



CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training

EN

Leaving education early:

putting vocational education
and training in centre stage



PORTUGAL

Introduction

This is one of the 15 country fiches that have been developed as background material to the Cedefop study:

Leaving education early: putting vocational education and training centre stage.

[Volume I: investigating causes and extent](#)

[Volume II: evaluating policy impact](#)

The publication was produced by Cedefop, Department for learning and employability, under the supervision of Antonio Ranieri.

Irene Psifidou, Cedefop expert, was responsible for the publication and research conducted under the 'Early leaving from education and training' project from October 2013 to July 2016.

Country fiches have been developed and drafted on the basis of desk research and interviews conducted between 2014-15 by ICF consulting services with national stakeholders, social partners, companies, VET providers and practitioners as well as learners who provided country-specific information. They have been validated by selected interviewees ⁽¹⁾.

Country fiches are available for: Austria, Belgium-Fr, Germany, Denmark, Estonia, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal and United Kingdom.

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Please note that this is an unedited version.

⁽¹⁾ The detailed methodology as well as an anonymous list of all interviewees, including information on country, organisation and job position/role, is available on request. Please contact Cedefop expert in charge Irene Psifidou: rena.psifidou@cedefop.europa.eu

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1. Definitions applying in national and regional context

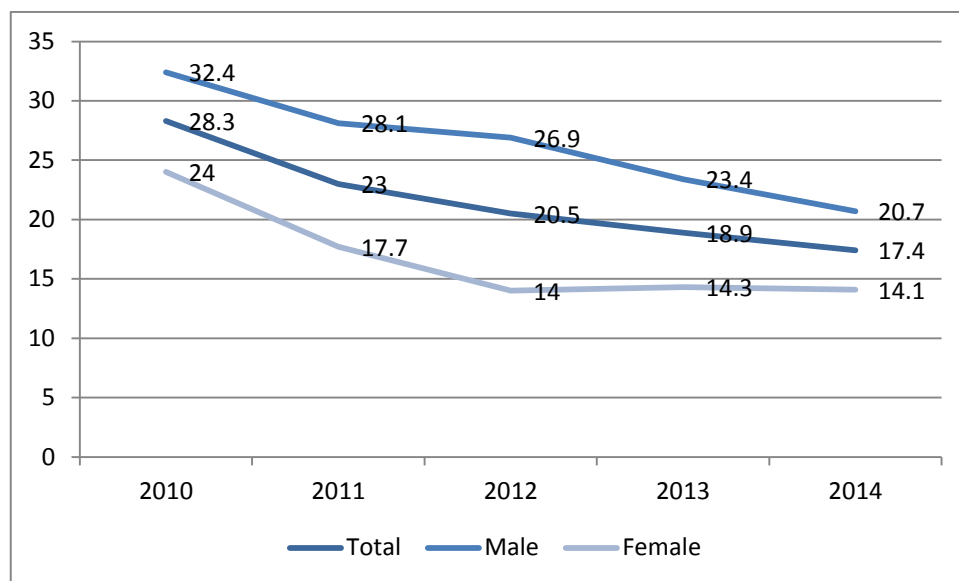
Questions	Answers
<p>What is the national definition(s) of early leavers from education and training?</p> <p>Who are classified as early leavers from education and training?</p>	<p>(a) Early leavers from education and training as defined in the labour force survey.</p> <p>(b) Concept in Portuguese: abandono escolar precoce.</p> <p>There are two additional indicators:</p> <p>(a) school leaving by place of residence: It refers to the resident population from 10 to 15 years old that has left school before the completion of basic education (primary and lower secondary education);</p> <p>(b) concept in Portuguese: Abandono escolar.</p> <p>(c) retention and dropout: It refers to the students that cannot transit to the next education level;</p> <p>(d) concept in Portuguese: retenção e desistência;</p> <p>(e) early leaver or student at risk of leaving before completing upper secondary education: it refers to students under compulsory education that have dropped out from school or have high levels of absenteeism ⁽²⁾;</p> <p>(f) concept in Portuguese: Aluno em situação de abandono ou risco de abandono antes de completar o ensino secundário.</p>
<p>What is the national definition of early leaving from VET?</p> <p>Does it include those in apprenticeships?</p>	<p>There is no definition of early leaving from VET.</p>
<p>What are the data used to inform this definition and who is responsible for it? (i.e. which data set(s) provide information that is used to compute ELET indicators and who sponsors the collection and collects these data).</p>	<p>(a) Labour force survey implemented in Portugal by the National Institute of Statistics.</p> <p>(b) Population and habitation census undertaken by the National Institute of Statistics.</p> <p>(c) Administrative data from schools collected in the Information System of the Ministry of Education (MISI).</p>

⁽²⁾ Recent definition included in legislation: *Despacho normativo* No 10-A/2015 of 19 of June (article 2). <https://dre.pt/application/file/67552607> [accessed 25.4.2017].

