

Cedefop Validation Workshop

Evaluating impact and success for VET policies to tackle early leaving from education and training

Brussels, 21 October 2015

Concept paper

1 Analysing policies and measures to tackle early leaving from education and training through VET - Study Context

Vocational Education and Training (VET) has an important role to play in reducing Early Leaving from Education and Training (ELET). The numbers of early leavers who drop out from VET are high and hence VET needs to play a preventive role. At the same time, VET is a key pathway to reengage early leavers back into education and training. The Council Recommendation on policies to reduce early school leaving notes that ‘*vocational schools face a particular responsibility and challenge with respect to the reduction of early school leaving*’.¹ In line with this and focusing specifically on VET, the Bruges Communiqué² of Ministers in charge of VET invites EU countries to ‘*maximise the contribution of VET to reducing the percentage of early leavers from education to below 10% through a combination of both preventive and remedial measures*’.

More recently, the Riga Conclusions of 2015 refer to integrating guidance and counselling services provided by both education and employment sectors for I-VET and C-VET, and promoting measures to foster inclusiveness of VET systems (including preventing early leaving or second chance VET programmes leading to qualifications).³

VET and traineeships or apprenticeships are also seen as a key component of Youth Guarantees schemes targeting early leavers or those at risk of early leaving as mentioned in the European Youth Employment Initiative⁴ (preceded by the European Youth Opportunities Initiative⁵) proposed by the European Council.

In this context, Cedefop has launched a three year project to analyse the “Role of VET in reducing early leaving from education and training”⁶. While significant efforts have been made to assess and understand the phenomenon of early leaving at EU level in the past years, little is known about the specific role of VET in this context across the EU. The project is currently in its second year. The first assignment was carried out in 2014 with the aim of developing a better understanding of the phenomenon of early leaving from VET. This included an analysis of the size of the issue of dropping out from VET and the factors related to it. Findings have been published in a joint report with Eurydice on: “Tackling early leaving from education and training in Europe: Strategies policies and measures”⁷

Building on what was learnt from the first assignment, this second one was launched in 2015, with a focus on improving understanding of how VET policies and measures can effectively address the issue of early leaving from education and training. This second phase has three main aims:

- To improve the knowledge base on policies and their effectiveness;
- To produce new evidence on what works and how;
- To draw evidenced based policy recommendations aimed at European policy makers, national stakeholders and other actors on how VET may contribute to reducing ELET at European, national/regional and different institutional levels.

¹ European Council (2011). *Council recommendation of 28 June 2011 on policies to reduce early school leaving*.

² European Ministers for Vocational Education and Training (2010). *The Bruges Communiqué on enhanced European Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training for the period 2011-2020*.

³ Riga Conclusions 2015 on a new set of medium-term deliverables in the field of VET for the period 2015-2020, as a result of the review of short-term deliverables defined in the 2010 Bruges Communiqué.

⁴ For more information see the web-site of DG Employment:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1829>

⁵ For more information see the web-site of DG Employment: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1006>

⁶ As a result of an open tendering procedure AO/ECVL/IPS-ARANI/EarlyLeaving/005/13, Cedefop signed a contract⁶ with a public policy research and consultancy company ‘ICF International’, to carry out this study.

⁷ The report is available to download here:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/thematic_reports/175EN.pdf

Out of 350 VET policies and measures mapped across 29 countries, 44 have been selected from 15 countries of the EU and EEA in order to further analyse their effectiveness. The findings will be published in 2016 in a Cedefop research paper.

2 Before, during and after the workshop

The workshop will bring together around 25 participants. Their profiles combine:

- National/Regional level policy makers (such as ministry representatives, those responsible for VET and/or ELET policies);
- Those responsible for measures involving VET that contribute to tackling ELET;
- Those involved in the design and/or implementation of VET related measures that contribute to tackling ELET;
- Leaders of VET schools, Apprenticeship centres or other relevant education and training providers (e.g. second chance schools);
- NGOs or other organisations active in ELET activities related to VET;
- Academic experts.

The workshop sessions will discuss the following 5 main questions:

- Focusing on the content of measures, what are the key features of successful measures to tackle ELET?
- Focusing on the design and implementation of measures, what are the key features of successful measures to tackle ELET?
- What evidence is available about measures to address ELET and how is it used to inform policies?
- What are the processes put in place to support transfer from successful examples?
- What eight key messages can be formulated for national and European policy makers?

Participants will be asked to work in groups on exercises and tasks that will be distributed during the event.

The workshop will conclude with a panel discussion with European and international actors focusing on:

- The local implementation of employment initiative and youth guarantees and factors affecting their success;
- How to make VET related policies more inclusive;
- Erasmus + and its contribution to evidence based policy making in VET.

The discussions held during the event will be used to inform the study final report and the policy briefs summarizing the key messages.

2.1 What do I need to do before the workshop?

You need to prepare responses to two exercises before the workshop. The exercises are presented in Annex 2.

The work that you will do at home will be direct input to the group work activities during the workshop. Therefore, please take the time to reflect on the questions asked and fill in the provided templates.

2.2 After the workshop – what will happen with the results of this work?

A press release will be published with the main conclusions of the event.

The research paper to be published by Cedefop will incorporate the results of the workshop, in particular when it comes to the following:

- Features which contribute to the effectiveness of measures involving VET to tackle ELET;
- Lessons learnt and transferability potential of measures tackling ELET via VET;
- Reflections on possible recommendations to EU-level and national-level policy makers to support or develop measures tackling ELET/ELVET and promote VET as a solution for ELET.

You will be acknowledged for your contribution and you will be informed for other related events Cedefop plans to organize.

