

KEY POLICY DEVELOPMENTS IN EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT – TUNISIA 2023

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SUMMARY

In July 2022, Tunisia entered a new phase when the country adopted a new constitution introducing a presidential regime and a bicameral legislative system. Two rounds of parliamentary elections took place in December 2022 and January 2023, and the first session of the new parliament began on 13 March. The recent adoption of decree-laws on municipal elections and new local councils was the first step towards establishing the second legislative chamber provided for in the Constitution.

Tunisia is a lower-middle-income country. Mainly as a consequence of COVID-19 and the effects of the war in Ukraine on prices, the country has entered a protracted financial crisis. This situation has led to social and political unrest and uncertainty, which have exacerbated geographic disparities and weakened the country's ability to create decent jobs and bounce back from the crisis.

Education was and is a universal right. Under the Constitution, it is compulsory until the age of 16. The Education Act makes education an absolute priority for the country and recognises it as a fundamental right that improves people's social prospects and supports development. Considerable efforts and financial resources have been invested in education, mainly to widen access and increase literacy. However, significant challenges remain in the areas of quality, efficacy and early school leaving, which has increased over the last year, as well as a persistently low level of educational attainment.

After a short stint under the supervision of the Ministry of Youth and Sport, vocational education and training (VET) has been placed under the Ministry of Employment. The Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training is holding consultations to update the 2008 law on vocational education and training, as well as other related laws and regulations. The intention is to inject new dynamism into the system, improve quality and equip young people with the skills needed to meet the current and future needs of the labour market. To this end, tripartite social dialogue, already formalised in the area of vocational training, should be further strengthened and skills needs identified and analysed on a regular basis.

The ministry has also made significant progress in fostering an entrepreneurial mindset thanks to a process that led to the accreditation of nine VET centres as Entrepreneurial VET centres in 2021. Significant efforts have also been made to reform the qualification and quality assurance systems.

Despite the demand for continuing education and training, skills upgrading and retraining, there is no overarching policy on continuing VET and the system remains fragmented. This is also reflected in low rates of participation in lifelong learning.

The Tunisian labour market has been severely affected by COVID-19, which worsened existing problems and struck those economic sectors that historically contributed to growth (such as tourism). The war in Ukraine and the resulting energy and food crises further impacted the Tunisian economy and people's living conditions.

Activity rates among the population aged 15+ remain low, despite slight improvements among women. Activity rates among young people aged 15–24 have declined significantly since 2020 due to the economic consequences of the pandemic, which discouraged young people from actively seeking work.

The number of people not in employment, education or training (NEETs) is also increasing. In Tunisia, this phenomenon seems to affect women as well as men, unlike in other North African and Mashreq countries.

1. KEY POLITICAL, DEMOGRAPHIC, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Political developments

In July 2022, Tunisia entered a new phase when the country adopted a new constitution introducing a presidential regime and a bicameral legislative system. Two rounds of parliamentary elections took place in December 2022 and January 2023, and the first session of the new parliament began on 13 March. The recent adoption of decree-laws on municipal elections and new local councils was the first step towards establishing the second legislative chamber provided for in the Constitution.

In July 2023, the European Union signed a comprehensive partnership agreement with Tunisia, focusing on four areas of cooperation: i) strengthening economic and trade links; ii) sustainable and competitive energy partnership; iii) migration; and iv) people-to-people contacts. At the same time, a memorandum of understanding was signed by the European Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement, Olivér Várhelyi, and the Secretary of State of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Migration and Tunisians Abroad, Mounir Ben Rjiba, opening a new chapter in relations between the European Union and Tunisia. The memorandum of understanding covers five pillars: macro-economic stability, trade and investment, green energy transition, people-to-people contacts, and migration and mobility. It will be implemented through the various strands of cooperation between the European Union and Tunisia, following the relevant regulations and applicable procedures.

At the time of writing, political relations between the President of Tunisia and the EU institutions remain strained, following the Tunisian authorities' rejection of a visit by a European Parliament delegation in September 2023. Recently, pro-Palestinian protests have also drawn attention to the fact that relations between the two parties is complicated by the conflict between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

Demographics

In 2022, Tunisia had a total population of 12,356,000, the result of an upward trend over the past 10 years. The relative size of the youth population was 20.2 % in 2022, following a steady decrease since 2010 (27 %). Although Tunisia currently has a large young population, these figures suggest that its population age structure will soon enter a transition phase, with longer average life expectancy (77 years overall, 75 years for men and 79 years for women) (World Bank database, 2020a) and a decreasing fertility rate (World Bank, 2020b). This population structure and the forecast changes are putting considerable pressure on policymakers in the short to medium term to set up an adequate education system and create jobs. In the longer term, expenditure on health and pensions will become the main challenge.

Migration rates have increased over the last 20 years, from 5 % in 2000 to 7.6 % in 2022 (UN DESA, 2020). Remittances have increased since the mid-1990s, reaching 5.4 % of GDP in 2020. The share of men and women migrating has remained relatively stable over the last 20 years, but with the share of women migrants trending upwards since 1990 (accounting for up to 44.3 % of all migrants). This is particularly true of women with a higher education degree (OECD, 2018 and ETF, 2022a).

Migration is mainly undertaken for economic motives, with migrants driven by the hope of finding better economic conditions, and the opportunities offered by labour markets abroad, especially for highly skilled Tunisians (ETF, 2022a).

Key economic developments

Tunisia is a lower-middle-income country. The global rise in energy and food prices has slowed Tunisia's economic recovery significantly over the last year. Rainfall has been below average for the sixth year in a row. This has negatively impacted Tunisian agricultural production and further slowed

an already sluggish economic recovery. The Tunisian economy grew by 1.2 % in real terms in the first half of 2023, i.e. half the 2022 rate and almost a quarter of the 2021 rate. The drought has compounded an already difficult recovery, beset by uncertain external financing and persistent regulatory barriers to growth.

