



## Community involvement

### Problem statement

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#### Addressed problem: Community involvement

The factors influencing early leaving from education and training are as a result of personal, social, economic, educational, institutional, or family-related reasons. The type of support a learner requires depends on the needs and specific circumstances of the individual. A learner may require a range of interventions on many different dimensions.

A comprehensive response to early leaving from education and training requires action from the entire VET community. This includes VET institution leaders, teaching and non-teaching staff, trainers, parents and families. This requires that VET institutions cooperate with companies, other external stakeholders and the wider community.

### Beneficiaries

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- ▶ **Early leavers from education and training**
- ▶ **Learners with low self-confidence and self-esteem**    ▶ **Low-motivated learners**
- ▶ **Young people with complex needs (e.g. health issues, in poverty, with caring responsibilities)**
- ▶ **Secondary education students**    ▶ **VET students (school based)**
- ▶ **VET students (in work based learning schemes)**    ▶ **Vulnerable groups**

All learners can benefit from community involvement in their education and training. The aim is to ensure each learner is supported in the most appropriate way to achieve their educational goals. Involving key stakeholders from within the VET institution and beyond can be useful for young people at risk of early leaving from education and training or who have already dropped out and, in particular, for:

- Young people with a high level of disengagement and possibly also complex barriers to learning (e.g. health issues, poverty, etc.)
- Young people who lack motivation to continue learning and who may have a low appreciation of the value of learning
- Young people who have low self-esteem and a lack of longer-term perspective for themselves

### Addressing the problem

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#### How can the entire VET community be involved in the prevention of early leaving?

The following tips are offered to policy makers and practitioners involved in the design and delivery of VET.

The information is based on Cedefop research into successful measures. It also draws on the work of EU Member States and the European Commission under the 'Education and Training (ET) 2020 Working Group on Schools Policy'. This working group developed the [European Toolkit for Schools](#) that contains a wide range of practical resources and materials that may be of use to practitioners.

In particular, this toolkit section is inspired by the ET 2020 Working Group on Schools Policy work on the 'whole school approach'. They consider that the aim of a 'whole school approach' is to create a multi-disciplinary approach to support all learner needs; to develop a corporate culture based on a shared understanding of a 'whole school approach' and to position and support education as a continuum, starting in the home, through primary, secondary education and beyond. In practice, this approach requires strong leadership and governance. It also requires a strategic vision which is grounded in an overall inclusive, learner-centred concept of education for all.

## **Tip 1: Prepare a development / action plan that foresees the involvement of the entire VET community**

At the VET institution level, a development / action plan is an important feature of the VET institution improvement process. It can be used for monitoring and self-evaluation of practices and processes.

A VET institution development / action plan designed with the aim of involving the entire VET community, as a minimum, should:

- Be developed and implemented by the entire school community (including learners, parents and families) and with trainers, employers, multi-professional teams and external local services
- Be based on common goals and shared responsibilities with clearly defined roles for all actors involved
- Include targets and measures to address the underlying factors of early leaving from education and training
- Include support measures for VET staff (initial and continued professional development)
- Include the key outcomes and targets it intends to achieve within a specified timeframe

## **Tip 2: Create a welcoming and inclusive learning environment**

The engagement of the entire VET community within the VET institution and beyond involves a strategic vision which is grounded in an overall inclusive, learner-centred concept of education for all. This means creating safe, welcoming and caring learning environments. Such environments serve to promote student engagement, stimulate motivation and commitment towards learning, and encourage individuals to grow and develop to the best of their ability and to feel a sense of belonging.

As a minimum, welcoming and [inclusive environments](#) can be achieved by:

- Offering sports and/or cultural activities to help create a positive climate and a sense of belonging for all learners
- Creating common spaces to promote diversity
- Promoting the use of shared facilities and spaces to build relationships between teachers, trainers, learners and parents
- Ensuring all learners have access to teachers, trainers and other professionals who can support their educational and personal development needs
- Celebrating learner achievement
- Ensuring anti-bullying / conflict resolution strategies are in place
- Engaging staff and pupils in the VET institution surveys and evaluations

## **Tip 3: Listen to the student 'voice'**

It is important all learners are given the opportunity to voice their views relating to their learning experience. They should also be given the opportunity to provide input into institutional decision-making. Utilising the process to empower a young person has a strong impact on their engagement in school life and company life (during in-company training), and their motivation to learn. Formal mechanisms include school councils and school surveys and evaluations. Less formal mechanisms may be required to reach marginalised learners and those at risk of disengagement (e.g. [one-on-one sessions](#), [small group work](#), and [motivational project work](#)).

