



Today's youth are part of the largest generation of young people to date. The potential of this generation will be lost if we do not invest more in ensuring they have the necessary vocational and digital skills to contribute to an economy which requires adaptability like never before. Today's youth are three times more likely to be unemployed than adults. Initiatives that address youth education and unemployment are increasingly focusing on digital skills, to tackle a growing skills gap that if not addressed could harm economies worldwide.

This challenge is addressed in the Sustainable Development Goals with quality education, reduced inequalities and gender equality all key goals that must be met in order to see today's youth play their role in achieving the SDGs.

*“Just as youth need education and training to access decent jobs in and of the future, they also require skills development to fulfil their vital role in SDG implementation,”* Peter Thomson, 2017 president of the UN General Assembly, proclaimed.

Whilst young people struggle with entering the workforce and gaining the necessary skills, it is often the most vulnerable and marginalized that are left behind. A recent UN global initiative '*Decent Jobs for Youth*'

is tackling youth unemployment with the aim of maximising the effectiveness of youth employment investments and delivering on the 2030 agenda. Within this initiative ‘*Digital Skills for Decent Jobs for Youth Campaign*’, in collaboration with the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and International Labour Organisation (ILO), the UN hopes to train 5 million young people globally with much needed digital skills by 2030. These vary from basic digital skills that are needed in everyday life to soft skills that are necessary in the digital economy as well as more advanced digital skills including coding and app development. It aims to connect young women and men with job opportunities offered by the digital economy as well as create more job opportunities, in the hopes of integrating more young men and women in the job market. It lastly hopes to encourage a more enabling environment where employment and business opportunities can be seized by young people; an environment where stakeholders are incentivised to invest in digital skills training for youth.

Digitalisation of our society and economy is unavoidable; we need to embrace it on this World Youth Skills day, July 15.

Link to *Digital Skills for Decent Jobs for Youth Campaign* - <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/partnership/?p=23539>

Link to Decent jobs for youth - <https://www.decentjobsforyouth.org/>