2. Rates of early leaving from VET during last five years

The rate of early leavers from education and training as defined in the labour force survey has decreased in the last five years.

Early leavers from education and training, by sex. Years 2010 to 2014 (%)



Source: Statistics Portugal. Labour force survey ⁽³⁾.

The regions of Azores and Madeira have higher rates of early leavers than continental Portugal. This trend is also observed in the national indicator 'rate of early school leaving by place of residence' which refers to the 'Resident population between 10 and 15 years old that has left school without completing the 9th grade (last year of lower secondary education)'.

The indicator on retention and dropout calculated by the ministry of education provides data by curricular orientation. According to the last data available, from 2012/2013, in upper secondary education there is less dropout and retention in VET courses (it includes professional courses and technological courses) than in general courses (see table below).

⁽³⁾https://www.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpid=INE&xpgid=ine_indicadores&indOcorrCod=0006268&contexto=bd&selTab=tab2 [accessed 25.4.2017].

Rate of early leavers from education and training

		2014						
	Type of ELET	cohort or age range	Male	Female	Total	Continental Portugal	Azores	Madeira
Statistics Portugal (labour force survey)	% ELET (the highest level of education or training attained is ISCED 0, 1, 2 or 3c short)	18-24 years-old	20.7	14.1	17.4	16.7	32.8	22.7
		2011						
Statistics Portugal (Census)	% ELET during lower secondary (less than ISCED3c long) - Rate of early school leaving by place of residence	10 - 15 years old	N/a	N/a	1.58	1.54	2.36	2.24
		2012/13						
Ministry of Education and Science	% retention and dropout during 'basic education' (less than ISCED3c long)	Cohort school year 2012/13	N/a	N/a	10.4	10.2	N/a	N/a
	% retention and dropout during upper secondary education	Cohort school year 2012/13	N/a	N/a	19	18.8	N/a	N/a
	% retention and dropout during upper secondary GE	Cohort school year 2012/13	N/a	N/a	N/a	21.5	N/a	N/a
	% retention and dropout during upper secondary VET and technological courses	Cohort school year 2012/13	N/a	N/a	N/a	14.3	N/a	N/a

Source: Statistics Portugal. Labour force survey; Statistics Portugal. 'Population and habitation census' ⁽⁴⁾ Directorate-General of Statistics on Education and Science (Ministry of Education and Science). 'Educação em números Portugal 2014' and 'Perfil do aluno 2012/13' ⁽⁵⁾.

- ⁽¹⁾ This data refers to professional courses (110 750 students in continental Portugal) and technological courses (4 576). Technological courses will be discontinued by the end of school year 2013-14 (Decreto-Lei No 139/2012).

3. National and regional strategy to tackle ELET

Questions	Description
National and/or regional strategy/action plan to reduce ELET	<p>Name and year: there is not a single document of reference for the strategy.</p> <p>The Ministry of Education and Science has put in place a set of measures that make up a national strategy to tackle early leaving from education and training. These include, among other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) measures to prevent school failure following the raise of the age for compulsory education to 18 ⁽⁶⁾. In upper secondary education, these include for instance the routing of students to an educational offer adapted to his or her profile, and the implementation of a modular system for students over 16 years-old; (b) measures to ensure a diversified curricular offer, including the introduction of the vocational courses in basic education and upper secondary education ⁽⁷⁾; (c) piloting of vocational courses in basic education and upper secondary education ⁽⁸⁾; (d) increased autonomy of public schools in terms of the distribution of work among teachers, and the organisation of school hours. Also, introduction of a system to attribute supplementary staff/hours to schools based on their outcomes in terms of their 'teaching effectiveness' (based on the progression of students' results), reduction of the 'percentage of students that have dropped out or are at risk of dropping out' and 'management capacity' ⁽⁹⁾; (e) approval of a statute of students and school ethics,

⁽⁴⁾ https://www.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpid=INE&xpgid=ine_indicadores&indOcorrCod=0007139&contexto=bd&selTab=tab2&xlang=pt [accessed 25.4.2017].

⁽⁵⁾ [http://www.dgeec.mec.pt/np4/97/%7B\\$clientServletPath%7D/?newsId=147&fileName=PERFIL_DO_ALUNO_1213.pdf](http://www.dgeec.mec.pt/np4/97/%7B$clientServletPath%7D/?newsId=147&fileName=PERFIL_DO_ALUNO_1213.pdf) [accessed 25.4.2017].

