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NEET Policies and Knowledge in Arab & East Central European Economies

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Note: I certify I have the right to publish with the MPRA

Abstract:

This research analyzes the policies related to those youth that are not in education, not in employment, and not in training (NEETs) in the Arab and the East Central European (ECE) countries. It attempts assessing the impacts of knowledge on policies related to NEETs. The empirical framework used is based on measures of knowledge such as the number of reports published by the European Training Foundation (ETF) for each country. The number of studies that relate to education, training, and to the labor markets represent the independent variables. Furthermore, this paper assumes that joining the European Union, as it is the case for ECE countries, benefits these economies through the available strategies and policies related to youth, mostly to the NEET category. Findings indicate that the more publications for a specific country, the more the NEETs decrease. Still, among the studied Arab countries, only Algeria and Morocco show this trend. For ECE countries, only Bulgaria and Slovak Republic benefit from joining the European Union (EU) by reducing the category of youth that are NEETs with the remaining countries having no statistically significant effects. These findings require that further knowledge is needed mainly in Arab countries even though Morocco and Algeria appear to behave differently. Such a knowledge is likely to induce more policies targeting the NEETs.

JEL: J68-I32

Keywords: NEETs, Arab, ECE Countries, NEETs, Policies.

Introduction:

A recent contribution of Harkat, Driouchi, and Achehboune (2016) indicates that the youngest segments of the population are the main drivers of economic, political and social change. Still, these categories are subject to limited regular and vocational education in addition to unemployment. Such a situation is related to the structural shifts from traditional agriculture to manufacturing and to knowledge based economies (Driouchi, 2014). The required new skills are often not available to ensure a smooth transition in the labor markets.

This research focuses on the analysis of the policies that relates to the NEETs, or young individuals not in education, not employment, and not in training. This category of youth is subject to social exclusion and marginalization. Data on the NEETs is limited for the Arab countries, and it is higher for this latter group of countries compared to Eastern and Central European (ECE) countries. For Palestine and Egypt the NEET rates account for 36 and 40% while in Slovak Republic, Slovenia, and Lithuania it accounts for 13.72%, 9.51% and 9.19%, respectively.

For this, many international organizations besides governments are putting strategies and policies to include the NEETs. The European Commission describes the set of strategies and policies for the inclusion of NEETs in Europe. This accounts for promoting access to education, providing healthcare, reducing school dropouts, providing youth with schools of the second chance, and increasing social cohesion. Strategies also account for the school to job transition.

This research is motivated by the available literature on the NEETs and aims at investigating the policies that target the NEETs in both Arab and ECE countries. The questions that could be raised at this stage include:

- Are policy makers in Arab countries benefitting from study reports as sources of prior knowledge to enrich their policies and strategies targeting the NEETs?
- Has the joining the European Union benefited ECE countries in diffusing knowledge in implementing strategies that ensure the inclusion of NEETs?

The current paper starts with a literature review centered on the policies and strategies that relates to the NEETs. This is followed by the empirical methods and data used in testing hypotheses related to the two questions posed above. This section leads to results and findings that are discussed in the objective of enriching and ensuring the targeting of NEETs country policies.

Literature Review

A recent contribution of Driouchi and Harkat (2017c) describes policies of the NEETs in both Arab and ECE countries. As this latter group of countries is part of the European Union, it benefits from policies directly linked to the NEETs (Europa, 2017).

Recent contributions identify some determinants that lead youths to fall into the NEET category. Among those reasons, there are low levels of education, low household income, difficult family environment, disability, and living in remote areas. For this, the European commission urges the policy makers, as to target youth policies towards the NEETs. This led the European Commission to initiate many programs to enhance the education and training among the EU members. Among these programs, there are the “Youth on the Move” initiated by the Europe 2020 flagship initiative, the “2012-2013 Youth Opportunities Initiative”, the “Youth Guarantee”, and the “EU Youth Strategy 2010-2018” (European Commission, 2009; 2013; 2015). The Council of the European Union (2013a; 2013b) structured the policies for enhancing the reaching of the NEETs. Thus, policies were divided into prevention policies, reintegration policies, and compensation policies.

