# Tunisian Education, Culture, Youth and Civil Society policies

**Education Policy in Tunisia**:

Education in Tunisia has a 6-3-4 formal education structure that has been established since 2001. Primary school’s official entry age is six and duration of six grades. Basic education consists of grades 7 – 9. Secondary education consists of grades 1 – 4. The first year of secondary are considered common branch, and at the end of the second year of the Secondary school students choose an orientation among 5 specialties; Information Technology, Mathematics, Science, Economy and Management, Technical science. In the forth year, students get the Baccalaureate degree after passing the national Baccalaureate Exam.

After the Tunisian independence, the educational system witnessed remarkable progress that bets on creating a solid base of human recourses that responds to a country in the phase of development. Substantial reforms took place since 1990 that covered the early childhood care, Basic Education, and High Education. The Basic and Secondary school are mandatory and Education is free in Tunisia, which counts as an asset for the Tunisian youth.

Nonetheless, the Revolution of 2010 in Tunisia revealed tremendous flaws in the governmental policies in different sectors including the education system. One of the Major problems that have emerged is the unemployables issue; High Education provided by the government is not compatible with the employment Market. Another issue was also highlighted which is the problem of corruption in the educational sector. For instance, in a sector where competence, scientific demands and rigor should take precedence, vested interests have had a degenerate effect which has had repercussions on the quality of education. The value of degrees and quality of education had been so devalued that graduates showed little promise of employability. Last but not least, the government is neglecting the elementary key player in the educational system in the policies making process which is the student.

**Culture Policy in Tunisia**

Many are the civilizations that alternated on Tunisia during the previous 3000years that created a vast and rich history and diverse culture; were the Carthaginian - their native civilization, Roman, Vandal, Jewish, Christian, Arab, Islamic, Turkish, and French, in addition to native Amazigh. This diversity in Culture can be witnessed in so many aspects such as Arts, Customs, and traditions. Yet with the all existent diverse s legacy, and despite the progress made by the latest government to facilitate and encourage Culture we still can consider that the successive governments did not present significant reforms that may improve the cultural sector. In the opposite, this sector is now facing major challenges that can be classified in 4 categories; Private production, Quality control, Cinema crisis, and book crisis.

Concerning the Private production, there are no stable funding resources and there is bad distribution of resources that leads to bad quality of cultural production, which leads to the next category which is Quality control. It is commonly agreed by professionals that public television/ radio programs does not rise to the expectation of the receivers. The content of the product is very poor in the popular content. About the Tunisian cinema crises, there is a remarkable decrease in the number of films produced nationally each year from 181 in 1982 to 50 on 2002. Only 11 films were supported by the ministry of culture in 2012. Also the reluctance of the public to attend the cinema represents one of the substantial factor behind this dilemma due to the technological evolution and internet. Today the number of cinemas has dramatically reduced and the remaining ones are suffering from very mediocre conditions. As for Tunisian book crisis, similarly to the filming sector, it endures hard times. This issue is blamed on the lack of distribution. Legal barriers are, in addition, a huge obstacle to the progress of this sector.

**Youth Policy in Tunisia**:

Youth represents about 35 percent of the Tunisian population. This important portion of the population represents a significant resource for the country. Youth demonstrated a huge power of change and leadership. The 2010 Jasmin revolution represents the best proof of that, where youth showed a great deal of civilization and creativity during the protest against the dictatorship. Yet despite the full involvement of youth in the Revolutionary change Tunisia witnessed in Terms of freedoms, we find that it is the first portion to be excluded from the policy building and decision making process in Tunisia. The Economic chocks taking place in that period revealed the sensitivity of youth and women employment; 1/3 out of 30% of employed youth lost their job between 2010 and 2011.Youth has the lowest participation in the election of both 2011 and 2014. All That is explained by the absence or lack of representativeness of youth in the parties proposed programs and the negligence of the decision makers to such powerful entity. As a result of this marginalization, Tunisian youth was massively targeted by extremist groups and significant smuggling group are created in order to afford the living expenses which dramatically hams the Tunisian economy. In the other Hand no Solid strategy is followed by the government in order to tackle these issues concretely.

**Civil Society Policy in Tunisia**

After the revolution of 2010, Tunisia witnessed a booming of NGOs that work on Education, Leadership, Human Rights, and many other problematic and huge international funds are allocated to Tunisian NGOs to boost the democratic transition and the national development. About 15,000 NGOs emerged sins 2011. Civil Society in Tunisia nowadays represents a powerful tool of change. We witnessed the assistance of 300 civil societies’ entities to the constitution of December 2014 among them “Bawsala” observatory. Furthermore, the NGOs played a key role in preventing conflict and maintaining peace and the best evidence to that is the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet composed of The Tunisian General Labour Union, The Tunisian Confederation of Industry, Trade and Handicrafts, The Tunisian Human Rights League, The Tunisian Order of Lawyers, that was awarded with the Nobel Peace Prize in 2015 for its deep contribution in the creation of a pluralistic democracy in Tunisia in the wake of the Jasmine Revolution of 2011. Again this sector also has its own problems. One major issue is the non sustainability of the funding since international funds are diminishing with time and the lack of funding provided by the government.

**Resources:**

* <http://www.epdc.org/country/tunisia>
* <http://www.reference.education.gov.tn/2016-02-20/PlanStrategiqueSectoriel.pdf>
* <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20111120095403594>
* <http://www.iri.org/Tunisia_2014_Presidential/1/assets/common/downloads/publication.pdf>
* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_of_Tunisia#Education>
* <http://www.worldcp.org/tunisia.php?aid=41>
* <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/tunisia/publication/tunisia-breaking-the-barriers-to-youth-inclusion>
* <http://countrymeters.info/en/Tunisia>
* <http://www.youthpolicy.org/pdfs/factsheets/tunisia.pdf>
* <http://scholar.colorado.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2212&context=honr_theses>