⁽⁶⁾ Decree-Law n176/2012, of August 2.

⁽⁷⁾ Decree-Law n139/2012, of July 5.

⁽⁸⁾ Regulation: Portaria n292-A/2012, of September 26 and Portaria n276/2013 of August 23.

⁽⁹⁾ Regulation: *Despacho normativo* No 13-/A 2012, of June 5; *Despacho normativo* 10-A/2015.

	<p>including the duty of attendance to school for those under 18, and measures to be put in place in case of truancy ⁽¹⁰⁾;</p> <p>(f) introduction of the Centres for Qualifications and Professional Education (CQEP) targeting youth and adults who aim to acquire a qualification, mainly through validation or VET ⁽¹¹⁾.</p>
Elements of the strategy are explicitly linked to VET	<p>A national strategy involving elements linked to VET can be traced back to 2004/05, with the introduction of the courses for education and training ⁽¹²⁾, targeting at-risk students, and the expansion of the professional courses ⁽¹³⁾ to the network of public schools (before, they were exclusively provided by private 'professional schools'). The number of students in professional courses evolved from 36 943 in 2005/06, to 107 266 in 2009/10, and to 117 699 in 2013/14 ⁽¹⁴⁾.</p> <p>Professional courses, and their expansion, can be seen as a preventive measure to tackle early leaving itself since it ensures a varied provision to respond to the needs of different students.</p> <p>The current government also includes VET as one of the elements in its strategy to tackle early leaving. Recently, the courses for education and training have been replaced by the vocational courses (in basic education) which also target at-risk students.</p> <p>The aim of introducing these VET measures is twofold: increasing the percentage of students in vocationally-oriented programmes, and reducing the rates of early school leavers from education and training, by providing several alternative types of programmes, including programmes specifically targeting at-risk students.</p>

4. Recent policy initiatives

Scope and questions	
New policy initiatives being undertaken that include a	The Ministry of Education has introduced different measures for prevention and the 'improvement of the

⁽¹⁰⁾ Act n51/2012, of September 5.

⁽¹¹⁾ Regulation: Portaria 135-A/2013 of March 28.

⁽¹²⁾ A type of VET programme that lead to a double certification, academic and professional, targeting students at risk of dropping out. It was more relevant in Basic education. It has now been replaced by the vocational courses that in basic education lead exclusively to an academic qualification.

⁽¹³⁾ Main type of VET programme in upper secondary education.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Source: Interview with representative of the Ministry of Education, based on the statistics of education.

<p>role for VET to reduce ELET: either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) reduce ELET from VET; (b) reduce ELET (in general) through VET 	<p>quality of education'. The ones with a clear link to VET are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the introduction of the vocational courses at basic and upper secondary education (piloted in 2012/2013 in basic education and 2013/14 in upper secondary education) (described below); (b) modifications in the professional courses (three-year VET programmes at upper secondary level), including more hours in work-based learning in 2013; (c) promotion of academic and professional guidance, through the introduction of the Centres for Qualifications and VET (CQEP) in 2014/15. <p>There are other measures to tackle early leaving that also have an impact on VET. At upper secondary level, the most significant is the programme Educational Territories of Priority Intervention (TEIP) which assigns specialised technicians (psychologists, mediators...) to clusters of public schools to support population at risk. This programme was created in 1996 and is inspired in the 'zones d'action prioritaires' (ZEP) in France ⁽¹⁵⁾.</p> <p>Also, the High Commission for immigration and intercultural dialogue (under the Portuguese government), promotes the 'Escolhas' programme for the promotion of social inclusion which includes measures related to vocational education and training and employability. 'Escolhas' is a funding programme for projects implemented by a network of local partners. During the current period (2013-15) 125 projects are being carried out. For instance there is a set of projects called 'Pontuais', developed in 2013 for the first time, aimed at offering VET second chance opportunities to early leavers at the local-level in partnership with an enterprise ⁽¹⁶⁾.</p> <p>There are also relevant initiatives from private entities (see below 'stakeholder cooperation').</p>
<p>Is the role of VET in reducing ELET assuming greater or lesser importance? Why?</p>	<p>The role of VET in reducing ELET is assuming greater importance since the mid-2000s, with the introduction of the courses for education and training, targeting at-risk students, and the expansion of the professional courses to the network of public schools.</p> <p>Those measures were at least partially motivated by European policies calling for an increase in the number of students enrolled in VET programmes.</p> <p>After the introduction of those measures, the country has seen a considerable increase in the number of students</p>

⁽¹⁵⁾ Regulation: Despacho No 147-B/ME/96. Further information at <http://www.dge.mec.pt/teip> [accessed 25.4.2017].

