

# #GIDSresearch 1 / 2026

Wolfgang Müller

## **Failing States**

The Development of Youth Unemployment as a Potential  
Early Warning Indicator?

#GIDSresearch | No. 1/2026 | March 2026 | ISSN 2699-4380

The German National Library lists this publication in the German National Bibliography; detailed bibliographic information can be obtained online via <http://dnb.dnb.de>

ISSN 2699-4380

This contribution is available under Creative Commons Licence CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 International (Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives).

For further information on the license, please refer to: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/deed.en>



This #GIDSresearch is published by the German Institute for Defence and Strategic Studies (GIDS).

Contributions may be retrieved free of charge from the GIDS website: [www.gids-hamburg.de](http://www.gids-hamburg.de)

#GIDSresearch reflects the personal opinions of the authors and does not necessarily represent the views of the GIDS.

Proposed citation:

Wolfgang Müller, Failing States – The Development of Youth Unemployment as a Potential Early Warning Indicator?, #GIDSresearch 1/2026, GIDS: Hamburg.

GIDS

German Institute for Defence and Strategic Studies

Führungsakademie der Bundeswehr

Manteuffelstraße 20 · 22587 Hamburg

Tel.: +49 (0)40 8667 6801

[buro@gids-hamburg.de](mailto:buro@gids-hamburg.de) · [www.gids-hamburg.de](http://www.gids-hamburg.de)

## Content

1	Introduction .....	1
2	The current indices of indicators and their critics.....	2
3	Testing the hypothesis .....	5
4	Conclusion .....	16
	List of References.....	17



---

Dr Wolfgang Müller \* | German Institute for Defence and Strategic Studies (GIDS)

## Failing States

### The Development of Youth Unemployment as a Potential Early Warning Indicator?

#### 1 Introduction

Among the most important undertakings in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development are interventions to prevent the failure of states or at least to slow down this process.<sup>1</sup> Such interventions are generally based on the assessment that a state is on the brink of failure and thus requires external intervention. Therefore, it is essential to determine whether this assessment is correct and whether it was made early enough to allow for a timely intervention. This question is not only an important one, but also an old one.<sup>2</sup> The reasons for its importance are too manifold to be covered in full in this paper, which is why it will concentrate on the security dimension.<sup>3</sup>

More specifically, the question of how to identify failing or failed states, and even more importantly, how to arrive at indicators of improvement or deterioration in the degree of a state's fragility is at the heart of this paper. It raises the question of whether there could be an early-warning indicator that is easier to use than, for example, the Fragile States Index (FSI). This paper intends to kick off further research, if indeed such a significant reduction of complexity will prove useful. One indicator, youth unemployment, will be taken to test the hypothesis that a single indicator – and more specifically, this indicator – can serve as the only leading early-warning indicator for state failure instead of the bundle of indicators that currently compromise indices such as the FSI. Several past and current situations in different states will be used to test this hypothesis.

Consequently, there are several issues that remain beyond the scope of the present paper. Providing an exact definition of failing or failed states is not an intention of this paper. Neither does it focus on the reasoning behind the aforementioned interventions, be they due to security, economic, moral or other reasons. Regarding the implications for security, what matters with regard to early warning is not what kind of security

---

\* Dr Wolfgang Müller is a Research Fellow at the German Institute for Defence and Strategies Studies, specialising in the subject areas of China and Total Defence. Prior to working for the GIDS, he occupied several national and international leadership positions, including in the German public administration. He holds an MBA and a PhD in Economics from the Bundeswehr University Hamburg/University of the Bundeswehr Munich. During his military career, he served as an Air Force officer with assignments to NATO, the UN and in military intelligence.

1 See for example: Kaplan 2008; European Commission 2007; Department for International Development 2005; Gisselquist/Justino/Vaccaro 2025; Lorch/Ziaja/Grävingsholt 2024.

2 See for example: Jackson 1990; Zartman 1995; Putzel 2010; Hegre et al. 2021; Muggah/Whitlock 2021.

3 See for example: Patrick 2010; OECD 2010; Brock/Holm/Sorenson 2012; Debiel/Lambach 2009; Oskanian 2021; Clausen/Albrecht 2021.

category is affected (such as terrorism<sup>4</sup>, migration<sup>5</sup>, islamisation<sup>6</sup>, civil war<sup>7</sup> or crime<sup>8</sup>). Rather, what matters is whether a state's collapse may create spill-over effects to neighbours<sup>9</sup> or the wider world<sup>10</sup>, which would have significant geostrategic implications.

## 2 The current indices of indicators and their critics

The idea of labelling a state 'failed', 'failing' or 'fragile', in combination with transparency about the indications used to arrive at such a conclusion, has led to the development of a number of different Fragile / Failing States Indices<sup>11</sup>:

- Index of State Weakness in the Developing World<sup>12</sup>
- Country Indicators for Foreign Policy<sup>13</sup>
- Classification of Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations<sup>14</sup>/ Country Policy and Institutional Assessment
- Bertelsmann Transformation Index<sup>15</sup>
- Fragile States Index<sup>16</sup>.

Those indices are composed of several indicators across various policy areas:

**Tab. 1** Fragile State Indices

Fragile States Index (Fund for Peace)	12 indicators
Transformation Index (Bertelsmann)	49 questions for qualitative assessment / 17 indicators
Classification of Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations/ Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (World Bank)	16 indicators
Country Indicators for Foreign Policy (Norman Paterson School of International Affairs)	83 indicators
Index of State Weakness in the Developing World (Brookings)	20 indicators

In the past, these indices were used to obtain information regarding two specific questions: Is an intervention necessary due to a bad overall ranking? And: What areas have

<sup>4</sup> Cf. on this: Rotberg 2003; Pasagic 2020.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. on this: Koller 2000; Martin-Shields 2017.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. on this: Celso/Nalbandov 2016; Taspinar 2009; Friedrich Ebert Stiftung 2015.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. on this: Geiß 2009; Collier/Hoeffert 1998.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. on this: Hansen 2011; Gros 2003.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. on this: Iqbal/Starr 2008.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. on this: Schneckener 2005.

<sup>11</sup> For an overview see: Schneckener 2007; Mata/Ziaja 2009.

<sup>12</sup> Brookings Institution n.d.

<sup>13</sup> Norman Paterson School of International Affairs n.d.

<sup>14</sup> World Bank n.d.

<sup>15</sup> Bertelsmann n.d.

<sup>16</sup> The Fund for Peace n.d..

the greatest need for external intervention? Based on these rankings – and therefore the identified weak policy areas – comprehensive state-building measures were then introduced.

Today, the meaningfulness of those indices is being questioned, as they have major conceptual limits and have thus been subject to some criticism regarding their role as the normative foundation both for international policy and development assistance.<sup>17</sup> Among the arguments brought forward by critics is that these indices often distort the quantitative ranking through the aggregation of unweighted indicators and their compensatory effects and that the differentiation between causes and outcomes is often blurred. In short: ‘The consequence of such agglomeration of diverse criteria is to throw a monolithic cloak over disparate problems that require tailored solutions.’<sup>18</sup> The most prominent example of how generic solutions applied to very distinct contexts can lead to the overall failure of state building is Afghanistan. To what extent that is due to a wrong strategy being chosen based on this particular methodological flaw is a question that remains unanswered, but the assumption is at least plausible. And there is yet another flaw in the usefulness of such complex and extremely work-intensive indices: looking at the countries ranking last in all 5 indices and those who are listed in at least 4 of the 5 indices, the result does not come as a surprise – such clear cases could have been identified without using the extensive methodology of these indices.<sup>19</sup>

As regards the specific issue of early-warning mechanisms, some work has been done by the OECD and the Political Instability Task Force (PITF). The OECD, for example, has proposed to use ‘early-warners’, i.e., local actors on the ground<sup>20</sup>, and the PITF has come up with four key indicators: regime type, infant mortality, armed conflict in neighbouring countries and state-led political discrimination.<sup>21</sup> The Fund for Peace Index explicitly aims to be an early-warning tool as well.<sup>22</sup>

As this paper argues, just one variable – (youth)employment – should be taken out of the indices and made the leading indicator for early warning.

Admittedly, there are some flaws to this approach from a methodological point of view:

First, early warning is not only about facts and model development. It is mainly about anticipating specific developments and preventing them from happening – or at least lessening their impact. Early warning also provides a useful starting point for allocating strategies and resources in response to a worsening situation, as it is a given fact that prevention is always more cost-effective than restoration. It should not serve as a prediction model to determine the time and extent of a state’s collapse, but rather to bring this particular country more into the focus of attention.

Second, it could also be argued that a different single indicator should be used. This paper is not built around a methodological approach determine, once and for all, which variable could serve best as the leading indicator, nor will it test the hypothesis by

**17** See for example: Saeed 2020 and 2023; Hukil 2013; Bhuta 2015; Nay 2013; Bethke 2012; Call 2010; Milante 2023.

**18** Call 2008, here p. 1495.

**19** Mata/Ziaja 2010; for a more detailed case-study based analysis see: Glawion/de Vries/Mehler 2018.

**20** See for example: OECD 2014; OECD 2009.

**21** Esty et al. 1995; Esty et al. 1999.

**22** Baker 2007.

comparing different single indicators across country-specific situations. Nor does it ignore the fact that there are interdependent or supporting indicators as well.

Nevertheless, there are reasons for taking youth unemployment as the potential lead indicator, which are the following:

- The labour market situation is one of the main – if not the most important – stabilisation factors of a society as such. Several studies have revealed the interconnection between unemployment and political stability. Therefore, one of the indicators to be found in Failing State Indices is the unemployment situation.<sup>23</sup>
- The potential for social unrest or strong (if not to say violent) forms of protest is much higher among young people than in any other age cohort of society.<sup>24</sup>
- At the same time, young people **in** work are a potential stabilisation factor.<sup>25</sup>
- (Youth)Employment is the dependent variable with regard to a lot of other variables in the aforementioned indices, although they are seen as equally important. Some of these variables are: demographics, educational level, educational content, economic development, corruption, import-export structure, sectoral structure of the economy, private and public markets, social security net, proportion of remittances in relation to GDP etc.

