



REPUBLIC OF COTE D'IVOIRE  
Union – Discipline – Work  
-----  
MINISTRY OF STATE  
MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT,  
SOCIAL AFFAIRS  
AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING



**“Providing Africa’s Youth with Skills and Training for Jobs”**

**The ICQN/TVSD 2014 Ministerial Conference**

**Abidjan, 21, 22 and 23 July 2014**

**Hotel NOVOTEL**

## **SEMINAR ON YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN AFRICA**

### **COUNTRY REPORT (Final) REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS**

**Prepared by JOOSERY Pradeep Kumar**

**Officer in Charge**

**Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (MITD)**

**May 2014**

# Table of Contents

Table of Contents .....	i
List of Tables .....	iii
List of Figures .....	iv
Acronyms .....	v
Executive Summary .....	vi
1. Introduction.....	1
2. Employment Structure .....	2
2.1 Employment by Occupational Classification.....	3
2.2 Foreign workers.....	4
3. Youth Unemployment.....	5
3.1 Number of Youth Unemployed.....	6
3.2 Youth Unemployed by Educational Attainment: 16-24 years .....	7
3.3 Duration of Youth unemployment .....	9
3.4 Number of Youth enrolment in TVET in 2013.....	10
3.5 Employment Rate of TVET graduates .....	11
4. Difficulties faced by youth to access the labour market .....	11
4.1 Mauritius Employers' Federation.....	11
4.2 Tertiary Education Commission - Graduate Tracer Study 2011 .....	12
4.3 HRDC Surveys and Workshops.....	12
5. Policies to Enhance Youth Employment .....	14
5.1 Apprenticeship Training.....	14
5.2 Tracer Studies (Apprenticeship).....	15
5.3 Financial incentives.....	16

5.4	The Second Chance Programme .....	17
5.5	Youth Employment Programme .....	17
5.6	The Services to Mauritius Programme (STM).....	18
5.7	Training and placement programme .....	18
5.8	Circular Migration Programme .....	20
5.9	Work-placement Programme for Secondary School students .....	20
5.10	Labour Shortage Surveys.....	20
5.11	Job Fairs.....	21
5.12	Diversification of economic sectors.....	21
5.13	Employment Service.....	21
5.14	The ICT Skills Development Programme .....	21
5.15	Policies to encourage entrepreneurship .....	22
5.16	The HSC Professional.....	22
5.17	Recognition of prior learning.....	22
6.	Conclusion .....	23
	REFERENCES .....	25

## List of Tables

Table 1: Age Distribution of the Population (2012) .....	1
Table 2: Growth Rate, Unemployment and Unemployment Rate for the Period 2008-2012.....	2
Table 3: Employed population by industrial sector and sex – 2002 & 2012 .....	3
Table 4: Labour force characteristics by Age and Sex for the year 2012.....	4
Table 5: Enrolment in Public TVET 2012.....	10
Table 6: Age Distribution of youth in TVET.....	10
Table 7: Causes and Policy Recommendations proposed by MEF .....	11
Table 8: Level of Mismatch/Underemployment across Faculties .....	12
Table 9: Summary of the Main Findings of the Different Surveys .....	13
and Workshops carried out by HRDC .....	13
Table 10: Tracer Studies (Apprenticeship).....	16

## List of Figures

Figure 1: Highest Education Attainment among Unemployed as at December 2012 .....	5
Figure 2: Youth unemployment (16-24) for the period 2006 to 2012 .....	7
Figure 3: Youth unemployed (16-24) by Educational Attainment, 2006 to 2012 .....	8
Figure 4: Youth unemployed (16-24) by Educational Attainment in 2012 .....	9
Figure 5: Youth unemployed (16-24 years) by Duration of Unemployment in 2012 .....	9

## **Acronyms**

<b>BPO</b>	<b>Business Processes Outsourcing</b>
<b>CPE</b>	<b>Certificate of Primary Education</b>
<b>HRDC</b>	<b>Human Resource Development Council</b>
<b>HSC</b>	<b>Higher School Certificate</b>
<b>ICT</b>	<b>Information and Communication Technology</b>
<b>IVTB</b>	<b>Industrial and Vocational Training Board</b>
<b>MEF</b>	<b>Mauritius Employers Federation</b>
<b>MITD</b>	<b>Mauritius Institute of Training and Development</b>
<b>MoEHR</b>	<b>Ministry of Education and Human Resources</b>
<b>MQA</b>	<b>Mauritius Qualifications Authority</b>
<b>NEET</b>	<b>Neither in Employment, Education and Training</b>
<b>NEF</b>	<b>National Empowerment Foundation</b>
<b>NTC</b>	<b>National Trade Certificate</b>
<b>NTCFC</b>	<b>National Trade Certificate Foundation Course</b>
<b>SC</b>	<b>School Certificate</b>
<b>STM</b>	<b>Services to Mauritius</b>
<b>TVET</b>	<b>Technical and Vocational Education and Training</b>
<b>UN</b>	<b>United Nations</b>
<b>YEP</b>	<b>Youth Employment programme</b>

## **Executive Summary**

The Republic of Mauritius is an island situated in the South West of the Indian Ocean and covers a surface area of 2,040 Km<sup>2</sup> and has the right over an Exclusive Economic Zone of 2 million Km<sup>2</sup>. The country has a population size of around 1.3 million, of which 16.2 % are youth aged between 15 to 24 years.

The Mauritian economy is primarily export-oriented and rests on five pillars, namely sugar, tourism, textile, financial services and ICT. Due to the recent global financial and economic crises the economic growth rate has declined from 5.5% in 2008 to 3.3% in 2012.

In Mauritius, education is free from pre-primary up to tertiary level and compulsory up to the age of 16 years. The country has a literacy rate of 89.9% among the population aged 12 years and above.

The Mauritian labour force was estimated at 593,100 (368,400 males and 224,700 females) in 2012. A total of 24,000 foreign workers were also employed, mainly at operator's level in the manufacturing sector.

Unemployment has increased slightly from 7.2% in 2008 and reached 8.1% in 2012. The female unemployment rate is higher than male unemployment rate, i.e. 12.7% compared to 5.3% respectively

The youth of working age between 16 years and 24 years represent about 40% of the total number of unemployed. The youth unemployment rate was 24.4% in 2012 compared to the overall unemployment rate (youth + adults) which stood at 8.1%.

Statistics by educational attainment reveal that the number of unemployed youth not holding a School Certificate (SC) has increased slightly by 3% during the period 2006 to 2012. The number of unemployed youth who have attained tertiary education level has increased significantly from 1,300 in 2006 to 5,000 in 2012. The statistics confirm that most graduates are finding it difficult to obtain a job during the past few years. The employment rate of TVET graduates for the 2012 cohort of trainees was 65.5% and the percentage pursuing further training was 18.2%.