⁽¹⁶⁾ Further information at <http://www.programaescolhas.pt/conteudos/noticias/ver-noticia/52381526a4b37/programa-escolhas-lanca-novo-periodo-de-candidaturas>. [accessed 25.4.2017]. Information from interviews from work assignment 1.

	<p>attending VET, and a decrease of the rate of early leavers. More recently, the government has introduced the vocational courses targeting learners at risk of early leaving (the basic vocational courses replace the courses for education and training, while the upper secondary vocational courses are a new VET offer).</p>
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5. Stakeholder cooperation

Question	Answer
<p>What are and have been the main influences of stakeholders in the development and implementation of VET related policies specifically to reduce ELET?</p> <p>(a) Employers, (b) trade unions social partners, (c) VET institutions, (d) other learning providers.</p>	<p>The involvement of stakeholders in national-level policies is gaining relevance. Concretely, small and large companies are involved in the implementation of vocational courses, most significantly in the provision of placements for work-based learning. For instance, large companies have been extending their involvement opening the possibility of providing placements across the whole country. The Ministry of Education has signed agreements with different companies defining the conditions of the provision of such placements, and establishing cooperation in the development of the different components of the vocational courses.</p> <p>There are also several relevant initiatives from private entities, most significantly:</p> <p>(a) second chance school of Matosinhos (described below);</p> <p>(b) projects developed by the association 'Entrepreneurs for social inclusion' (Empresários pela Inclusão Social (EPIS)). This association was created in 2006 as an initiative from the civil society, with the mission of tackling early leaving and low performance in education and training. The main project implemented by EPIS is called 'Mediators for school success' (Mediadores para o sucesso escolar) and targets students both in primary and lower secondary education. Complementary to this, they have also launched a programme that involves guidance, training and professional integration activities for the youth already supported by EPIS in the last years of lower secondary and in upper secondary education (Vocações EPIS – orientação, formação e inserção profissional). The methodologies were piloted in 2007-2010 and the projects have been developed and extended to involve more municipalities since 2011⁽¹⁷⁾;</p> <p>(c) Project 'Arco Maior'. This is a socio-educational project for early leavers launched in 2013/14 in Oporto. It</p>

⁽¹⁷⁾ Further information available at <http://www.epis.pt/vocacoes/resumo-do-programa>. [accessed 25.4.2017]. Information from interviews from Work Assignment 1.

	<p>targets adolescents and youth excluded from formal education and training, that have not finished compulsory education, preferably between 15 and 18 years old, but also older. The main aims are to ensure school and/or socio-professional insertion, and the return to formal education and training if possible, and, at the same time, ensure the attainment of basic education certificates (either sixth or ninth grade depending on the case). The programme involves personal development plans, and includes the following main areas: Mother tongue, mathematics, citizenship and employability and workshop practices (in restoration, catering, arts and crafts, and ICT-multimedia). It involves also other activities such as visits to different institutions in the city and internships. The project has involved 20 youth in 2013/14 and 28 in 2014/15 ⁽¹⁸⁾;</p> <p>(d) in-VET project funded by the European Commission. This is a project designed to support VET professionals to detect students at risk of dropping out at an early stage. It involves the development of an online-questionnaire to identify young people at risk, counselling guidelines for VET professionals to support young people at risk, and an online portal with training methods for VET professionals to work against dropout. It is being piloted in several countries including Portugal where it involves several Professional Schools (all publicly-funded private schools from the network of the National association of VET schools (Associação Nacional de Escolas Profissionais (ANESPO))). The first results will be presented in September 2015 ⁽¹⁹⁾;</p> <p>The ANESPO has been involved in other initiatives concerning early leaving from VET. Interestingly, it has developed two reports on dropout in its network of professional schools ⁽²⁰⁾.</p> <p>There are also initiatives by municipalities and schools ⁽²¹⁾.</p>
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⁽¹⁸⁾ Some information is available at: http://www.porto.ucp.pt/sites/default/files/files/FEP/docs/projecto_arco_maior_FEP.pdf [accessed 25.4.2017]; additional information has been obtained through e-mail exchanges with the coordinator of the project.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Information available at <http://invet-project.eu/> [accessed 25.4.2017]. Details on the calendar of the project have been obtained through e-mail exchanges with representatives from ANESPO involved in the project.

⁽²⁰⁾ *Razões de Abandono e Desistência dos Alunos das Escolas Profissionais* (2011) and *Razões de Abandono e Desistência dos Alunos das Escolas Profissionais* (2012) (sent to ICF under work assignment 1).

⁽²¹⁾ See examples at Alvares, M. (coord) et al. (2014). *Combate ao Abandono Escolar Precoce : Políticas e Práticas*. CIES-IUL.