Response to climate change in numbers

Tunisia needs an estimated USD 24.4 billion over 2020–2030 to adequately respond to climate change, with adaptation set to cost an estimated USD 4.22 billion, mitigation USD 14.39 billion and loss and damage USD 4.99 billion. There is a promising range of options for private sector engagement: i) financial markets (green bonds and the carbon market); ii) results-based financing that can act as a catalyst for mixed (public-private) financing instruments; iii) Islamic finance; and iv) financial products tailored to expatriates to transform remittances into green investments. However, private sector involvement in climate finance in Tunisia is in its infancy. Barriers include the lack of information about the profitability of green projects; difficulties assessing and pricing their risks; potentially very long investment horizons; and quantifying their benefits. New regulatory frameworks and government incentives will be essential to channel private finance into green growth. Tunisia has a coastline of around 1,300 km, which supports more than two-thirds of its 12 million inhabitants. Tunisia's natural capital has enormous potential for various forms of green, solar and wind energy, ecotourism and organic farming. The country also has large phosphate and hydrocarbon deposits, which are largely under-exploited.

Source: African Economic Outlook, African Development Bank 2023

Tunisia's GDP is expected to reach almost 2.3 % in 2023, but this figure could vary considerably depending on how financing conditions and structural reforms develop. Reforming energy subsidies to gradually phase them out will be critical. These subsidies have become increasingly costly, accounting for an average of 2.1 % of GDP over the last decade and spiking to 5.3 % in 2022. Doing so would make it possible to tackle the macro-economic crisis, improve the performance of the energy sector and stimulate the production of renewable energy. However, it will be necessary to minimise the impact of this reform on vulnerable households by establishing stable tariffs and transfers.

Tunisia's economy has faced many challenges, including a high trade deficit and consumer subsidies. The country's limited access to international finance has made local debt financing difficult. Moreover, inflation in Tunisia reached 10.4 % in February 2023, its highest rate for over three decades, largely due to rising energy and food prices. These factors have exerted significant pressure on the economy, making the implementation of reforms to promote sustainable growth all the more urgent.

Shortages of commodities have continued, partly due to the subsidy system and the fall in agricultural production, which have also led to a rise in the debt of state-owned enterprises selling subsidised imported goods (World Bank, 2023).

The contribution of different sectors to GDP reflects the dominant and growing position of the service sector since 2010 (55.9 %), with small fluctuations since 2020 (from 60.2 % in 2020 to 60.1 % in 2021 and 60.3 % in 2022, INS). Although the relative weight of other sectors remains minor, the contribution of the agricultural sector has been growing steadily for several years, from 6.8 % in 2010 to 10.1 % in 2022. In contrast, the contribution of the industrial sector to GDP has fallen sharply, from 29.5 % in 2010 to 21.5 % in 2020, with a small improvement in 2022, 23 % (INS).

The majority of large enterprises continue to be state-owned and the public administration is the dominant actor. Outside the public sector, the Tunisian economy has a high level of informality and a large number of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. These businesses offer no or only low-skilled jobs and have little capacity to grow and innovate, with low levels of job creation, even in periods of sustained growth.

Informality is widespread. According to the Economic Research Forum (ERF, 2022a), 44.8 % of employed people work in the informal sector, 42.5 % are self-employed entrepreneurs or employers and the remaining 6 % are unpaid family workers. The likelihood of an individual working in the

informal sector depends on their marital status, age and level of education (ERF, 2022b). Informality is most common in the agriculture and fisheries sectors, followed by construction and public works.

Key social issues

Tunisia has experienced inequality and social unrest since before the 2011 revolution, mainly linked to economic factors. Unfortunately, the reforms implemented following the revolution failed to resolve the country's persistent social problems, which has led to a resurgence in protests and social unrest. The socio-economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic brought the country to the brink of collapse.

Tunisia continues to suffer from socio-economic inequality, including unequal local human and business development. The 2016–2020 National Development Plan set specific objectives and targets to improve the economic situation. However, faced with COVID-19-related downturns, these targets have proven unrealistic.

Tunisia's coastal regions are much more developed and account for 80 % of urban areas and 90 % of employment. Access to services, including education, reflects these disparities. The poverty rate is estimated to have risen from 14% in 2020 to 21% in 2021 (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2021). This follows a period in which poverty fell from 20.5 % in 2010 to 13.8 % in 2019, thanks in particular to a decrease in rural poverty (World Bank, 2022b).

Tunisia has also experienced significant migratory flows, not only of people leaving the country to seek better socio-economic opportunities abroad, often using irregular routes and risking their lives to do so, but also of people from sub-Saharan Africa, who transit through Tunisia or travel to Tunisia as their final destination (Human Rights Watch, 2022).

2. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

2.1 Trends and challenges

Education strategy and legal framework governing education

Education remains a universal right and is compulsory up to the age of 16 (Article 44 of the new Constitution). The Education Act (No. 2002-80 of 23 July 2002) makes education a priority for the country, given that it can offer people better opportunities for social and professional development.

The education sector comprises primary and secondary education, vocational education and training (VET) and higher education. While many sectoral ministries and agencies are involved in managing the different sub-sectors of education, interinstitutional cooperation remains a challenge. It is therefore difficult to develop an overarching vision and strategy for lifelong learning and to unlock the full potential of human capital in Tunisia.

The latest available education sector plan covered 2016–2020, a period in which considerable effort was made to widen access to education and increase literacy levels. However, significant challenges remain in the areas of quality, efficacy and early school leaving. As regards early school leaving, Tunisia has recorded an increase among the total population, from 29.7 % in 2021 to 32.4 % in 2022. Early school leaving is particularly common among boys, whose rate of early school leaving has risen from 35.2 % in 2021 to 37.6 % in 2022. It should be noted, however, that the aggregate rate (including boys and girls), although quite high in 2020, without doubt due to the outbreak of COVID-19, has decreased since 2010. This bears witness to the Tunisian government's efforts to keep young people in school and provide them with an education and better prospects.

In contrast, the education rate of the population aged 15+ remains generally low, standing at 58.6 % in 2022 (it was 58.5% in 2021). The rates corresponding to medium and high levels were 24.5% and 16.9 % respectively, in 2022, a slight improvement compared with 2021.

Education expenditure

With 6% of its GDP and 22.7% of its state budget allocated to education, Tunisia has exceeded the recommendations of the 2015 Incheon Declaration. The declaration recommends that national governments allocate between 4 % and 6 % of their GDP and/or 15 % to 20 % of their total public expenditure to education, with a particular focus on basic education (pre-primary, primary and lower secondary). The political priority given to education is also reflected in the fact that public spending on education is the highest among the social sectors, with an average of 22 % over the last decade, and around 28 % in 2021. The main source of funding for education is the government, with less than 1% of the total budget allocated to education coming from external funding since 2012 (UNICEF, 2021, p. 2).