Therefore, high levels of youth unemployment can be a strong signal of deeper structural issues within a country, potentially contributing to its classification as a failed state. These are the key points on how youth unemployment as a dependent variable serves as an indicator for failed states:

1. **Economic Stability:** High youth unemployment reflects poor economic conditions and a lack of economic opportunities. This indicates that the state is unable to provide jobs for a significant portion of its population, which can lead to broader economic instability.
2. **Social Stability:** Unemployed youth are more likely to experience frustration, hopelessness, and disillusionment, which can lead to increased social unrest, crime, and violence.
3. **Political Stability:** High youth unemployment can fuel political instability. Disfranchised youth may become more susceptible to extremist ideologies, leading to political radicalisation and potential insurgency.
4. **Educational Failures:** Persistently high youth unemployment can also indicate systemic failures in the education system. If educational institutions are not adequately preparing young people for the job market, it reflects a broader failure of state infrastructure.
5. **Health and Welfare:** Unemployment affects not only the economic status but also the mental and physical health of young people.
6. **Migration and Brain Drain:** High youth unemployment often leads to increased migration as young people seek opportunities elsewhere. This brain drain can further weaken the state, reducing its ability to develop and grow economically.
7. **Intergenerational Tensions:** Prolonged youth unemployment can lead to tensions between generations, particularly if older workers are seen as occupying positions that could be filled by younger individuals. This can exacerbate social divisions and weaken social cohesion.

---

<sup>23</sup> See for example: Stewart 2015; Berman et al. 2011; Brück 2012; GIZ 2015.

<sup>24</sup> See for example: Cramer 2010; Gertel 2021; UNICEF 2024; Dardeli 2020; Honwana 2019; Yom/Lynch/al-Khatib 2019.

<sup>25</sup> See for example: Dowd 2017; McLean-Hilker/Fraser 2009; Walton 2010; Cramer 2015; Batmanglich/Enria 2014; Munive 2008; for a more critical view see: Gilligan 2016.

One might think that the overall economic situation might be a potential better single indicator compared to youth unemployment. There are several reasons, however, why this is not the case. The most important one: Depending on the economic structure of a national economy and the relative strength of the different economic sectors, one might find a statistically strong economy with a solid growth rate, but still high levels of un- or underemployment. Although there is a strong link between economic growth and unemployment<sup>26</sup>, more and more critics are questioning that principle in today's time.<sup>27</sup>

To look at a specific labour market situation, one needs also to look at demographics. A growing working-age population can, on the one hand, be the foundation for economic growth; on the other, it requires measures to ensure the integration of new labour market entrants. If, for example, youth unemployment in a country is high, but the share of young people in that society is comparably small, the high level of youth unemployment will have a lesser impact on the issue of social, political and intergenerational stability.<sup>28</sup>

### 3 Testing the hypothesis

The hypothesis of this paper is, if one indicator – youth unemployment – can be taken as the only leading early-warning indicator for state failure instead of the bundle of indicators that currently compromise Failing-States-indices. To test it, but also to identify its methodological limitations, we will take a closer look at three situations:

- The situation in the countries of the Maghreb region (Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia and Libya) prior to the Arab Spring,
- the situation in the countries of the Sahel zone (Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali) prior to the military coup d'états and
- the situation in China.

Regarding our first situation, we saw a strong increase in demographic growth in the above-named countries of the Maghreb region from the mid-seventies until the nineties, especially due to higher birth rates<sup>29</sup>. By early 2000, the share of this age cohort increased up to 50 % with regard to the overall population<sup>30</sup>:

**26** The so called 'Okun's Law': a 2 % increase in economic growth leads to a 1 % decrease in unemployment (Samuelson/Nordhaus 2009, here p. 597).

**27** Cf. on this: Hinterberger et al. 2012; Hammer 2021; Ball/Leigh/Loungani 2013.

**28** Cf. on this: ILO n.d.

**29** See Fig. 1–5.

**30** Fuller 2004: 6.

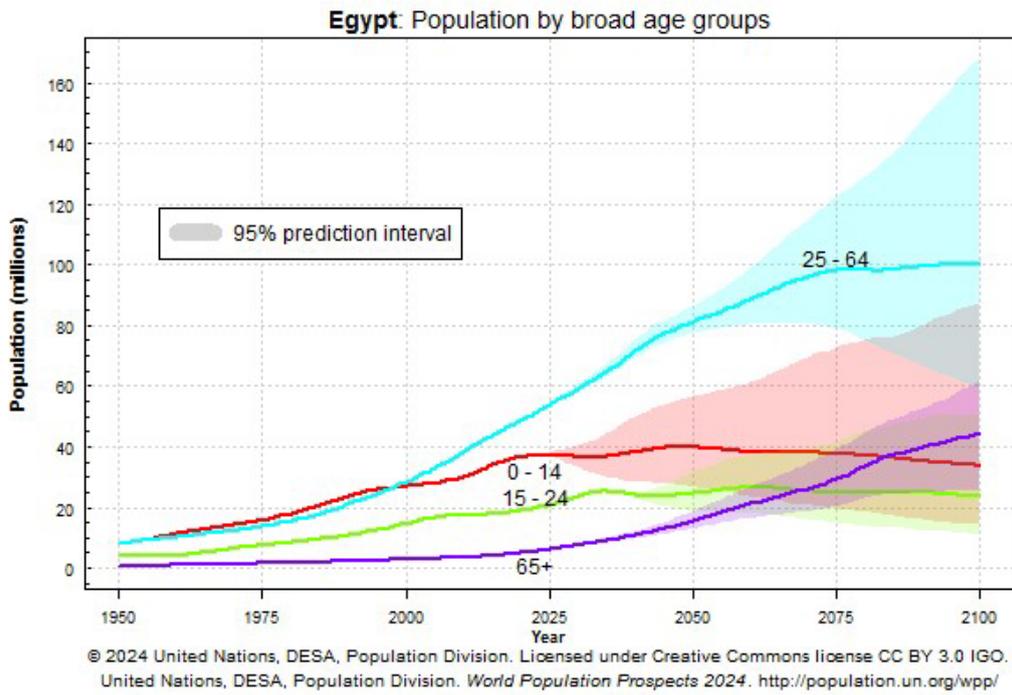


Fig. 1 Egypt: Population by broad age groups (United Nations 2024a)

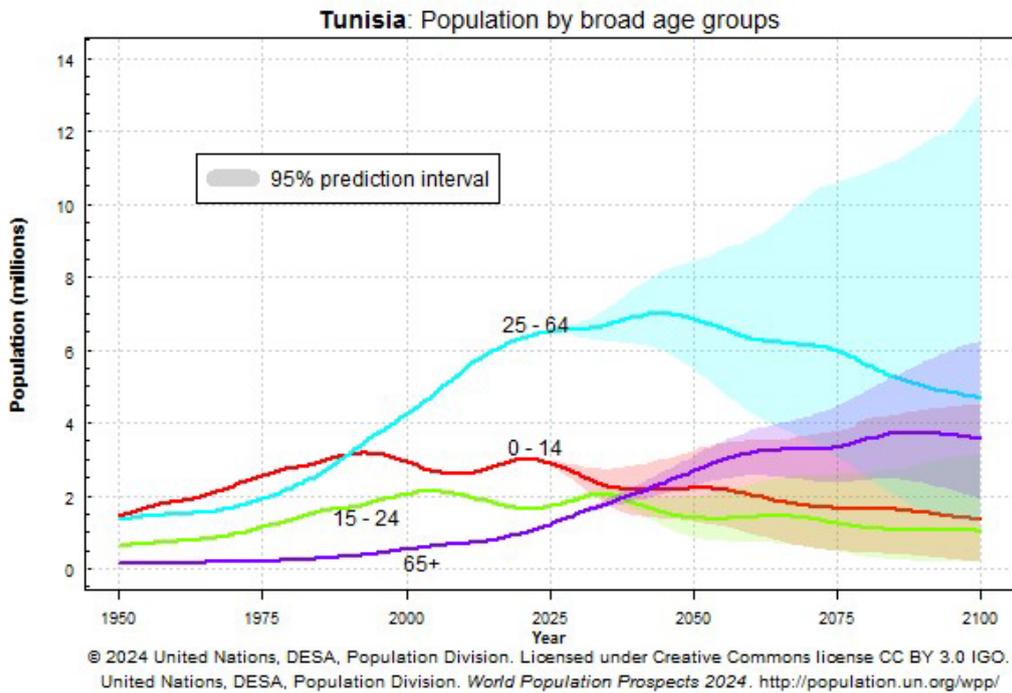


Fig. 2 Tunisia: Population by broad age groups (United Nations 2024b)

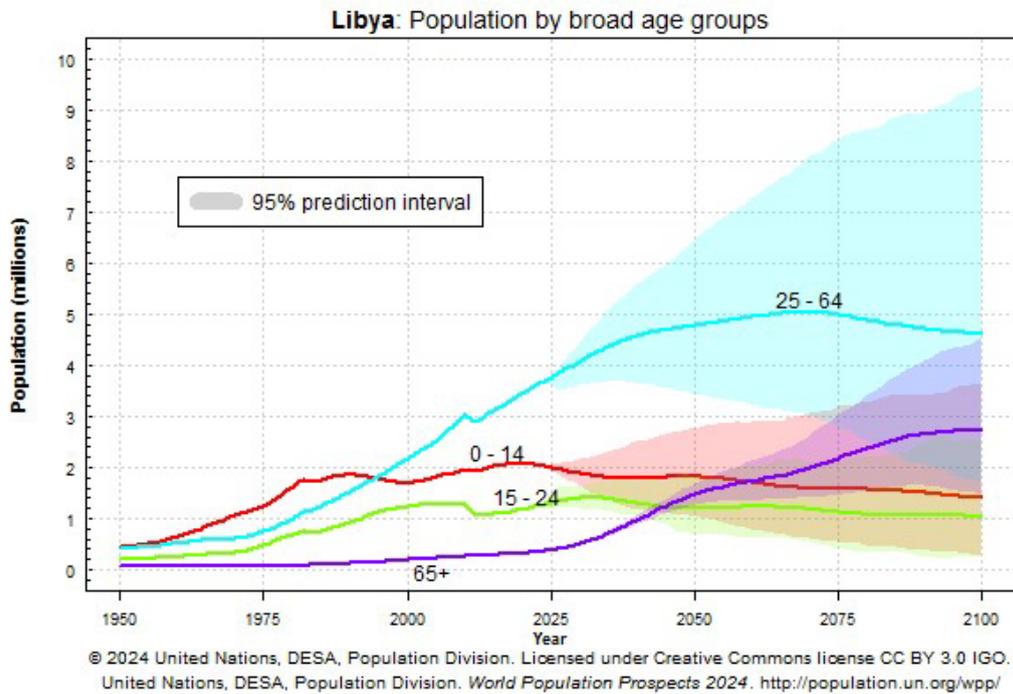


Fig. 3 Libya: Population by broad age groups (United Nations 2024c)