3 Preliminary findings

Note: This text is based on a preliminary analysis. It is meant as a basis for discussion and should not be further disseminated by workshop participants before the event.

3.1 Early leavers and their pathways

The analysis of international and selected national datasets that measure early leaving, including a focus on VET, suggests that:

- Slightly more than half of the people considered as early leavers never started an upper-secondary education. This means they either dropped out during lower secondary education or did not make the transition between the two education stages. In most EU countries, VET pathways start at upper-secondary level hence those who are ‘non-starters’ have in most cases never been enrolled in VET;
- When looking at upper-secondary level alone, the rate of early leaving is frequently higher in VET than in general education. However, important differences exist between types of VET programmes and their orientation.
- Though many early leavers come from VET programmes, VET is also a safety net for those who drop-out or struggle to successfully complete general education. A non-negligible number of them switch from general education to VET as some point in time during their upper-secondary studies;
- Of those early leavers who eventually return to education and training and gain upper-secondary qualifications, the majority do so through VET. VET is the main remedial pathway to qualifications.

3.2 Factors affecting early leaving from VET

Understanding the causes of early leaving and disengagement has been the focus of a wealth of research. Young people who leave education and training prematurely are a very diverse group. The difficulties they face in education and outside are more or less severe. Early leaving is a phenomenon that touches many young people who have the capacity to complete an upper-secondary qualification. What they lack is often the motivation, interest, aspiration but also the supportive environment and personalised tuition. Some do not choose to drop out but are obliged to do so by other events in their lives. That is why there isn't a single profile of an early leaver. In fact, many young people who successfully pursue education and training have the same profiles as some of those who exit without qualifications. Frequently, it is the accumulation of several factors and life events which

make young people disengage from education and training. However, some characteristics tend to be recurrent among early leavers. The research commissioned by Cedefop paid attention to identifying these factors that are specifically associated with early leaving from VET. The focus is more specifically on identifying the extent to which VET is part of the solution to tackle ELET and what makes successful measures effective.

Understanding the factors that are related to early leaving is crucial for the design of effective measures. Successful measures are based on a good understanding of why young people leave education and training and address the underlying causes of their premature departure. If the measures are not built on a good understanding of the causes there is a risk that they will only provide a quick fix that will not result in long lasting changes.

Table 3.1 below provides a flavour of those factors related to early leaving and the main challenges this poses for VET in tackling ELET.

Table 3.1 Factors associated with early leaving - related to VET

Factors	Main challenges
Academic performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low performing learners can often be oriented towards VET and drop out of education and training ■ VET programmes or measures can have to put in remedial measures to account for a lack of basic skills
Students' orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Negative choice of a VET programme ■ Lack of a vision of learners future career ■ Guidance constrained because of education structure (i.e. high competition between providers for retaining their learners) ■ Lack of training or preparation given to teachers, trainers and counsellors to provide guidance
Perception of VET education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ VET associated with failure and a negative self-perception ■ Clear preferences for young people to follow the general academic pathways ■ Misperceptions of careers (and therefore VET pathways) such as technical skills needed, or what kind of jobs result from given pathways
Differentiation and track selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lack of diversification of VET programmes to respond to students' aspiration and motivations ■ Lack of permeability and flexibility of VET pathways
Work based learning and apprenticeships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lack of placements or apprenticeships ■ Problematic relationships at the workplace ■ Low readiness to work
Employment outcomes of VET graduates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lack of job opportunities after VET

3.3 Key features of effective policies to tackle early leaving from VET and through VET

VET is not always explicitly mentioned as part of national strategic documents to reduce early leaving. The specificity of VET as a means to address early leaving is therefore not always recognised. As explained above, those who drop-out, reengage in education and training in most cases through VET. The place given to VET in the context of national strategies to tackle early leaving is not commensurate to this fact. At the same time, countries are reforming VET to improve the permeability and flexibility of educational pathways as well as quality and availability of VET routes. These measures are broader than the fight against early leaving but should ultimately also have positive effects on rates of those who drop out without qualifications.

The Cedefop study analysed 44 measures for which evidence of their effectiveness in tackling early leaving was available. These combine prevention, intervention and compensation elements. They are also designed to tackle different target group and different factors that lead to disengagement. A basic overview of these measures is presented in Annex 1.

The study analysed what makes these measures successful. It looked at this question from two angles:

- The content of measures – the working methods being put in place; and
- The approach to design and implementation.

Regarding the content of measures, table 3.2 below gives an overview of the different working methods through which effective measures tackle the factors linked to early leaving. None of the measures combines all the methods present in the table below however most measures combine several of these features. The approaches implemented depend on:

- The target group of a given measure (measures aimed at severely disadvantaged and strongly disengaged young people display other features than prevention measures that focus on a much broader target group);
- The VET system (for example, the presence and level of development of apprenticeships, level of permeability in the system).