According to a report prepared by the MEF, one of the main causes of youth unemployment is the lack of adequate education, training and employable skills

## **Measures taken to enhance youth employment**

- Training under Apprenticeship System introduced by the IVTB in the TVET sector yielded relatively high employment rate among TVET graduates. The Dual Apprenticeship System is also being extended to include Diploma and Degree programmes as from 2014
- The Second Chance Programme has been set up in 2009, to provide basic numeracy & literacy skills to youngsters aged between 16-21 years, who are not in education, employment and Training (NEET) and orient these young people to a vocational training programme.
- This Youth Employment Programme programme, was launched in year 2013 to assist the unemployed youth between the ages of 16 and 30 years, with different educational backgrounds, to obtain employment through work placement and training over a period of one year.
- The Services to Mauritius Programme launched in 2008, is targeted towards the educated youth, i.e. the young professionals who have completed the tertiary level studies. The aim of the programme is to build capacity in the public sector.
- The Training and Placement Scheme, has been introduced in 2009 with the objective to provide the unemployed with an in-company placement coupled with a work-related formal training so as to make them employable
- Government, through the NEF is facilitating circular migration of Mauritian workers to secure employment opportunities abroad for a fixed term and in specific sectors
- Placement of Lower VI students in enterprises for a period of 2 weeks during the school holidays. The objective is to complement a students' academic studies with on-the-job practical work experience and to bridge the gap between school and the world of work
- Labour Shortage Surveys are conducted in different sectors to help develop strategies and policies to reduce the mismatch between demand and supply of labour in the country.
- Job fairs are organized to facilitate contact between employers and graduates/trainees
- Diversification of economic sectors such as green and ocean economy leading to new jobs creation
- The Employment Service deals with the management of Employment Information Centres, registration, counselling, placement of jobseekers in employment, processing of work permits, collection and publication of statistics on the labour market, including employment and unemployment.
- The Training and Work Placement Scheme in the ICT/BPO sector aimed at providing work placements to unemployed youth having an SC, HSC, Diploma and/or Degree for a maximum period of 12 months
- The Work-Based Learning for University Students scheme enables employers to identify talents before graduation among Tertiary Level Students through a 'Work-Based Learning' concept.



- The Accelerator Project meant to facilitate the creation of technology-based companies for young developers who have the potential but not the necessary tools to engage in entrepreneurship
- implementation of the HSC Professional (HSC Pro) to offer to students an alternative course of study geared towards the world of work

# 1. Introduction

The Republic of Mauritius which lies in the South West of the Indian Ocean is made up of the islands of Mauritius, Rodrigues, Agaléga and Cargados Carados. Mauritius is of volcanic origin and covers a surface area of 2,040 sq. Kms and has the right over an Exclusive Economic Zone of 2 million Kms.

The estimated population of the Republic of Mauritius in 2013 was around 1.3 million, with a population density of 628 people per square kilometre. The age distribution below shows that 208,702, that is 16.2 % of the population is in the age group of 15 to 24 years

*Table 1: Age Distribution of the Population (2012)*

Age Group	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
0-14	135,044	21.2%	130,715	19.9%	265,759	20.6%
15-19	52,254	8.2%	51,810	7.9%	104,064	8.1%
20-24	53,161	8.4%	51,477	7.9%	104,638	8.1%
25-29	46,945	7.4%	46,158	7.0%	93,103	7.2%
30-49	198,813	31.3%	202,121	30.8%	400,934	31.1%
50-64	108,869	17.1%	114,997	17.5%	223,866	17.3%
65 and above	40,734	6.4%	58,069	8.9%	98,803	7.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>635,820</b>		<b>655,347</b>		<b>1,291,167</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Source: Statistics Mauritius (2012)**

The performance of the Mauritian economy, which is primarily export-oriented, has been adversely affected by the recent global financial and economic crises as shown in table 2 below.

**Table 2: Growth Rate, Unemployment and Unemployment Rate for the Period 2008-2012**

	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>
<b>Growth Rate</b>	+5.5	+3.1	+4.2	+3.5	+3.3
<b>Unemployment</b>	40,400	41,500	45,200	46,100	48,300
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	7.2%	7.3%	7.8%	7.9%	8.1%

**Source: Statistics Mauritius, 2012**

The annual economic growth rate has declined from 5.5% in 2008 to 3.3% in 2012. Consequently, the unemployment rate has continuously increased from 7.2% in 2008 to 8.1% in 2012 resulting from low job creation. The unemployment rate for males has grown over the past five years from 4.1% to reach 5.3% in 2012 but remains comparatively low to female unemployment rate which stood at 12.7%. The tables below portray the labour force characteristics for 2012.

In Mauritius, education is free from pre-primary up to tertiary level. The country has a literacy rate of 89.9% among the population aged 12 years and above. This figure is expected to increase in the wake of the educational reform underway and the government policy of compulsory education up to the age of 16 years.

## **2. Employment Structure**

As shown in Table 2 below, out of every 100 workers, 65 were employed in the tertiary sector (covering trade, accommodation and food service activities, transportation and storage and all the other service industries), 28 in the secondary sector (covering manufacturing, electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply and water supply, sewerage waste management and remediation activities and construction) and around 8 in the primary sector (covering agriculture, forestry and fishing and mining & quarrying)

**Table 3: Employed population by industrial sector and sex – 2002 & 2012**

Industrial Sector	2002			2012		
	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes
Primary	39,900	13,700	53,600	29,400	12,400	41,800
Secondary	111,100	56,100	167,200	112,500	39,100	151,600
<i>of which Manufacturing</i>	<i>61,500</i>	<i>54,500</i>	<i>116,000</i>	49,000	37,100	86,100
<i>Construction</i>	<i>44,900</i>	<i>500</i>	<i>45,400</i>	55,500	1,400	56,900
Tertiary	166,900	79,100	246,000	206,800	144,600	351,400
<i>of which Wholesale and retail trade</i>	<i>42,400</i>	<i>19,300</i>	<i>61,700</i>	49,800	36,700	86,500
<i>Accommodation and food service activities</i>	<i>17,200</i>	<i>6,600</i>	<i>23,800</i>	23,900	14,700	38,600
<i>Transportation and storage</i>	<i>23,300</i>	<i>2,800</i>	<i>26,100</i>	31,700	3,700	35,400
<i>Public administration and defence</i>	<i>25,000</i>	<i>8,000</i>	<i>33,000</i>	31,600	10,300	41,900
<i>Education, human health &amp; social work</i>	<i>19,500</i>	<i>21,300</i>	<i>40,800</i>	21,000	28,400	49,400
<b>All sectors</b>	<b>317,900</b>	<b>148,900</b>	<b>466,800</b>	<b>348,700</b>	<b>196,100</b>	<b>544,800</b>

The tertiary sector is becoming increasingly important in terms of employment. From 2002 to 2012, employment in this sector rose from 245,400 to 351,400; its share over total employment also increased from 53% to 65%. In contrast, employment in the primary and secondary sectors has been declining over time. In the primary sector, employment went down from 50,800 in 2002 to 41,800 in 2012 mainly due to a decline in the agricultural sector. In the secondary sector, employment declined from 170,600 to 151,600 mainly due to a decreasing workforce in the manufacturing sector.