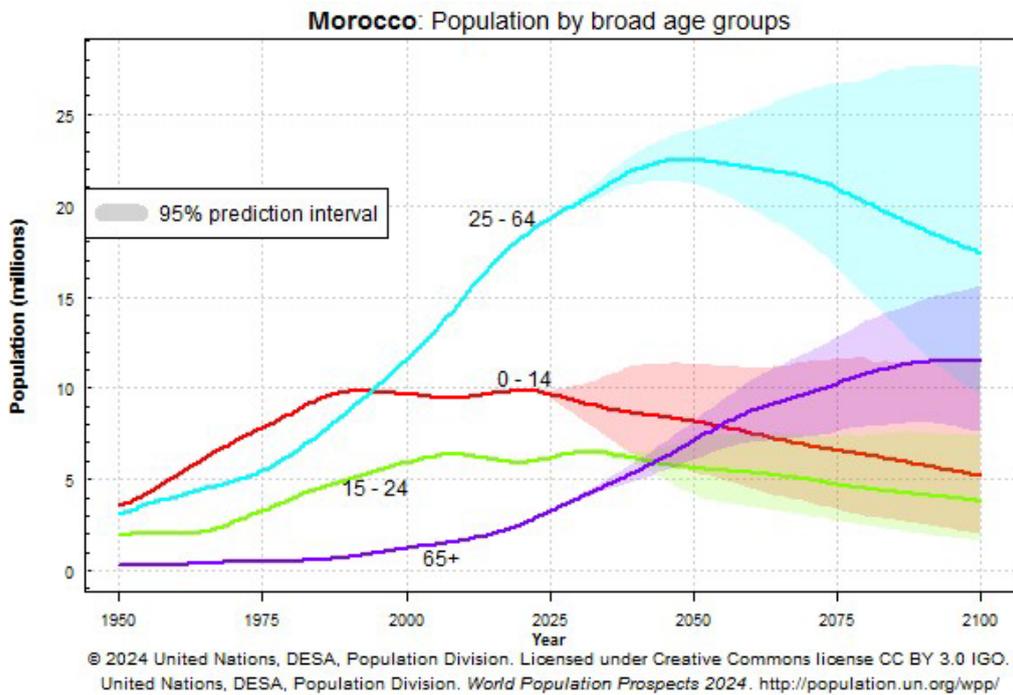
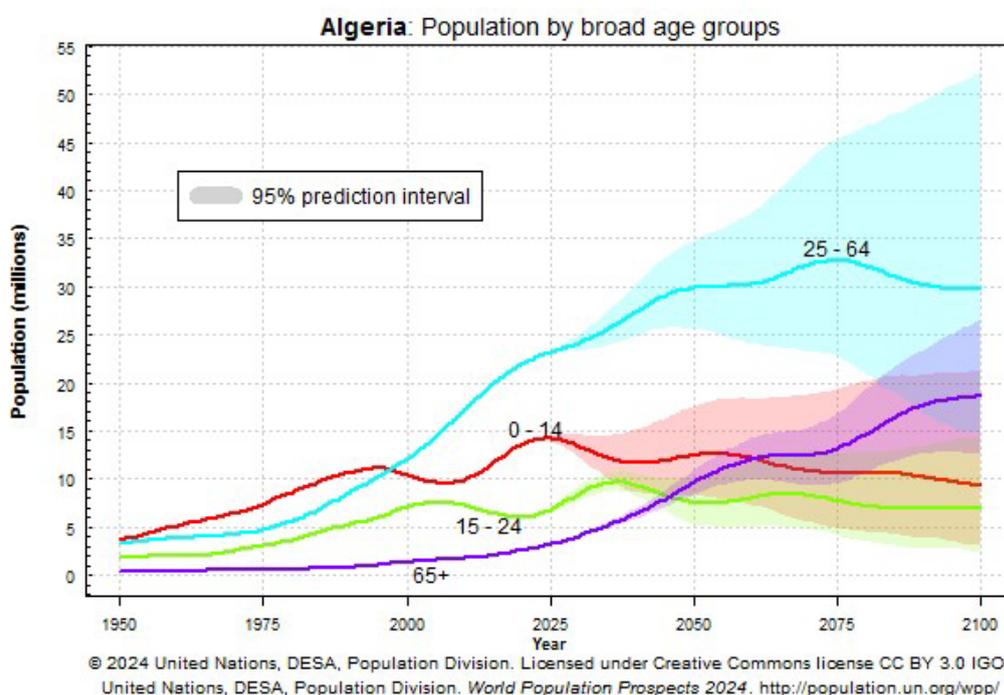


Fig. 4 Morocco: Population by broad age groups (United Nations 2024d)



**Fig. 5** Algeria: Population by broad age groups (United Nations 2024e)

**Tab. 2** Demographic Growth (UN World Population Statistics)

State	2000	2020	2030
Egypt	55.7	32.5	28.1
Turkey	50.4	39.2	35.7
Iran	59.3	42.4	38.9
Pakistan	61.0	56.2	51.4
S. Arabia	62.3	56.1	52.1
Iraq	61.7	53.9	47.2
Yemen	65.3	68.4	65.7
Algeria	56.5	40.9	37.4
Indonesia	50.7	39.5	36.4
Morocco	55.1	43.4	38.4

Looking at the development of youth unemployment in these countries prior to the Arab Spring<sup>31</sup>, the difficulty of meeting the political, social, economic, and infrastructural demands created by this age cohort is obvious. Constant rates of unemployment of at least 20 % and above (with the exception of Morocco, although it came close to 20 %, too) could be observed. Even though there are no exact figures, a high rate of underemployment or employment outside the formal sector can also be assumed. To sum up, the constant incapability of each of these states to accommodate the expectations of the young generation with regard to (meaningful) employment, income security, poverty prevention, etc. created an enormous pressure inside their societies. From the author's

**31** See Tab. 3, and then the Fig. 6–10 for the individual countries.

perspective, it is fair to assume that the effects of this (over)pressure led to the events of the Arab Spring, with security implications that still reverberate today.

**Tab. 3** Youth unemployment rates in % (ILO 2024)

Country	Source	Sex	Age	Year	Value
Algeria	LFS - Household Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2011	22.4
Algeria	LFS - Household Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2010	21.5
Algeria	LFS - Household Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2009	21.3
Algeria	LFS - Household Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2008	23.8
Algeria	LFS - Household Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2007	27.4
Algeria	LFS - Household Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2006	24.3
Algeria	LFS - Household Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2005	31.1
Algeria	LFS - Household Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2001	47.8
Egypt	LFS - Labour Force Sample Survey	Total	15–24	2011	29.3
Egypt	LFS - Labour Force Sample Survey	Total	15–24	2010	24.3
Egypt	LFS - Labour Force Sample Survey	Total	15–24	2009	24.8
Egypt	LFS - Labour Force Sample Survey	Total	15–24	2008	25
Egypt	LFS - Labour Force Sample Survey	Total	15–24	2007	24.8
Egypt	LFS - Labour Force Sample Survey	Total	15–24	2006	29.9
Egypt	LFS - Labour Force Sample Survey	Total	15–24	2002	27.1
Egypt	LFS - Labour Force Sample Survey	Total	15–24	2001	27.7
Morocco	LFS - National Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2011	17.9
Morocco	LFS - National Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2010	17.6
Morocco	LFS - National Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2009	16.6
Morocco	LFS - National Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2008	18.2
Morocco	LFS - National Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2007	15.6
Morocco	LFS - National Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2006	16.6
Morocco	LFS - National Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2005	15.7
Morocco	LFS - National Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2004	15.4
Morocco	LFS - National Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2003	17
Morocco	LFS - National Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2002	17.6
Morocco	LFS - National Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2001	18.9
Tunisia	LFS - National Population and Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2011	42.3
Tunisia	LFS - National Population and Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2010	29.4
Tunisia	LFS - National Population and Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2009	30.9
Tunisia	LFS - National Population and Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2008	28.4
Tunisia	LFS - National Population and Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2007	27.9
Tunisia	LFS - National Population and Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2006	27.7
Tunisia	LFS - National Population and Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2005	28.2

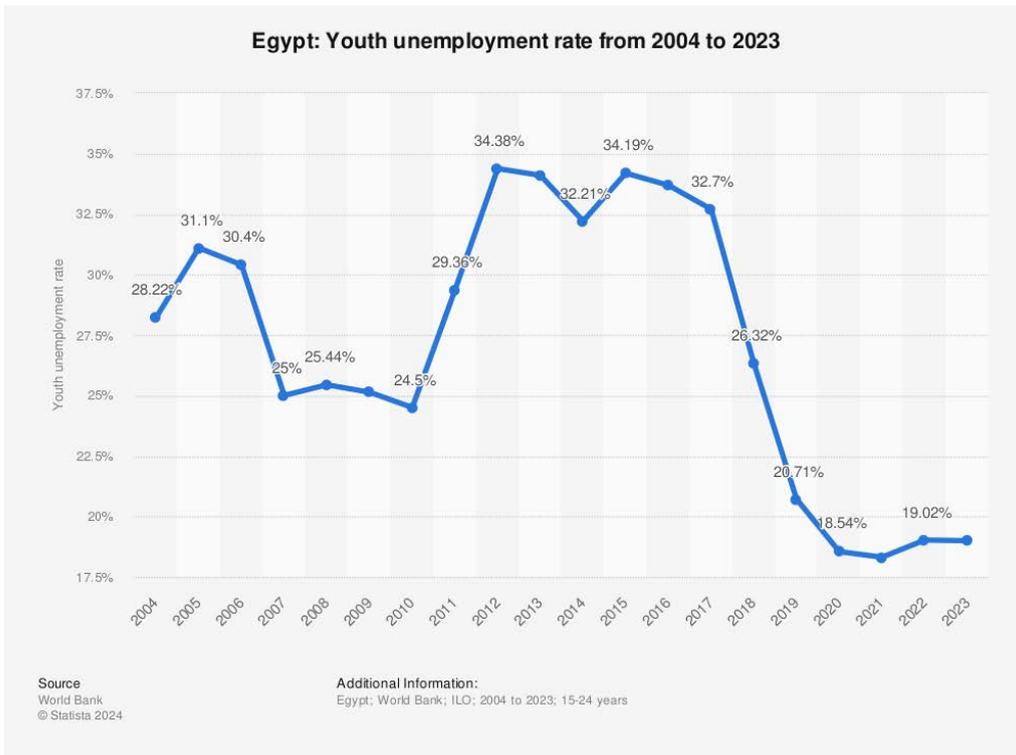


Fig. 6 Egypt: Youth unemployment rate from 2004 to 2023 (Statista 2024a)

