

## Youth employment issues

**Y**outh are the potential and future of every country, and productive young people are the architects of a healthy, growing economy. A common concern of many governments nowadays is finding the best ways to integrate young people into the labor force as an increase in youth unemployment will have seriously negative effects on national economic growth and productivity.

The APO in cooperation with the National Iranian Productivity Organization (NIPO) held a four-day workshop on Youth Employment Issues in APO Economies, 2–5 August, in Tehran. Twenty-two participants representing 12 member countries and nine observers attended. This was the first time a workshop on focusing specifically on issues of youth employment was organized. Two resource persons from Japan and Singapore, countries with effective policies to keep the youth unemployment situation in check, were assigned to facilitate the proceedings.

After updates on national youth employment trends and challenges facing productivity, participants eagerly shared effective policies on youth entrepreneurship, education, and training; minimum wages for the young; and youth labor de-

mand to address employment issues they had encountered. In addition to noting initiatives from other countries to suggest to their governments, participants also offered ideas for the APO Secretariat to examine in-depth in future research. On behalf of all participants, A.

Rahim Bin Abdul Razak of Malaysia gave a vote of thanks for the timely workshop and reiterated their suggestion for the APO to carry out a future study to measure the impact of youth unemployment on productivity. He also pointed out the necessity of devising a universal framework to collect youth labor market information. 🌐



*A site visit to the Iran Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization showcasing how a job creation policy is implemented to reduce youth unemployment. The young man wearing black in the foreground is becoming skilled in manufacturing automotive brakes. Photo courtesy of NIPO.*