In 2021, recurrent expenditures absorbed 93 % of the public education budget, leaving only 7 % for investment expenditure. The majority of the recurrent budget is spent on salaries (83 % in 2019, UNICEF, 2021), leaving little budget for improving quality and governance. Secondary education absorbs most of the education budget, compared with primary education (the budget for which remains below the level recommended by the Global Partnership for Education).

Access, participation and early school leaving

Net enrolment rates are only available for primary and higher education. Records show that rates have remained stable since 2012 and stood at 98.4 % in 2021 (32.8 % for higher education) (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, ISU, 2021).

Rates of medium and higher educational attainment have increased at the population level, but the rate for lower levels of education has fallen slightly. Higher education attainment rates among women have remained relatively stable at 19.2 % in 2020 and 18.2 % in 2021, after rising from 11.9 % in 2010

to 18.1 % in 2019. The higher education attainment of women has consistently outweighed that of men since 2016 (INS).

As mentioned above, early school leaving remains a critical issue in Tunisia. The rate of early school leaving increased between 2021 and 2022, despite having improved over previous years. According to trend figures analysed in 2021, the rate of early school leaving has increased among men and women (respectively 35.2 % and 23.9 % in 2021, and 37.6 % and 25.4 % in 2022, INS).

Relatively high expenditure on education does not have a major effect on the quality of outcomes: the unemployment rate is high among school leavers with medium to high levels of education.

Tunisia last participated in PISA in 2015. There are therefore insufficient recent data to analyse.

Young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs)

The NEET rate in Tunisia has risen sharply over the last ten years. According to figures from 2019 (pre-COVID-19), the NEET rate was 32.0 % (31.0 % among men and 33.0 % among women), rising in 2022 to 41.2% (41.7 for men and 40.0 for women).

2.2 Initial VET and adult learning

Strategic and legal framework for initial VET and adult learning

It has been difficult to make headway on certain priority reforms in the VET sector. There are two main reasons for this. Firstly, there has not been a Minister for Employment and Vocational Training since February 2023, following a relatively short term of office. This had a negative impact on the continuity of decision making and the strategic direction of the sector. Secondly, as a corollary, there has been no overarching sectoral strategy since the last strategy expired in 2020. This last strategy aimed, through specific projects and with support from the donor community, to address critical issues and challenges in the VET sector, including the attractiveness of the profession, teachers' professional development, improving entrepreneurship, and strengthening monitoring and evaluation.

In October 2021, the Minister of Employment and VET launched a consultation on the strategic framework and the need to modernise the legal framework. The 2008 VET Act has been under review for several years, along with other related laws and regulations. The intention is to inject new dynamism into the system, improve quality and equip young people with the skills needed to meet the needs of the labour market now and in the future. To this end, tripartite social dialogue, already formalised in the area of vocational training, should be further strengthened and skills needs identified and analysed regularly.

Entrepreneurship can be strengthened by building on the significant results achieved by the establishment and accreditation of the Entrepreneurial VET centres. In November 2021, nine VET centres received this accreditation following a seven-year process. They were supported in this endeavour by the ministry's strategic reform process and the European Training Foundation (ETF).

Despite demand for continuing education and training, skills upgrading and retraining, there is no overarching policy on continuing VET and the system remains fragmented.

Continuing vocational training is coordinated by the National Centre for Continuing Education and Professional Advancement (CNFCPP). The National Agency for Employment and Self-Employment (ANETI), Tunisia's public employment service, is responsible for training unemployed jobseekers as part of active labour market measures.

Non-formal adult learning opportunities are mainly available in the areas of literacy and digital skills and are mainly delivered by civil society organisations. DVV International runs activities in Tunisia to promote social and economic participation among adults, and women in particular. The importance of adult education and training has only recently been recognised in Tunisia, partly as a consequence of the ageing population and the shortage of skilled workers. The 2022 International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA) helped guide discussions and policy work in this area.

VET governance and financing arrangements

VET is a sub-sector of the general education system. For approximately 18 months between 2020 and 2021, the VET sector was placed under the responsibility of the Ministry of Youth and Sport. However, it has been brought back under the Ministry of Employment, which is now called the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training (MEFP). As mentioned above, in February 2023, the President removed the Minister of Employment and Vocational Training from office without appointing a replacement.

There are several agencies under the supervision of the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training, including:

1. the Tunisian Vocational Training Agency (ATFP), which manages 136 VET centres and covers 300 fields of study;
2. the National Centre for Teacher Training and Training Course Design (CENAFIFF), responsible for pedagogical and curriculum development;
3. the National Centre for Continuing Education and Professional Advancement (CNFCPP);
4. the National Agency for Employment and Self-Employment (ANETI);
5. the National Observatory for Employment and Qualifications (ONEQ), which assists the Ministry to design and monitor its strategy and policies, and produces studies and analyses.

VET provision comprises both initial and continuing VET. Initial VET, which falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training, has four levels (*Certificat de compétence*, *Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle*, *Brevet de technicien professionnel*, *Brevet de technicien supérieur*). It is delivered at upper secondary and post-secondary levels. It also plays a role in the professional development and retraining of adults. The higher education system provides both academic and non-academic vocational training.

Public training centres in areas such as agriculture, tourism, crafts, health or defence report to different sectoral ministries, making the management of each sub-sector extremely complex. Many private training centres also operate in Tunisia.

Because VET is not well integrated into the education system as a whole and has weak links with other education sub-sectors, the educational pathways open to VET students are limited in terms of the flexibility to move between training courses at the same level and between levels (ETF, 2021b).

Based on a preliminary analysis of the 2022 Budget Act, the budget allocated to the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training for employment and VET amounts to almost 2 % of the total national budget. This amount does not include the financial resources earmarked for training by each sectoral ministry or their agencies or institutions working in this area. The budgets allocated to VET and employment policies are well below the general education budget (14 % of the national budget) and the higher education budget (4 %).

Within the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training, more than 45 % of financial resources are allocated to vocational training programmes, followed by operations (39 %), engagement with the private sector (12 %) and capacity building (almost 3 %). It is worth noting that an additional 0.4 % of the total budget is also allocated to directly supporting young people under the Ministry of Youth and Sport (Decree, 2021-21).

