2KqIMAGA>.

<sup>29</sup> See my review of the Helsinki Youth Department: Williamson, H. (2012), *The Wonderful World of Youth Work: Some reflections on strategies and practice of Helsinki Youth Department*, City of Helsinki Youth Department.

<sup>30</sup> Young people may have a positive *anticipatory* view of entrepreneurship but may not continue to hold this view following experience of simulated or 'mini' enterprise, even when such activity tends to yield 'false profits'.

Such perspectives can only be connected to policy development through dialogue with youth.

**9. Strengthening civil society.** There needs to be a strong third sector, as a counterweight and compliment to the public and private sectors.

**10. Linking equal opportunities to democracy.** Education has a key role to play in developing, strengthening, and maintaining the connections between equal opportunities and democracy – through voice, dialogue and consultation.

Ms Sirén concluded her intervention by re-emphasising the importance of access, noting that public policies are required across the age span, highlighting continuous learning as preparation for skills for the future, and re-stating the case for involving young people<sup>31</sup> when it comes to the making of youth policy.

## EVALUATION OF PUBLIC POLICIES ON YOUTH: METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS

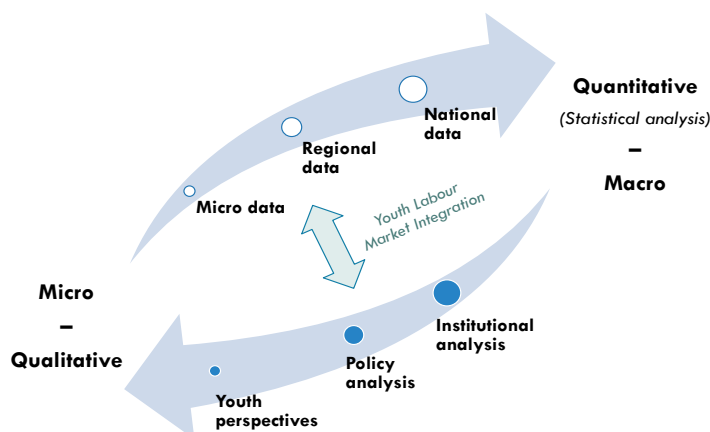
**Dr Rosario Scandurra**

Department of Sociology, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Dr Scandurra provided a detailed methodological account of the research study reported above, concerning regional disparities in effective school-to-work transitions.

He started by making the important point that robust research evidence needs to include data from macro national statistics to micro qualitative illumination (see Diagram 4). Numbers may be useful, and used, to anchor discussion, but there are always choices to be made. That is the nature of politics and policy. It is, nonetheless, essential that data are considered to be both relevant and reliable.

**Diagram 4: The range of data needed for a deep grasp of the issues around Youth Labour Market Integration (YLMI)**



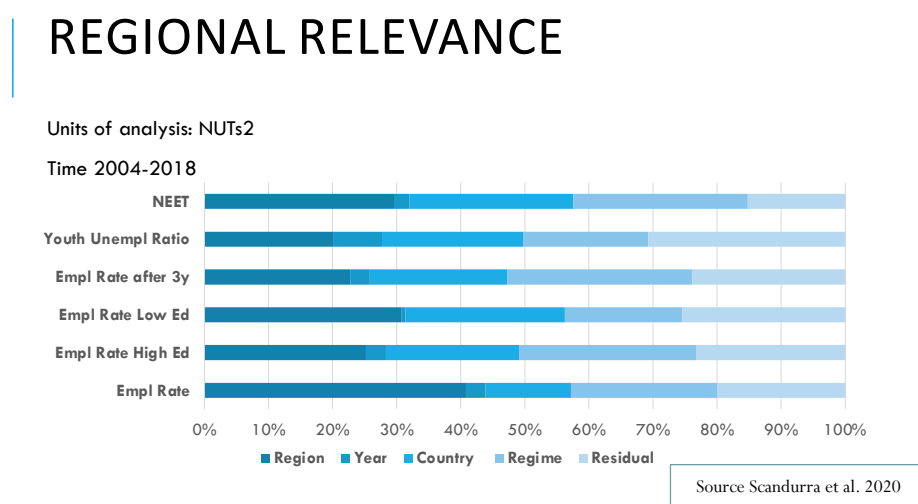
They discover the hard work required and that “your mates are not always your best workmates”. See Jamieson et al. (1985), *The Mini-Enterprise in Schools Project: an evaluation*, Department of Trade and Industry.