## 2.1 Employment by Occupational Classification

In 2012, around 20.4% of the workforce was engaged in the highest occupational group (ISCO 1-3) which comprised chief executives, senior officials and legislators; professionals; technicians and associate professionals, as compared to 14.5% in 2002. Service workers and shop and market sales workers (ISCO 5) also had a larger share of employment in 2012, 21.2% against 15.3% in 2002. In contrast the share of employment in the lowest occupational group (ISCO 9) representing elementary jobs decreased from 23.4% to 17.4%. Also, skilled agricultural and fishery workers; craft and

related trade workers; plant and machine operators and assemblers (ISCO 6-8) were less represented in 2012 (31.9%) compared to 39.5% in 2002.

## 2.2 Foreign workers

The total number of foreign workers in 2012, stood at 24,000 mainly in the manufacturing sector and the construction sector. The foreign workers in the manufacturing sector were mainly engaged in occupations at operators' level such as machine operators, bakery operators and fish cutters. In the construction sector foreign workers were employed mainly in the following grades namely, masons, bricklayers, bar-benders, plasterers, carpenters and building painters amongst others.

*Table 4: Labour force characteristics by Age and Sex for the year 2012*

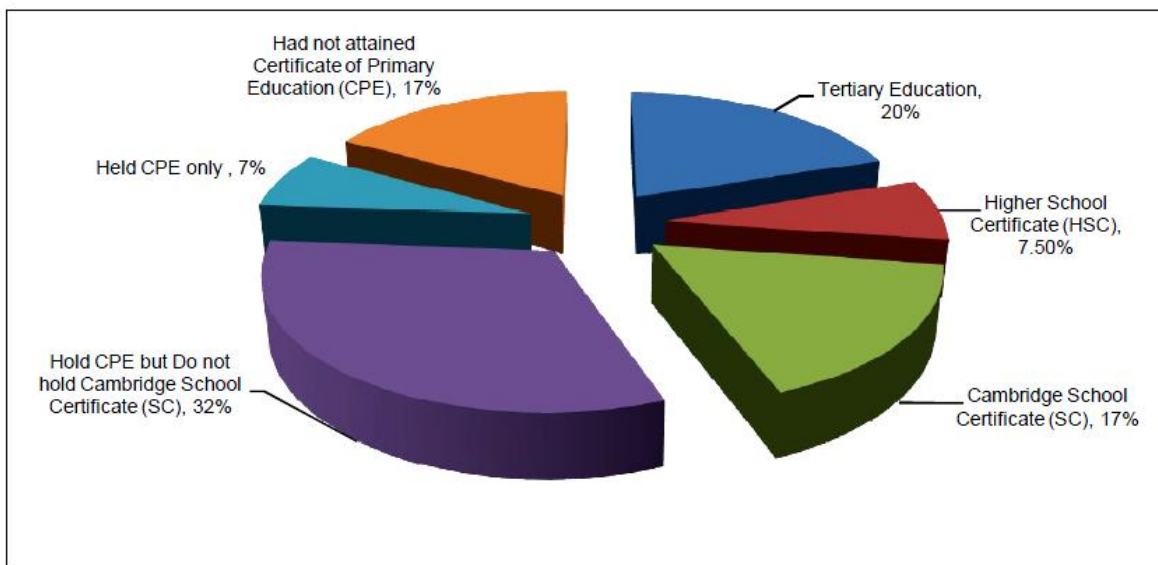
Age Group	16-19	20-24	25 - 29	30-35	35-39	40+	Total
<b>Both Sexes</b>							
Labour Force	16,100	65,200	71,000	85,300	75,600	279,900	593,100
Employment	10,400	51,100	62,900	79,400	71,200	269,800	544,800
Unemployment	5,700	14,100	8,100	5,900	4,400	10,100	48,300
Employment rate (%)	64.6%	78.4%	88.6%	93.1%	94.2%	96.4%	91.9%
Unemployment rate (%)	35.4%	21.6%	11.4%	6.9%	5.8%	3.6%	8.1%
<b>Male</b>							
Labour Force	9,600	38,200	41,900	52,200	45,400	181,100	368,400
Employment	6,800	31,800	38,300	50,300	44,200	177,300	348,700
Unemployment	2,800	6,400	3,600	1,900	1,200	3,800	19,700
Employment rate (%)	70.8%	83.2%	91.4%	96.4%	97.4%	97.9%	94.7%
Unemployment rate (%)	29.2%	16.8%	8.6%	3.6%	2.6%	2.1%	5.3%
<b>Female</b>							
Labour Force	6,500	27,000	29,100	33,100	30,200	98,800	224,700
Employment	3,600	19,300	24,600	29,100	27,000	92,500	196,100
Unemployment	2,900	7,700	4,500	4,000	3,200	6,300	28,600
Employment rate (%)	55.4%	71.5%	84.5%	87.9%	89.4%	93.6%	87.3%
Unemployment rate (%)	44.6%	28.5%	15.5%	12.1%	10.6%	6.4%	12.7%

Source: Statistics Mauritius, 2012

An analysis of the above statistics reveals that

- The female unemployment rate is higher than male unemployment rate, i.e. 12.7% compared to 5.3% respectively.
- The unemployment rate among the lowest age groups is highest and decreases progressively with increasing age.
- Most of the unemployed males are single whilst the unemployed females are mostly married.
- Nearly three quarters of those unemployed in the country do not hold a Higher School Certificate or higher qualifications as shown in the chart below

Figure 1: Highest Education Attainment among Unemployed as at December 2012



Source: Statistics Mauritius

### 3. Youth Unemployment

According to Statistics Mauritius, based on the UN International Recommendation, youth is defined as people of 15-24 years. However, it is to be noted that, as from 2007, labour force estimates are based on population aged 16 years and above, following amendments to the Labour Act in December 2006, whereby the minimum legal working age is 16 years. The

youth unemployment rate is calculated using 16-24 years at Statistics Mauritius. In this report, we define youth as being the age of 16 years and 24 years.