Qualifications, validation and recognition

In 2009, Tunisia adopted the National Classification of Qualifications (CNQ), a reference framework designed to link the certificates and diplomas issued by different institutions to the corresponding qualification level (Presidential Decree 2009-2139 of 8 July 2009). The National Classification of Qualifications covers the different pillars of the education and training system, but has had limited success to date in linking up the different educational pathways.

In recent years, the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training has been developing a register of qualifications as part of a general reform of qualifications, which includes the operationalisation of the National Classification of Qualifications. This work is still in its early stages.

The validation and recognition of skills acquired through non-formal and informal learning have been piloted for qualifications in some sectors. Although this issue is a high priority for the ministry, due to the higher number of migrants, programmes in this area have not yet been implemented on a larger scale.

Tunisia is also part of the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF). The National Classification of Qualifications and the qualifications register could be linked to the ACQF and to the European Qualifications Framework.

Quality and quality assurance

VET quality assurance is handled by the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training's Directorate for Evaluation and Quality in Education. Quality assurance involves a "product", i.e. the compliance of learning outcomes with the relevant descriptions in the National Classification of Qualifications, and a "process" that ensures centres deliver high quality training. This process is based on the National Vocational Training Quality Standard (RNQFP). This standard was developed some years ago as a digital tool. However, it has never been fully implemented and now requires revision.

The quality assurance mechanisms of training providers vary depending on whether they are public or private institutions. The Tunisian Vocational Training Agency (ATFP) encourages public institutions under its responsibility to use the National Vocational Training Quality Standard. It is however up to the institutions whether they do so. The Agency for Vocational Training has begun to update its eight quality assurance process standards, beginning a digitalisation process, to allow it to bring its VET centres within the framework of the National Vocational Training Quality Standard.

It is important to extend the use of the National Vocational Training Quality Standard to all public and private institutions, and doing so is one of the Ministry's priorities for the coming years. It should also be noted that private institutions are free to adopt their own quality assurance procedures and processes (ETF, 2021a).

The ministry monitors performance indicators, and oversees the system of diplomas and certificates, the quality of training providers and teacher training. Performance indicators include the number of learners and their pass rates, graduate employment rates by qualification level and sector of employment, and unemployment rates by education/qualification level. The ministry's unit responsible for performance-based budget management publishes these figures in annual performance reports (GBO, 2022).

Qualifications and their quality are also monitored using a specific system developed by the EU PEFESE programme.¹ To improve the quality of the certificates awarded following initial training, a project was launched to standardise the system for recognising diplomas, including in the areas of training and certification of learning outcomes (ETF, 2021a).

Work-based learning arrangements

There are three types of work-based learning programmes under the Tunisian system: apprenticeships, alternance training and internships. The vast majority of students on work-based learning programmes are undertaking alternance training (79 %), followed by on-site training (15 %) and apprenticeships (6 %) (ONEQ and MEFP, 2018).

Alternance training is a good alternative to full-time studies at a training centre. It helps students to get used to companies' working culture and technologies, to work on real projects and to acquire practical skills. Investing in this system is seen as a way to invest in the skills of the workforce of the future. However, despite partnership agreements having been signed with companies, Tunisia's alternance

¹ Support Programme for Education and Training linked to Graduate Employability.

training offering has remained limited. Students sometimes struggle to secure work experience placements. Some sectors with less attractive working conditions, such as the leather industry, generally offer more training places and young people find employment more easily in these sectors, sometimes even before completing their VET programme (Chelbi, 2017).

In pre-COVID-19 times, the textile and tourism sectors showed positive signs of recovery. A decade ago, the textile sector was in decline: materials and equipment had fallen into disuse and investment had plummeted. But with the sector picking up, investment resumed. Similar trends were observed in the tourism sector. Given the important role that alternance training can play in helping future employees acquire the skills they need, new partnerships were developed with companies. This led to agreements being signed with training centres, internships being set up, companies appointing mentors and the remuneration of students' work (Ferchichi, 2019). The recent COVID-19 pandemic put an abrupt end to these positive developments. It could have disastrous consequences for the alternance training system, because the labour market, particularly in the tourism sector, faces an oversupply of workers and jobseekers and a shortage of income/visitors.

The 2019 ETF study on work-based learning highlights five issues: (i) the presence of various governance and funding challenges; (ii) the growing reluctance of trainers and apprenticeship advisers at training centres to attend companies' sites to check on their trainees; (iii) communication, an area in which centres have made little effort and in which public supervisory bodies are not very effective; (iv) the unavailability of trained tutors to instruct and supervise trainees at companies; and (v) mobility, which has two facets: mobility between regions and mobility between countries (Chelbi, 2017).

Digital education and skills

COVID-19 has accelerated digitalisation in Tunisia like never before, including in the areas of education and training. The 2021–2025 Digital Strategy has five components, one of which, Smart Tunisia, concerns the potential of Tunisia's human capital to catalyse its digitalisation and transform it into a talent hub to drive job creation and growth.

Specific measures on digital education and training had been launched well before the outbreak of COVID-19, but on a smaller scale than recent efforts. The French telecommunications company Orange has set up several digital schools, which make digital devices available to students.

In October 2020, in Tunisia, only 27% of primary school pupils had an internet connection for home schooling, compared with 40% of middle/secondary school students (Statista, 2020). In May 2021, 130 primary and secondary schools were equipped with more than 38,000 devices. Thanks to higher funding availability, equipment and digital tools are more readily available at private centres and schools. However, the digital divide remains a significant challenge for Tunisia and acts as a barrier to online and digital education.

Statistics on education and training

Tunisia does not have a comprehensive system for managing information on education. Some ministries and related institutions collect data on specific indicators, such as student numbers and grades. Data are regularly published by the National Statistics Institute (statistics on education) and relevant ministries or institutions (the National Observatory for Employment and Qualifications in the case of VET). The short *VET in figures* report was last published in 2020, based on data for 2018.

The importance of monitoring, particularly performance monitoring based on specific criteria and indicators, is a key priority for the country and for the education and training reforms. Indeed, monitoring was an integral component of the action plan for the VET reform. As indicated above, the VET budget is performance-based. However, this system is yet to be fully implemented.

Although the data do exist and are collected regularly, they are not always easily accessible. Furthermore, the absence of digitised systems and databases complicates the analysis and assessment of trends and potential problems related to policies in the sector.

