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## PRESS RELEASE

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### Lifelong skills development helps people who disconnect

In 2107, 15.7% of low-qualified young Europeans aged 15-29 were not in education, employment or training (NEET), compared to 9.6% of their better educated peers. In the same year, the unemployment rate of low-qualified adults of working age (25-64) stood at 13.9% in the EU-28 while that of their highly qualified peers was at 4.2%.

Low skills, usually associated with low or no qualification credentials, come at a high social and economic cost. They are devastating for the individuals concerned, damaging their social status, earnings, self-confidence, health and ability to engage in civil society.

This is why policies across Europe have increasingly been focusing on prevention and early intervention, from tracking youth at risk to offering low-skilled people comprehensive counselling and upskilling measures, especially basic skills training.

The EU has launched two large-scale initiatives to help Member States take both preventive and remedial action: the *Youth guarantee*, which helps countries address the needs of young people who are either at risk of dropping out of the system or have already disconnected, and the *Upskilling pathways* initiative which is designed to support low-qualified adults, especially in strengthening their literacy, numeracy and digital skills.

Cedefop supports European policy with its research and policy advice. It also offers online resources on its website, such as a [VET toolkit for tackling early leaving](#) and [online resources for guidance](#).

For further reading, please consult Cedefop's latest briefing note on [Preventing low skills through lifelong learning](#).

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### **About Cedefop**

The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), an agency of the European Union based in Thessaloniki, Greece, supports European policy-making in the field of vocational education and training.

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