Table 3.2 Working methods of measures to tackle early leaving

Factors	How effective VET measures focusing on ELET address these issues	Country Examples
Factors associated with VET		
Academic performance (and demotivation linked to previous failure)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide opportunities for remedial training, tutoring as part of mainstream programmes ■ Integrate training covering basic skills depending on individual's needs ■ Individualised learning plans ■ Activities aimed at building confidence and motivation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In the French speaking community of Belgium grade repetition, has been forbidden and teachers are required to provide remedial training if learners are lagging behind. ■ In the UK, the Training for Success targets young people who dropped out of ET. About 40-45% of the cohort has important gaps in basic skills. For this group, the programme delivers 'essential skills' curriculum to enable learners to make up for skill deficits and achieve qualification. ■ In Luxembourg, specific courses target pupils aged 15 to 18 years who lack the necessary skills to find a job and do not fulfil the requirements for entry into Technical and Vocational Education and Training. Among other things, these courses also provide socio-cultural, sporting or artistic activities to build confidence and motivation.
Students' inappropriate orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Opportunities to try different professional orientations (tasting) ■ One-to-one coaching/ mentoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In the UK, the Youth Contract provides young people with the possibility of a pre-engagement activity during which the young persons' reading for a given pathway is tested. This allows young people to experiment before making a final decision for their progression.
Negative perception of VET education and related negative self-perception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Coaching for development of career-plans including development of a positive vision of one's pathway ■ Work-based learning as a means to valorise VET pathways 	<p>The Youth Coaching Scheme in Austria offers three types of support, depending on young persons' situation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Up to 5h of general counselling/ provision of information to encourage the learner to take next steps by him/herself. ■ Up to 6 months and 15 hours of coaching including targeted vocational counselling, support to individual decision-making processes and arranging access to other support measures. ■ Up to 6 months and 30h of counselling for those in greatest need of support.

Differentiation and track selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Possibility to transit between programmes ■ Transition from remedial measures to VET programmes or apprenticeships ■ Low-entry barriers to programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In Germany, the pre-training programme (EQ) aims at providing bridging training for those young people who do not manage to secure an apprenticeship placement and are hence left outside education and training; ■ Basic Vocational Courses in Portugal complement the educational response to student's needs and ensure the inclusion of all students in a school path. It is believed that the main pathway of Basic Education is not adequately responding to the needs of certain learners, those that are at risk of early leaving. For this reason, a new, different pathway is provided. Its main aim is to motivate at-risk students to continue their studies. ■ In Norway, the Certificate of Practice was introduced to offer opportunities to those who would have otherwise struggled to complete VET. It can be seen as either: a bridge towards a regular apprenticeship position or a qualification for the labour market;
Work based learning and apprenticeships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop work-readiness by working on skills such as time-management, communication, working in a team ■ Provide work-based learning and close-to-real simulations as a motivational measure ■ Cooperate with employers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Second chance schools based on the model of factory schools in PT, AT and IT integrate a school-level company which offers real working context for young people, in particular those who struggle finding a regular apprenticeship position. ■ In Northern Ireland (UK), apprenticeships were strengthened as part of the strategy to improve completion rates at upper-secondary level. ■ In France the second chance schools systematically combine working experience with school-based training modules.
Employment outcomes of VET graduates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide young people with a vision of their future beyond the qualification – offer positive role models ■ Remuneration of apprentices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In France, those who have been early leaving and enrol in the new chance schools (specific model of second chance schools) sign traineeship agreements with the training institutions and receive an allowance to compensate for their work contribution. This is considered as motivational.
Other factors which are also associated with ELET and addressed by the measures analysed		
School and classroom climate, students' not being well integrated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Accountability for all teachers and trainers to tackle the problem of ELET ■ School-level action plans to tackle ELET 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In Denmark, the retention caravan and its successor measure encourage the establishment of coordinators to prevent ELET in each school as well as the development of action plans to prevent ELET.
Non-supportive family environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Parental involvement, giving parents the tools to support the education progression and choices of their children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In the UK scheme Training for Success (Northern Ireland), mentors play a key role in supporting the relationship between participant – parent – employer, amongst other aspects of support.
Difficulties related to issues outside education: health, mental health, poverty, etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Case-management. Work in parallel on the full range of challenges the person faces. Young person is in contact with one intermediary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The apprenticeship coaching scheme in Austria provides among other things case management. During this stage the coach involves other institutions in the coaching process, to support the apprentice in individual issues; this could be therapists, doctors, debt counselling, youth welfare or the Public Employment Service. The case management approach ensures that the coach is the main contact person to organise every step together with the apprentice. ■ Youth Labour Market agencies are part of the federal plan to improve cooperation of stakeholders involved in federal as well as regional programmes dealing with career guidance and counselling for disadvantaged youth and their integration in education, training and the labour market. They offer one-stop shops for guidance but also deal with many other issues including personal difficulties.

Source: case studies

The study also looked at the operational features through which the successful measures are being designed and implemented. As with any policy, the success of a measure depends not only on the content of the measures (the approach taken in terms of working methods) but also on the process put in place (the way in which a given measure is designed and being implemented). It is known that even the best methods can fail if the design and implementation processes are not appropriate.

The following key features related to the design and implementation process have been identified:

- Carrying out a needs assessment: Given the range of needs dependent upon both the target group and the context of the measure, supports that can effectively re-engage learners and provide assistance to relevant stakeholders have to be based on their particular needs. This involves identifying the issues facing the target group as well as the appropriate methods of working with learners, teachers, trainers and other stakeholders;
- Reaching out to the right target group: Identification of young people at risk of early leaving at school-level (based on absenteeism, teachers' feedback on disengagement), referral to the intervention/ remedial measures from services such as public employment or active;
- Multi-disciplinary working teams: In addition to the pedagogical staff, many measures involve social workers or youth workers and some also engage health professionals specialised on young people for a holistic approach;
- Combined focus on education, training and work: Successful measures do not only have the aim of qualifying young people for a job but they also tackle gaps in achievement of basic skills and focus on making sure that once qualified, young people have a good perspective to transit to employment;
- Mobilising existing professionals and structures or filling in specific gaps: in some countries there is already a complex landscape of possible support structures and rather than creating new ones, the existing structures are being mobilised to tackle early leaving. However in some cases, specific gaps in provision may exist. Some of the examples analysed concern new bridging measures. In such cases, it is crucial that the bridging measures are integrated into the education and training system and offer opportunities to transition and to gain recognised qualifications.

