



# Official launch of 2<sup>nd</sup> edition

## Cedefop VET toolkit for tackling early leaving

### POLICY FORUM

## WHAT ROLE FOR COMMUNITY LIFELONG LEARNING CENTRES?

The potential of one-stop shops  
for preventing youth at risk from  
disconnecting

29 May 2019  
Brussels

#earlyleaving  
#VETtoolkit

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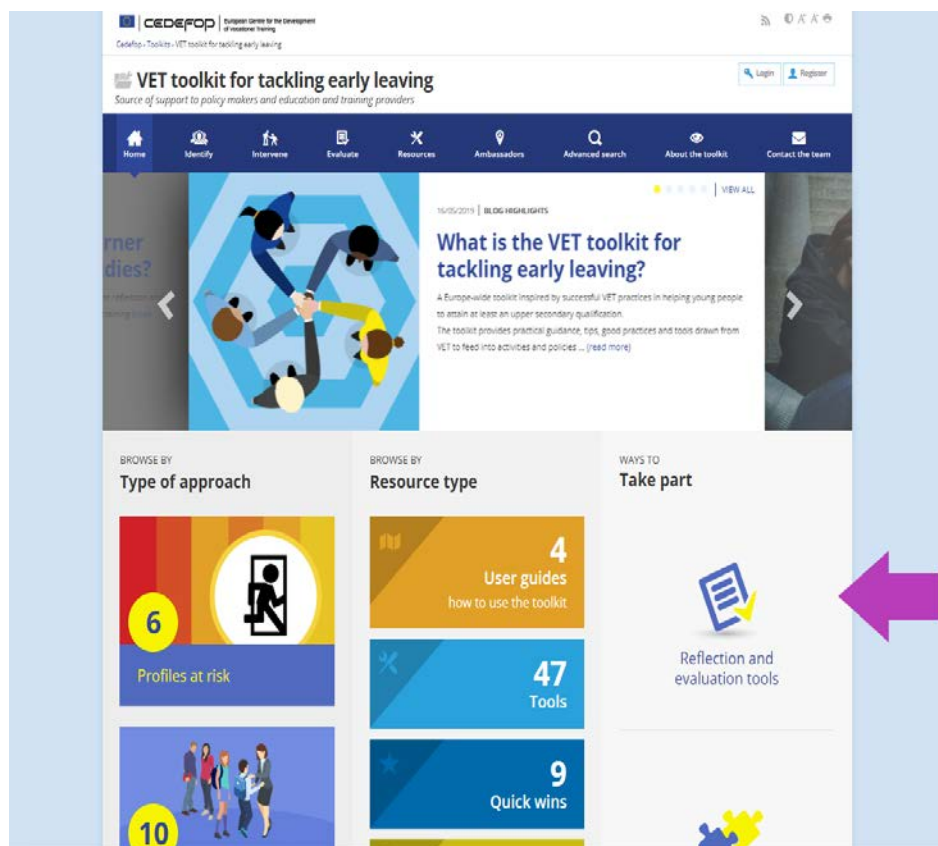


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# Reflection tool for policy makers



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**VET toolkit for tackling early leaving**  
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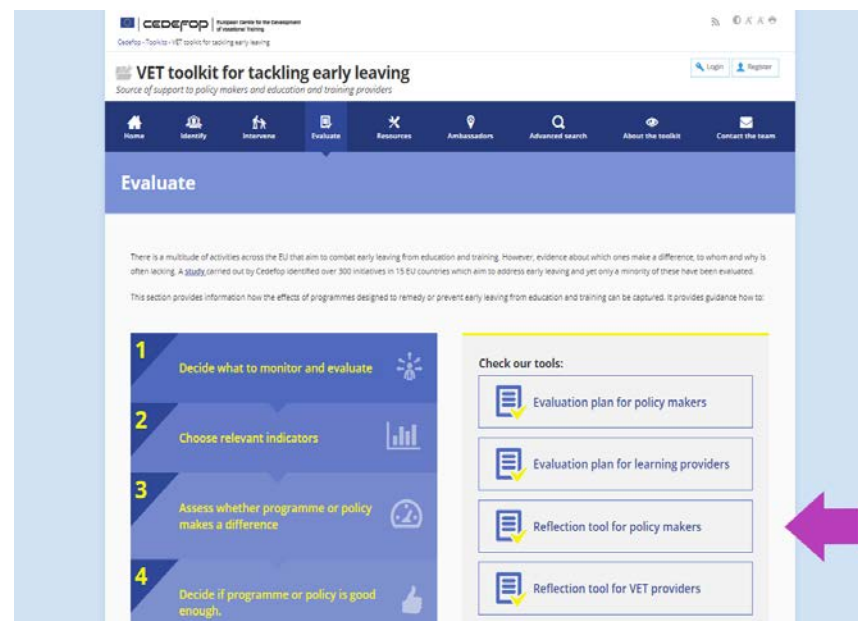
Home Identify Intervene Evaluate Resources Ambassadors Advanced search About the toolkit Contact the team

**What is the VET toolkit for tackling early leaving?**  
 A Europe-wide toolkit inspired by successful VET practices in helping young people to attain at least an upper secondary qualification. The toolkit provides practical guidance, tips, good practices and tools drawn from VET to feed into activities and policies ... (read more)