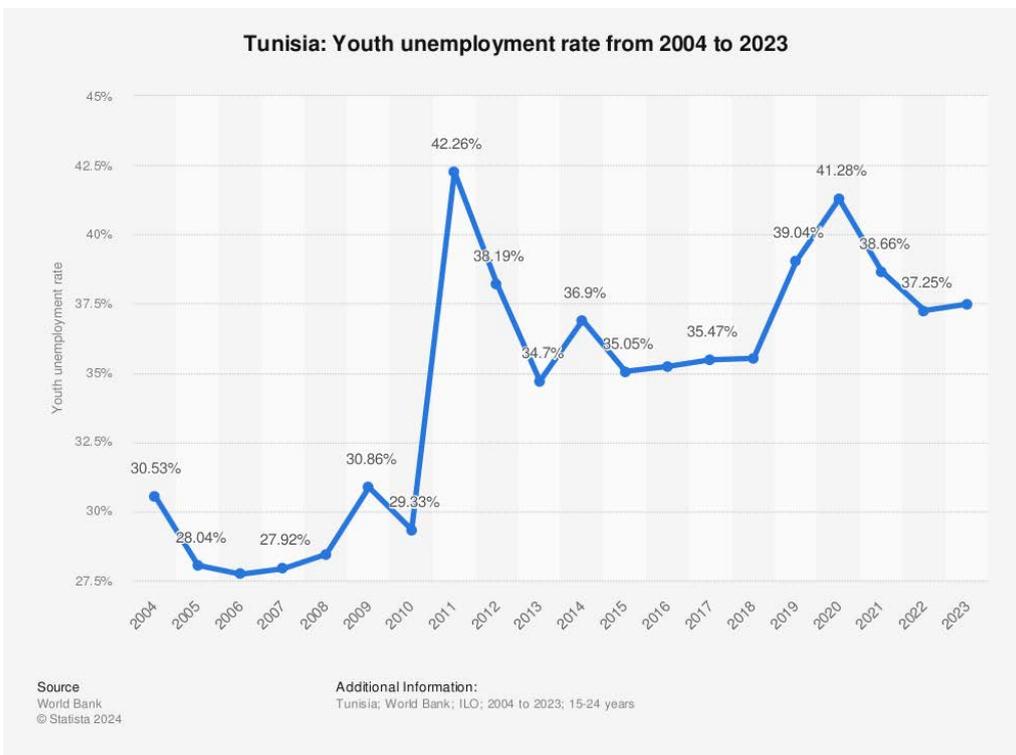
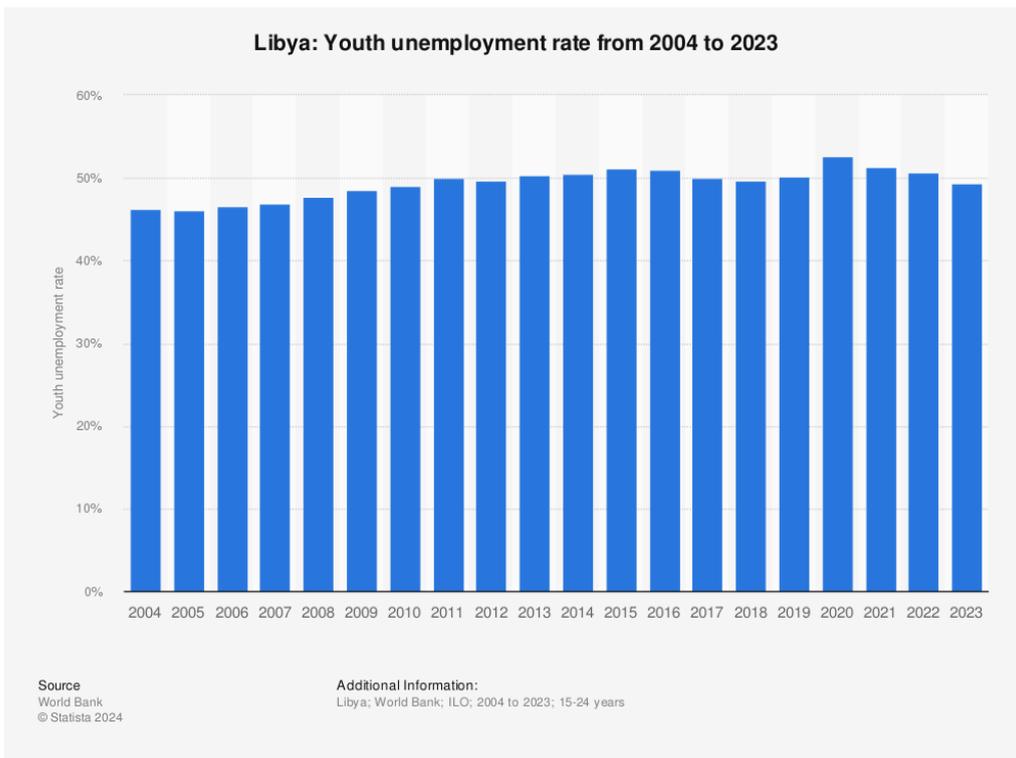
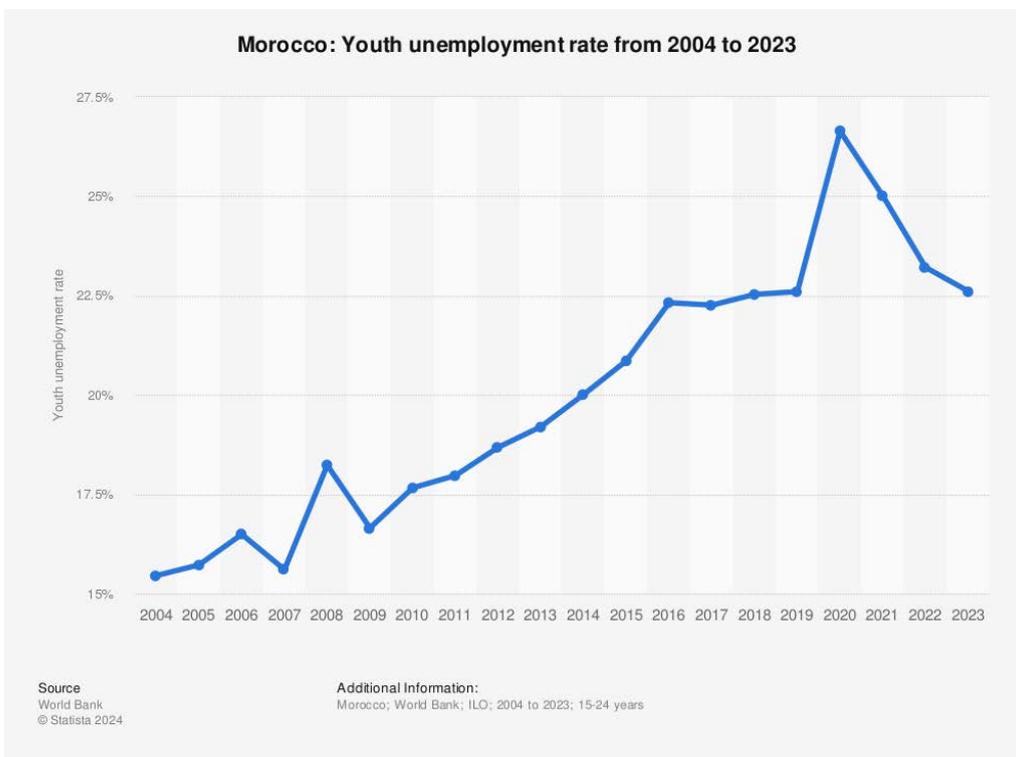


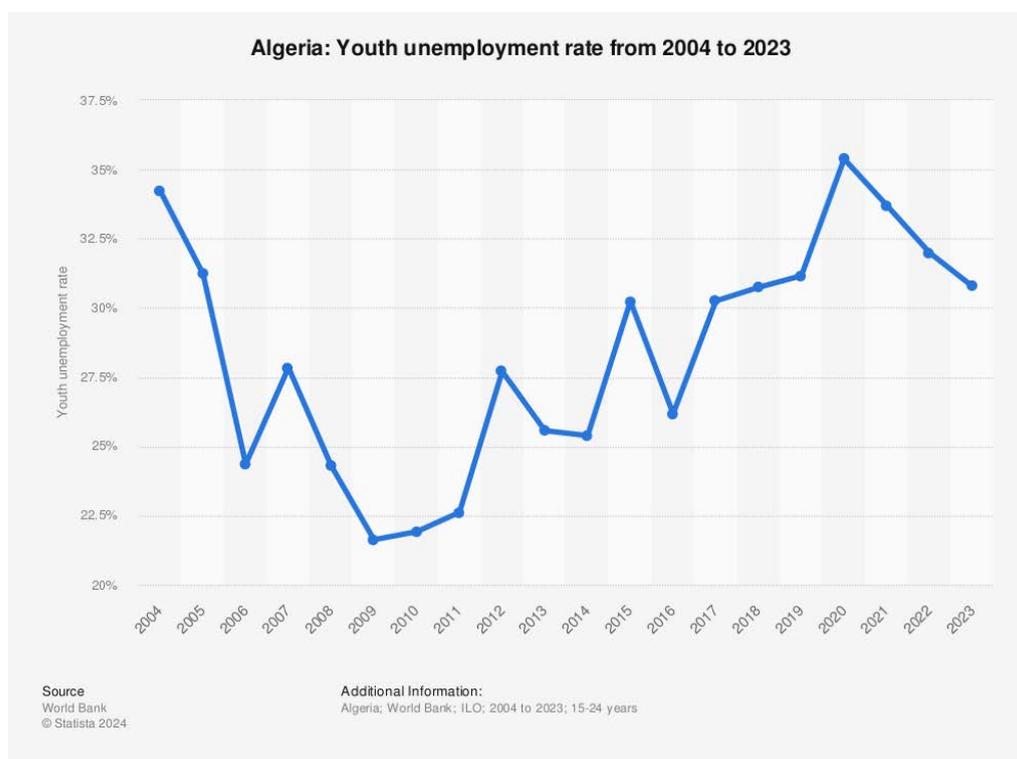
Fig. 7 Tunisia: Youth unemployment rate from 2004 to 2023 (Statista 2024b)



**Fig. 8** Libya: Youth unemployment rate from 2004 to 2023 (Statista 2024c)



**Fig. 9** Morocco: Youth unemployment rate from 2004 to 2023 (Statista 2024d)



**Fig. 10** Algeria: Youth unemployment rate from 2004 to 2023 (Statista 2024e)

At this point we have to be aware that measuring employment – and unemployment – around the world is far from being easy or consistent.<sup>32</sup> The ILO provides several data sets when it comes to the topic of employment. As important as unemployment is, there is also the concept of underemployment, employment outside the formal sector, or just being outside of the labour force. If we want to have a consistent statistical data set covering a specific time frame across various countries, we will end up with a lot of blind spots. In our example provided in Fig. 6, we see, for instance, that in the case of Egypt there are no data for the years 2003, 2004, and 2006. When we start looking at the other data around employment, the gaps are becoming even more numerous. This is particularly the case with our other two scenarios.

In our second situation, we want to take a closer look at the employment situation in Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali prior to the military coups. The methodological restraints mentioned above are particularly present with regard to these countries. Looking at demographics, we see pretty much the same picture as in the states of the Maghreb region, although the time frame is different.<sup>33</sup> As the statistical labour market data provided by the ILO is too weak<sup>34</sup>, we need to take qualitative analyses of the domestic reasons behind the coups into account.<sup>35</sup> A repetitive argument is a proportionally large young generation without any economic perspective, frustrated over the wealth of a small and – in their perception – corrupt elite without any chance for themselves of sustainable income and stability/ security. Another option would be to fall back on local

<sup>32</sup> For an extensive methodological discussion, see: ILO 2019a.