<sup>31</sup> Few argued against this, but the question that has always to be asked is ‘which young people’? Participation may be an inherent right within Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, but it can mean many things and involve ‘young people’ in many different ways, or not at all. See Corney *et al.* (2020), *Approaches to Youth Participation in youth and community work: a critical dialogue*, Commonwealth Alliance of Youth Worker Associations.

Dr Scandurra then talked through the strengths of their YLMI model, arguing for the rigour of the method. Data were gathered from a number of reputable sources (cf. the Labour Force Survey) and the analysis drew from three dimensions of integration and exclusion: *access*: employment by level of education; *time to job*: employment rates after three years; and *exclusion*: ‘NEET’ rates and unemployment.

The analysis demonstrates strongly the regional effect, with 30% of six indicators having a significant regional dimension (see Table 3).

**Table 3: The significance of region**



There are also very different levels of variance *within* countries, with – for example – wide levels of variance in Italy but minor variance in Austria. The conclusion to the study raises some questions about the commitment to human capital theory, as there is quite an inconsistent effect of educational experience on labour market outcomes. This suggests the need to explore, and perhaps change, the nature of regional policies and institutional arrangements.

Dr Scandurra argued for the mainstreaming of youth policy within all policies<sup>32</sup> and suggested that a central issue lies in the design of policies and the connections between education and employment<sup>33</sup>. The research reported, with its acknowledged limitations, also opens up possibilities for new approaches to activating the more effective labour market integration of young people.

<sup>32</sup> This may not in fact be the issue. Rather, it is important that there is coherence and consistency in policy that applies to ‘youth’ wherever it sits within political and administrative arrangements. Too often, policy in one ministry can neutralise or even clash with policy elsewhere in government.

<sup>33</sup> The preoccupation with ‘employability’ being the desirable outcome of education should never completely distract from the imperative that education must always be about more than preparation for work. Indeed, the Council of Europe, in particular, would argue that education, both formal and non-formal (see note above), needs to embrace learning for democracy and for participation in civic and social life.

## DISCUSSION

The ideas presented in the Finnish experience were welcomed but concern was expressed about their transferability to other countries and contexts.

There was strong support for improving the participation of young people in decision-making processes. Intergenerational dialogue was essential, and more attention should be paid to the representation of young people within political structures in Morocco.

Young people today are the leaders of tomorrow, and some concern was expressed that so few young people in Morocco were active in civil society – perhaps just 10%. How can or should young people be attracted to noble, rather than negative politics, to serve their country and contribute to solving its problems.

It is perhaps not surprising that so few young Moroccans are actively engaged, when very few are socially protected. Most would say that they want a dignified job, but employers are always saying that they can't find the 'right' young people. What is going wrong?

Finland is no longer so prominent in the PISA rankings, and has been superseded by both Singapore and Qatar, whose education systems are modelled on Finland<sup>34</sup>. Why had their educational performance been so successful, or Finland's less so? One possible explanation is that Finland has become more polarised in recent years, in terms of both sub-sections of the youth demographic and at a regional level. But Finland remains committed to its approach and the principles that underpin it. They cannot be copied but they could be adapted for other contexts. In particular, the status of teachers could be emulated. There is no shortage of demand to become a teacher in Finland, despite individuals being required to undertake five years of training. The reward is recognition and respect for the teachers, and motivation and performance from their students.