Building these findings and participants' experience (see the exercise **number 1 in Annex 2**) the workshop will discuss the following key questions:

- Focusing on the content of measures, what are the key features of successful measures to tackle ELET?
- Focusing on the design and implementation of measures, what are the key features of successful measures to tackle ELET?

3.4 Measuring effectiveness of policies and programmes

The above features can be present at the level of single projects/ measures but also at programme/policy level. The pool of 44 examples included both: large national programmes/policies as well as specific relatively small scale measures. Availability of evidence about success is a precondition for scaling up small-scale practices.

All the measures analysed have been evaluated to a certain extent or they were considered as successful based on the monitoring information available. However, in most cases the evaluation and monitoring data focused on outputs rather than results and impacts.

Only a small proportion of the measures analysed has evidence of the following key indicators:

- For prevention measures: decrease in the number of early leavers; and
- For intervention/ remedial measures: the share of participants who successfully achieved an upper-secondary qualification or equivalents following the intervention.

In most cases, the data available covers numbers of participants who were reached by the measure. Sometimes data is collected on satisfaction of participants.

Consequently, it is rarely the case that there would be robust data available on the difference the measure put in place make on young people's pathways.

Some examples of good practice in evaluation of effectiveness of measures analysed are:

- The Danish measure called Retention Caravan and the successor programme Retention Taskforce was systematically evaluated using a mixed method approach. A target of reducing ELET rates by 20% in participating schools was set. Achievement of the target was monitored throughout the implementation. The retention rates of participating schools were compared to a) a baseline and b) the rates of non-participating schools so as to measure the effect of the policy. The effects of the intervention on different profiles of learners were also compared. Such systematic evaluation was possible due to the existence of a unique student register that monitors not only drop-out rates (people who quit a given institution) but also early leaving rates (those who do not register in another institution). Lessons' learnt from the Retention Caravan were integrated into the successor programme – Retention Taskforce.
- In Austria, the measure Coaching and counselling for apprentices and training companies was firstly piloted in selected regions. These were selected because they represent a variety of socio-economic contexts and also have a large share of apprentices. An external evaluation was carried out in the third year of the piloting. The results from this evaluation were used to adjust the scheme before its mainstreaming. A key indicator of effectiveness used was the share of apprentices who met the objectives they set themselves as the beginning of the coaching process. For most of them, these were related to staying in the apprenticeship.
- In Germany, Bavaria, the Vocational orientation programme (BOP) is being monitored through the following channels: interim reports delivered by providers and on-site visits by a support team and regular standardised feedback questionnaires. The monitoring process was accompanied by already two external evaluations (one at a pilot stage and one later on). A Longitudinal study of students' pathways is being done in the period 2013-2017. The first two evaluations showed that with almost 80% of students answered that they knew which professions they felt were not suitable for them at all and more than 60% stated that they knew which professions were indeed suitable for them following the guidance intervention.

Overall, availability of evaluations was scarce even though there are notable differences in the development of evaluation cultures between countries. Even where such evaluations are available, these are rarely considered as a key element of the design of the measure.

Building on this analysis and participants experience (see **exercise number 2 in Annex 2**), the workshop will discuss the following question:

- What evidence is available about measures to address ELET and how is it used to inform policies?

3.5 Transferability and sustainability of measures at local, regional and national level

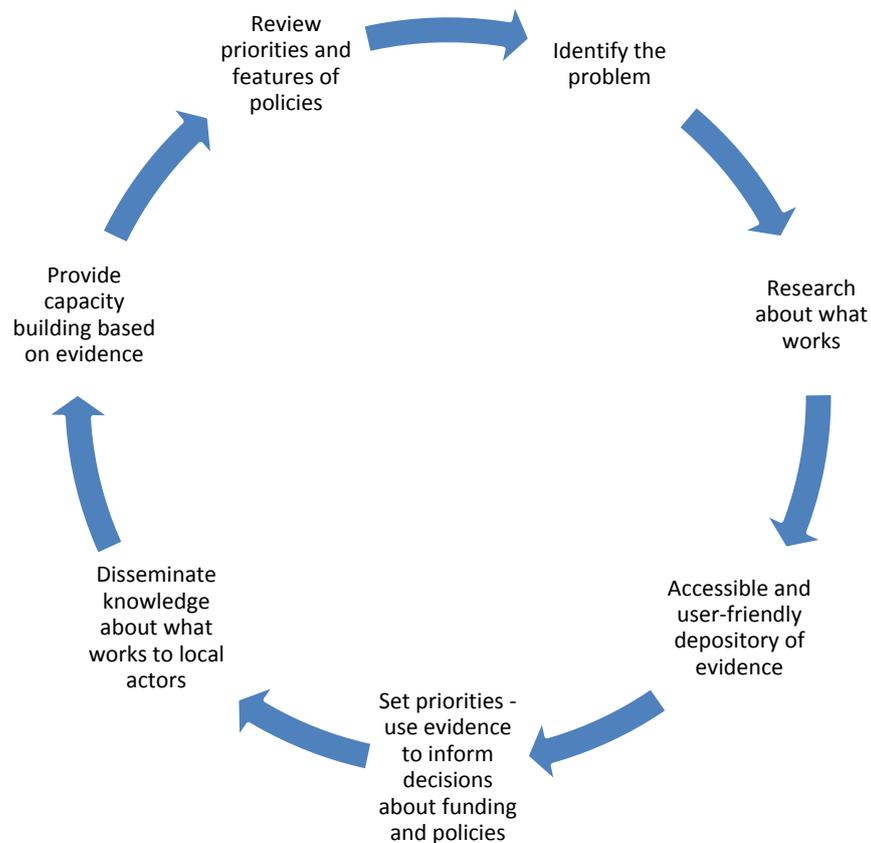
Availability of evidence about what works is considered as a key element of a systemic approach to enable learning and transfer within the education system (see for example OECD (2009)⁸). Other key elements are:

- Dissemination of evidence;
- Use of evidence to inform decisions at the level of policy but also at local level
- Capacity building activities based on evidence on what works for organisations that can learn from this practice.