With regard to the prevention policies aims at preventing the long-term of school dropouts by providing career orientation services besides new innovative teaching methods. This is to avoid having discouraged students. Some organizations such as European Commission and Eurydice targets preventing young individuals subject to negative socio-economic background (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice/Cedefop, 2014; ETF, 2014b; ETF, 2015a; 2015b; ETF, 2009; Zelloth, 2014)

Concerning the reintegration, policies target the youth that have the possibility of re-entering the educational system or start vocational training. This is done

throughout the second-chance education opportunities, validation of the formal training, and so forth (ETF 2014c; European Commission, 2015; ETF, 2015c; ETF 2015 d). For the compensation policies, they support youth that are not affected by other types of policies targeting poverty alleviation, individuals with disabilities and so forth.

The ECE countries above besides all other EU members, committed during the “Council Recommendation of April 2013” to implement the Youth Guarantee Program (YG). This latter targets individuals in the age group of 25 years or less, mostly the NEETs. The prime objectives are to ensure employability, education, apprenticeship, and vocational education or training. This program requires a strong relationship between many stakeholders that are both private and public. Stakeholders include education and training institutions, public authorities, and career guidance providers. The motivation of this program is both the inclusion of youth and the reducing of the cost of the unemployed youth and the NEETs in the future throughout excessive reforms (Europa, 2017).

The Youth Guarantee Program puts different strategies that significantly reduced the NEETs in different economies such as Croatia and Bulgaria (European Commission, 2017b; European Commission, 2017a). Among these programs there are “Activation Through Cultural Content”, “Strategy for Social Inclusion 2014-2020”, and “Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020”, and aim at increasing access to education, increasing access to employability besides enhancing social conditions.

Unlike European countries, including ECE countries, Arab countries do not have directly related policies for the NEETs. Still, there are current programs and strategies for youth inclusion.

Recent contributions indicate the situation of young individuals within economies. In the case of Morocco, one of the major challenges that youths face is the early dropout from schools, which results in the deterioration of the human capital within this country (World Bank, 2012a; 2012b; & 2013; Sabha, 2014). The NEET rate in Morocco accounts for 35.4% for the age group between 15 and 29 with higher rates for females. In addition to that, 73.3% of the active youth in the same group age do not have any medical coverage or contract (Sahwa, 2016a & 2016b). Since the 1990s, the National Council for Youth and the Future was putting strategies that were

able to reach only a small number of the unemployed youth. Currently, Morocco is putting more efficient strategies such as the new “National Employment Strategies 2015-2025” that aims at promoting self-employment, and at improving youth employability access, and the “National Integrated Youth Policy 2015-2030” that aims at enhancing education quality besides improving health and housing access (Rapport du Conseil Economique et Social, 2011; HCP, 2012; Ministère de la Jeunesse et Sports, 2014 & 2001; Kamal, 2016). In addition to that, the Moroccan government is introducing strategies for youth inclusion that has international cooperation programs.

For Algeria, strategies related to the education and health are promising, but the youngest segment lack enthusiasm for the future because of the lack of universities attractiveness (Omrane, 2016). Among the existing challenges that youth face within this country are the mismatch between the skills learned while education or training and the job market besides unemployment with higher gender gap (Laaredj, 2016). The Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Local administration, and the Ministry of Culture, in addition to the government are working collaboratively (Rapport du Programme Euromed, 2010; Rouag, 2014). These strategies target the inclusion of youths in the decision-making, the increase of employability, and reduce the gender gap with regard to the education and employability. Also, Algeria is cooperating with international organizations such as the International Labor Organization (ILO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

The youngest segment in Egypt suffers from unemployment that accounted for more than 42% in 2010 with an increasing trend. This is explained by the lack of job opportunities (Korany, El-Sayyad, Serag, 2016). For this, the government initiated a President’s Leadership Program that involves youth in policy-making decisions as well as many other programs to enhance employability within this country.

A recent contribution of Tholen (2016) summarizes youth policies in Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, and Lebanon. Given the challenges these economies face with regard to employment and education, Algeria collaborate with many government and non-government agencies to initiate programs for youth inclusion. Among these

organizations, there is the National Employment Agency and the Social Development Agency. For Tunisia, Egypt, and other North African countries, strategies account for “Initiation Training for Professional Life”, Higher Education Graduates Insertion Contact”, “Contract of Reintegration into Working Life”, and whatnot (ILO, 2012). These strategies are supported by decrees and funded by many international organizations such as the ETF, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), World Bank, and International Youth Foundation.

