

Do ICTs Reduce Youth Unemployment in MENA Countries?

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Abstract

This paper examines the impact of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) on youth unemployment in MENA countries. The study employs a dynamic panel data for a sample of 17 countries, over the period 1995-2012. We investigate the effect of ICTs on total, male and female youth unemployment. The empirical results show that fixed telephones and internet have a negative and significant effect on youth unemployment, on both aggregate and gendered levels. The results also indicate that for both aggregate and the gendered levels of youth unemployment in the MENA region, the impact of mobile phones is found to be negative but it is not significant. The paper ends with some recommendations that aim to improve the employability of young workers in MENA countries, benefiting from the diffusion of ICT facilities in the region.

Keywords: ICTs, Youth unemployment, MENA countries

JEL Classification: C23, J21, J23.