These other elements of the cycle that enables systemic innovation, based on OECD research (see figure 3.1) are also scarce. The study identified few examples where one could conclude that:

- The design of the measure was based on evidence about the phenomenon of early leaving and an understanding of the specific needs of the target group; and/or
- Efforts have been made to systematically communicate about effective measures to those who could further implement the findings; and/or
- Funding and support is available for capacity building and learning from each other at the level of education providers, guidance centres or second-chance measures.

Figure 3.1 Supporting learning from effective practice



Source: Based on OECD (2009). *Working out Change: Systemic innovation in VET*

⁸ OECD (2009). *Working out Change: Systemic innovation in VET*.

Examples of good practice supporting learning from experience and capacity building are:

- In the French speaking community of Belgium, the project ExPairs was set up to provide capacity building to VET schools in the design of their action plans and measures to improve students' orientation and thus enhance retention in VET. While each school was working on its project/ action plan, they were also systematically supported by researchers whose role it was to provide guidance based on research but also based on observation of other schools' activities. The schools were also regularly brought together to exchange;
- In France, one of the challenges in fight against early leaving was the multiplicity of measures coexisting locally with little or no coordination. The introduction of a new monitoring system of early leavers required the establishment of regional platforms to tackle early leaving. It is the responsibility of these platforms to contact those who left without achieving a qualification and offer them suitable solutions according to their needs. The platforms are therefore an opportunity to coordinate measures regionally and make sure these complement each other; and to exchange experience. The monitoring data proved to have a pivotal role in raising awareness of the problem of ELET and mobilising all organisations concerned.
- In the already mentioned Danish example – Retention Caravan – the focus was on the schools and competences of teachers. The logic of this was that committed teachers play an important role in the retention of young people. At the same time, an engaged management is important to ensure the commitment of teachers. The retention Caravan was implemented by a core team which worked together with schools to set up the function of coordinator to address ELET, develop the tools that the school will use to improve education completion, to support peer-learning among teachers. Evidence-based capacity building provided to schools was a core component of this measure.

Based on the study findings and participants' experience the workshop will discuss the following question:

- What are the processes put in place to support transfer from successful examples?

Annex 1 Brief overview of the 44 measures analysed

Table below gives an overview of the measures analysed as part of this assignment. Note that the following criteria were used to select the measures:

- 15 countries were selected based on rates of ELET and existence of measures to tackle it. The geographical distribution was also taken into account.
- In each of the countries a long list of 350 measures to tackle ELET were identified. The 44 measures presented below were selected from this list. These are measures that have been evaluated (or an evaluation was ongoing in some cases) showing that the measure was, at least partly successful. The second criterion used was the coverage of different types of measures by the sample (prevention/ intervention/ compensation). In some countries, evidence of effectiveness was available for many more measures than in others. This explains why the sample of measures is not fully geographically balanced.

	Measure	Target Group	Type of measure	Main focus – brief summary
AT	Coaching and counselling for apprentices and training companies	Apprentices who are either at risk of dropping out or had already dropped out from their apprenticeship. The measure also supports companies providing apprenticeships.	Intervention	The measure aims to coach the apprentice through any pending issues/ conflicts (related or unrelated to the apprenticeship) hindering their chances of success and to coach the provider on any specific issue that might arise.
AT	Production School (formerly “Ready for Education and Training”)	The beneficiaries of the measure are Early School Leavers and those who are neither in Education, Employment or Training. The age group is roughly 15 to 21 years of age.	Intervention	The aim is to support young individuals to obtain skills (both social and cultural - including ICT) which are required to enter the occupational field that is considered to correspond best to their opportunities and potential.
AT	Supra-Company Training	Young adults who, upon completion of compulsory school cannot find an apprenticeship. The focus within this group is on those with learning difficulties, 'older' teenagers and Early School Leavers.	Compensation	The measure aims to provide apprenticeship training for young adults who cannot find a training company and thus insert them into the labour market.
AT	Youth Coaching Scheme	All learners during their 9th year at school; Early School Leavers and those neither in Education, training or Employment up to the age of 19; learners with special education needs/ disabilities up to the age of 24; Learners with individual impairments; Learners from disadvantaged backgrounds.	Prevention, Intervention	The measure aims to keep/ re-integrate young learners up to the age of 19 into the education and training system on a lasting/sustainable basis.
BE-fr	Expairs project	Vocational Education and Training 1 st year students (school based).	Prevention, Intervention	The main aim is to prevent early leaving by stimulating students, showing them that VET is interesting and by finding new strategies to motivate learners to stay in education and training.