3. LABOUR MARKET AND EMPLOYMENT

3.1 Trends and challenges

Labour market characteristics

The Tunisian labour market was severely affected by COVID-19, which exacerbated certain persistent problems and struck those economic sectors that contributed to growth (such as tourism).

Activity rates among the population aged 15+ remain consistently low and have not exceeded 47 % for over 5 years, despite slight improvements among women (up from 24.8 % in 2010 to 28.6 % in 2021, INS). Activity rates among young people (aged 15–24) have declined sharply since 2020, from 35.7 % in 2020 to 26.5 % in 2021 (INS). This may be linked to the impact of COVID-19 on the economy, which discouraged young people from actively seeking work.

Rates of employment by level of educational attainment show that the employment rate increases with educational attainment, ranging from 50.9 % for people with a high level of education to 35.4 % for people with a low level of education in 2021. While this could also suggest that people with low educational attainment are more likely to work in the informal sector, it does indicate that people with higher education have a better chance of finding a job. It would be beneficial to assess whether their position matches their level of education and field of study. An ETF study to measure skills mismatches found that, in 2019, a high percentage of employees in Tunisia were underqualified for their jobs (45 %, ETF, 2022c).

As regards employment status, employees account for the majority of the active population aged 15+. This figure has remained relatively stable in recent years at around 70 % (74.1 % in 2021, followed by a small decrease in 2022 to 72.5 %) (INS). Self-employed people make up 27.5 % of the active population (INS, 2022).

Unemployment among people aged 15+ fell from 18 % in 2021 to 15.3 % in 2022 (INS). This is encouraging, as it is the first time it has fallen since 2015. The unemployment rate among young people aged 15–24 follows the same trend, i.e. decreasing from 42.2% in 2021 to 37.2% in 2022 (INS), with small differences between men and women (37.4% for men and 36.6% for women in 2022).

These figures suggest that young people in Tunisia face many challenges, with high inactivity rates, especially among men, high NEET rates and very high unemployment rates. This situation also reflects the lack of opportunities in the labour market and young people's general despondency and disillusionment regarding their employment prospects.

Labour market and employment statistics

Labour market and employment statistics are regularly collected and published by the National Statistics Institute (INS). However, according to anecdotal evidence, the INS suffers from a shortage of staff and resources. The data are available on its website as well as on request. The National Agency for Employment and Self-Employment (ANETI) also collects data on the labour market, in particular by analysing the data received by the INS. ANETI produces annual activity reports which can be consulted on its website. The National Observatory for Employment and Qualifications (ONEQ) also produces regular analyses and reports focusing on the skills supply.

There is no comprehensive information system on the labour market, nor systematic sectoral analyses of needs to better match skills supply and demand.

The Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training received support from the EU, in particular through the National Observatory, to pilot a methodology for forecasting skills needs. The pilot study is underway. However, analyses to forecast and predict needs, including future skills needs, are not conducted systematically nor in all sectors.

Recently, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) supported the large energy company STEG in Tunisia to analyse future skills needs in the sector. Based on these results and with funding from Switzerland, STEG developed its 2030 programme for human resource development and signed agreements with training providers to train its staff.

The ETF also produced an analysis of future skills needs in the energy sector, on a larger scale and with a focus on skills. The energy sector is a key economic sector that is expected to provide job opportunities in the future, especially in the context of the green transition.

3.2 Employment policy and institutional frameworks

Strategy and legal framework for employment policy

The Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training is responsible for setting the strategic policy direction and priorities. In 2019, a new 2030 Vision for employment was developed under the leadership of a political steering committee. It is based on the tripartite dialogue set up as part of the Social Contract and benefited from the involvement of social partners.

The 2030 Vision is still under development and will be fully integrated into the national framework to generate growth and added value by leveraging human capital and natural resources effectively and efficiently. According to the information available on the ministry's website, this vision will be used to support the development of five-year action plans. These plans will comprise innovative measures and take account of the digital and green transitions, with a view to overcoming the socio-economic, political and health-related challenges of recent years.

Initiatives to boost employment

Tunisia has a long tradition of implementing active labour market programmes. Pursuant to Decree No. 2019-542 of 2019, programmes financed by the National Employment Fund have now been launched, some of which are continuations of previous programmes launched in 2012. These programmes allow young people to enrol on training courses to develop skills and competences that should help them find a job. They can also be used to complement or complete their qualifications and training courses to broaden their skills and open up more opportunities in the job market.

Three programmes are aimed at all unemployed jobseekers:

- Work experience contract (*Contrat d'initiation à la vie professionnelle*): This is a placement with a 12-month contract, extendible up to 24 months. All enterprises can access this type of contract.
- The KARAMA dignity contract (*contrat-dignité*) encourages companies to recruit first-time jobseekers with higher education and help them improve their skills.
- The civil service contract (*contrat service civil – CSC*) aims to support higher education graduates who are first-time jobseekers by enabling them to develop their practical skills and competences in a professional setting, and to facilitate their integration into working life as employees or self-employed workers.

It is worth noting that two of these measures are only open to higher education graduates. The National Agency for Employment and Self-Employment also offers an online training service, called [ANETI Tkawen](#), which offers training on ICT and soft skills, mainly to support work placements.

These programmes are run by the National Agency for Employment and Self-Employment, the main non-administrative public body reporting to the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training. Other government-accredited private organisations can also help unemployed people and jobseekers to find job placements in Tunisia and abroad.

The National Agency for Employment and Self-Employment also provides career guidance, and support with self-employment and entrepreneurship. Encouraging entrepreneurship and supporting start-ups are priorities for the government. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have been

particularly hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. According to a study by the Arab Institute of Business Leaders (IACE, 2020) conducted in early spring 2020, 61 % of the companies surveyed had to reduce their workforce due to the pandemic. In response to this exceptional situation, a number of support programmes, including EU-funded IRADA and PAFIP, reallocated funding to support SMEs and young entrepreneurs with a focus on saving jobs. The National Agency for Employment and Self-Employment has also launched a programme to help enterprises restructure their activities to allow them to weather the COVID-19 crisis. The National Agency for Employment and Self-Employment offers specific support to start-ups ([Start Up Act](#)), in the form of training and loans.

Although they are not subject to systematic monitoring and evaluation, it is generally agreed that active labour market programmes have had some positive impact in Tunisia, especially for young people. Active labour market programmes have provided opportunities for first-time jobseekers and young people with business ideas. However, it is also recognised that the results in terms of placements and improved participant employability could have been better given the considerable public investment (ILO, 2018).