In 2012, close to 19,800 youth were unemployed in the country. The youth of working age between 16 years and 24 years represent about 40% of the total number of unemployed. The youth unemployment rate was 24.4% in 2012 compared to the overall unemployment rate (youth + adults) which stood at 8.1%. Thus, the youth unemployment rate is three times the overall unemployment rate. The problem has been aggravated by the sequels of the economic and financial crisis the country has been facing.

In 2012, the working age population (aged 16 years and over) numbered 993,500, of whom 593,100 consisted of the labour force. The number employed totalled 544,800 whilst the number of unemployed was at 48,300; the unemployment rate as a percentage of labour force worked out to 8.1 percent of the labour force.

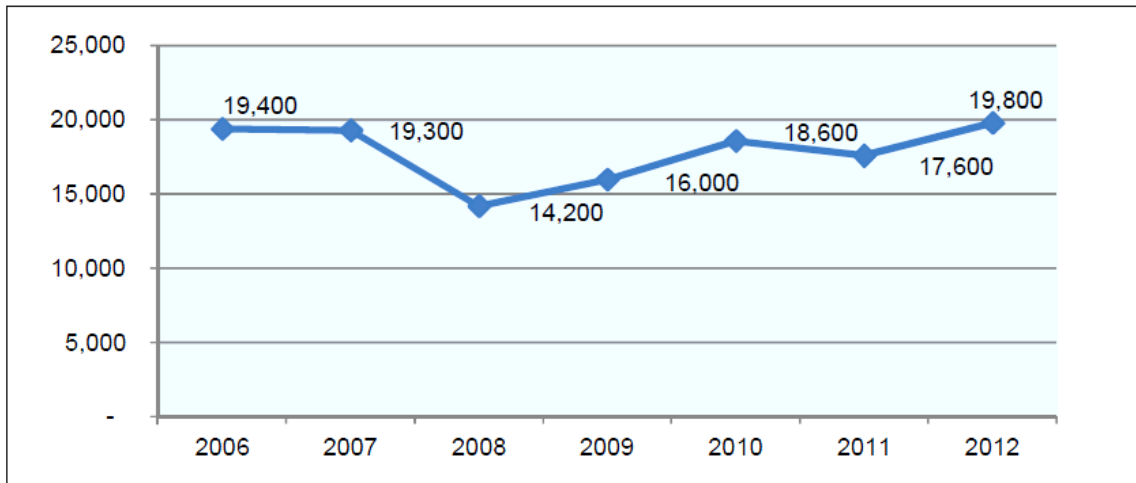
Out of the total labour force of 593,100, 81,300 belonged to the 16 to 24 age group. The number of youth in employment stood at 61,500 resulting in a youth unemployment rate of 24.4%.

### **3.1 Number of Youth Unemployed**

In 2012, the number of unemployed youth for the age group 16-24 stood at 19,800. The number of youth unemployed for the age group 16-24 has increased by 39% during the period 2008 to 2012. A profiling of the unemployed youth shows that the unemployment rate among the lowest age groups is the highest and peaks at 35.4% among those below 20 years and 21.6% for those between 20 and 24 years. The disparity between male and female unemployment rate is also highest in the lower age group

The trend of youth unemployment for the period of 2006 to 2012 is shown below.

**Figure 2: Youth unemployment (16-24) for the period 2006 to 2012**



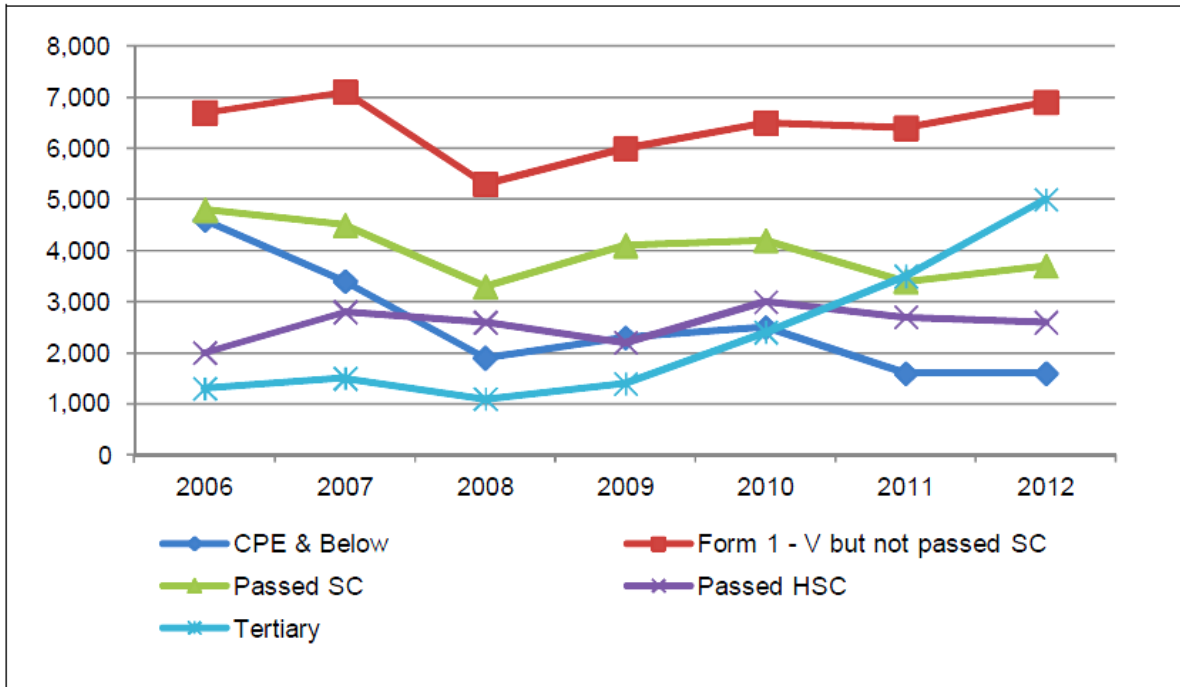
### **3.2 Youth Unemployed by Educational Attainment: 16-24 years**

Statistics regarding youth unemployed, aged between 16 and 24, by educational attainment reveal that the number of unemployed youth not holding a School Certificate (SC) has fallen from 6,700 in 2006 to 5,300 in 2008 before increasing to 6,900 in 2012. It represents a slight increase of 3% during the period 2006 to 2012.

On the other hand, the number of unemployed youth who have attained tertiary education level has increased significantly from 1,300 in 2006 to 5,000 in 2012. The statistics confirm that most graduates are finding it difficult to obtain a job during the past few years.