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<sup>34</sup> But not their democratic systems or (equal) structures of opportunity.

## CONCLUSION

Professor Williamson provided some closing remarks and observations, relating them to the various presentations and interventions made throughout the day. Many of these are also captured in the footnotes to this report, in order for them to be aligned to the context and comments to which they respond. They provide some ‘food for thought’ although they are derived largely from research studies, academic thought, and policy and practice experiences from the ‘Global North’. For this reason, Professor Williamson asked the Round Table participants to “forgive the misguided perspectives but please consider the issues in relation to your particular context”.

### The wider context

The geographical disparities in any country need careful thought. Countries themselves may be concerned about ‘brain drain’, but there is also the issue of inward mobility, especially drift towards urban contexts. The extent to which *regional* economic development, perhaps through ‘growth centres’, accompanied by appropriate social infrastructure, can be secured and sustained, is an important issue for consideration. Dr Scandurra (see Table 3) had demonstrated the significance of regional variations in young people’s successful labour market integration.

It is always tempting to speak generically of ‘the labour market’, as if it has one monolithic character. As Prof Guerraoui explained so clearly, there are diverse labour markets in Morocco, as elsewhere. They have different needs and present different opportunities. Not all may require ‘enterprise’ and ‘active’ youth: some may require very specific qualifications or skills, and others may seek compliance, a friendly demeanour, or physical strength. It is important to remain attentive to this diversity, and the different ways in which young people may need to orient themselves to take opportunities within it.

### The ‘social condition’ of young people

Sweeping generalisations are often attached to depictions of young people’s lives. Like the labour markets to which they aspire, ‘youth’ is characterised by heterogeneity – in, amongst many things, character, aspirations, motivation, attitude, knowledge, beliefs and understanding. Differentiating between young people’s experiences and orientations is likely to be important; ‘one size’ rarely fits all.

Global North conceptualisations of, for example, ‘precarity’ or ‘social exclusion’ are unlikely to be very helpful to Morocco. As we know, conditions described in this way to reflect the circumstances of a minority (albeit a growing minority) of young people in Europe arguably affect a substantial *majority* of young people in the Global South. The Round Table raised questions about the *transferability* of ideas, issues and policy responses between countries.

The challenge is to consider the relevance of the issues to the social condition of young people in Morocco and to convert potential policy responses to specific circumstances. While countries may seemingly face similar challenges in the youth field (jobs, crime,

health), the scale of the challenge is invariably very different, as is the political will and the economic resources to address it.

### Policy and practice

Put simply, contemporary youth policy in most parts of the world is usually framed around four pillars: active citizenship, lifelong learning for changing economies, social inclusion, and the safety of communities.

Most countries, as with Morocco, are trying to establish more transversal and coherent policies for young people that will strengthen safe and effective transitions to adult responsibilities: in employment, family life and civil society.

This demands a mosaic of initiatives, though not necessarily for all young people all of the time. An 'extending entitlement' youth policy agenda is worthy of consideration, embedded in Council of Europe principles that, where possible, policy should be opportunity-focused, rather than problem-oriented.

Strong family life and good schooling is no longer sufficient to prepare young people for adulthood. Young people need a range of experiences and opportunities – careers guidance; access to wider information, advice and guidance; constructive leisure time possibilities in music, arts and culture; group activities to foster collaboration, communication and teamwork; contact with other young people from different backgrounds and cultures; and platforms to express their views and have their voices heard.

There is no single conduit for providing these things. Some young people have no need of them through public intervention because they will access them by private means. If, however, such a 'package of entitlement' is not accessible, it should come as no surprise that young people denied it are consigned to the margins and to 'social exclusion'. An inclusive youth policy extends the *reach* of this package of opportunities and experiences to young people who cannot access them by any other means. In that sense, the policy is what might be called 'a universal service differentiated according to need'.