The main shortcomings of Tunisia's active labour market programmes relate both to their target participants and to their geographic distribution. Active labour market programmes mainly target higher-education graduates, with only a few programmes and services providing support to low-skilled or disadvantaged people. In addition, programmes are easier to access in Tunis and in coastal regions. Inland regions are less well served, so the number of active labour market programme participants among long-term unemployed and low-skilled people remains low.

The lack of unemployment insurance has also led to a significant imbalance. In practice, resources have been distributed unequally between different groups (for example, women with secondary or higher education versus women without formal qualifications) and between different regions, exacerbating existing dichotomies.

Initiatives to increase the capacity of public employment services

The National Agency for Employment and Self-Employment (ANETI) is the main public body responsible for providing public employment services. Other private agencies also help jobseekers to find a job.

As indicated above, the National Agency for Employment and Self-Employment is the main public employment agency and offers a relatively broad range of services. However, despite the breadth of its mandate, the National Agency for Employment and Self-Employment is allocated only limited resources, which prevents it from fulfilling its role as a fully operational public employment service. As the main provider of public employment services, the National Agency for Employment and Self-Employment has benefited from donor initiatives, particularly in terms of capacity building and support through specific projects targeting unemployed people.

The National Agency for Employment and Self-Employment is currently working on Vision 2030, as part of which consultations and evaluations of its services are being carried out with a view to reshaping its future. The same or very similar services have been offered for a long time and the way they are delivered needs to be modernised. This process involves collecting feedback internally and conducting surveys of businesses.

A major digitisation project is underway, with the support of the World Bank and the European Union. It aims to bring services into closer alignment with the needs of jobseekers and the labour market. Digitising and automating registration, matching and other tasks should lighten employment advisers' workload. These advisers will then be able to support and guide jobseekers on their path to employment. It should also help to establish the profile of jobseekers across the country, given that the National Agency for Employment and Self-Employment is present in all regions, and to provide a service that is less standardised and better tailored to jobseekers' different profiles. The use of artificial intelligence for job matching is also being trialled.

The National Agency for Employment and Self-Employment is also working on a toolkit for jobseekers who want to set up their own business.

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TUNISIA STATISTICAL ANNEX

The Annex includes annual data from 2010, 2015, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022 or the last available year.

	Indicator	2010	2015	2019	2020	2021	2022	
1	Total Population (in thousands) ⁽¹⁾	10 895.1	11 557.8	12 049.3	12 161.7	12 262.9	12 356.1	
2	Relative size of youth population (age group 15–24 and denominator age 15–64, %) ^{(1) c}	27.5	23.2	20.7	20.4	20.2	20.2	
3	GDP annual growth rate (%)	3.0	1.0	1.6h	-8.8	4.4	2.5	
4	Gross value added by sector (%)	Agriculture	6.8	9.2	9.8	10.4	10.1	10.1
		Industry	29.5	24.9	23.2	21.5	23.1	23.0
		Services	55.9	58.9	59.9	60.2	60.1	60.3
5	Public expenditure on education as share of GDP (%)	6.0	6.2	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	
6	Public expenditure on education (as % of total public expenditure)	24.8	22.7	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	
7	Adult Literacy (%) ^c	79.1	79.0 ⁽⁵⁾	M.D.	M.D.	82.7	M.D.	
8	Educational attainment of total population (aged 15+) (%)	Low ⁽²⁾	66.0	64.6	63.0	63.1	58.5	58.6
		Medium ⁽³⁾	21.5	20.7	20.5	19.5	25.1	24.5
		High ⁽⁴⁾	12.6	14.7	16.4	17.4	16.4	16.9
9	Early leavers from education and training (aged 18–24) (%) ⁽⁷⁾	Total	51.3	36.9	35.2	37.8 ⁽⁸⁾	29.7	32.4
		Male	54.9	41.2	42.4	45.0 ⁽⁸⁾	35.2	37.6
		Female	47.7	32.5	27.7	30.4 ⁽⁸⁾	23.9	25.4
10	NET enrolment rates in secondary education (ISCED level 2–3) (%)	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	
11	Share of VET students in upper secondary education (ISCED level 3) (%)	9.1	9.6	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	
12	Low achievement in reading, mathematics and science – PISA (%)	Reading	50.16 ⁽⁶⁾	71.6	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
		Mathematics	73.57 ⁽⁶⁾	74.8	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
		Science	53.73 ⁽⁶⁾	65.9	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
13	Activity rate (aged 15+) (%) ⁽⁷⁾	Total	46.9	47.1	46.9	47.7 ⁽⁸⁾	47.0	46.0
		Male	69.5	68.8	68.0	69.8 ⁽⁸⁾	66.4	65.3