For Libya, there are no strategies that relate to the inclusion of youth in the active job market. The only few existing programs relate to training and fostering entrepreneurship. This is also the case for Palestine (ETF, 2013b; 2015).

In the case of Jordan, approximately 21 public offices under the ministry of labor collaborated to launch the program “National Electronic Empowerment System online Platform”. This government also launched different programs to increase the vocational training reach for young individuals besides enhancing its quality (ETF, 2015).

Previous contributions and analyses show that the average NEET rate in European countries is lower than the average rate for ECE countries. Still, both of these two latter rates are significantly lower than the NEETs rate in Arab countries. This is mainly because European countries benefit from strategies, programs, and direct policies for the NEETs inclusion, in which some of them are implemented in ECE countries. This suggests for Arab countries to have direct policies for the inclusion of this category of young individuals.

Governments and policy makers should have more awareness with regard to the NEET category in the Arab region. This is to include them both socially and economically, and reduce the economic losses that this category of young individuals incurs.

Empirical Method & Data

For assessing the policies targeting the NEETs in both Arab and ECE countries, one has to estimate the extent at which the NEET rate in Arab and ECE economies benefits from the existing knowledge as measured from the ETF reports, the article count (Nature Index) and the number of citable documents per country.

These measures are proxies that represent the studies made on both general and vocational education besides employment. Three types of analyzes are conducted using the NEETs and the selected explanatory knowledge variables.

1. A simple regression analysis using the NEETs rate as dependent variable and the ETF publications as the independent variable is first performed on Arab countries using the following data.

Table 1: ETF report per year per each Arab country

| Year | Algeria | Egypt | Jordan | Lebanon | Libya | Morocco | Palestine | Syria | Tunisia |
|------|---------|-------|--------|---------|-------|---------|-----------|-------|---------|
| 1992 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1993 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1994 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1995 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1996 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1997 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1998 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1999 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2001 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2002 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2003 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2004 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2005 | 9 | 6 | 8 | 7 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 8 | 10 |
| 2006 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 3 |
| 2007 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 7 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 5 | 7 |
| 2008 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| 2009 | 7 | 10 | 10 | 8 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 7 | 8 |
| 2010 | 8 | 9 | 8 | 8 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 7 | 8 |
| 2011 | 3 | 10 | 8 | 6 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 5 | 9 |
| 2012 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 5 | 5 |
| 2013 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| 2014 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 6 |
| 2015 | 6 | 8 | 7 | 8 | 6 | 10 | 7 | 2 | 8 |
| 2016 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 3 |

2. The second analysis consists of a regression analysis between the article count per year for each of Arab and ECE countries with the NEET rate. The data of the article count is summarized in the following table:

Table 2: Article count per year in Arab and ECE countries

| Countries | Article Count |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Algeria | 25 |
| Egypt | 122 |
| Iraq | 12 |
| Jordan | 12 |
| Kuwait | 12 |
| Lebanon | 23 |
| Libya | 3 |
| Mauritania | 1 |
| Morocco | 86 |
| Oman | 6 |
| Qatar | 82 |
| Saudi Arabia | 410 |
| Sudan | 6 |
| Syria | 2 |
| Tunisia | 18 |
| UAE | 92 |
| Palestine | 5 |
| Yemen | 3 |
| Bulgaria | 132 |
| Croatia | 174 |
| Czech Republic | 573 |
| Estonia | 162 |
| Hungary | 383 |
| Latvia | 33 |
| Lithuania | 94 |
| Poland | 1006 |
| Romania | 230 |
| Slovakia | 143 |

Source: Nature Index

A comparative analysis of the difference between the means of the NEET rates and the article counts of Arab and ECE countries by the use of t-statistics is also performed. This tests hypotheses: H_0 : The average article count in ECE countries is equal to the one of Arab countries; H_A : The average article count in ECE countries is different than the one of Arab countries and; H_0 : The average NEET rate in ECE countries is equal to the one of Arab countries

with; H_A: The average NEET rate in ECE countries is different than the one of Arab countries.