## **Tip 4: Establish links with the wider community**

Establishing links with the wider community offers reciprocal benefits to young people, the VET institution and the wider community. This includes establishing links with local NGOs representing minority / vulnerable groups at risk, and other local stakeholders such as employers.

Collaboration with local NGOs and other community organisations representing minority groups and/or vulnerable groups at risk of early leaving could help to ensure that providers are better prepared to work with young people from these particular groups.

Building partnerships between VET institutions and employers at local level can help facilitate school-to-work transition. There are [many different ways](#) in which employers can support schools, including offering:

- Career talks and site visits
- Work experience, taster sessions
- To donate equipment/resources
- Provide up to date information about careers in their sectors

## **Tip 5: Support VET teachers and trainers to understand early leaving from education and training**

Through initial and continued professional development, all teachers and trainers must be given the opportunity to develop their understanding of the factors contributing to early leaving from education and training. This includes developing their capacity to diagnose the varying needs of individual learners and to determine the type of intervention required. In doing so, teachers and trainers should be given the opportunity to develop their skills in relation to educational disadvantage, diversity, conflict resolution, and bullying for example. Providing VET teachers and trainers with opportunities to support their professional development is essential in this respect. This could include, though not limited to:

- Opportunities to work in multi-professional teams – to develop the skills required to work alongside different professionals and to understand the respective contribution other professionals offer
- Having access to a range of teaching methods, tools and approaches in order to facilitate a more inclusive classroom environment
- Collaboration between VET teachers, trainers and other professionals to encourage peer-to-peer learning and support

## **Tip 6: Promote school-family partnerships**



Actively engaging parents in their child’s education and personal development can be a powerful determinant to reducing the risk of early leaving. There are many ways to build and promote school-family partnerships, such as:

- Promoting parental participation in school decision making – this can be through formal approaches such as parents’ associations, parent councils and parent consultation. Less formal approaches may also be required to ensure the views of all parents are taken into account e.g. in collaboration with local NGOs or other community organisations.
- Creating designated spaces for parents and families can help to build family-school partnerships. Promoting parental participation in formal and/or informal activities provides opportunities for parents to learn new skills, develop positive relationships with the school/other parents and build self-confidence. It can also help parents learn more about the life of the school and the curriculum.
- Parents serve as an important resource to each other. They can also serve as an important resource to the school. Parents could be invited to share their expertise in schools by delivering talks about their job as part of a guidance activity for example.

Promoting school-family partnerships that are built on trust and mutual respect can help identify families with high levels of need. Specific outreach measures can then be deployed to support them. There may be a need for an outreach strategy to individual families facing complex challenges; or it can be useful to designate a specific key school worker with a concrete role to engage with parents.

## Expected outcomes

When the entire VET community shares an inclusive, learner-centred vision of education for all, and a common approach to tackling early leaving from education and training, the following outcomes can be expected at different levels:

 <b>INDIVIDUAL</b>	 <b>INSTITUTIONAL</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social / health / psychological / economic challenges being tackled in a holistic manner involving all members of the school community – including where necessary, external stakeholders</li> <li>• Improved well-being</li> <li>• Promote a positive vision of oneself</li> <li>• Foster a positive attitude towards learning, and education and training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased information sharing and collaboration between VET teachers and trainers, and with parents and relevant stakeholders to ensure effective coordination of measures / interventions</li> <li>• Ensuring specific measures / interventions are identified and tailored to the needs of the individual learner</li> <li>• Increased focus on ensuring learner progress is monitored</li> <li>• Increased focus on creating welcoming and inclusive learning environments that encourages learner engagement, motivation and sense of belonging</li> <li>• VET practitioners increase their knowledge and understanding of educational disadvantage and the factors contributing to the process of disengagement and early leaving</li> <li>• Parents increase their knowledge of the curriculum, education and training, and the life of their children more generally</li> </ul>