6. Monitoring systems

Question	Answers
What specific early leavers monitoring systems exist?	<p>1. Name/descriptor: MISI, information system of the Ministry of Education</p> <p>Aims: collect information on students in the education system to support governance and administration</p> <p>Year introduced: 2006</p> <p>Coverage:</p> <p>(a) it covers school based VET and other school based programmes;</p> <p>(b) national level;</p> <p>(c) what is measured: it includes information on individual students from public schools and private schools that have signed a contract with the ministry. It allows for the calculation of the 'rate of retention and drop-out' based on the data on pupils that attend education and training in a given year but the next year are not enrolled anymore.</p> <p>2. Name/descriptor: SGFOR, system for the management of training of the Institute for Employment and Professional Education (IEFP) ⁽²²⁾</p> <p>Aims: support the planning and management of training activity</p> <p>Coverage:</p> <p>(a) apprenticeship-type courses (Cursos de Aprendizagem) ⁽²³⁾;</p> <p>(b) national level;</p> <p>(c) what is measured: truancy, drop-out.</p> <p>3. Name/descriptor: SIGO, System of information and management of education and training offer ⁽²⁴⁾</p>

http://www.igfse.pt/upload/docs/2014/EstudoPOATFSE_combateaoabandonoescolarprecoce_.pdf [accessed 25.4.2017].

⁽²²⁾ The information on the system SGFOR is based on interviews with professionals from a training centre under the public employment service in work assignment 1.

⁽²³⁾ Apprenticeship-type courses are alternance training courses under the ministry of employment that lead both to a professional qualification and an academic qualification. Students spend part of their time in a company or other entity where they develop work-based learning, and part of the time in a training institution (either a public centre under the public employment service or private entities authorised to provide this type of training).

	<p>Aims: facilitate the management of available programmes and follow up students throughout the system. It is also the system through which schools request the implementation of new programmes.</p> <p>Year introduced: 2009/10 (being modified at the moment)</p> <p>Coverage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) education and training offer for adults (2009/2010) (b) professional courses, vocational courses, apprenticeship-type courses (2014); (c) upper secondary general programmes (2015, ongoing). <p>4. Name/descriptor: monitoring system of the Commission for the Protection of Children and Youth at risk (CPCJ) ⁽²⁵⁾</p> <p>Aims: detect young people at risk</p> <p>Coverage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) youth from 15 to 21 years-old signalled by other institutions as at-risk; (b) national level; (c) what is measured: drop-out, truancy, school failure <p>5. Name/descriptor: McVocacionais</p> <p>Aims: follow up each vocational course and gather data to be used in evaluation studies.</p> <p>Coverage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (d) national level (e) what is measured: drop-out, truancy, school failure.
What information is monitored/collected?	<p>1. MISI</p> <p>Number of drop outs: yes ('rate of retention and drop-out')</p> <p>Reasons for dropping out: no</p> <p>Background characteristics of drop outs/those at risk: yes. It collects information on each student on sex, age, year attended, socio-demographic characteristics, parents' level of education and parents' profession.</p> <p>2. SGFOR</p> <p>Number of drop outs: yes</p> <p>Reasons for dropping out: yes</p>

⁽²⁴⁾ Information on the system SIGO based on information from an interview from the Directorate-General of Statistics of Education and Science (Ministry of Education and Science).

⁽²⁵⁾ The information on the monitoring system of the CPCJ is based on interviews with professionals from this service in work assignment 1. Further information on the CPCJ and annual reports with statistics on dropout are available at: <http://www.cnpcjr.pt/> [accessed 25.4.2017].

	<p>Background characteristics of drop outs/those at risk: (information not found)</p> <p>3. SIGO</p> <p>Number of drop outs: yes. It will follow up the trajectories of learners throughout the different systems. It will allow to differentiate a true dropout from a learner that moved to a training offer from a different network of providers, namely to training under the state public employment service.</p> <p>Reasons for dropping out: (it will be aligned with other systems so the information will be the one collected in MISI and SGFOR).</p> <p>Background characteristics of drop outs/those at risk: (it will be aligned with other systems so the information will be the one collected in MISI and SGFOR).</p> <p>4. Monitoring system of the CPCJ:</p> <p>Number of drop outs: yes</p> <p>Reasons for dropping out: No</p> <p>Background characteristics of drop outs/those at risk: It collects information on sex, age, country of origin, household and family composition, income, conditions of housing, and other aspects related to risk behaviours and situations.</p> <p>5. McVocacionais:</p> <p>Number of drop outs: yes</p> <p>Reasons for dropping out: Yes</p> <p>Background characteristics of drop outs/those at risk: yes. It collects information on each student on sex, age, year attended, socio-demographic characteristics, parents' level of education and parents' profession.</p>
What are the data used for? How it is used by VET institutions/providers?	<p>1. MISI: it is not used by VET institutions/providers. It is used by the Directorate-General of Statistics of Education and Science for statistical reports and as an internal tool to monitor dropout in each school. It is also used to calculate the new indicator on 'Early leaver or student at risk of leaving before completing upper secondary education'.</p> <p>2. SGFOR has a warning system when the number of absences surpasses 3%. Students in apprenticeship type courses can have a maximum of 10% of absences (5% justified and 5% unjustified). The public employment centre has access to this information. If the interruption of the training is unjustified or due to expulsion, it leads to an automatic interruption of social benefits. Training centres use the warning system to trigger support measures.</p> <p>3. SIGO: it will allow VET institutions/providers to follow up</p>