Within this package, there are more specific policy imperatives that make appropriate connections. One is to bring employment closer to education. This does not mean that education is only about employment and employability, but building bridges from school to work, and indeed by bringing employers into the learning environment, helps to forge important links for young people in the transition from school to work.

Within schools and colleges, learning and teaching practices need to strengthen 'active learning', 'experiential learning' and project-based group work, in which a range of curriculum subjects can be blended within one task or challenge. Teachers become the facilitators of learning rather than dispensers of knowledge – what is sometimes characterised as the 'guide by the side, rather than a sage on the stage'. There is still a need for some traditional education (knowledge cannot be guessed at) but there is an increasingly strong case for connecting this to wider practices of what has come to be known as 'non-formal education and learning', where the 'teacher' is, at different times an educator using more participatory and experiential methods ('do, review,

learn, apply') and a facilitator who supports young people to think through how their daily 'informal learning' can be applied to wider contexts of their lives.

Information is no longer difficult to find: it is all on the internet. However, it is more difficult to discern what is useful information and what is not. The late President Havel of the Czech Republic used to convene students from all over the world to consider the issues for learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. One team came up with 'FREUD in a human envelope'. FREUD is an acronym for Find, Retrieve, Evaluation, Use and Defend. It is not so far away from Professor Guerraoui's assertion of the need for 'searching, finding, creating'. But young people need to be supported in such 'enterprise'; hence the human envelope.

Nowhere is this more paramount than in the field of enterprise which, though theoretically self-determined and self-directed, requires significant learning and guidance. Textbooks classically discuss business planning, start-up finance, and perhaps a mentoring offer. Young people, however, need simulated experiences of the highs and lows, the elation and isolation, of enterprise activity; in short, they need to acquire and display the *resilience* required of any successful entrepreneur. The Round Table talked about the need to cultivate greater risk taking, but if the calculation of the risk is probable failure, then it will not be taken. Life experience produces the 'knock backs' and methodologies for bouncing back; young people often have yet to acquire such skills. Privileged and successful young people have not experienced hardship, while young people from more disadvantaged backgrounds are reluctant to take the plunge. There are, of course, exceptions to this binary assertion but it is the general rule.

### Research

The Round Table was especially interested in the evaluation of public policies, particularly those related to youth. There was a tendency to reify 'facts', as if they convey some objective meaning. But, of course, all facts demand interpretation. Moreover, diverse methodologies are invoked to produce 'facts', often different facts! Policy makers are therefore able, should they wish, to pick and mix the facts that fit best with their ideological orientation and political preferences.

Furthermore, hard facts may need to rub shoulders with soft perceptions. Illuminative evaluation, using qualitative methods, may shed useful, and different, light on issues about which the 'facts' may tell a different story. As the famous mantra goes, 'not everything that is important can be counted, and not everything that can be counted is important'. What is important is that mixed methods are used in order to *triangulate* findings, testing what quantitative data may tell us against the findings of qualitative inquiry which reveal how and why things may have occurred in particular ways.

There are, therefore, at least three trios for consideration in any research on youth policy. First, there are the methods, that need to combine secondary data analysis with, for example, both survey and interview data. Here the voice and perspectives of young people become important. Policy has to be *meaningful and relevant* to young people's lives. Excellent policy delivery may still be rejected if it is not seen that way; conversely, apparently poor policy and practice may be well received if it connects positively to young people's lives, even in ways that were not intended by those who



designed the policy. Secondly, though, one may have to temper the views and voice of young people with those of others (managers, providers, employers). Where there is an impasse in perspective, observational research may have to be conducted.

And thirdly, there are the three stages of policy development and implementation: its expression, its enactment and how it is experienced. Policy is notorious for remaining on the shelves, never reaching those for whom it is intended (or only those most easy to reach). Enactment often requires adaptation and compromise. It may not, as noted above, be experienced in ways that were intended.