## Related protective factors



**Education achievement and attendance**



**Health and well-being**



**Inclusive environment**



**Positive relationships in the workplace and in the classroom**



**Supportive family environment**

## **Related resources**

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### **Statistics and data**

 [Statistics and data](#)

#### **Professionals involved in tackling ELET at school and community level**

**A variety of professionals play a role in tackling early leaving from education**

and training (ELET) in Europe: school heads, teachers, career counsellors, psychologists and therapists, social workers, youth workers, nurses, and speech and language specialists. In most countries, school heads and teachers are the key professionals responsible for tackling early leaving.

 Austria  Belgium  Bulgaria  Croatia  Cyprus  Czechia  Denmark

 Estonia  EU level  Finland  France  Germany  Greece  Hungary

 Iceland  Ireland  Italy  Latvia  Lithuania  Luxembourg  Malta

 Netherlands  Norway  Poland  Portugal  Romania  Slovakia  Slovenia

 Spain  Sweden  Turkey  United Kingdom

## Good practices

 Good practice

### Integrated Pedagogical System - Integrált Pedagógiai Rendszer (IPR)

The Integrated pedagogical System in Hungary is a national programme that aims to enhance inclusive education. It requires the involvement and cooperation of teachers and external stakeholders. Schools participating in the programme report positive outcomes in classroom management, student autonomy, teacher-student relationships.

 Hungary

 Good practice

### Crafts Square

*Piazza dei Mestieri*

In Italy, 'Crafts Square' offers young people, unemployed young people and adults with an alternative educational offer with a good balance between practical and theoretical courses. The environment created by the 'Craft Square' aims to ensure learners feel understood, supported and valued.

 Italy

 Good practice

### VerA - Prevention of Training Dropout

Retired trained professionals volunteer their time and experience to support apprentices as part of a mentors scheme in Germany.

 Germany

 Good practice

### Invest in talent

Invest in Talent offers a combined offer of: internships, work, education, affordable housing, coaching for vulnerable young people to reduce dropout rates and support sustainable career perspectives.

 Good practice

## Orianta4YEL

Supporting educational and social inclusion of young early leavers and those at risk of early leaving through mechanisms of orientation and tutorial action.

 Germany  Portugal  Romania

 Spain  United Kingdom

 Good practice

## Early School Workers (ESW)

Erasmus+ project “Early School Workers” was designed and carried out to provide VET teachers and schools with guidelines and tools to support learners from becoming early school leavers and increase the employability of youngsters while fostering their active role in the society.

 Belgium  Germany  Italy

 Spain  United Kingdom

## Tools

 Tools

### SOS-Network: Social Inclusion of students/learners with special needs into mainstream VET and labour market

The SOS network is a practitioner’s community which contributes to the social inclusiveness of disadvantaged learners or those with special needs. The website is a platform for teachers, trainers and other professionals from all over Europe who share good practices and experiences of inclusive education.

International

 Tools

### Guidelines for Teachers - P2Peer Tutoring

The ‘Guidelines for Teachers - P2Peer Tutoring’ handbook is aimed at practitioners in secondary VET. The guidelines include “do’s and don’ts” and similar practical information to assist practitioners in their daily communication with learners.

 Italy  Romania  Turkey

 United Kingdom

 Tools Tools

## Reaching out to all learners: a resource pack for supporting inclusive education

*From the IBE-UNESCO series 'Training tools for curriculum development'*

The 'Training tools for curriculum development' resource pack provides a framework to support the development of inclusive schools and classrooms. It provides guidance to support teachers on how to engage all learners.

[International](#)

## Need for all Youngsters

*Brug for alle Unge, (BFAU)*

The Danish initiative 'Need for all Youngsters' included national initiatives to raise awareness of the educational system, in particular VET, amongst parents from ethnic minorities.