	<p>their students.</p> <p>4. Monitoring system of the CPCJ: the data is used by the CPCJ to trigger support measures. It is not used by VET providers.</p> <p>5. McVocacionais: the data is used to monitor Vocational Courses in what regards dropout, school success, and involvement of enterprises.</p>
How is the monitoring system linked with offering support measures? (i.e. is it being used to contact those who have dropped out to provide support to find employment, education or further training?)	<p>1. MISI: the Directorate-General of Statistics of Education and Science shares information with other departments of the ministry of education as the Directorate-general of Education in charge of programmes to prevent early leaving from education and training. The data is not used to contact those who have dropped out.</p> <p>2. SGFOR: the pedagogical team of the training centre contacts the students when the level of absence surpasses 3% or the maximum limit. They can agree to give the student a second chance even if he has reached the maximum of 10% of absences. Also, social workers from the training centre may contact the Commission for the Protection of Children and Youth at risk or with social services in certain cases.</p> <p>3. SIGO: this system aims at facilitating the monitoring and management of the different programmes. It is not used to contact those who have dropped out.</p> <p>4. Monitoring system of the CPCJ – the CPCJ contacts those who have dropped out (or are in other risk situations) and their families and tries to reach an agreement to start a “process of promotion and protection”. If the family does not accept the agreement or persistently fails to comply with it, it is taken to court. The CPCJ tries to find education and training alternatives for the children and youth.</p> <p>5. McVocacionais is a platform for the coordinators of the Vocational Courses and the initiatives they develop to provide support to students at risk are also registered, namely the notification to CPCJ. Each time such an event is registered an email is sent to the Ministry of Education.</p>
What role is/has the monitoring system played in the design, development or implementation of the	<p>1. MISI: data has been used for instance to decide on the areas where the programme educational territories of priority intervention (TEIP) is implemented ⁽²⁶⁾. It is also used to decide on the allocation of credit hours (i.e. ‘staff</p>

⁽²⁶⁾ Information from an interview with a ministry representative from work assignment 1.

policies, strategies and initiatives?	<p>time') to schools based on several indicators, including one on the reduction of early leavers and learners at risk of early leaving.</p> <p>2. SGFOR: no evidence has been found on the use of this system in the design, development or implementation of policies.</p> <p>3. SIGO: this system aims at facilitating the monitoring and management of the different programmes. For instance, the ministry uses the information in SIGO to decide on the approval of each vocational course proposed by a school (e.g. information on the curriculum, partners and partnership agreements, human and material resources available in the school).</p> <p>Data from SIGO are being migrated to a new platform of application to funding from the European Social Fund (the Integrated System of Information of the European Social Fund – SIIFSE). With this purpose, SIGO will also integrate statistics of each school considered relevant in the applications (school success, retention and drop-out, employability and continuation of studies, educational efficacy and resource management capacity).</p> <p>4. Monitoring system of the CPCJ – it supports the implementation of policies in the sense that it identifies young people that have dropped out and liaises with other institutions to find support measures to reintegrate them, for instance the second chance school of Matosinhos, or the recent 'Arco Maior' project.</p> <p>5. McVocacionais: this platform has only recently been introduced. It aims at monitoring a particular initiative, the vocational courses, and is expected to inform any potential future changes in these programmes.</p>
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7. Effect of the economic crisis

Question	Answers
<p>In what ways has the role of VET in reducing ELET been influenced by the economic crisis:</p> <p>(a) supply of VET places;</p> <p>(b) demand for VET places;</p> <p>(c) qualifications of VET students (increasing decreasing);</p>	<p>The crisis seems to have influenced the role of VET in reducing ELET through different routes:</p> <p>(a) the high rates of unemployment seem to have both positive and negative effects on participation in education and training. On the one hand, it seems to be a factor motivating students to stay or return to education and training since the attraction of the labour market has decreased with the crisis. On the other hand, the economic difficulties of families often constitute a constraint for young people to participate in education and training (for instance, they often cannot</p>