As Dr Scadurra emphasised (see Diagram 4), there are numerous methods and levels required of research if it is to convey with accuracy the pathways to successful labour market integration. Such a programme of research would be extraordinarily expensive and take time. The findings of long-term studies are, sometimes at least, dismissed by politicians and policy makers as being out of date! Research is almost always only able to provide a partial insight into the efficacy of public policy programmes, but over time, with the usual caveats about context and targets, an accumulation of understanding can provide pointers to what might usefully be done. That was the purpose of the Round Table and, in the space of a few hours, some level of consensus suggested the following overall conclusions.

First, at the level of governance, greater transparency and equality of opportunity, through better labour market regulation, needs to be cemented if greater trust between young people and the public authorities is to be secured.

Second, throughout the economy and the labour market, measures are required to stimulate business incubation and innovation.

Third, consideration needs to be given to a range of labour market insertion strategies, whereby young people can gain work experience and where employers are incentivised to provide young people with meaningful and relevant experience.

Fourth, there is a need for a national initiative for youth, to unleash their energies in constructive ways, both through risk-taking and entrepreneurship in the world of work, and through greater involvement in civic and community life.

Fifth, this requires a stronger commitment to youth participation, ensuring platforms for young people's voice, opportunities for civic engagement and greater possibilities for political involvement.

Sixth, school curricula should be reviewed, and revised to embody more active learning.

Seventh, the cornerstone to such development is investment 'upstream' in both families (parents) and schools (teachers), in order to effect cultural change – from dependency and passive expectations to greater autonomy and active enterprise.

Fleshed out in further detail, with political will and within the human and financial resources available, these conclusions might constitute seven pillars on which young

people in Morocco may pursue more active lives for the benefit of themselves, and the communities and society in which they live.

The Round Table drew to a close with the chairperson concluding that while there are many different forms and shapes of youth in Morocco, the desire is for all to have a better active and working future, conceived by young people for young people, with the support of relevant and meaningful public policies.

## Appendix 1 – Programme

### PROGRAMME

#### Registration of participants

##### Opening speeches:

- **Abid Badil**, Chairman of the Provisional Thematic Working Group in charge of preparing the annual evaluation session on youth policy, Chamber of Councillors
- **Georgios Katrougalos**, Member of the Parliament of Greece, Chair of the PACE Sub-Committee on the Middle East and the Arab World
- **Carmen Morte Gomez**, Head of the Council of Europe Office in Morocco
- **Briac Deffobois**, Head of Section for Social and Rural Development at the Delegation of the European Union to Morocco

#### Public policies on youth: the Moroccan and European experience

**Facilitator: Abid Badil**, Chairman of the Provisional Thematic Working Group in charge of preparing the annual evaluation session on youth policy, Chamber of Councillors

- Youth employment in Morocco: a key to the present and lines of thought for the future  
**Driss Guerraoui**, President of the Open University of Dakhla and President of the Forum of African Economic Intelligence Associations
- Council of Europe international reviews of youth policy  
**Howard Williamson**, University of South Wales (*via video conference*)

##### Discussion

- National youth policies: the experience of Greece  
**Georgios Katrougalos**, member of the Parliament of Greece, Chair of the PACE Sub-Committee on the Middle East and the Arab World
- Young people's access to working life: the findings of a European study  
**Ruggero Cefalo**, University of Vienna

##### Discussion

#### Evaluation of public policies on youth: methodological aspects

**Facilitator: Mina Hamdani**, Member of the Provisional Thematic Working Group in charge of preparing the annual evaluation session on youth policy

- National youth policies: the experience of Finland  
**Saara-Sofia Sirén**, member of the Finnish Parliament
- Young people's access to working life: the methodology of a European study  
**Rosario Scandurra**, Autonomous University of Barcelona

##### Discussion

#### Conclusions

**Howard Williamson**  
**Mina Hamdani**