<sup>33</sup> See Fig. 11–13; see also: Sippel et al. 2011.

<sup>34</sup> See Tab. 4.

<sup>35</sup> See for example: Mahmoud/Taifouri 2013; Tschörner 2023; Ayala 2023.

studies.<sup>36</sup> Although there are substantial hints to strengthen our hypothesis, the causal link is less strong.

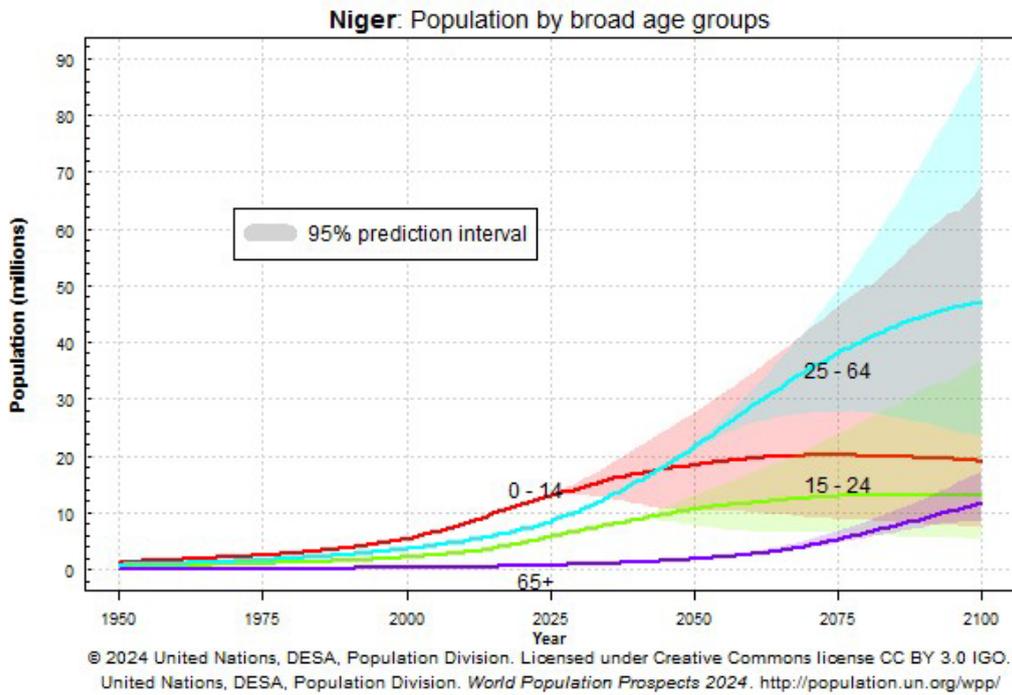


Fig. 11 Niger: Population by broad age groups (United Nations 2024f)

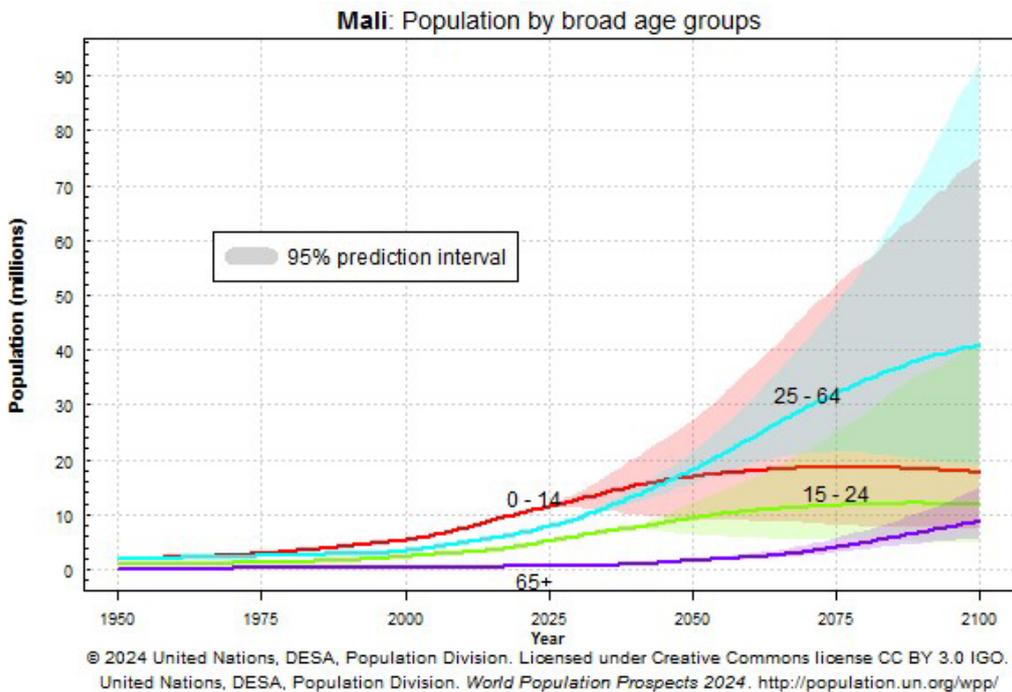
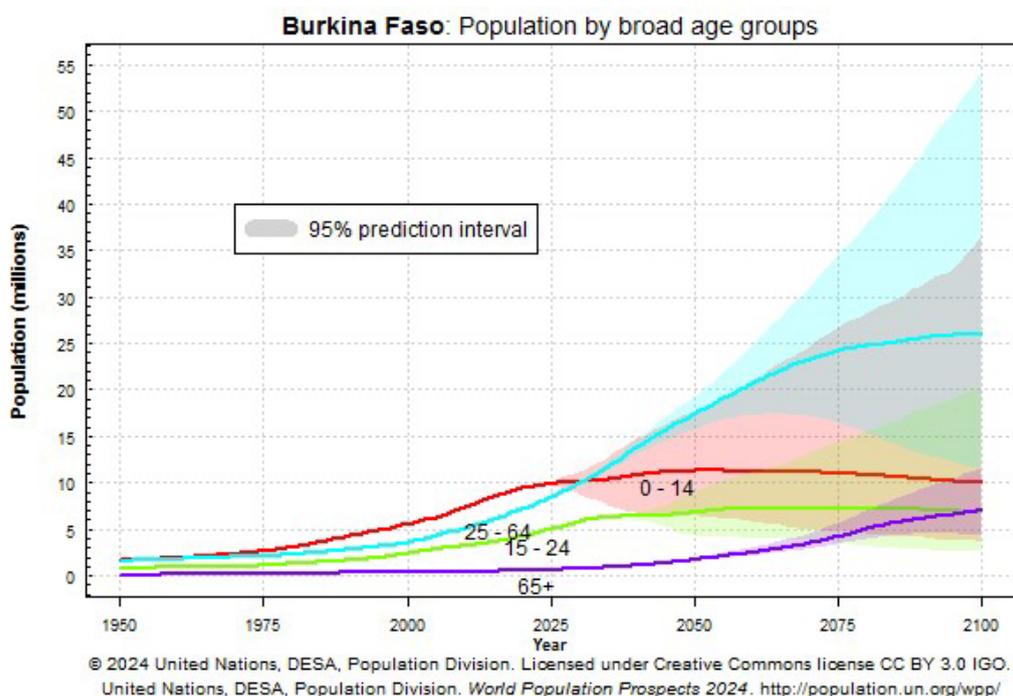


Fig. 12 Mali: Population by broad age groups (United Nations 2024g)

<sup>36</sup> See for example: African Development Bank Group n.d.; examples for older studies, but highlighting the same issue, are: UN Population Fund 2012; Irwin/Mader/Flynn 2018; Fortune/Ismaïl/Stephen 2015; Danish Trade Union Development Agency 2022.



**Fig. 13** Burkina Faso: Population by broad age groups (United Nations 2024h)

**Tab. 4** Youth unemployment rates in % (ILO 2024)

Country	Source	Sex	Age	Year	Value
Burkina Faso	LFS - Regional Integrated Survey on Employment and the Informal Sector	Total	15–24	2023	8.6
Burkina Faso	HIES - Harmonized Survey on Household Living Conditions	Total	15–24	2022	3.4
Burkina Faso	HIES - Harmonized Survey on Household Living Conditions	Total	15–24	2019	2
Burkina Faso	LFS - Regional Integrated Survey on Employment and the Informal Sector	Total	15–24	2018	8.6
Burkina Faso	HIES - Continuous Multisectoral Survey	Total	15–24	2014	8.7
Mali	HIES - Harmonized Survey on Household Living Conditions	Total	15–24	2022	3.3
Mali	LFS - Continuous Household Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2020	7.5
Mali	HIES - Harmonized Survey on Household Living Conditions	Total	15–24	2019	4.8
Mali	LFS - Continuous Household Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2018	2.4
Mali	LFS - Continuous Household Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2017	19.6
Mali	LFS - Continuous Household Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2016	2.3
Mali	LFS - Continuous Household Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2015	20
Mali	LFS - Continuous Household Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2014	8.2
Mali	LFS - Continuous Household Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2013	8.5
Niger	HIES - National Survey on Household Living Conditions	Total	15–24	2022	0.4
Niger	HIES - National Survey on Household Living Conditions	Total	15–24	2019	0.8
Niger	LFS - National Survey on Employment and the Informal Sector	Total	15–24	2017	16.6
Niger	HIES - National Survey on Household Living Conditions	Total	15–24	2014	0.7

Looking at our last situation, we are faced with another problem: China cannot be considered a failing state, let alone a failed state. But as China is confronted with an unprecedented rise of youth unemployment, it deserves a closer look as well. Being an authoritarian state, independent from outside institutions like the ILO or the World Bank, if and when China wants to be, statistics are a particularly sensitive issue<sup>37</sup>. As regards China's youth, the growth of this demographic group has already reached its peak and is falling.<sup>38</sup> If we look at the ILO Data for the unemployment situation<sup>39</sup>, we are limited regarding the time frame. A different source illustrates the dramatic increase in the last years. Currently, youth unemployment has reached the highest level ever recorded in China.<sup>40</sup> Looking at the reaction of the state – besides the issue with the statistic itself –, several interventions can be observed. The fundamental difference to the countries of the Maghreb region and the Sahel zone is the constitution of the economy as such. This constitution serves as a stability measure by itself.<sup>41</sup> But we also see active measures, like sending young people into rural areas – the same measure (sending more than 16 million young people into the villages) that was used by Mao Zedong in the sixties and seventies – or investing heavily in the start-up community.<sup>42</sup> In conclusion, the development of youth unemployment triggered a fundamental and quick reaction by the Chinese government. This supports the hypothesis that drastic negative changes can serve as an early warning mechanism and trigger strong reactions.

