

The Role of Youth Bulge on Political Instability: Cross-Country Evidence

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Abstract

Why is the youth bulge phenomenon associated with political instability? We contend that the young who experience unemployment and low levels of democracy are more likely to commit direct political action. A novel feature of our empirical analysis is that we examine the effect of labour markets and the level of democracy in the linkage between youth bulges and political instability. Using data on political instability derived from International Country Guide Risk (ICGR) we conduct a series of panel data analyses and make use of several sub-samples for the years from 1984 to 2013. We find that youth bulge alone enhances political instability, while high rates of unemployment enhances its role further. Interestingly, we find that moving toward democracy increases its effect upon political instability.

Keywords: Youth bulge, youth unemployment, democracy, political instability, and panel data