	Measure	Target Group	Type of measure	Main focus – brief summary
BE-fr	Certification per Unit	All Vocational Education and Training students and adult learners in the four vocational tracks (auto mechanic, auto technician, beauty practitioner and hairdresser). It does not specifically target early leavers (or those at risk of).	Prevention, Intervention	The CPU has the aim of providing more flexibility in Vocational Education and Training pathways, allowing learners to validate their skills gradually, thus reducing early leaving rates.
DE	Vocational Training Accompanying Measures	The measure targets apprentices at risk of dropping out, apprentices with learning difficulties and/or socially disadvantaged apprentices under the age of 25.	Prevention and Intervention	The overall aim is to improve disadvantaged apprentices in their integration into the labour market and to prevent them from dropping-out.
DE	Vocational Orientation Programme (implementation in Bavaria)	All students in the 7 th , 8 th and 9 th year of schooling, especially in secondary schools which do not lead to an academic career, in Bavaria.	Prevention	The measure's goal is to give students an insight into a wide range of professions.
DE	Assisted Vocational Education and Training	Young people who are fit to take on apprenticeship training, but have had difficulties in finding or keeping placements.	Prevention, Intervention	The initiative aims at including apprentices who are facing various challenges into the regular labour market.
DE	Pre-Training Programme	Young people who seek apprenticeship training but have limited perspectives of finding a regular apprenticeship placement.	Prevention, Intervention	The aim of the measure is to provide help in finding a regular apprenticeship to those having difficulty finding one.
DE	Youth labour employment agency) Hamburg	JBA targets youth (< 25) in transition from education to the labour market and in particular those at risk of dropping out of education and training.	Prevention, Intervention	The aim of JBA Hamburg is to unite career guidance and counselling services in one single place, in order "not to lose anyone on the way".
DE	Professional training guidance and coaching in vocational schools and training companies	Vocational Education and Training learners (apprenticeship-based) on the verge of ending their apprenticeship prematurely.	Prevention, Intervention	To reduce the number of contract dissolutions, which lead to a permanent drop-out of education and training.
DE	Prevention of Training Dropout	Those at-risk of dropping out from their apprenticeships.	Prevention	The measure is a coaching initiative to guide those at risk of early leaving through their vocational training.
DK	Youth Guidance Centres	As of 2015, the focus will be on the 20% weakest at risk students (under 25 years old) in grade 7, 8, 9 and 10 (optional) in lower secondary school, and in particular those in transition between lower and upper secondary school.	Prevention/ Intervention	The aim is to create easily accessible and transparent guidance which supports students in continuing Education and Training.

	Measure	Target Group	Type of measure	Main focus – brief summary
DK	Retention Caravan	Vocational Education and Training teachers and counsellors.	Prevention, Intervention	Support the retention of Vocational Education and Training students from ethnic minorities - in particular boys.
EE	The Kutse Programme	Extended to 400 young adults who had discontinued their studies either in VET or in general Secondary education.	Intervention and compensation	Offer the opportunity to acquire professional qualifications in upper secondary Vocational Education and Training and/or professional higher education and complete studies.
EE	Pathfinder	Children and young adults from 15 to 26 years of age; Parents, educational staff, local government and other specialists.	Intervention	It aims to provide advice and guidance to children, their guardians and their teachers.
FR	Experimentation of the AFEV Association	All students/learners	Prevention	Provide long-term individualised support to disadvantage VET students in order to reduce absenteeism and risk of dropping out.
FR	Integration into the Public Establishment	Young people aged 18-25 who are early leavers, unemployed and/or at risk of exclusion	Compensation	Empower young 'volunteers' to successfully integrate in society and in the labour market by helping them to consolidate basic skills.
FR	New Chance Upper Secondary School	Young unemployed and who have interrupted their education and training at the upper secondary level.	Compensation	The purpose is to help participants to achieve a vocational qualification.
FR	Innovative Pole	Early school Leavers (16-21).	Compensation	Offering Vocational Education and Training combined with thorough individualised support.
FR	Platform for monitoring and coordination of early leavers	Early school leavers.	Intervention/ Compensation	Early identification of Early School Leavers, enhancement of coordination among local stakeholders.
FR	Second Chance	Early School Leavers (18-25) who have been outside the school system for at least a year.	Compensation	Reintegrate young people into a training course leading to a qualification or directly into employment.
HU	Springboard	At risk, Early School Leavers, Vocational Education and Training students, institutions	Prevention/ Intervention	To give a second chance to continue and complete education or return to professional life.
HU	Integrated Pedagogical System	All students/learners	Prevention, Compensation	Enhance inclusiveness, reduce disadvantages, strengthen a child-centred approach.
IE	Learning Certificate Applied	Students who are not adequately catered for by other Leaving Certificate programmes.	Prevention	Aims to retain 'at risk' young people within the full-time educational system.
IE	Youth Guarantee Pilot	All registered jobseekers under 25 years of age.	Compensation	To ensure a good-quality offer of a job, apprenticeship, traineeship, work-experience, or continued education within 4 months of registration.
IE	Youthreach	15-20 year olds early school leavers who are unemployed.	Compensation	Provided a way in which young people and adults may return to, or complete their education.

