

## INTRODUCTION

No doubt that liberal arts education did well enough in preparing a candidate that demonstrate capacity to think critically, communicate clearly, and solve complex problems. In addition, the majority of employers (93%) agree that having such a broad range of skills and knowledge is most important for recent job seekers to cope with today's marketplace needs and achieve long-term career success. If it is the case in most institutions across the world, the situation in MENA region, especially Egypt, is regrettably different as the liberal arts education is not yet deeply rooted in the higher, or even in the pre-university, education. Moreover, Egypt registers a NEET (a person who is Not in Education, Employment, or Training) rate of 40%, increased to 64% for young females, for the age group 15–29. In view of the applicants sever lack of the liberal arts skills, requirement of collaboration in supporting and developing a digitalization for the liberal arts skills that qualify the job seekers (especially NEETs) to the Egyptian today's workplace needs, and could be transferred to the regional countries, is increasingly necessitated.

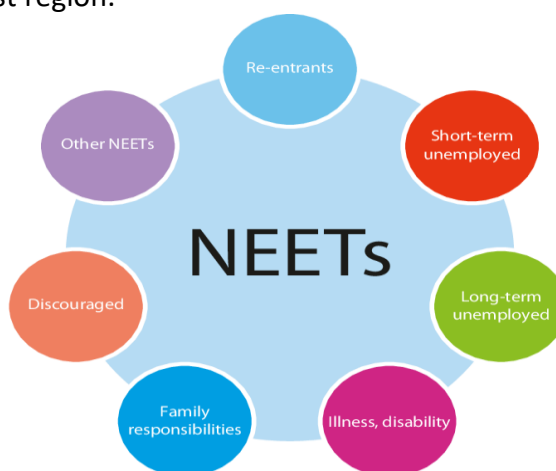
## OBJECTIVE

It is of our interest to contact the partners of the project with similar initiative, to join strategies and create a network from which to launch activities that are aligned with the following specific objectives :

- Promote the liberal arts' conception of applicant as "a free person that takes an active part in civic life, and not merely specialized in certain field".
- Inclusion of job seekers and NEETs (especially women and young people aged under 35) in the society as well as the job market is a priority;
- Creating innovative tools to digitalize liberal arts skills that are accessible and suit the job seekers and NEETs in MENA region's social barriers (e.g., offering remote learning at home that could be easily accessible via all technological devices, such as mobile phones for instance).
- Address challenges that job seekers and NEETS (especially women and young people aged under 35) face in the field of recruitment (e.g., accessibility, gender discrimination, doubting about applicant behavior/discipline).

## PROPOSED APPROACH

The digitalized liberal arts portal provides an online/remote learning/training ground that crosses traditional boundaries between liberal arts disciplines, as a support and development of liberal arts education arise. The digitalized liberal arts portal is also committed to connect the job seekers (including NEETs) with the employers either through direct intervention, or by establishing database with search engine to easiest finding the best results for both. The main aim of the digitalized training courses is to satisfy the increasing demand of an applicant that is virtuous or ethical, knowledgeable in many fields and highly communicative. To address this aim and its objectives, a multiple research design approach that includes survey and case study is employed. The research development flow for this proposed project is to be conducted in six main phases: namely, (1) research model development phase; (2) survey development phase; (3) case-study development phase; (4) research validation phase; (5) implementation; and (6) monitoring and reviewing. It is highly anticipated that greater access to quality digitalized training courses of the liberal arts skills helps creating greater and more decent job opportunities for job seekers and NEETs (especially young men and women) in the Middle East region.



Source: Eurofound. "Exploring the Diversity of NEETs." (2016).  
Figure 1 Diversity of NEETs

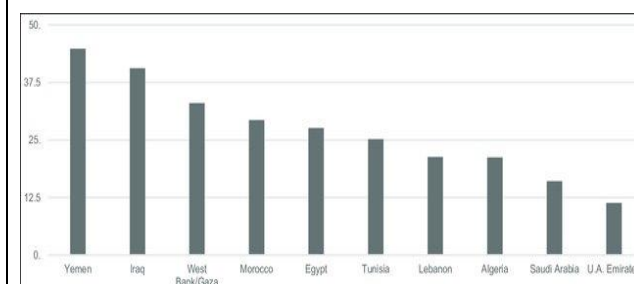
In view of this, our project academic and scientific effects are as following:

- Increasing the awareness, inside academia, of liberal arts skills and their importance, recent advances and challenges ;
- Getting concrete statistics and findings, based on research investigations, of the impact of the liberal arts skills on today's job market;
- Proposing organizational academic and scientific plans for the liberal arts skills evaluation and future development.

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The expected outcomes of the proposed approach are:

1. Concrete statistics and findings, based on research investigations, of the impact of the liberal arts skills on today's job market, and/or proposed plans for the liberal arts skills evaluation and future development.
2. Increase the awareness of the liberal arts skills and their importance, recent advances and challenges.
3. Establishing an online/remote learning platform for the liberal arts skills courses and activities.
4. From an economic perspective, greater access to quality digitalized training courses of liberal arts skills helps creating greater and more decent job opportunities for job seekers and NEETs (especially young men and women) in the Middle East region.
5. From a social perspective, inclusion of job seekers and NEETS in the society has a great impact on society stability.



Source: Enzo Valentini (May 2020).  
Figure 2 NEETs rates in MENA region

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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