



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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Statement By

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Unemployment and political representation, amongst the Inter-Parliamentary Union's challenges to integrate youth

Young people are a key component to any democracy. Since 2010, the Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) has worked to promote their inclusion with strategies such as the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, a global platform that changes the youth agenda.

However, millions of young people in the world are going through a difficult situation, as 70 million "are unemployed. This is equal to the entire population of Thailand and France combined. At the same time, it means that youth has three times the odds to be unemployed than adults", as Gabriela Cuevas Barron, President of the IPU, stated during the Parliamentary Symposium on the creation of youth labour, in the context of the Global Parliamentary Conference 2018.

In addition, we have to consider that 70% of migrants are below 30 years old, and at least 73% of the world's countries have restrictions that keep young people from being elected. Hence, the IPU and the Organization of the United Nations (UN) have promoted the campaign Not too young to run, which is led by the idea that countries must allow for youth representation. "If you are old enough to get married or join the army, you are also old enough to vote and be responsible to be voted".

It must be recalled that only 1.9% of parliamentarians in the world are less than 30 years old, despite the fact that this demographic group corresponds to more than half of the world's population. This entails a representation problem, but it also pertains to who has made the decisions for youth. "In 73 countries, there are no open doors or windows that allow for young people to participate in politics", as underscored by Cuevas Barron, based on registered data in the IPU-conducted study Youth participation in national parliaments of 2016.

During the forum organized by the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union said that better political practices and legislation are being promoted from within the organization. Nonetheless, there is still a need to invest in public policy that favors youth, with sights to comply with Point 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) related to this sector of the population.

"We must understand that a new educational model is needed; one that guarantees free and compulsory education; that promotes dual education, as it's being made in Germany and France; education adapted to the labour market; a new relationship between the public and private sector; to develop national strategies of employment, sectorial and industrial politics; subsidies for companies that hire young people, as it's already being done in Uruguay and Mexico, as well as fostering corporate initiatives for self-employment and entrepreneurship".

According to the Legislator, new educational models will enable us to face challenges such as the automation of labor processes. These currently represent 50% of all global processes and, as an example, they could eliminate 47% of all employment in the United States in the upcoming years. Populist currents are using the subject of automation to avoid generating solutions and only, "but for political ends with partisan ends". Thus, we must understand that liberal democracy will face a great challenge and we must be able to face them from our own parliaments and governments.

“We are going to need new social policies, a new social contract, a new social approach. One of the most important proposals is the programme of a universal basic income, a network of social security that has had great advances in Canada and Kenya. Of course, we must also include migrants and first-time workers, and those who are under 25 years old, like it’s done in the European Union with the Youth Guarantee Programme”, as stated by Cuevas Barron during her participation at the Global Parliamentary Conference 2018.

The Parliamentary Network on the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund is a non-governmental organization that provides a platform for parliamentarians from the member-countries of the WB and the IMF with the purpose of advocating for a better accountability and transparency in the efforts of cooperation for development. The Parliamentary Network, together with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, organizes the Global Parliamentary Conference (GPC).

The GPC is a unique assembly of national legislators and development institutions dedicated to discussing crucial topics regarding the international financing for development, including economic stability, the accomplishment of the Sustainable Development Goals, and more generally, fostering the initiatives for international development. This assembly gathers over 150 parliamentarians of approximately 100 countries, civil society leaders and associate organizations, as well as High-Level officials of several international financial institutions such as the WB, the IMF and other regional Banks of development.