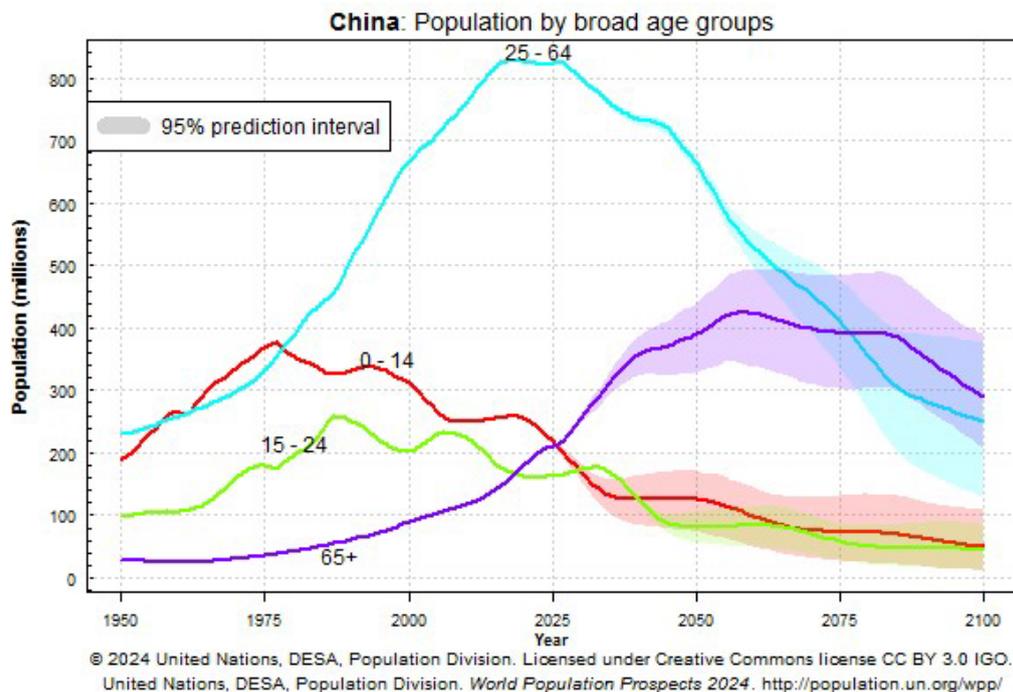
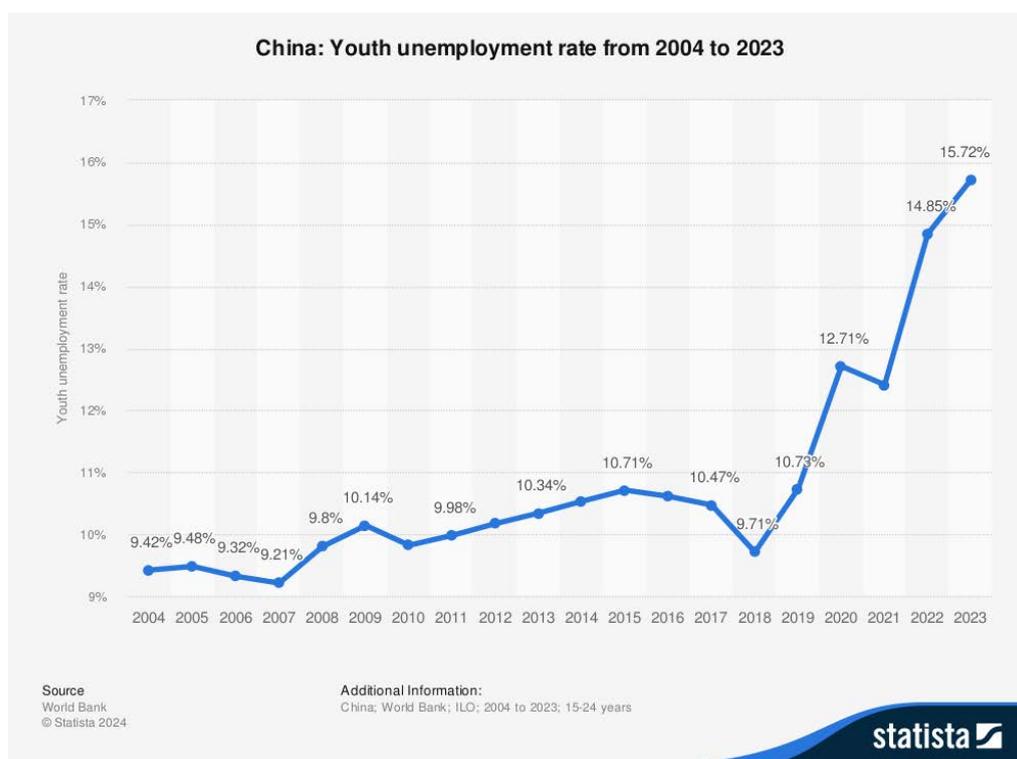


Fig. 14 China: Population by broad age groups (United Nations 2024i)

- 37** It is even argued, that due to the bad figures in unemployment, the Bureau of Statistics in China ceased to published new monthly figures (Gänger 2023).
- 38** See Fig. 14.
- 39** See Tab. 5.
- 40** See Fig. 15.
- 41** Cf. on this: Wen 2020; Wen 2019; Li 2011.
- 42** Amme 2023.

**Tab. 5** Youth unemployment rates in % (ILO 2024)

Country	Source	Sex	Age	Year	Value
China	LFS - National Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2021	14,2
China	LFS - National Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2020	14,2
China	LFS - National Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2019	11,8
China	LFS - National Employment Survey	Total	15–24	2018	10,8

**Fig. 15** China: Youth unemployment rate from 2004 to 2023 (Statista 2024f)

## 4 Conclusion

Employment creation is an accepted tool in international development cooperation, and thus strongly promoted.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, several studies exist on the effects of employment creation, even meta-analyses.<sup>44</sup> But we do see two limitations: Interventions with targeted and nationwide labour market policy instruments, coordinated as both national and international efforts, do hardly exist. One of the meta-analyses<sup>45</sup> found only 7 suitable studies that examine whether primary quantitative and qualitative evidence on the

<sup>43</sup> See for example: ILO International Training Centre Conferences (Promotion of decent work in situations of fragility, Promotion of youth employment in fragile settings, Promotion of youth employment in fragile settings in the context of COVID-19) or G7 High Level Group Meeting (Private sector investment and job creation in Fragile States); World Bank 2016; also: ILO 2019b.

<sup>44</sup> See for example: Blattman/Ralston 2015; Holmes et al. 2013; International Security and Development Center n.d.

<sup>45</sup> Holmes et al. 2013.

impacts was provided. The second caveat is that there is hardly any analysis on the effects of long-term employment creation, making it virtually impossible to measure ex-post the success of such an intervention with regard to the respective ‘failing’ state’s change in status.<sup>46</sup>

It is plausible that through singling out employment as a major causal link and indicator to the (upcoming) deterioration of a state, we are able to create an early warning mechanism which is far easier to handle than complex and work-intensive indices. This conclusion does not imply that there are no other indicators that could be used as well, or that might even work better; nor was it the aim of this paper to spout forward this suggestion.

It is also important to add that, from an ex-post point of view, this paper should not be used to pinpoint to youth unemployment as the single reason for a state’s failure. There will always be a mixture of causes, where other developments might enforce or buffer the impact of unemployment on a state’s deterioration. Therefore, (youth) unemployment should only serve as an ex-ante early warning indicator.

By taking a failed/failing state as it is at one point in time and looking backwards at the development of youth unemployment in the years before this state’s collapse or the severe deterioration of its stability, we could find explanatory evidence. For this purpose, however, it is necessary to take a wider look into the area of employment, taking into account the aspects of the informal employment situation, looking at both un- and underemployment, and also considering the so-called NEETs (Not in Education, Employment and Training).

Therefore, in order to get an early warning to either look further and deeper into a country’s situation with a higher awareness, or to start intervening to strengthen the domestic labour market situation, youth unemployment can indeed be used as an indicator. Based on this causal link, one could further argue that instead of a comprehensive state-building effort, targeted and tailored labour market policy instruments should be added to the toolbox of international cooperation. This type of intervention can be done by the state itself, or by neighbouring states or other states interested in that particular country.

In summary, youth unemployment is a multifaceted indicator that encapsulates economic, social, political, and educational dimensions of state functionality. High levels of youth unemployment can signal significant underlying problems, making it a valuable metric in assessing whether a state is failing. Due to the methodological limitations of this paper, further research using methods of regression analysis is expedient and necessary to tackle endogeneity and eliminate reverse causality. But this paper shows that there is enough indication – although based mostly on descriptive analysis – that such an effort would prove helpful.

## List of References

- African Development Bank Group (n.d.): Country Results Brief, n.d., <https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/publications/country-results-briefs>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Amme, Caroline (2023): Xi will Chinas Jugend auf dem Land schuftten sehen, 2023, in:

<sup>46</sup> See an exceptional example: Department for International Development 2019.