<p>(d) popularity and perception of VET;</p> <p>(e) increase/decrease in public resources for VET;</p> <p>(f) access to 'second chance' VET opportunities.</p>	<p>afford the transport to the school or training centre) ⁽²⁷⁾;</p> <p>(b) the crisis may have also contributed to an increased valorisation of VET in society. The unemployment among graduates from higher education drove the society to think about the alternatives, namely VET. This was also promoted by European initiatives and investment in VET through public policies ⁽²⁸⁾;</p> <p>(c) the Ministry of Education has observed an increased interest from companies to cooperate in the definition of VET qualifications. Companies aim to overcome needs for employees with certain technical skills (most significantly those related to the introduction of new technologies) by the development of new qualifications or re-qualification programmes. The involvement of companies is considered an asset since it helps to develop programmes with relevance in the labour market which makes them more attractive to learners. The interest of companies is also reflected in a will to take in more learners for work-based learning. However, this increased interest is not necessarily a consequence of the crisis, since the government has also devoted efforts to involving companies in VET in recent years ⁽²⁹⁾.</p>
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8. Factors positively contributing to the effectiveness of VET in reducing ELET ⁽³⁰⁾

Increased involvement of enterprises. The Ministry of Education has recently signed several agreements with companies or employers' associations so as to identify what qualifications are more in demand in the labour market, and what companies are available to provide internships. For instance, in May 2015 the ministry signed a protocol with the employers' organisation 'Entrepreneurial Council for Sustainable Development' to increase cooperation with companies for the development of the vocational courses ⁽³¹⁾. The ministry has signed

⁽²⁷⁾ Interview with a representative from ANESPO.

⁽²⁸⁾ Interview with a representative from the National Agency for Qualification and Professional Education (Agência Nacional para a Qualificação e o Ensino Profissional, I.P.).

⁽²⁹⁾ Interview with a representative from the Ministry of Education and Science.

⁽³⁰⁾ The main sources of this section are interviewees. Other sources are identified where relevant.

⁽³¹⁾ Information at the website of the Ministry of Education:
<http://www.portugal.gov.pt/pt/os-ministerios/ministerio-da-educacao-e-ciencia/mantenha-se-atualizado/20150510-mec-protocolo-educacao.aspx> [accessed 25.4.2017].

cooperation agreements with several companies with two main purposes: to ensure the availability of placements for work-based learning and to promote coordination of schools and companies in the development of the curriculum of the programmes. Agreements with companies can also have the purpose of ensuring the availability of the necessary equipment for training.

Cooperation with other public administrations. The ministry also establishes agreements with other public administrations mainly to ensure the availability of the necessary equipment for practical training. For instance, the ministry of education has recently concluded an agreement with several other ministries for the provision of an upper-secondary level Vocational Course in the area of the 'sea' according to which the technical part of the programme is offered by a training centre (FOR-MAR) under the state public employment service ⁽³²⁾.

Cooperation with higher education institutions (of the polytechnic system) with the aim of facilitating the continuation of studies. Cooperation can involve the participation of polytechnic institutions in the adaptation of contents of programmes but also the sharing of human or material resources. As an example, the Polytechnic Institute of Beja has recently concluded an agreement with a nearby VET school for technical and pedagogical support in the development of vocational courses ⁽³³⁾.

Work-based learning in companies is motivating for learners (as observed for instance in surveys for students of vocational courses). There are also examples of VET teachers from technical areas that apply to short in-company training periods to update their knowledge (this started as an initiative of one specific company –Portugal Telecom- and is now being promoted by the Ministry of Education).

The existence of a variety of programmes in upper secondary education. VET provision (mainly professional courses) is an alternative for students who are not interested in scientific-humanistic courses (academically-oriented upper secondary programme). VET provision is more diverse and as such it more easily responds to students' motivations; it provides for more individualised solutions.

The fact that VET programmes lead to a double certification (upper secondary education certificate and a professional certificate), allowing for the

⁽³²⁾ National strategy for the sea (2015). Annex B, p. 36.
http://www.dgpm.mam.gov.pt/Documents/07_Fichas_D_Governa%C3%A7%C3%A3o_Educa%C3%A7%C3%A3o_2015.pdf [accessed 25.4.2017].

⁽³³⁾ Protocol available at
<https://www.ipbeja.pt/RepositorioDocumentosOficiais/Lists/Protocolos/Attachments/278/Escola%20Profissional%20de%20Alte.pdf> [accessed 25.4.2017].

continuation of studies in higher education, is also considered to motivate students to participate in these programmes.