	Measure	Target Group	Type of measure	Main focus – brief summary
IT	School-Work Association “Alto Milanese”	Vocational Education and Training students (school based and training) Unemployed youth and adults.	Prevention/ Intervention/ Compensation	Offer new VET pathways to young people.
IT	Crafts square	Vocational Education and Training students (school based and training) Unemployed youth and adults.	Prevention/ Intervention/ Compensation	Provide young people in ‘compulsory education’, as well as unemployed young people and adults, with an alternative educational offer.
LU	Guidance and Professional initiation Courses and Professional initiation courses to diverse professions	Pupils (15 to 18) lacking the necessary skills to find a job and without requirements for entry into Technical and Vocational Education and Training.	Compensation	A ‘bridging measure’ into Technical and Vocational Education and Training or into the labour market.
LU	Local Action for Youth	All young people aged 15-25 years, with a focus on early school leavers and those at risk of early leaving.	Prevention, proactive intervention, compensation	Combat early school leaving, Support early school leavers to go back to school; Monitor Early School Leaving nationally.
LU	Second Chance School	Youth aged (16 to 30) who have dropped out of school or have failed to find an apprenticeship.	Compensation	Re-engage early school leavers back into the educational system.
NL	The drive to reduce drop-out rates	Recent Early School Leavers from Vocational Education and Training (also basic).	Prevention/ Intervention	Reduce the number of early school leavers by 2016 to below 25,000 young people from 25.970 in the year 2013-14.
NL	Getting Started	young people (15-23) lacking learning and professional skills or with difficulties living autonomously or maintaining a social network	Intervention / Compensation	That participants either finish education (a basic qualification at minimum) or find a place in the labour market
NL	Medical Advice for Sick-reported Students	Young people (12-18) enrolled in secondary education or in Vocational Training	Prevention	Address school medical absenteeism putting schools in direct collaboration with youth health care physicians.
NO	Certificate of Practice	Those who find it difficult to complete Vocational Education and Training programmes and are at risk of leaving school early.	Intervention	To reduce Early Leaving in Vocational Education and Training by providing an alternative to students who would otherwise have difficulties completing.
PL	Voluntary Labour Corps	Young people (15-18) who fail to continue compulsory education and are not in education. Young people (18-25) who are neither in Education, Employment or Training.	Prevention and Compensation	Help complete compulsory education and reduce social/ professional inactivity.
PT	Second Chance School	15-25 year olds who left school without obtaining the minimum qualifications.	Compensation	Provide a second chance to obtain an education.

	Measure	Target Group	Type of measure	Main focus – brief summary
PT	Vocational Courses	Basic: Students older than 13 years old that have repeated year twice; Upper: Students over 16 years-old that completed Basic education.	Prevention/ Intervention	Basic: completing education Upper: creating conditions for the compliance with compulsory education and the reduction of early school leaving
UK - NI	Success through Skills Strategy – Apprenticeships	16-24 year olds leaving compulsory school and being in unemployment.	Intervention	Development of skills (essential skills, employability skills, ICT skills and work-based skills specific to occupations and sectors)
UK	Training for Success	16-17 years old unemployed young people who have left compulsory education.	Intervention	Enable learners to enter training and progress to a stage where they can maximise their potential through the development of professional, personal and employability skills and qualification.
UK - W	Pathways to Apprenticeship	Unemployed 16-24 year olds studying towards a level one, two or three qualification.	Intervention	Provide a flexible route for young people to acquire the knowledge and skills required for successful completion of an apprenticeship.
UK	Youth Contract	16-17 year olds not in employment, education or training with low levels of qualifications.	Compensation	Support the participation of 16-24 year olds in education, training and work.

Annex 2 Exercises to prepare before the workshop

Exercise 1

1) Think about a successful measure to prevent or address early leaving.

The table below presents a list of working methods/ approaches that are frequently present in successful measures reviewed during the Cedefop study. These features were identified as elements of effective methodologies to prevent/ address early leaving. They can be linked to the factors which make young people leave education and training prematurely.

Not all the characteristics are expected to be part of all measures. Depending on the target group and their level of disengagement from education as well as other characteristics the right 'mix' of methods will vary.

Using the table 1 below:

- Describe which features are present in the successful measure that you are familiar with
- Provide additional features that are not captured in the list
- Identify which of the features you think are the most important (prioritise)

Explanation to the table below:

- Prevention policies aim to reduce the risk of early school leaving before problems start. Intervention policies aim to avoid early school leaving by improving the quality of education and training at the level of the educational institutions, by reacting to early warning signs and by providing targeted support to pupils or groups of pupils at risk of early school leaving. Compensation policies aim to help those who left school prematurely to re-engage in education, offering routes to re-enter education and training and gain the qualifications they missed⁹.
- The features presented in the table are mentioned in no specific order.

⁹ Source: Council Recommendation on policies to reduce early school leaving [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32011H0701\(01\)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32011H0701(01))

Table A2.1 Key features of successful measures to tackle early leaving

Name of the measure that you are familiar with and country: Target group (who were the beneficiaries of this measure) : Is this a prevention/intervention or compensation measure:		Is this feature present in the measure that you are familiar with? Yes – No If yes please describe	Rank ¹⁰ 1 – most important 5– less important
	Key feature	Explanation	
A	Opportunities for remedial training, tutoring as part of mainstream programmes	Students who accumulate delays in competence development compared to the rest of the group are more likely to disengage. Remedial training offered as part of the mainstream programme enables to ensure that difficulties are addressed early on, before they become problematic.	Yes – No
B	Integrated training covering basic skills depending on individual's needs	For those young people who already have more important gaps in skills development, the programme offers specific training in particular focusing on basic skills.	Yes – No
C	Individualised learning plans	Young people who are at risk of ELET or who already dropped out may be facing specific difficulties and require individualised planning and adaptations to the standard programme.	Yes – No
D	Activities aimed at building confidence and motivation	In particular those who already dropped out for some time may have a negative self-perception and low motivation. Activities aiming at building a more positive image of oneself can help reengage in training.	Yes – No
E	Opportunities to try different professional orientations (tasting)	Transition periods are particularly risky. Young people who find themselves in a programme that does not suit their needs and capacities can be discouraged. Tasting measures can help them make a better informed decision.	Yes – No
F	One-to-one coaching/ mentoring to find the right programme orientation	The issue is the same as above but putting emphasis on the role of a coach/ mentor to stimulate and accompany the reflection process.	Yes – No
G	Coaching/ mentoring for development of career-plans including development of a positive	Young people who leave education prematurely often lack a positive vision of their future and do not project themselves into future. Working with them to develop and clarify their aspirations helps to (re)engage them in education/ training.	Yes – No