3. The fourth analysis is a regression of the NEET rate and a dummy variable that represents the year at which the ECE countries joined the European Union (EU). This is to indicate whether if joining the EU contributes to the decrease of the NEETs or not.

The following table shows the date of joining the EU for each of the ECE countries.

Table 3: ECE countries and years of joining the EU

| Country | Day of introduction to the EU | Source |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Bulgaria | 2007 | http://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/bulgaria_en |
| Croatia | 2013 | http://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/croatia_en |
| Czech Republic | 2004 | http://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/czechrepublic_en |
| Estonia | 2004 | http://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/estonia_en |
| Hungary | 2004 | http://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/hungary_en |
| Latvia | 2004 | http://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/latvia_en |
| Lithuania | 2004 | http://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/lithuania_en |
| Poland | 2004 | http://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/poland_en |
| Romania | 2007 | http://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/romania_en |
| Slovakia | 2004 | http://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/slovakia_en |

The NEET rates for the Arab countries are estimated based on the contribution of Driouchi and Harkat (2017b).

Results

As to measure the extent at which reports on general and vocational education besides employment, the ETF report is a measure used as a proxy to indicate the number of studies on each of specific countries. Table 4 summarizes the results of the regression analysis of the NEETs on the number of ETF report published per year in Arab economies.

Among all the Arab economies, only Algeria and Morocco have negative coefficients of -0.011 and -0.003 that correspond to t-statistics of -5.280 and -2.763, respectively. This is interpreted such as that policy makers in these two economies are benefiting from these reports as to include strategies and policies to reduce the NEETs. In the case of Algeria, this aligns with the recent contribution of Driouchi and Harkat (2017c) that indicates that the trend of the NEETs population is significantly decreasing within this economy. For Morocco, the trend of the NEETs population is not statistically significant, but these findings (Table 4) indicate that policy makers appear to be implicitly considering strategies for the NEETs based on the empirical finding from the ETF reports.

Concerning Libya and Palestine, they have positive significant coefficients with the values of 0.003 and 0.006 and t-statistics values of 4.451 and 2.107, respectively. This means that the more reports are published from the ETF, the more the NEETs are increasing. This leads to concluding that policy makers do not align their strategies and policies based on the results of the findings of the ETF reports. For the remaining countries that are Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Tunisia, they have no significant coefficient, and this can be interpreted as policy makers in these countries do not use these reports to make decisions.

The above findings also align with the contribution of Driouchi and Harkat (2017c), as all these economies have either a non-significant or positive trend with regard to the young NEET population.

Table 4: Regression Analysis of the NEETs and ETF report in Arab Economies

| Country | R-Square | Intercept | Coefficient |
|---------|----------|-----------|-------------|
|---------|----------|-----------|-------------|

| | | | |
|------------------|-------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Algeria | 0.548 | 0.281 (38.465) | -0.011 (-5.280) |
| Egypt | 0.044 | 0.226 (49.310) | 0.001 (1.034) |
| Jordan | 0.047 | 0.242 (74.180) | -1.069 (0.296) |
| Lebanon | 0.032 | 0.194 (266.474) | 0.000 (0.869) |
| Libya | 0.463 | 0.285 (212.943) | 0.003 (4.451) |
| Morocco | 0.249 | 0.207 (37.554) | -0.003 (-2.763) |
| Palestine | 0.162 | 0.252 (49.167) | 0.006 (2.107) |
| Syria | 0.005 | 0.199 (27.985) | 0.001 (0.344) |
| Tunisia | 0.013 | 0.242 (62.049) | 0.000 (0.554) |

The second part of the results is related to the regression analysis between the NEET rates of young population and article count per country provided by the Nature Index as of 2017. This model resulted in an R-square value of 0.233, still, it is significant as it resulted in an F-stat of 0.00923. This model is given by the following equation:

$$NEETs = 0.212 - 0.00015 * Article\ count$$

The above model has an intercept value of 0.212 with a t-statistics value of 15.734 and a coefficient of 0.00015 with a t-statistics value of -2.813. This is interpreted such as the more reports and articles are published per country per year, the more the NEETs are decreasing.

