



VET helps people say **yes** to education and training



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*Cedefop has new evidence that VET
may prevent and counteract early leaving*



Cedefop research looks for new evidence to understand dropout and early leaving from vocational education and training (VET) in Europe and to analyse VET's role in reducing early leaving. Project manager Irene Psifidou answers some of the questions the research addresses.

Why is early leaving more common for those enrolled in VET programmes?

This is true for some countries, such as Belgium (French-speaking community/Flemish community), Denmark, France, the Netherlands and Italy, and for some types of VET. For example, early leaving rates are higher in VET schools and apprenticeships in Austria, but not in VET colleges. VET's nature, and its connection with the labour market, may explain this. VET has an inclusive role, accommodating learners who would have already

dropped out from education if it was not offered as a choice. It is also very much related to labour market reality. Availability of apprenticeships, value of qualifications and workers' wages may all affect the achievement of a VET qualification.

How does Cedefop promote VET as a solution to the problem of early leaving?

Cedefop has provided new evidence that VET may prevent and counteract early leaving; this is why many initiatives aiming to combat the phenomenon encourage VET pedagogies. Work-based learning, apprenticeships and real work simulations may build learners' confidence, increase their motivation and engagement by adopting a positive attitude to learning.

What is being done in Europe to address early leaving from or through VET?

There have been several approaches aiming at prevention

or remedy. However, we don't know much about how successful these interventions are; impact measurements have been undertaken for just a few implemented policies. Of 350 measures Cedefop has examined, only 37 had some evaluation undertaken. And even when policies are evaluated, the extent to which these have ultimately helped young people to achieve an upper secondary qualification, to continue further studies, or to integrate into the labour market remains largely unknown.

What remains to be done?

Most of those who abandon education and training prematurely fail to return. This is why it is so important to develop tools to identify early those who are at risk of dropping out from VET, plus ways of reaching out to those who have already dropped out. In the detail of design and application we can see what makes such tools beneficial. But benefiting learners is not a detail. ■