**Figure 3: Youth unemployed (16-24) by Educational Attainment, 2006 to 2012**



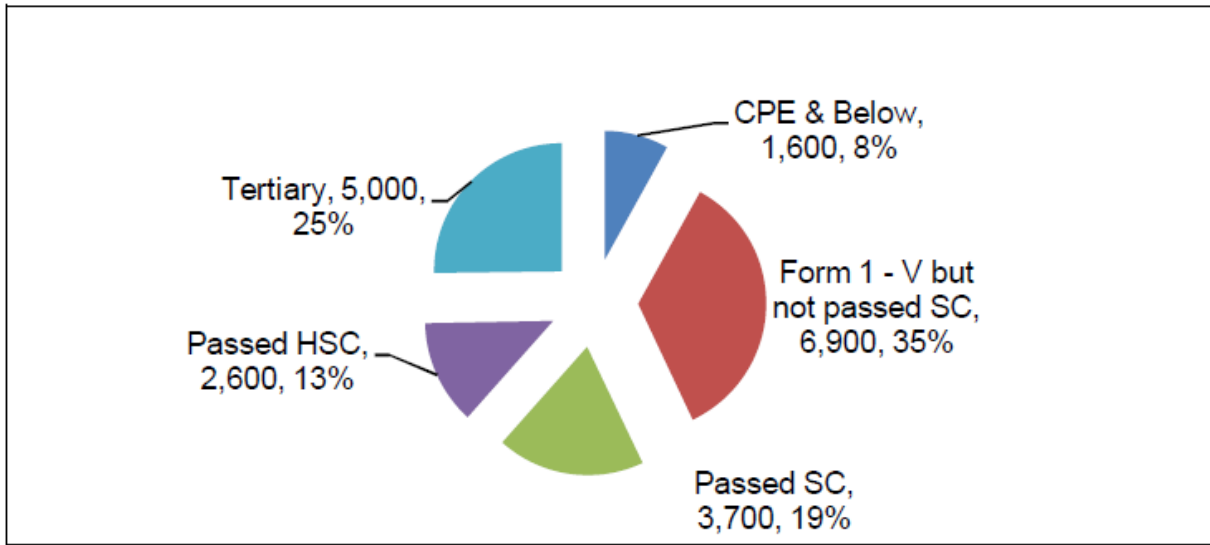
Source: Continuous Multi-Purpose Household Survey (CMPHS), Statistics Mauritius

At the lowest level of education, the number of unemployed youth holding a CPE and below qualification has fallen tremendously from 4,600 in 2006 to 1,600 in 2012. Those holding an HSC have remained almost unchanged whilst the number of unemployed holding an SC has fallen by 1,100 since 2006.

The main observations from the statistics on the number of unemployed youth between the ages of 16 and 24 years are as follows:

- In 2012, there were some 5000 unemployed youth who have completed the tertiary education level, representing 25% of the total youth unemployed.
- 62% of the youth unemployed have studied at the most up to School Certificate level

**Figure 4: Youth unemployed (16-24) by Educational Attainment in 2012**

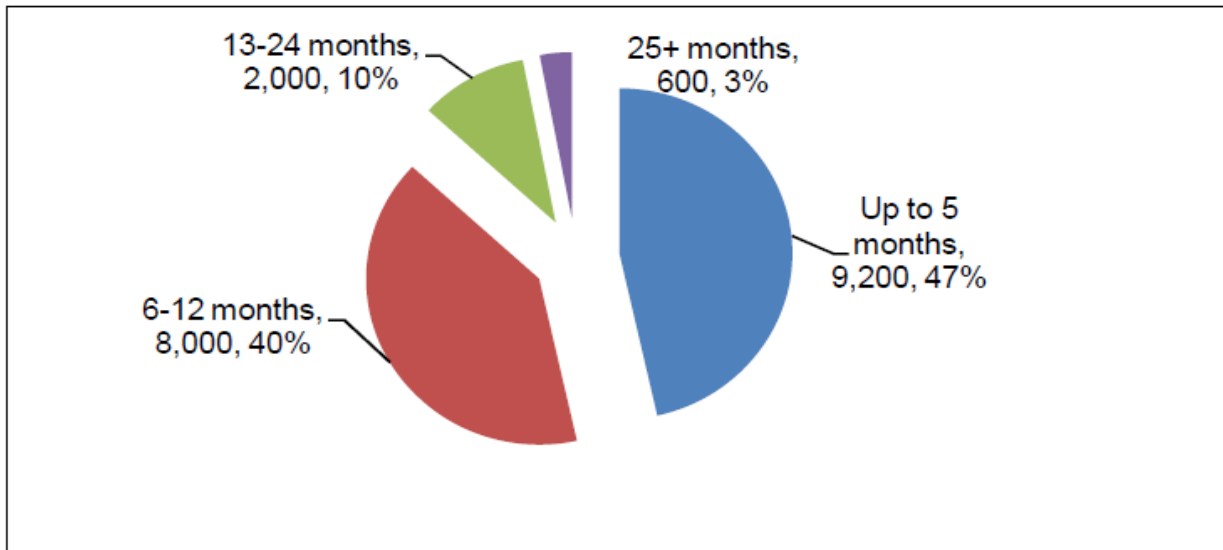


*Source: Continuous Multi-Purpose Household Survey (CMPHS), Statistics Mauritius*

### 3.3 Duration of Youth unemployment

The figures for youth unemployed by duration of unemployment show that 47% of the youth unemployed waited only up to 5 months before obtaining a job and 40% waited up to 1 year.

**Figure 5: Youth unemployed (16-24 years) by Duration of Unemployment in 2012**



*Source: Continuous Multi-Purpose Household Survey (CMPHS), Statistics Mauritius*

### 3.4 Number of Youth enrolment in TVET in 2013

The Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (MITD) operates a network of 25 Training Centres comprising of 15 vocational training centres and 9 dedicated NTC Foundation/Pre-Vocational centres. The vocational training centres offer technical and vocational courses at National Certificate up to higher national Diploma level in a number of different fields. The courses are provided through different modes including: apprenticeship training, full time training, part time training and targeted training. In 2012 the total number of people trained by MITD was 10,168 as follows:

*Table 5: Enrolment in Public TVET 2012*

Type of courses	No. of people trained
Full Time	2970
Part Time	4387
Apprenticeship	1160
NTC Foundation	1651
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,168</b>

The age distribution of the youth engaged in pre-employment TVET programmes are as follows.

*Table 6: Age Distribution of youth in TVET*

MODE	Age distribution of trainees (Years)								TOTAL
	15*	16	17	18	19	20	21	>21	
<b>Full-Time</b>	3599	570	376	336	335	327	295	536	<b>6374</b>
<b>Apprenticeship</b>	0	178	149	259	236	161	114	216	<b>1313</b>
<b>G.TOTAL</b>	<b>3599</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>595</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>752</b>	<b>7687</b>

\* Note the students aged 15 years comprises of 1678 (NTCFC) and 1921 (Pre-Vocational Education)

### 3.5 Employment Rate of TVET graduates

According to the tracer studies carried out by the MITD, six months after successful completion of the training programmes, the employment rate of TVET graduates for the 2012 cohort of trainees was 65.5% and the percentage pursuing further training was 18.2%.