- ntv, 20-07-2023, <https://www.n-tv.de/wirtschaft/Xi-will-Chinas-Jugend-auf-dem-Land-schuffen-sehen-article24273920.html>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Ayala, Olayinka (2023): Understanding the crisis of democracy in West Africa and Sahel, Geneva Centre for Security Policy Paper, October 2023, <https://www.gcsp.ch/publications/understanding-crisis-democracy-west-africa-and-sahel>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Baker, Pauline H. (2007): The conflict assessment system tool – An analytical model for early warning and risk assessment of weak and failing states, Washington.
- Ball, Laurence/Leigh, Daniel/Loungani, Prakash (2013): Okun’s Law: Fit at 50?, International Monetary Fund Working Paper No. 10.
- Batmanglich, Sara/Enria, Luisa (2014): Real jobs in fragile contexts: Reframing youth employment programming in Liberia and Sierra Leone, International Alert Paper, July 2014, <https://www.international-alert.org/publications/real-jobs-fragile-contexts/>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Berman, Eli/Callen, Michael/Felter, Joseph H./Shapiro, Jacob N. (2011): Do working men rebel? Insurgency and unemployment in Afghanistan, Iraq and the Philippines, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, No. 4, pp. 496–528.
- Bertelsmann (n.d.): Bertelsmann Transformation Index, n.d., <https://bti-project.org/de/?&cb=00000>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Bethke, Felix S. (2012): Zuverlässig invalide – Indizes zur Messung fragiler Staatlichkeit, in: *Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Politikwissenschaft*, No. 1, pp. 19–37.
- Bhuta, Nehal (2015): Measuring stateness, ranking political orders: Indices of state fragility and state failure, in: Alexander Cooley and Jack Snyder (eds.), *Ranking the world: Grading as a tool of global governance*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2015, pp. 85–111.
- Blattman, Christopher/Ralston, Laura (2015): Generating employment in poor and Fragile States: Evidence from labor market and entrepreneurship programs, World Bank White Paper, June 2015.
- Brock, Lothar/Holm, Hans-Henrik, Sorenson, Georg, Stohl, Michael (2012): *Fragile States: Violence and the failure of intervention*, London: Polity Press.
- Brookings Institution (n.d.): Index of State Weakness in the Developing World, n.d., [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/02\\_weak\\_states\\_index.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/02_weak_states_index.pdf), last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Brück, Tilman (2012): Jobs under Fire: Beschäftigung in von Konflikt bedrohten und fragilen Staaten, in: *Vierteljahreshefte zur Wirtschaftsforschung*, No. 3, pp. 125–129.
- Call, Charles T. (2010): Beyond the ‘failed state’: Toward conceptual alternatives, *European Journal of International Relations*, No. 2, pp. 303–326.
- Call, Charles T. (2008): The fallacy of the ‘Failed State’, in: *Third World Quarterly*, No. 8, pp. 1491–1507.
- Celso, Anthony N./Nalbandov, Robert (2016): The crisis of the African state: Globalization, tribalism, and Jihadism in the twenty-first century, 2016, <https://www.usmcu.edu/Portals/218/Crisis%20of%20the%20African%20State.pdf>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Clausen, Maria-Lousie/Albrecht, Peter (2021): Interventions since the Cold War: From statebuilding to stabilization, in: *International Affairs*, No. 4, pp. 1203–1220.
- Collier, Paul/Hoeffler, Anke (1998): On economic causes of civil war, in: *Oxford Economic Papers*, No. 50, pp. 563–573.
- Cramer, Christopher (2015): Jobs, unemployment and violence, GSDRC Professional Development Reading Pack, No. 10, <https://gsdrc.org/professional-dev/jobs-unemployment-and-violence/>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Cramer, Christopher (2010): Unemployment and participation in violence, World

- Development Report, November 2010, <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/191661468176944774/unemployment-and-participation-in-violence>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Danish Trade Union Development Agency (2022): Labour Market Profile Niger 2021/2022, <https://www.ulandssekretariatet.dk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/LMP-Niger-2021-final.pdf>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Dardeli, Aleksander (2020): Young people are key for defusing unrest and restoring public trust, in: World Economic Forum, 09-05-2020, <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2020/03/young-people-key-defusing-unrest/>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Debiel, Tobias/Lambach, Daniel (2009): Fragile Staaten: Ursachen und sicherheitspolitische Auswirkungen, in: Bundesakademie für Sicherheitspolitik (ed.), Sicherheitspolitik in neuen Dimensionen, Ergänzungsband II, Berlin, pp. 363–387.
- Department for International Development (2019): Long-term job creation in Fragile States, Research Report December 2019.
- Department for International Development (2005): Why we need to work more effectively in Fragile States, London.
- Dowd, Caitriona (2017): How does work feature in literature on youth participation in violence?, Institute for Development Studies Working Paper, No. 485.
- Esty, Daniel C./Goldstone, Jack A./Gurr, Ted R./Harff, Barbara/Levy, Marc/Gabelko, Geoffrey D./Surko, Pamela T./Unger, Alan N. (1999): State Failure Task Force Report: Phase 2 Findings, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/event/Phase2.pdf>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Esty, Daniel C./Goldstone, Jack A./Gurr, Ted R./Surko, Pamela T./Unger, Alan N. (1995): State Failure Task Force Report, 1995, [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Jack-Goldstone/publication/248471752\\_Working\\_Papers\\_State\\_Failure\\_Task\\_Force\\_Report/links/548ec7860cf214269f246b81/Working-Papers-State-Failure-Task-Force-Report.pdf?\\_tp=eyJjb250ZXh0Ijp7Im-ZpcnN0UGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uIiwicGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uIn19](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Jack-Goldstone/publication/248471752_Working_Papers_State_Failure_Task_Force_Report/links/548ec7860cf214269f246b81/Working-Papers-State-Failure-Task-Force-Report.pdf?_tp=eyJjb250ZXh0Ijp7Im-ZpcnN0UGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uIiwicGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uIn19), last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- European Commission (2007): Towards an EU response to situations of fragility: Engaging in difficult environments for sustainable development, stability and peace, SEC (2007) 1417, Brussels 2007.
- Fortune, Francis/Ismail, Olawale/Stephen, Monica (2015): Rethinking youth, livelihoods, and fragility in West Africa: One size doesn't fit all, World Bank Paper 2015, <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/454001468178757781/Rethinking-youth-livelihoods-and-fragility-in-West-Africa-one-size-doesn-t-fit-all>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (2015): The rise of religious radicalism in the Arab world: Significance, implications, and counter-strategies, Amman.
- Fuller, Graham E. (2004): The youth crisis in Middle Eastern society, Brief Paper April 2004, <https://www.ispu.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/the-youth-crisis-in-middle-eastern-society-graham-fuller.pdf>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- The Fund for Peace (n.d.): Fragile States Index, n.d., <https://fragilestatesindex.org/>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Gänger, Jan (2023): Diese Statistiken veröffentlicht China lieber nicht, in: n-tv, 18-08-2023, <https://www.n-tv.de/wirtschaft/Diese-Statistiken-veroeffentlicht-China-lieber-nicht-article24335642.html>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Geiß, Robin (2009): Armed violence in Fragile States, International Review of the Red Cross, No. 873.

- Gertel, Jörg (2021): Protest gegen Enteignung: Zehn Jahre Generation „Arabischer Frühling“, in: *Jugend und Protest, Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, No. 38-39, pp. 41–46.
- Gilligan, Michael J. (2016): Employment and rebellion in conflicted and fragile states, *IZA World of Labour Paper*, No. 271.
- Gisselquist, Rachel M./Justino, Patricia/Vaccaro, Andrea (2025): Development cooperation under fragility: Evidence from across the globe, in: Rachel M. Gisselquist, Patricia Justino and Andrea Vaccaro (eds.), *Fragile Aid: Development cooperation in weak states and conflict contexts*, Oxford University Press: Oxford, pp. 3–26.
- GIZ (2015): Employment promotion in contexts of conflict, fragility and violence, <https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Employment%20promotion%20in%20contexts%20of%20conflict,%20fragility%20andviolence.pdf>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Glawion, Tim/de Vries, Lotje/Mehler, Andreas (2018): Handle with care! A qualitative comparison of the Fragile States Index's bottom three countries, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/dech.12417>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Gros, Jean-Germain (2003): Trouble in paradise: Crime and collapsed states in the age of globalization, in: *British Journal of Criminology*, No. 1, pp. 63–80.
- Hammer, Andreas (2021): Wirtschaftswachstum senkt nicht die Arbeitslosigkeit, 2021, <https://w9eg9znx6.hier-im-netz.de/hammer-eu/wordpress/?p=1659>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Hansen, Wibke (2011): The Failed State-organized crime-terrorism nexus, in: *SWP Comments* No. 40.
- Hegre, Håvard/Karlsen, Joakim/Nygaard, Havard Mogleiv/Strand, Harvard/Urdal, Henrik (2021): Forecasting civil conflict along the shared socioeconomic pathways, in: *Environmental Research Letters*, No. 5, pp. 1–15.
- Hinterberger, Friedrich/Pirgmaier, Elke/Stocker, Andrea/Ax, Christine (2012): Wachstum und Arbeit, Policy Paper August 2012, [https://archive.wachstumimwandel.at/wp-content/uploads/PolicyPaperArbeit\\_final.pdf](https://archive.wachstumimwandel.at/wp-content/uploads/PolicyPaperArbeit_final.pdf), last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Holmes, Rebecca/McCord, Anna/Hagen-Zanker, Jessica/Bergh, Gina/Zanker, Franzisca (2013): What is the evidence on the impact of employment creation on stability and poverty reduction in Fragile States – A systematic review, *Overseas Development Institute Review*, May 2013, <https://media.odi.org/documents/8386.pdf>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Honwana, Alcinda (2019): Are global youth protest learning from the Arab Spring?, 2019, <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/mec/2019/11/27/are-global-youth-protests-learning-from-the-arab-spring/>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Hukil, Roomana (2013): Failed States Index Report – A critique, *Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies Debate*, <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/174681/SR145-IP-CSDebate-FSIRreport.pdf>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- ILO (International Labour Organization) (n.d.): Statistics on the population and labour force, n.d., <https://ilostat.ilo.org/topics/population-and-labour-force/#>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- ILO (2024): ILOSTAT Data Explorer. Youth unemployment rates, [https://rshiny.ilo.org/dataexplorer33/?lang=en&id=POP\\_XWAP\\_SEX\\_AGE\\_NB\\_A](https://rshiny.ilo.org/dataexplorer33/?lang=en&id=POP_XWAP_SEX_AGE_NB_A), last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- ILO (2019a): Quick guide on interpreting the unemployment rate, Geneva.
- ILO (2019b): How to design, monitor and evaluate Peacebuilding results in Jobs for Peace and Resilience Programmes, *Handbook for Field Testing*,

- <https://www.itcilo.org/resources/how-design-monitor-and-evaluate-peace-building-results-jobs-peace-and-resilience>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- International Security and Development Center (n.d.): Does opportunity reduce instability? A meta-analysis of skills and employment interventions, n.d., <https://isdc.org/projects/does-opportunity-reduce-instability-a-meta-analysis-of-skills-and-employment-interventions-in-lmics/>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Iqbal, Zaryab/Starr, Harvey (2008): Bad neighbors: Failed states and their consequences, in: *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, No. 4, pp. 315–331.
- Irwin, Stacie/Mader, Philip/Flynn, Justin (2018): How youth specific is Africa’s youth employment challenge?, Institute of Development Studies, July 2018.
- Jackson, Robert H. (1990): *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, international relations, and the Third World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kaplan, Seth D. (2008): *Fixing Fragile States: A new paradigm for development*, Westport/London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Koller, Michaela (2000): *Migration aus Nordafrika: Ursachen und Probleme*, Neuried: Deutsche Hochschuledition.
- Lorch, Jasmin/Ziaja, Sebastian/Grävingsholt, Jörn (2024): Constellations of state fragility: Improving international cooperation through analytical differentiation, German Institute of Development and Sustainability Report, <https://www.idos-research.de/en/policy-brief/article/constellations-of-state-fragility-improving-international-cooperation-through-analytical-differentiation/>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Li, Jianmian (2011): China’s looming labour supply challenge?, in: *ChinaBrief* No. 6, pp. 5–7.
- Mahmoud, Sohaib/Taifouri, Mohamed (2013): The Coups d’état of the Sahel region: Domestic causes and international competition, Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies Analysis Paper, September 2013, <https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/the-coups-detat-of-the-sahel-region-domestic-causes-and-international-competition/>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Martin-Shields, Charles P. (2017): State Fragility as a cause of forced displacement: Identifying theoretical channels for empirical research, *Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik*, Discussion Paper No. 30.
- Mata, Javier F./Ziaja, Sebastian (2009): User’s guide on measuring fragility, United Nations Development Programme, Oslo et. al.
- Mata, Javier F./Ziaja, Sebastian (2010): Was leisten Indizes staatlicher Fragilität? *Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik Analysen und Stellungnahmen*, Bonn.
- Milante, Gunnar (2023): Why do we still measure state fragility?, UNUT-MERIT Working Papers, No. 2023-041, <https://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/326891/1/wp2023-041.pdf>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- McLean-Hilker, Lyndsay/Fraser, Erika (2009): Youth exclusion, violence, conflict and Fragile States, Department for International Development Report April 2009.
- Muggah, Robert/Whitlock, Mark (2021): Reflections on the evolution of conflict early warning, *International Journal of Security and Development*, No. 1, pp. 1–12.
- Munive, Jairo (2008): Youth employment in Fragile States, Danish Institute for International Studies Policy Brief, October 2008.
- Nay, Olivier (2013): Fragile and failed states: Critical perspectives on conceptual hybrids, in: *International Political Science Review*, June 2013, pp. 1–16.
- Norman Paterson School of International Affairs (n.d.): Country Indicators for Foreign Policy, n.d., <https://carleton.ca/cifp/about-cifp/>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- OECD (2014): *Development assistance and approaches to risk in fragile and conflict affected states*, Paris.