The average article count in ECE countries is 293 while in Arab countries, it is 51. The NEET rate is 13.014% in ECE countries while it is 22.541% in Arab countries. Table 5 indicates that the difference between the means of these above two variables for these two set of economies is significant, as it results in t-statistics values of 3.215 and -4.837 that corresponds to p-values of 0.35% and 0.01%.

This leads to explaining the lower rate of NEETs in ECE in comparison to Arab countries by the higher number of article counts within these economies.

Table 5: Difference between the means of Article count and NEET rates of ECE and Arab economies.

| | Article count | NEET rate |
|--------------|---------------|-----------|
| t-statistics | 3.215 | -4.837 |
| Df | 26 | 26 |
| P-value | 0.0035 | 0.0001 |

The following table (Table 6) summarizes the results of regression analysis of ECE countries and the dummy variable that indicates the date they have joined the European Union (EU). The countries are selected based on those that have NEET rate observations both before and after they joined the EU. These countries are: Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, and Slovak Republic.

Findings indicate that Bulgaria benefits from joining the EU, as the dummy variable resulted in a coefficient of -0.048 that corresponds to a t-statistics value of -4.423. Under a significance level of 10%, this is also the case of the Slovak Republic as well that has a coefficient of -0.032. For Croatia and Romania, they have non-significant coefficients.

This aligns with the findings of Harkat and Driouchi (2017a), as both Croatia and Romania have non-significant coefficient of the young NEET population.

Table 6: Regression Analysis of the NEET rate in ECE countries and Dummy variable that represents joining the EU

Independent Variable: NEET rate

Dependent Variable: Dummy variable that represents joining the EU

| Country | R-square | Intercept | Coefficient |
|------------------------|----------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Bulgaria | 0.640 | 0.249 (27.543) | -0.048 (-4.423) |
| Croatia | 0.709 | 0.132 (11.896) | 0.053 (4.383) |
| Romania | 0.129 | 0.174 (15.877) | -0.017 (-1.277) |
| Slovak Republic | 0.259 | 0.169 (10.837) | -0.032 (-1.962) |

The regression analysis between the NEETs and the citable documents on education per year per each of the Arab countries indicates that only Algeria, Palestine, and Saudi Arabia that have significant negative coefficients with values of -0.158, -0.280, and -0.005 that corresponds to t-statistic values of -2.311, -2.550 and -4.650, respectively (Table 7). This means that the strategies used in these countries that relate to education take into account the NEETs besides the quality of education and whatnot. Among Arab countries, Egypt, Kuwait, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, and the United Arab Emirates have a positive significant coefficient. This is interpreted such as increasing number of research and reports related to education does not benefit the NEETs. With regard to education policies, policy makers do set strategies and programs that include this category of youth.

Table 7: Regression analysis of the NEETs rate and citable documents related to education in Arab countries

| | R-squared | Intercept | Coefficient |
|-----------|-----------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Algeria | 0.276 | 25.928 (20.588) | -0.158 (-2.311) |
| Bahrain | 0.046 | 12.895 (558.537) | 0.003 (0.953) |
| Egypt | 0.539 | 21.456 (51.121) | 0.049 (4.592) |
| Iraq | 0.096 | 27.311 (15.551) | -0.258 (-0.976) |
| Jordan | 0.064 | 23.411 (86.010) | 0.008 (1.107) |
| Kuwait | 0.816 | 12.202 (41.714) | 0.219 (9.172) |
| Lebanon | 0.002 | 19.462 (160.794) | -0.001 (-0.204) |
| Libya | 0.090 | 28.619 (59.992) | 0.197 (0.995) |
| Morocco | 0.010 | 19.109 (32.221) | -0.019 (-0.413) |
| Oman | 0.002 | 30.108 (147.446) | 0.002 (0.165) |
| Palestine | 0.317 | 14.526 (17.574) | -0.280 (-2.550) |

| | | | |
|--------------|--------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Qatar | 0.022 | 23.443 (67.772) | -0.007 (-0.524) |
| Saudi Arabia | 0.532 | 20.416 (253.932) | -0.005 (-4.650) |
| Sudan | 0.357 | 18.911 (19.657) | 0.814 (2.789) |
| Syria | 0.576 | 22.956 (39.683) | 0.509 (3.862) |
| Tunisia | 0.4489 | 14.091 (65.194) | 0.044 (3.917) |
| UAE | 0.394 | 23.559 (32.389) | 0.042 (3.514) |
| Yemen | 0.242 | 21.791 (28.601) | 0.491 (1.785) |

Concerning ECE countries, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Poland, and Slovakia have significant negative coefficients (Table 8). This indicates that these countries have policies that target directly the NEETs, which is the case of all EU countries. For the remaining countries, they have non-significant coefficients.