## 4. Difficulties faced by youth to access the labour market

### 4.1 Mauritius Employers' Federation

According to a report prepared by the MEF, one of the main causes of youth unemployment is the lack of adequate education, training and employable skills. The MEF stated that education and training should be promoted to reduce the youth unemployment. It further proposed that youth employment should be part of development strategies of the country. The table below shows a summary of the causes and policy recommendations proposed by the MEF.

*Table 7: Causes and Policy Recommendations proposed by MEF*

Causes of Youth Unemployment	Promotion of Youth Employment in Mauritius
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of adequate education, training and employable skills</li> <li>• The issue of low economic growth</li> <li>• Absence of targeted policies and strategies</li> <li>• Job search constraints</li> <li>• Weak entrepreneurial culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education and training</li> <li>• Macroeconomic policies</li> <li>• Job vacancies information and careers guidance</li> <li>• Youth entrepreneurship</li> </ul>
Policy recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an integrated approach</li> <li>• Sustain economic growth and mainstream youth employment into development strategies</li> <li>• Enhance youth employability</li> <li>• Undertake targeted labour market programmes for youth</li> <li>• Foster youth entrepreneurship</li> <li>• Address the gender bias</li> <li>• Develop monitoring and evaluation systems</li> </ul>	

*Source: Eco Trends: The Challenge of Youth Employment, Mauritius Employers' Federation, 2012*

## 4.2 Tertiary Education Commission - Graduate Tracer Study 2011

In the study of 2011, there were about 1,500 graduates from the University of Mauritius and University of Technology who participated in the survey.

The results of the survey showed that it is difficult for new graduates to obtain an offer of employment as long as the results of their final examinations are not officially known. Furthermore, according to the study, *“in general, it took about 2 years for the near-totality of graduates (98.0%) to secure a job, irrespective of the field of study and gender and one year for 90% to obtain employment”*

In general, about 23.1% of graduates stated that they were underemployed as their jobs did not need a degree. The level of mismatch or underemployment varied from faculty to faculty as shown in the table below.

*Table 8: Level of Mismatch/Underemployment across Faculties*

Faculty / School	Level of Underemployment
School of Sustainable Development and Tourism	60.9%
School of Business Management and Finance	41.8%
University of Mauritius / MGI	40%
Agriculture	39%
Social Studies and Humanities	28.6%
Law & Management	20.4%
Engineering	8.8%
Science	16.8%

*Source: TEC's Graduate Tracer Study, 2011*

## 4.3 HRDC Surveys and Workshops

The Human Resource Development Council carries out surveys and conducts workshops with a view to identifying labour shortage and skills mismatch. Below is a table that summarizes the main findings.

**Table 9: Summary of the Main Findings of the Different Surveys and Workshops carried out by HRDC**

Survey/ Workshop	Sector	Year	Main Findings as Reported by HRDC
Workshop	ICT / BPO	May 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many graduates from tertiary institutions are not equipped with the right skills</li> <li>• The main shortfall to having a skilled and qualified labour is the disconnect between what education/training providers teach and the skills that employers are looking for</li> </ul>
Survey	Financial sector	Aug – Sep 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 55% of the employers felt that Mauritius was experiencing labour shortage at national level</li> <li>• Among the most common difficulties that employers are facing to recruit skilled labour include a demand for high wages/salaries, the preference of skilled labour to work abroad, a negative attitude towards work, and the lack of skilled labour in the market</li> </ul>
Workshop	Financial sector	June 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need to establish a correlation between what employers are looking for and tapping the available talent pool.</li> <li>• Closer collaboration and dialogue between the industry and training institutions are fundamental.</li> </ul>

Survey/ Workshop	Sector	Year	Main Findings as Reported by HRDC
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modules on work ethics should be integrated in the school curriculum to inculcate the right approach and work culture in students from an early age.</li> <li>• Professional career guidance should be introduced as from Form III level.</li> <li>• At organisational level, continuous learning through top up courses and training should be encouraged. These were among recommendations made at the conclusion of the workshop</li> </ul>
Survey	Manufacturing	Aug – Sep 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• employers complain about the lack of the right skills at the right time</li> <li>• retention of skilled labour and competent workers</li> </ul>
Survey	Agriculture	Aug – Sep 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• many of those people unemployed in Mauritius are not willing to join the agricultural sector</li> <li>• issue of labour importation, minimal exposure to agriculture subjects in the school curriculum from primary level, lack of career guidance</li> </ul>
Survey	Construction	Aug – Sep 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shortage of skilled labour in the Construction sector in Mauritius is a matter of growing concern among companies and HR professionals</li> </ul>

Source: Various documents, HRDC

## 5. Policies to Enhance Youth Employment

### 5.1 Apprenticeship Training

Training under the Apprenticeship Scheme was introduced by the ex-IVTB in 1996 and is governed by Regulation under the ex-IVT Act (1988) and now the MITD Act (2009). This mode of training is based on the German Dual system.

Generally, the period of apprenticeship lasts for one to two years and leads to the National Trade Certificate/National Certificate. Since the introduction of training under the AS mode, the MITD has trained over 13,000 persons in technical and the hospitality trades.

The Apprenticeship training combines on-the-job training with centre-based learning to develop the necessary skills and knowledge required for a trade. The main objectives of Apprenticeship Training are:

- To produce skilled and qualified workforce
- To increase access to TVET
- To strengthen links with industries
- To improve efficiency and effectiveness of training system

#### (i). Apprenticeship Trades

The MITD is presently delivering training programmes in 26 different trades under the Apprenticeship mode.

- Landscape Maintenance
- Aluminium and UPVC Joinery
- Automotive Body Repairs
- Automotive Mechanics
- Bakery
- Beauty Therapy
- Building Maintenance
- Butchery
- Electrical Installation Works
- Engineering Machining and Tool Making
- Food Production
- Front Office
- Wood Trades
- Hairdressing
- Housekeeping
- Maintenance and Repairs of Equipment for Parc et Jardin
- Pastry Production
- Plumbing
- Print Finishing
- Refrigeration and Air Conditioning
- Restaurant /Bar Service
- Sheet Metal Fabrication
- Tractor and Heavy Vehicle Mechanics
- Villa Services
- Welding
- Automotive Electricity and Electronics

## **(ii).Modes of Apprenticeship**

There are three different modes of Apprenticeship Training operated by the MITD.

### ***Dual Mode***

The Apprentices spend 4 to 5 days a week in an enterprise to acquire skills and work experience and one day in a training centre for the theoretical and technological knowledge.