- OECD (2010): *Conflict and Fragility: Do no harm*, Paris.
- OECD (2009): *Toolkit: Preventing violence, war and state collapse: The future of conflict early warning and response*, Paris.
- Oskanian, Kevork (2021): *Securitisation gaps: Towards ideational understandings of state weakness*, in: *Journal of International Security*, No. 4, pp. 439–458.
- Pasagic, Aleksandar (2020): *Failed States and terrorism: Justifiability of transnational interventions from a counterterrorism perspective*, in: *Perspectives on Terrorism*, No. 3, pp. 19–28.
- Patrick, Stewart (2010): *Weak links: Fragile States, global threats, and international security*, London.
- Putzel, James (2010): *Why development actors need a better definition of ‘State Fragility’*, London, <https://www.lse.ac.uk/international-development/Assets/Documents/PDFs/csdc-policy-briefs/Why-Development-Actors-need-a-Better-Definition-of-State-Fragility.pdf>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Rotberg, Robert I. (ed.) (2003): *State failure and state weaknesses in a time of terror*, Washington: Brookings Institution Press.
- Saeed, Raza (2020): *The ubiquity of state fragility: Fault lines in the categorization and conceptualization of Failed and Fragile States*, in: *Social and Legal Studies*, No. 6, pp. 767–789.
- Saeed, Raza (2023): *Failing the state: The fragility of the state-failure paradigm*, University of Warwick Working Paper, <https://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/id/eprint/173543/1/WRAP-Failing-the-states-the-fragility-of-the-state-failure-paradigm-Saeed-2023.pdf>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Samuelson, P.A./Nordhaus, W.D. (2009): *Economics*, 19th edition, New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Schneckener, Ulrich (2005): *Fragile Staatlichkeit als globales Sicherheitsrisiko*, in: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, No. 28-29, pp. 26–31.
- Schneckener, Ulrich (2007): *Rankings und Indizes: Welche Staaten gelten als fragil?*, SWP Diskussionspapier, Nr. 3.
- Sippel, Lilli/Kiziak, Tanja/Woellert, Franziska/Klingholz, Reiner (2011): *Afrikas demografische Herausforderung*, Institute for Population and Development, [https://www.berlin-institut.org/fileadmin/Redaktion/Publikationen/aeltere\\_Studien/Afrikas\\_demographisch\\_Herausforderung/Afrika\\_deutsch\\_final.pdf](https://www.berlin-institut.org/fileadmin/Redaktion/Publikationen/aeltere_Studien/Afrikas_demographisch_Herausforderung/Afrika_deutsch_final.pdf), last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Statista (2024a): *Youth unemployment rate in Egypt from 2004 to 2023*, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/811968/youth-unemployment-rate-in-egypt/>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Statista (2024b): *Youth unemployment rate in Tunisia from 2004 to 2023*, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/813115/youth-unemployment-rate-in-tunisia/>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Statista (2024c): *Youth unemployment rate in Libya from 2004 to 2023*, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/812198/youth-unemployment-rate-in-libya/>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Statista (2024d): *Youth unemployment rate in Morocco from 2004 to 2023*, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/812261/youth-unemployment-rate-in-morocco/>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Statista (2024e): *Youth unemployment rate in Algeria from 2004 to 2023*, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/811617/youth-unemployment-rate-in-algeria/>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Statista (2024f): *Youth unemployment rate in China from 2004 to 2023*, <https://www.statista.com/download/MTcyMjQ0ODE3MiMjMSMjODEx-OTM1IyMxIyNwZGYjI1N0YXRpc3RpYw==>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.

- Stewart, Frances (2015): Employment in conflict and post-conflict situations, UN Development Programme Report.
- Taspinar, Ömer (2009): Fighting radicalism, not terrorism: Root causes of an international actor redefined, in: SAIS Review, No. 2.
- Tschörner, Lisa (2023): From anchor of stability to crisis hotspot: Background and consequences of the military coup in Niger, Megatrends Policy Brief, No. 20.
- UN Population Fund (2012): Adolescents and young people in sub-Saharan Africa, Status Report.
- UNICEF (2024): Youth, protest and the polycrisis, Report March 2024, <https://www.unicef.org/innocenti/reports/youth-protests-and-polycrisis>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- United Nations (2024a): World Population Prospects 2024. Egypt: Population by broad age groups, [https://population.un.org/wpp/assets/graphs/1\\_Demographic%20Profiles/Egypt/Line%20Charts/2-Population%20by%20broad%20age%20groups.png](https://population.un.org/wpp/assets/graphs/1_Demographic%20Profiles/Egypt/Line%20Charts/2-Population%20by%20broad%20age%20groups.png), last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- United Nations (2024b): World Population Prospects 2024. Tunisia: Population by broad age groups, [https://population.un.org/wpp/assets/graphs/1\\_Demographic%20Profiles/Tunisia/Line%20Charts/2-Population%20by%20broad%20age%20groups.png](https://population.un.org/wpp/assets/graphs/1_Demographic%20Profiles/Tunisia/Line%20Charts/2-Population%20by%20broad%20age%20groups.png), last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- United Nations (2024c): World Population Prospects 2024. Libya: Population by broad age groups, [https://population.un.org/wpp/assets/graphs/1\\_Demographic%20Profiles/Libya/Line%20Charts/2-Population%20by%20broad%20age%20groups.png](https://population.un.org/wpp/assets/graphs/1_Demographic%20Profiles/Libya/Line%20Charts/2-Population%20by%20broad%20age%20groups.png), last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- United Nations (2024d): World Population Prospects 2024. Morocco: Population by broad age groups, [https://population.un.org/wpp/assets/graphs/1\\_Demographic%20Profiles/Morocco/Line%20Charts/2-Population%20by%20broad%20age%20groups.png](https://population.un.org/wpp/assets/graphs/1_Demographic%20Profiles/Morocco/Line%20Charts/2-Population%20by%20broad%20age%20groups.png), last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- United Nations (2024e): World Population Prospects 2024. Algeria: Population by broad age groups, [https://population.un.org/wpp/assets/graphs/1\\_Demographic%20Profiles/Algeria/Line%20Charts/2-Population%20by%20broad%20age%20groups.png](https://population.un.org/wpp/assets/graphs/1_Demographic%20Profiles/Algeria/Line%20Charts/2-Population%20by%20broad%20age%20groups.png), last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- United Nations (2024f): World Population Prospects 2024. Niger: Population by broad age groups, [https://population.un.org/wpp/assets/graphs/1\\_Demographic%20Profiles/Niger/Line%20Charts/2-Population%20by%20broad%20age%20groups.png](https://population.un.org/wpp/assets/graphs/1_Demographic%20Profiles/Niger/Line%20Charts/2-Population%20by%20broad%20age%20groups.png), last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- United Nations (2024g): World Population Prospects 2024. Mali: Population by broad age groups, [https://population.un.org/wpp/assets/graphs/1\\_Demographic%20Profiles/Mali/Line%20Charts/2-Population%20by%20broad%20age%20groups.png](https://population.un.org/wpp/assets/graphs/1_Demographic%20Profiles/Mali/Line%20Charts/2-Population%20by%20broad%20age%20groups.png), last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- United Nations (2024h): World Population Prospects 2024. Burkina Faso: Population by broad age groups, [https://population.un.org/wpp/assets/graphs/1\\_Demographic%20Profiles/Burkina%20Faso/Line%20Charts/2-Population%20by%20broad%20age%20groups.png](https://population.un.org/wpp/assets/graphs/1_Demographic%20Profiles/Burkina%20Faso/Line%20Charts/2-Population%20by%20broad%20age%20groups.png), last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- United Nations (2024i): World Population Prospects 2024. China: Population by broad age groups, [https://population.un.org/wpp/assets/graphs/1\\_Demographic%20Profiles/China/Line%20Charts/2-Population%20by%20broad%20age%20groups.png](https://population.un.org/wpp/assets/graphs/1_Demographic%20Profiles/China/Line%20Charts/2-Population%20by%20broad%20age%20groups.png), last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Walton, Oliver (2010): Youth, armed violence and job creation programmes, Norwegian Peacebuilding Centre Study, September 2010.
- Wen, Jaya (2020): Subsidising stability: State employment in China, <https://voxdev.org/topic/institutions-political-economy/subsidising-stability-state-employment-china>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.

- Wen, Jaya (2019): The political economy of state employment and instability in China, <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/d1a10863088a164ac2d190337aedef4a-0050022021/original/The-Political-Economy-of-State-Employment.pdf>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- World Bank (2016): An integrated framework for jobs in fragile and conflict situations, 2016, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstreams/6e0470ff-7716-5073-b1ba-999712169985/download>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- World Bank (n.d.): Harmonized list of fragile situations, n.d., <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/fragilityconflictviolence/brief/harmonized-list-of-fragile-situations>, last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Yom, Sean/Lynch, Marc/al-Khatib, Wael (2019): Youth politics in the Middle East and North Africa, POMEPS Studies No. 36, November 2019, [https://pomeps.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/POMEPS\\_Studies\\_36\\_Web-1.pdf](https://pomeps.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/POMEPS_Studies_36_Web-1.pdf), last accessed on: 07-01-2026.
- Zartman, I. William (1995): Collapsed States: The disintegration and restoration of legitimate authority, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.