¹⁰ Rank the key features by their importance for the target group (what makes the biggest difference)

Name of the measure that you are familiar with and country: Target group (who were the beneficiaries of this measure) : Is this a prevention/intervention or compensation measure:		Is this feature present in the measure that you are familiar with? Yes – No If yes please describe	Rank ¹⁰ 1 – most important 5– less important
Key feature	Explanation		
vision of one's pathway			
H Work-based learning as a means to valorise VET pathways	The negative image of VET may have negative impact on how young people perceive themselves. Offering real-work experience valorises the youngster and the VET programme more generally.	Yes – No	
I Provide work-based learning and close-to-real simulations as a motivational measure	Work-based learning puts emphasis on applying theory in practice and in a context. It helps young people to see their training in a meaningful manner. This has motivational effects.	Yes – No	
J Low-entry barriers to programmes	This includes the possibility to enter the programme at different times of the year, the person starts by small elements of the programme of a shorter duration, not being too strict about attendance, etc.	Yes – No	
K Possibility to transit between programmes	Young people at risk of early leaving are often disengaged because they discover that programme they are on is not suitable for them. Orienting them towards other programmes without having to start from the beginning can keep them in education and training.	Yes – No	
L Transition from remedial measures to VET programmes or apprenticeships	The re-engagement programmes for those who already dropped out also need to be linked to programmes that enable young people to get a qualification.	Yes – No	
M Develop work-readiness by working on skills such as time-management, communication, working in a team	Young people can end up as early leavers because they did not manage to find an apprenticeship placement. Often they are not 'ready' to operate in a work environment and lack the skills to convince employers that they would make a good contribution to their team.	Yes – No	
N Cooperate with employers	Measures to tackle ELET that involve work-based learning require education and training providers to have good cooperation with local employers.	Yes – No	
O Provide young people with	The achievement of a qualification alone is not sufficient to	Yes – No	

Name of the measure that you are familiar with and country: Target group (who were the beneficiaries of this measure) : Is this a prevention/intervention or compensation measure:		Is this feature present in the measure that you are familiar with? Yes – No If yes please describe	Rank ¹⁰ 1 – most important 5– less important
Key feature	Explanation		
	a vision of their future beyond the qualification – offer positive role models	(re)motivate young people. It is important to offer them a positive vision beyond the training programme. Role models can be one means to achieve this.	
P	Remuneration of apprentices	Some young people drop-out because they have to be financially autonomous. Pathways that enable them to get some remuneration can be a good alternative.	Yes – No
R	Accountability for all teachers and trainers to tackle the problem of ELET	Early leaving was often seen as a problem of the young person and not as a problem for the education institution. Making teachers and the school responsible and accountable for early leaving is a means to activate education professionals.	Yes – No
S	School-level action plans to tackle ELET	In the same vein as above, school-level action plans help the education institution to identify the problem, decide on solutions and monitor and evaluate these.	Yes – No
T	Parental involvement, giving parents the tools to support the education progression and choices of their children	Lack of parental support can negatively affect young people's education aspirations and engagement. Reengaging parents can be a tool to signal to young people that their education is important.	Yes – No
U	Case-management. Work in parallel on the full range of challenges the person faces. Young person is in contact with one intermediary	Some early leavers (or those at risk) face multiple challenges not all of which are linked to education and training – for example health, mental well-being, poverty, etc. These young people may require comprehensive case management whereby the measure is not only focused on education and training but helps them also with the other challenges.	Yes – No

Exercise 2

Below is a list of ‘ideal’ indicators that should be used to monitor and evaluate measures to address and prevent early leaving. These indicators have been developed based on the study results when it comes to:

- a) Understanding the factors leading to ELET (what is the problem)
- b) Understanding the solutions that tackle these problems based on the effective measures (what is being done)
- c) Understanding the objectives of measures to prevent or address early leaving (what are the objectives)

Based on the list of indicators below:

- 1) ‘Tick’ what is being done to monitor and evaluate the successful measure that you have described above
- 2) Prioritise what you think should be monitored to assess the measure ideally.
- 3) Please add other indicators that are being used in measure(s) that you are familiar with

Table A2.2 Indicators to monitor and evaluate measures to address early leaving

	Indicator	Possible additional breakdowns	Is this data available in the measure that you are aware of?	Should this data be available as part of monitoring/ evaluations? (rank)
1	Number of young people at risk of ELET (typically defined by the rate of absenteeism)	Gender, socio-economic status, minority or migration background, geographical location, type of education programme followed		
2	Number of young people who have left education and training without completing a programme	Idem		
3	The number of persons who benefitted from the measure (beneficiaries/ participants)	Idem		
4	The share of participants who stayed in education and training (for example 6 months after intervention)	Idem		
5	The share of participants who achieved a qualification	Idem In addition: type of qualification achieved		
6	The share of participants who were in employment (for example 6 months after graduation)	Idem as 5		
7	Participants’ satisfaction with support received	Idem as 1		
8	Change in participants’ education performance	Idem as 1		
9	Change in participants’ attitude/ engagement in	Idem as 1		

	education and training			
10	Change in the number of young people at risk of ELET	Idem as 1		
11	Change in the number of young people who have left education and training without completing a programme	Idem as 1		
12	The number of education and training institutions/ training companies participating	Type of programmes offered, geographical location		
13	The number of teachers/ trainers participating	Idem as 12		
14	Number of action plans implemented	Type of education/ training institution, geographical location		
15	Change in education and training providers/ training companies practices	Idem as 12		
16	Change in teachers' practices	Idem as 12		
17	Other:			
18	Other:			
19	Other:			