### ***Tailor-Made Mode***

This mode of training is meant for responding to the specific training needs of enterprises based on a specifically designed curriculum.

### ***In-House Training***

The employer undertakes to provide both theoretical and practical training and the assessment and certification are conducted by the MITD. Training under this mode has been conducted primarily in the hotel and tourism sector.

## **5.2 Tracer Studies (Apprenticeship)**

According to tracer studies carried out in 2013, six months after successful completion, the employment rate of TVET graduates was 65.5% and the percentage of respondents pursuing further training was 18.2%. The study also revealed that the employment rate of Apprenticeship graduates (85.1%) was higher than full-time graduates.



*Table 10: Tracer Studies (Apprenticeship)*

<b>Employment Rate of Apprentices by Sector</b>	
<b>Sector</b>	<b>Employment Rate</b>
Hospitality Sector	85.8%
Engineering Sector	82.3%
Overall	<b>85.1%</b>

### **5.3 Financial incentives**

Financial incentives are provided by the Human Resource Development Council to employers hiring apprentices. The amount is based on the basic wages, determined in line with Remuneration Orders for different economic sectors and occupations, and includes also part of overhead cost associated with the supervision on the job by trained tutors.

The apprentice is paid a monthly allowance by the employer, which is 40% and 60% of the minimum wage, as spelt out by the appropriate Remuneration Order for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> years respectively. Since 2000, the employer is eligible for a financial incentive in the form of re-imbursment by the ex-IVTB (since 2004 by the HRDC) of 50% of the qualifying expenses (apprentice wage and overheads) incurred on an apprentice by the employer.

The Apprenticeship System of training is recognized for its effectiveness in bridging the gap between education and the world of work. In the 2014 Budget measures have been announced for the extension of the Dual Apprenticeship System to include Diploma and Degree programmes as well, and not limited to trades only.

## **5.4 The Second Chance Programme**

In 2009, Government set up the Second Chance Programme, which aims at providing basic numeracy & literacy skills to youngsters aged between 16-21 years, who are not in education, employment and Training (NEET) and orient these young people to a vocational training programme. The programme lays strong emphasis on life training skills and provides psychological and social back up to the youngsters. The programme targeted around 2000 youth falling in this category and was conducted by the MITD from 2009 to 2013. A total of 1606 youngsters joined the programme, out of which 847 were successful and they awarded a Certificate in Literacy and Numeracy

### ***Objectives***

The objectives of the training programme are to:-

- Develop reading, writing and communication skills.
- Develop life skills
- Develop a positive attitude.
- Prepare psychologically for the world of work

## **5.5 Youth Employment Programme**

This programme, launched in year 2013, is aimed at specifically assisting the unemployed youth between the ages of 16 and 30 years, with different educational backgrounds, to obtain employment through work placement and training over a period of one year. The Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, in partnership with the Joint Economic Council, has established a joint public-private initiative called the Skills Working Group (SWG), in order to implement the Youth Employment Programme.

The YEP offers a subsidy of fifty percent of the youth's monthly stipend to the companies, which varies based on the level of education of the trainee. YEP thus contributes up to a

maximum of Rs 4000 for non-degree holders and Rs 7500 for degree holders. Additionally, YEP subsidises fifty percent of the cost of training up to a maximum of Rs.7, 500.

In 2013, 4178 (2266 male and 1912 female) youth have been placed in private companies. The companies that hired trainees were from different sectors, namely: Professional, Scientific and Technical activities (21.1%), Information and Communication (16.3%), Wholesale and Retail Trade (13.8%), Manufacturing (13%), and Accommodation and Food Service activities (9.7%).

The educational levels of the trainees ranged from University degrees (17%), Higher School Certificate (23%), School Certificate (26%) and Below School Certificate (26%).

## **5.6 The Services to Mauritius Programme (STM)**

This programme, launched in year 2008, is targeted towards the educated youth, i.e. the young professionals who have completed the tertiary level studies. The aim of the programme is to build capacity in the public sector. By providing internships to youths in the public service, it provides opportunities to acquire skills, knowledge and experience at a relatively high level in Government Ministries and public sector institutions. The internship is for one to two years and is renewable for another year.

## **5.7 Training and placement programme**

Government introduced in 2009 the Training and Placement Scheme, implemented by the National Empowerment Foundation (NEF), in collaboration with employers and training providers.

The objective of the Programme is to address the problem of mismatch in the labour market, with on one hand, employers finding it difficult to find the labour force they need, and on the other, a high rate of unemployment. The programme is designed to provide the

unemployed with an in-company placement coupled with a work-related formal training so as to make them employable. The employer will retain at least 60% of the trainees in placement for at least 13 months so that the employer could participate again in this scheme.

To encourage employers to engage through this program, the NEF contribute financially to the cost of training and remuneration of trainees.

The target population consists of:

- School leavers
- Unemployed (16 yrs and above)
- Retrenched workers
- Laid off workers from Workfare Programme
- To encourage the employers to engage in this program, the NEF contributes financially at the expenses of training and remuneration of the trainees. Employers can recover up to 60 % of training cost and 50% of stipend paid to the trainees

In 2013:

- 2,100 unemployed persons below SC level have been trained as at end September 2013. An additional 300 unemployed are expected to be trained up to December 2013.
- 300 persons offered work placement in various fields for a period of 12 months
- 47 persons enrolled under the Circular Migration

#### ***Incentives to employer***

- Refund of up to **60% of training costs & 50% of stipends** paid to trainees during placement (limits apply for training costs and stipends).
- Placement periods: **maximum 6 months**.
- Maximum ceilings vary **from Rs. 30 000 to Rs. 60 000 depending on academic qualifications of trainees**.
- **Formal training & On-the-job training** take place simultaneously or sequentially.

- Employer *retains 60% of trainees who complete the placement for at least 13 months so as to* be able to participate again in the P&T Scheme

## **5.8 Circular Migration Programme**

The NEF is also responsible for facilitating circular migration of Mauritian workers to secure employment opportunities abroad for a fixed term and in specific sectors. Following the entry into force of a Franco-Mauritian agreement circular labour migration, the NEF's mission is to coordinate the whole process for the Mauritian party, to support selected candidates in their efforts to migration and integration. In 2013, a total of 47 persons enrolled under the Circular Migration programme

## **5.9 Work-placement Programme for Secondary School students**

The Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) conducts a programme for the placement of Lower VI students in enterprises for a period of 2 weeks during the school holidays. The objective is to complement students' academic studies with on-the-job practical work experience and to bridge the gap between school and the world of work.

## **5.10 Labour Shortage Surveys**

To help develop strategies and policies to reduce the mismatch between demand and supply of labour in the country, Labour Shortage Surveys are conducted by the HRDC in different sectors.