Table 8: Regression analysis of the NEETs rate and citable documents related to education in ECE countries

| | R-squared | Intercept | Coefficient |
|-----------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Bulgaria | 0.804 | 27.441 (34.582) | -0.124 (-7.576) |
| Croatia | 0.000 | 16.267 (12.932) | 0.001 (0.096) |
| Czech Republic | 0.334 | 11.039 (13.411) | -0.019 (-2.555) |
| Estonia | 0.024 | 11.976 (13.338) | -0.011 (-0.609) |
| Hungary | 0.081 | 13.948 (18.032) | -0.021 (-1.153) |
| Latvia | 0.000 | 13.207 (11.245) | 0.001 (0.012) |
| Lithuania | 0.049 | 11.625 (11.912) | -0.015 (-0.876) |
| Poland | 0.224 | 14.141 (14.777) | -0.016 (-2.010) |
| Romania | 0.034 | 17.616 (18.729) | -0.007 (-0.731) |

| | | | |
|---------------------------|-------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Slovakia (log) | 0.463 | 2.999 (28.502) | -0.095 (-3.349) |
| Slovenia | 0.001 | 8.262 (15.172) | 0.001 (0.126) |

Discussion and Conclusion

The two major questions pursued in this paper include policy makers in Arab countries and benefits from the reports, to reform their policies and strategies targeting the NEETs in addition to the effects of joining the EU in terms of policies and knowledge related to NEETs.

Using mainly regression analysis with different data sets, series of results are attained. Analysis uses time series data of the NEETs of ECE and Arab countries. In addition to that, it uses the number of publication per year released by the ILO, the yearly number of citable document on education, and article count per country for the year 2017, and for ECE countries, it uses a dummy variable to represent the year of joining the European Union. First, this is to assess throughout regression analyses the extent at which existing policies align with researches and studies. Empirical findings show that for Arab countries, only Algeria and Morocco benefit from ETF reports while for Libya and Palestine, they have positive coefficients.

This contribution indicates the importance of direct NEETs policies. This is to support new policies related to youth inclusion, mostly in Arab countries. Analysis assumes that the reports released by international organizations as well as the article count of a country are a source of knowledge to support the creation of new strategies and activities, as to monitor the youngest segments.

The above results indicate that policies and programs related to youth inclusion in most of Arab countries aim at creating job opportunities and increase education reach without taking into consideration the different supporting evidence such as ETF reports. Furthermore, the relationship between citable documents on education per country and the NEETs rates indicates that only 4 out of 18 that have significant negative coefficients. This suggests that most of policies and programs related to youth inclusion in Arab countries exclude the NEETs.

For ECE countries, the number of citable documents per country has significant coefficients with the NEETs rate in 4 out of 11 countries. Unlike some Arab economies that have significantly positive coefficients, the remaining ECE countries have non-significant ones.

ECE countries that have enough observations of the NEETs rate before and after joining the European Union (EU) are Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, and Slovak Republic. Bulgaria and Slovak Republic indicate that the NEETs population benefited from joining the EU.

The regression analysis that assesses the link between the number of article count per country and the NEETs rate indicate that there is a significant negative coefficient between these two variables. The lower number of citable documents explains the significantly higher NEETs rates for Arab economies in comparison to ECE countries.

The EU countries have established policies, strategies, and programs that target young individuals that are NEETs, such as the “Youth Guarantee Programme”. This latter program covers most ECE countries that are part of the EU but benefits other many countries. This is not the case of Arab countries.

This paper shows the importance of having directed policies of the NEETs, as to include them in youth inclusion programs, and provides guidance for policy makers, mostly in Arab countries.

Further research is needed to enlarge the knowledge base that could enrich policies targeting higher inclusion of the NEETs.

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