	Indicator		2010	2015	2019	2020	2021	2022
		Female	24.8	26.0	26.6	26.7 ⁽⁸⁾	28.6	27.5
14	Inactivity rate (aged 15+) (%) ^{c (7)(10)}	Total	53.1	52.9	53.1	52.3 ⁽⁸⁾	53.0	54.0
		Male	30.5	31.2	32.0	30.2 ⁽⁸⁾	33.6	34.7
		Female	75.2	74.0	73.4	73.3 ⁽⁸⁾	71.4	72.5
15	Employment rate (aged 15+) (%) ⁽⁷⁾	Total	40.8	39.9	39.7	40.0 ⁽⁸⁾	38.2	38.9
		Male	61.9	60.3	59.6	60.4 ⁽⁸⁾	56.2	56.7
		Female	20.1	20.3	20.6	20.6 ⁽⁸⁾	21.8	21.8
16	Employment rate by educational attainment (aged 15+) (%) ⁽⁷⁾	Low ⁽²⁾	9.3	43.4	36.9	37.1 ⁽⁸⁾	35.4	36.0
		Medium ⁽³⁾	13.7	39.6	40.1	42.3 ⁽⁸⁾	37.7	38.1
		High ⁽⁴⁾	22.9	23.2	50.0	48.0 ⁽⁸⁾	50.9	50.3
17	Employment by sector (%) ⁽⁷⁾⁽¹¹⁾	Agriculture	17.9	15.0	13.7	14.6 ⁽⁸⁾	11.5	11.5
		Industry	32.9	32.8	34.4	33.4 ⁽⁸⁾	32.5	32.0
		Services	49.2	52.2	51.9	52.0 ⁽⁸⁾	56.0	56.4
18	Incidence of self-employment (%)	31.4	26.8	26.3	25.9	25.9	27.5	
19	Incidence of vulnerable employment (%)	24.7	20.1	19.0	19.1	19.0	20.5	
20	Unemployment rate (aged 15+) (%) ⁽⁷⁾	Total	13.0	15.2 ⁽⁹⁾	15.3	16.2 ⁽⁸⁾	18.0	15.3
		Male	10.9	12.4 ⁽⁹⁾	12.3	13.5 ⁽⁸⁾	15.4	13.1
		Female	18.9	22.2 ⁽⁹⁾	22.4	22.8 ⁽⁸⁾	23.6	20.5
21	Unemployment rate by educational attainment (aged 15+) (%) ⁽⁷⁾	Low ⁽²⁾	9.3	8.8	9.9	10.8 ⁽⁸⁾	14.4	12.2
		Medium ⁽³⁾	13.7	16.3	16.1	15.6 ⁽⁸⁾	19.5	15.7
		High ⁽⁴⁾	22.9	26.8	26.9	28.7 ⁽⁸⁾	24.2	21.9
22	Unemployment rate (aged 15-24) (%) ⁽⁷⁾	Total	29.4	34.0 ⁽⁹⁾	34.4	35.7 ⁽⁸⁾	41.5	37.2
		Male	27.8	33.5 ⁽⁹⁾	34.2	35.4 ⁽⁸⁾	42.2	37.4
		Female	32.7	35.5 ⁽⁹⁾	34.5	36.2 ⁽⁸⁾	40.0	36.6
23	Proportion of people aged 15-24 not in employment, education or training (NEETs) (%) ⁽⁷⁾	Total	25.2	29.1	32.0	30.2 ⁽⁸⁾	41.2	M.D.
		Male	19.4	25.3	31.0	29.0 ⁽⁸⁾	41.7	M.D.
		Female	31.2	32.8	33.0	31.4 ⁽⁸⁾	40.0	M.D.
24	Participation in training/lifelong learning (% aged 25-64) ⁽⁷⁾	Total	1.8	1.3	2.2	1.2 ⁽⁸⁾	1.6	1.3
		Male	1.7	1.2	2.8	0.9 ⁽⁸⁾	1.3	1.1

	Indicator	2010	2015	2019	2020	2021	2022
	Female	1.9	1.5	3.1	1.5 ⁽⁸⁾	3.2	1.4
25	Human Development Index	0.720	0.733	0.745	0.737	0.731	M.D.

Last update: 28/08/2023

Sources:

Indicators 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11: The World Bank, World Development Indicators database

Indicators 7, 10, 11: UNESCO, Institute for Statistics

Indicators 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 (2010, 2019–2022), 18 (2015, 2019–2022), 19 (2015, 2019–2022), 20, 21, 22, 23, 24: Tunisian National Institute of Statistics (INS).

Indicator 12 - OECD PISA 2018 Results (Volume I) Annex B1

Indicator 25 – UNDP

Indicator 17 (2015), 18 (2010), 19 (2010): ILOSTAT

Notes:

(1) Estimation.

(2) Low education: No education, ISCED levels 0–2

(3) Medium education: ISCED levels 3–4

(4) High education: ISCED levels 5–8

(5) applies to 2014

(6) applies to 2009

(7) applies to second quarter of the year

(8) applies to third quarter of the year

(9) provisional data

(10) 2015–2019: ETF calculation on National Institute of Statistics – LFS

(11) Totals may not add to 100 % due to those not classified in any economic activity

Legend:

C= ETF calculations

N.A. = Not Applicable

M.D. = Missing Data

Annex: Definitions of indicators

	Description	Definition
1	Total population (in thousands)	The total population is estimated as the number of people having their usual residence in a country on 1 January of the respective year. When information on the usually resident population is not available, countries may report legal or registered residents.
2	Relative size of youth population (age group 15–24) (%)	This is the ratio of the youth population (aged 15–24) to the working-age population, usually aged 15–64 (or 15–74 or 15+).
3	GDP annual growth rate (%)	Annual percentage growth rate of GDP at market prices based on constant local currency. Aggregates are based on constant 2010 U.S. dollars. GDP is the sum of gross value added by all resident producers in the economy plus any product taxes and minus any subsidies not included in the value of the products. It is calculated without making deductions for depreciation of fabricated assets or for depletion and degradation of natural resources.
4	Gross value added by sector (%)	The share of value added from Agriculture, Industry and Services. Agriculture corresponds to ISIC divisions 1–5 and includes forestry, hunting, and fishing, as well as cultivation of crops and livestock production. Value added is the net output of a sector after adding up all outputs and subtracting intermediate inputs. It is calculated without making deductions for depreciation of fabricated assets or depletion and degradation of natural resources. The origin of value added is determined by the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC), revision 3 or 4. Industry corresponds to the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC) tabulation categories C-F (revision 3) or tabulation categories B-F (revision 4), and includes mining and quarrying (including oil production), manufacturing, construction, and public utilities (electricity, gas, and water). Services correspond to ISIC divisions 50-99 and they include value added in wholesale and retail trade (including hotels and restaurants), transport, and government, financial, professional, and personal services such as education, health care, and real estate services. Also included are imputed bank service charges, import duties, and any statistical discrepancies noted by national compilers as well as discrepancies arising from rescaling.
5	Public expenditure on education as share of GDP (%)	Public expenditure on education expressed as a percentage of GDP. Generally, the public sector funds education either by directly bearing the current and capital expenses of educational institutions, or by supporting students and their families with scholarships and public loans as well as by transferring public subsidies for educational activities to private firms or non-profit organisations (transfer to private households and enterprises). Both types of transactions together are reported as total public expenditure on education.
6	Public expenditure on education (as % of total public expenditure)	Public expenditure on education expressed as a percentage of total public expenditure. Generally, the public sector funds education either by directly bearing the current and capital expenses of educational institutions, or by supporting students and their families with scholarships and public loans as well as by transferring public subsidies for educational activities to private firms or non-profit organisations (transfer to private households and enterprises). Both types of transactions together are reported as total public expenditure on education.
7	Adult literacy (%)	Adult literacy is the percentage of the population aged 15 years and over who can both read and write a short simple statement on his/her everyday life, and understand it. Generally, 'literacy' also encompasses 'numeracy' – the ability to make simple arithmetic calculations.