The objectives of the study are to:

- assess the current situation of labour shortage in each sector;
- identify the immediate and future specific skills requirements;
- identify the profile of employees required by employers; and
- make recommendations for policy makers to devise strategies to reduce the labour mismatch in the different sectors.

The survey covered the following sectors: Agriculture, Seafood, Finance, ICT, Manufacturing, Construction, Export Oriented Enterprises, Tourism, Public services, Other Economic Activities and Rodrigues. After the survey, reports were prepared for each sector. Validation workshops were organised for each report with stakeholders of respective sectors. Each report has made recommendations and these recommendations were taken up at Sectoral Committee level for discussions and implementations

## 5.11 Job Fairs

Job fairs are organized by different educational and training institutions to facilitate contact between employers and graduates/trainees.

## 5.12 Diversification of economic sectors

The potential for creating new jobs is more likely to be in emerging sectors of the economy and youth would benefit a good share of the jobs created. Just one emerging sector which has been much exposed lately, “Green Jobs”, could include a variety of new or redefined jobs such as renewable and clean energy jobs, green building jobs, organic jobs and all jobs that encompass the environment. Another sector which is being promoted - “the Ocean Economy” - would embrace jobs in such related fields as fishing, aquaculture, seafood processing, deep ocean water applications, biotechnology, marine renewable energy, marine associated activities, shipping, petroleum storage and port activities.

## 5.13 Employment Service

The Employment Service operates under the aegis of the Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations and it deals with the management of Employment Information Centres, registration, counselling, placement of jobseekers in employment, processing of work permits, collection and publication of statistics on the labour market, including employment and unemployment.

## 5.14 The ICT Skills Development Programme

**The Programme comprises two incentive schemes:**

### (i). **Scheme 1: Training and Work Placement Scheme**

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

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

### (ii). **Scheme 2: Work-Based Learning for University Students**

The Work-Based Learning for University Students scheme enables Employers to identify talents before graduation among Tertiary Level Students through a 'Work-Based Learning' concept. ICT/BPO companies are encouraged to recruit trainees from the ICT Skills Development Programme database and offer them a work-based training / placement. Trainees should undergo the training / placement for at least 2 times for a period of 6 weeks each during a year of study. Participants receive an all-inclusive stipend of Rs 6,000 per month during the placement

## **5.15 Policies to encourage entrepreneurship**

### **Accelerator Project**

In 2013, Government launched the Accelerator Project meant to facilitate the creation of technology companies for young developers who have the potential but not the necessary tools to engage in entrepreneurship

The project is the first to be implemented under the incubators project meant for young Application Developers as outlined in the Budget speech 2013 to instil a culture of entrepreneurship among the youth and encourage entrepreneurship and innovation leading the industry to the next level of development.

It is a Public Private Partnership, initiated by the Government in collaboration with Mauritius Telecom in line with the strategy of the Government to democratise the economy through entrepreneurship.

## **5.16 The HSC Professional**

The Ministry of Education & Human Resources), is planning the implementation of a new award called the HSC Professional (HSC Pro) for first teaching in pilot schools beginning in January 2015. The purpose of the new award is to offer to students an alternative course of study to the HSC Academic award that is more geared towards the world of work. For the piloting, the focus will be on the ICT sector

## **5.17 Recognition of prior learning**

The MQA has set up the Recognition of prior learning, which is a mechanism for validating competencies for purposes of certification obtained outside the formal education and training systems. A person's skills and experience can be measured against the requirements of unit standards for obtaining recognised qualifications as developed by MQA.

## 6. Conclusion

The Mauritian economy has over the period 2006 to 2012 registered a decline in the rate of economic growth, largely attributed to the adverse impact of the economic crisis in Europe and the U.S, the two major export markets for Mauritius. This resulted in an increase in the unemployment rate, which was significantly higher among the youth. Simultaneously, a new trend has been observed with regard to the level of education of the unemployed, whereby a relatively larger number possessed tertiary qualifications. In addition, the trend pointed towards a relatively higher unemployment rate among females. Paradoxically, this period has been characterized by an increase in the number of foreign workers employed primarily in the Manufacturing and Construction sectors. These changes in the labour market took place in a context where employment in the primary and secondary sector has been declining in both absolute and relative terms, whilst the share of employment in the tertiary sector has been continuously increasing to account for almost two third of total employment.

The main causes of the growing youth unemployment rate were attributed to the slow creation of jobs, mismatch between the demand for and supply of labour, lack of work experience, inadequate career information , counselling and job search services.

In order to address the problem of youth unemployment, several measures have been adopted. Access to technical and vocational education has been increased and the fields of training diversified, with an increasing emphasis placed on the Apprenticeship mode. This mode of training has proved to be more effective in easing the transition from education to the world of work.

The recent introduction of the Youth Employment Programme has yielded satisfactory results in enabling the unemployed youth to acquire work experience and thereby address the issue of “ no experience-no- work and no work no experience”

The other measures relate to Training and Placement, specially targeted for young unemployed belonging to disadvantaged groups; the Accelerator project aimed at developing entrepreneurial skills among young graduates through the setting up of incubators; the Second Chance programme aimed at youth who are not in education, training or employment.

The labour shortage surveys are being conducted more frequently on a sectoral basis and are expected to yield better information on skills shortage and training needs of industry. Together with the organization of regular job and career education fairs, these measures are expected to reduce the information gap on the labour market and its evolution.

It may be concluded that the problem of youth unemployment is caused by many factors and that a multi-pronged approach is required to address the problem. Whilst it is important to ensure that the macroeconomic policies are appropriately designed and implemented to support job creation,



it is equally important to reform the education and training system with a view to easing the transition to work. The active participation of different stakeholders, specially the employers in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the TVET system is imperative for greater efficiency and effectiveness in tackling the problem of labour mismatch.

## REFERENCES

- Statistics Mauritius: Labour Digest 2012
- Statistics Mauritius: Labour Force, Employment & Unemployment (Based on the results of the CMPHS) - Year 2012,
- Statistics Mauritius: Digest of Demographic Statistics 2012,
- Statistics Mauritius. 2012: Digest of Statistics on Education.
- Statistics Mauritius. 2012: Labour force, Employment and Unemployment based on
- Human Resource Development Council, Report of Sectoral Committees, 2012
- Human Resource Development Council, Workshop Outcome: Skills Mismatch in the,2012
- Ministry of Finance: Budget Speeches 2014
- Tertiary Education Commission, Graduate Tracer Study 2011; Preliminary Report, Feb 2011
- National Economic and Social Council. Youth Unemployment Improving Employment Prospects, October 2013
- Report on Youth Employment Programme, January 2014