 [Denmark](#)

 [Tools](#)

## Concept and Materials - involve parents, improve school

The Involve Parents, Improve school toolkit provides practical solutions to teachers on how to improve parent involvement in school activities.

 [Denmark](#)  [France](#)  [Germany](#)

 [Iceland](#)  [Ireland](#)  [Poland](#)

 [Portugal](#)  [Spain](#)  [Turkey](#)

 [United Kingdom](#)

 [Tools](#)

## Parents' toolkit

*Mallette des parents*

In France, the 'Parent's Toolkit' (mallette des parents) provides examples of how to increase parental participation in school life. The toolkit contains tools for educational teams to organise and facilitate discussions with parents.

 [France](#)

 [Tools](#)

## European Network Against Bullying in Learning resource pack

The ENABLE resource pack contains training material for teachers and youth leaders/peer supporters, lesson plans, activities and resources, campaign ideas for schools, information for parents,

 [Tools](#)

## DIDO - Dropping-in the dropouts toolkit

The DIDO toolkit contains practical tools aimed at preventing dropout in adult education.

 [Belgium](#)  [Denmark](#)  [Finland](#)

 [Netherlands](#)  [Portugal](#)



and implementation guidelines.

 Belgium  Croatia  Denmark

 Greece  Hungary  Portugal

 United Kingdom

 Switzerland

## Publications

 Publications

### **Towards a differentiated, holistic and systemic approach to parental involvement in Europe for early school leaving prevention**

The RESL.eu project conducted a survey to explore the opinions of school personnel about the factors increasing the risk of early leaving, and the adequacy of the measures and policies in place to tackle this phenomenon. It covered seven countries: Belgium, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

Download the report  [here](#).

 EU level

 Publications

### **A Longitudinal Study of Educational Trajectories of Youth at Risk of Early School Leaving**

The paper presents the findings of the longitudinal qualitative study of the educational trajectories of youth at risk of early school leaving in seven EU member-states.

This publication focuses particularly on the perspectives of young people under study.

 Austria  Belgium  Hungary

 Netherlands  Poland  Portugal

 Spain  Sweden  United Kingdom

 Publications

### **Immigrant background and expected early school leaving in Europe: evidence from PISA**

This technical brief analyses the relationship between immigrant status and educational expectations in PISA. Migration flows from outside and within the EU have increased in recent years, and this has raised the attention of policy

 Publications

### **Natives and immigrants enrolled in Spanish intermediate vocational education and training: a comparative study**

*Antoni Cerdà-Navarro, Francesca Salvà-Mut, Rubén Comas-Forgas & Mercè Morey-López*

This article looks at the differences and similarities between Spanish-born and immigrant students

makers and the general public, with special interests on the implications that those flows can have on, among other, the education system and the labour markets.

 EU level

enrolled in the first year of Intermediate Vocational Education (IVET) programmes in Spain.

 Spain

 Publications

## Recommendations on inclusive education

*Based on the COFACE Disability S.H.I.F.T. guide for a meaningful inclusion of persons with disabilities and their families. COFACE Families Europe is a pluralistic network of civil society associations representing the interests of all families.*

According to article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), signed and adopted by the European Union and all its Member States, and of its General Comment No. 4, State parties must ensure the realisation of the right of persons with disabilities to education through an inclusive education system at all levels, including pre-schools, primary, secondary and tertiary education, vocational training and lifelong learning, extracurricular and social activities, and for all students, including persons with disabilities.

## Quick wins

★ Quick win

### Listening to the student 'voice'

Listen to the student 'voice' - give learners the chance to express their

★ Quick win

### Create opportunities for informal interactions between students and VET provider staff

**views about issues relating to their learning and welfare. Different approaches can be introduced at a low cost and be highly effective.**

 **Portugal**



**Creating opportunities for informal interactions between learners and staff can help build trust and create positive relationships.**

 **Poland**  **Portugal**

★ Quick win

## **Keeping in touch with young drop-outs**

**Keep in touch: create a platform to coordinate the activities of the main stakeholders working in the field of early leaving in your area.**

 **France**  **Luxembourg**

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Source URL: <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/en/tools/vet-toolkit-tackling-early-leaving/intervention-approaches/community-involvement>