Initiatives for the promotion of VET, including the organisation of international awards, the celebration of the day of VET for the first time in 2015 ⁽³⁴⁾, and the second edition of a 'road show' promoting VET across the country.

9. Factors constraining the effectiveness of VET to reduce ELET

The current diversity of types of upper-secondary VET programmes creates confusion among learners. At the moment there are three different types of upper secondary VET programmes -professional courses ⁽³⁵⁾, vocational courses ⁽³⁶⁾, and the apprenticeship-type courses ⁽³⁷⁾ and it is often possible to find programmes in the same area of the three types. There have been discussions about the unification of the different types of programmes under a common overarching term ('double certification courses'), allowing for different modalities (e.g. programmes with a different share of work-based learning, etc.). However, these discussions were stopped without any results ⁽³⁸⁾. According to the ministry of education, the existence of different types of programmes aims at adapting offer to the profile of students; this is considered a main asset of the system and it is believed that any measures attempting to unify the different upper secondary VET programmes could endanger it.

Competition among school providers hinders information and guidance. The overall reduction in the numbers of youth in school ages due to demographic trends has created competition among providers, namely between the network of

⁽³⁴⁾ <http://www.diadoensinoprofissional.anqep.gov.pt/site/evento.asp> [accessed 25.4.2017].

⁽³⁵⁾ Three-year programmes of 3 200 to 3 440 hours, of which 18%-24% of work-based learning, under the governance of the Ministry of Education (Decree-Law No 139/2012 of July 5; Decree-Law No 91/2013 of July 10).

⁽³⁶⁾ Two-year programmes of 3,000 hours, of which 46% of work-based learning, under the governance and management of the Ministry of Education. Compared to professional courses these are more intensive.

⁽³⁷⁾ Programmes of 2 800 to 3 700 hours, of which 40% of work-based learning, of a length of approximately three years, under the ministry of labour (Portaria No 1497/2008 of December 19).

⁽³⁸⁾ According to an interviewee from the National Agency for Qualification and Professional Education (Agência Nacional para a Qualificação e o Ensino Profissional, I.P.).

public schools (providing professional courses and vocational courses), the network of private VET schools (providing the same types of VET programmes) and the network of training centres under the public employment service (providing Apprenticeship-type courses). This has caused that guidance is not always impartial and that schools try to keep their students by recommending them the programmes they offer and not the programmes that are more adequate for the learners.

There is a need for an independent, quality information and guidance provision. The recently created Centres for Qualifications and Professional Education (CQEP), independent from schools and other providers, have an important role to play in this area. However, the number of these centres will be limited, and there is a need for coordination with the psychology and guidance services ⁽³⁹⁾ in schools. Also, it would be important to have information on the education and training offer in advance, namely before the beginning of school year, to be able to inform students.

The provision of VET is unequal throughout the country. In the interior of the country is very difficult for schools to provide a varied offer of VET programmes, due to the low number of students and the low number of enterprises for the development of work-based learning. For this reason, the cooperation between schools and between local authorities is of utmost importance. However, there are difficulties in terms of the mobility of students. A possible way to overcome this difficulty would be to finance transport and lodging for students attending VET programmes or developing work-based learning in other municipalities or regions.

Compensatory measures are not available throughout the country. They are of an exceptional nature, targeting a small number of young people, and their continuation in time is not ensured. For instance, the second chance school of Matosinhos is one of the most persistent initiatives; it started its activities in 2008 and struggles each year to ensure the necessary resources to continue carrying out its activities.

There is a need to promote the social image of and information about certain professional areas that are not attractive for learners but in which there is demand of skilled workers in the labour market (e.g. construction).

There is a need to strengthen social support to families. Many families are now in great financial difficulties and cannot ensure the minimum requirements for the younger members to attend education and training (for instance, it is often

⁽³⁹⁾ Servicos de Psicologia e Orientação (SPO).

the case that they cannot afford transport to the VET school or company for work-based training). The National Association of School Directors considers that a strategy against early leaving has to go beyond schools and the education system and include a stronger social support to families, measures for employability and for the reconciliation of work and family life.

A reduction in early leaving does not necessarily imply an increase in educational success. In Portugal the education is compulsory until the 12th year of education (last year of upper secondary) or until the learner reaches 18 years-old. This causes that strategies put in place to tackle early learning often do not achieve the desired outcomes: they may succeed at retaining youth in the system but not at ensuring that they attain a certain level. As put by an interview from WA, referring to class truancy: 'they are in school, in the yard, waiting to reach 18 years-old (and then they leave)'.