	Description	Definition
8	Educational attainment of total population (aged 15+) (%)	Educational attainment refers to the highest educational level achieved by individuals expressed as a percentage of all persons in that age group. This is usually measured in terms of the highest educational programme successfully completed, which is typically certified by a recognised qualification. Recognised intermediate qualifications are classified at a lower level than the programme itself.
9	Early leavers from education and training (aged 18-24) (%)	Early leavers from education and training are defined as the percentage of the population aged 18–24 with at most lower secondary education who were not in further education or training during the four weeks preceding the survey. Lower secondary education refers to ISCED 1997 levels 0–2 and 3C short (i.e. programmes lasting under two years) for data up to 2013 and to ISCED 2011 levels 0–2 for data from 2014 onwards.
10	NET enrolment rates in secondary education (ISCED level 2–3) (%)	This indicator covers the enrolments in a given level of education of children/youths belonging to the official age group corresponding to the given level of education.
11	Share of VET students in upper secondary education (ISCED level 3) (%)	Total number of students enrolled in vocational programmes at a given level of education (in this case, upper secondary), expressed as a percentage of the total number of students enrolled in all programmes (vocational and general) at that level.
12	Low achievement in reading, Maths and Science – PISA (%)	LOW achievers are the 15-year-olds who are failing to reach level 2 on the PISA scale for reading, mathematics and science.
13	Activity rate (aged 15+) (%)	The activity rate is calculated by dividing the active population by the population of the same age group. The active population (also called 'labour force') is defined as the sum of employed and unemployed people. The inactive population consists of all people who are classified as neither employed nor unemployed.
14	Inactivity rate (aged 15+) (%) c	The inactivity/out of the labour force rate is calculated by dividing the inactive population by the population of the same age group. The inactive population consists of all people who are classified as neither employed nor unemployed.
15	Employment rate (aged 15+) (%)	The employment rate is calculated by dividing the number of employed people by the population of the same age group. Employed people are all people who worked at least one hour for pay or profit during the reference period or were temporarily absent from such work. If a different age group is used, this should be indicated.
16	Employment rate by educational attainment (aged 15+) (%)	The employment rate is calculated by dividing the number of employed persons by the population of the same age group. Employed persons are all persons who worked at least one hour for pay or profit during the reference period or were temporarily absent from such work. If a different age group is used, this should be indicated. Educational levels refer to the highest educational level successfully completed. Three levels are considered: Low (ISCED level 0–2), Medium (ISCED level 3–4) and High (ISCED 1997 level 5–6, and ISCED 2011 level 5–8).
17	Employment by sector (%)	This indicator provides information on the relative importance of different economic activities with regard to employment. Data are presented by broad branches of economic activity (i.e. Agriculture/Industry/Services) based on the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC). In Europe, the NACE classification is consistent with ISIC.
18	Incidence of self-employment (%)	The incidence of self-employment is expressed by the self-employed (i.e. employers + own-account workers + contributing family workers) as a proportion of the total employed.
19	Incidence of vulnerable employment (%)	The incidence of vulnerable employment is expressed by the own-account workers and contributing family workers as a proportion of the total employed.

	Description	Definition
20	Unemployment rate (aged 15+) (%)	The unemployment rate represents unemployed people as a percentage of the labour force. The labour force is the total number of people who are employed or unemployed. Unemployed people comprise those aged 15-64 or 15+ who were without work during the reference week; are currently available for work (were available for paid employment or self-employment before the end of the two weeks following the reference week); are actively seeking work, i.e. had taken specific steps in the four-week period ending with the reference week to seek paid employment or self-employment, or had found a job to start later (within a period of, at most, three months).
21	Unemployment rate by educational attainment (aged 15+) (%)	The unemployment rate represents unemployed people as a percentage of the labour force. The labour force is the total number of people who are employed or unemployed. Unemployed people comprise those aged 15–64 or 15+ who were without work during the reference week; are currently available for work (were available for paid employment or self-employment before the end of the two weeks following the reference week); are actively seeking work (had taken specific steps in the four-week period ending with the reference week to seek paid employment or self-employment, or had found a job to start later (within a period of, at most, three months)). Educational levels refer to the highest educational level successfully completed. Three levels are considered: low (ISCED level 0–2), medium (ISCED level 3–4) and high (ISCED 1997 level 5–6, and ISCED 2011 level 5–8).
22	Unemployment rate (aged 15-24) (%)	The unemployment rate represents unemployed people as a percentage of the labour force. The labour force is the total number of people who are employed or unemployed. Unemployed people comprise those aged 15–24 who were without work during the reference week; are currently available for work (were available for paid employment or self-employment before the end of the two weeks following the reference week); are actively seeking work, i.e. had taken specific steps in the four-week period ending with the reference week to seek paid employment or self-employment, or had found a job to start later (within a period of, at most, three months).
23	Proportion of people aged 15–24 not in employment, education or training (NEETs) (%)	The indicator provides information on young people aged 15–24 who meet the following two conditions: first, they are not employed (i.e. unemployed or inactive according to the ILO definition); and second, they have not received any education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey. Data are expressed as a percentage of the total population of the same age group and gender, excluding the respondents who have not answered the question on participation in education and training.
24	Participation in training/lifelong learning (% aged 25–64)	Participants in lifelong learning refers to persons aged 25–64 who stated that they received education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey (numerator). The denominator is the total population of the same age group, excluding those who did not answer the question on participation in education and training. The information collected relates to all education or training, whether or not it is relevant to the respondent's current or possible future job. If a different reference period is used, this should be indicated.
25	Human Development Index	The index is a summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and having a decent standard of living.

ABBREVIATIONS

ALMP	Active labour market programmes
ANETI	National Agency for Employment and Self-Employment
ATFP	Tunisian Vocational Training Agency
CENAFIFF	National Centre for Teacher Training and Training Course Design
CNFCPP	National Centre for Continuing Education and Professional Advancement
CNQ	National Classification of Qualifications
CSC	Civil service contract
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross domestic product
ICT	Information and communication technology
INS	National Statistics Institute
MEFP	Ministry for Employment and Vocational Training
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
ONEQ	National Observatory for Employment and Qualifications
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
VET	Vocational education and training

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