BROWSE BY  
**Type of approach**  
 6 Profiles at risk  
 10 [Icon of people]

BROWSE BY  
**Resource type**  
 4 User guides how to use the toolkit  
 47 Tools  
 9 Quick wins

WAYS TO  
**Take part**  
 Reflection and evaluation tools



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**Evaluate**

There is a multitude of activities across the EU that aim to combat early leaving from education and training. However, evidence about which ones make a difference, to whom and why is often lacking. A study carried out by Cedefop identified over 300 initiatives in 15 EU countries which aim to address early leaving and yet only a minority of these have been evaluated. This section provides information how the effects of programmes designed to remedy or prevent early leaving from education and training can be captured. It provides guidance how to:

- 1 Decide what to monitor and evaluate
- 2 Choose relevant indicators
- 3 Assess whether programme or policy makes a difference
- 4 Decide if programme or policy is good enough.

**Check our tools:**

- Evaluation plan for policy makers
- Evaluation plan for learning providers
- Reflection tool for policy makers
- Reflection tool for VET providers



## Reflection tool for policy makers: what it offers

The tool proposes evidence-based strategies for tackling early leaving from VET

- You will be asked if these are in place in your country, region or municipality. Having all strategies in place is an ideal situation
- It is likely that some, or many elements, are missing or are not fully implemented in practice. Based on your answers, the tool will help you design an action plan



## Reflection tool for policy makers: topics covered

- Identification of learners at risk of early leaving
- Monitoring of early leavers
- The VET system and other learning pathways
- Guidance, counselling and support
- Individual learning pathways
- Skills development
- School-based learning environments
- Work-based learning environments



# Reflection tool for policy makers - Questionnaire

## The VET system and other learning pathways

Are the following policies or measures to tackle early leaving in VET in place in your country?

There is a **national strategy** which provides opportunities for learners to **change to a different type of institution** if needed (for instance, from a VET school to another type of school or an entity providing apprenticeships).

- Yes
- No

There are **flexible pathways** and **clear progression** routes **between VET and general education** or other types of programmes, including possible access to higher education.

- Yes
- No



# Reflection tool for policy makers – Action plan

## Proposed actions

You are invited to propose actions towards the implementation of the strategies.

### The VET system and other learning pathways

- There is a **national strategy** which provides opportunities for learners to **change to a different type of institution** if needed (for instance, from a VET school to another type of school or an entity providing apprenticeships).

#### Proposed actions

What can be done at the system level (by public authorities or other national/regional stakeholders) to develop or strengthen this strategy?

- Break down learning programmes into modules or units, and develop systems of credit transfer or recognition of prior learning to avoid repetition when students change programmes or institutions
- Establish links between alternative opportunities (second chance or compensatory measures) and mainstream education (e.g. recognition of learning outcomes achieved in alternative opportunities to access mainstream education or to avoid repetition)
- Increase flexibility in enrolment conditions and registration deadlines (e.g. to allow students to apply to other programmes if they were not able to access their first choice)
- Other



# Evaluate

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Home Identify Intervene **Evaluate** Resources Ambassadors Advanced search About the toolkit Contact the team

## Evaluate

There is a multitude of activities across the EU that aim to combat early leaving from education and training. However, evidence about which ones make a difference, to whom and why is often lacking. A [study](#) carried out by Cedefop identified over 300 initiatives in 15 EU countries which aim to address early leaving and yet only a minority of these have been evaluated.

This section provides information how the effects of programmes designed to remedy or prevent early leaving from education and training can be captured. It provides guidance how to:

- 1** Decide what to monitor and evaluate
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**Check our tools:**

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- Evaluation plan for learning providers
- Reflection tool for policy makers
- Reflection tool for VET providers



# Evaluate

## Evaluation guidance

## Deciding what to monitor and evaluate

### Monitoring and evaluation

- **Performance monitoring** helps assess programme/policy implementation against a set of indicators. These should measure key outputs and results of the initiative. They should capture the evolution throughout the implementation process.
- **Evaluation** makes judgements about the extent to which the programme or policy meets its objectives. These judgements are also made based on series of indicators. Evaluations do not only present the data on outputs and results; rather they assess whether these results can be considered as 'good' performance or not. Evaluations provide insights that should be used to refine and improve programmes or policies and make them more effective.

### Defining what is to be monitored and/or evaluated

#### Step 1. Defining the scope of an evaluation

The first step in developing a monitoring framework or an evaluation approach is defining what is to be covered. This implies clarity about the scope of the subject of monitoring or evaluation. This can concern aspects such as:

- the exact activities covered
- the period covered
- the geographical scope of the evaluation

#### Step 2. Developing the programme theory or intervention logic

The second step is developing the programme theory, or the 'intervention logic'. This explains how the programme is expected to work. It clarifies the logical chain from inputs and activities to outputs, results and impacts. It articulates why a certain activity is expected to lead to certain changes. It identifies the intermediary changes that are needed to achieve the expected results and impacts.

On this page:

- 1 Monitoring and evaluation
- 2 Defining what is to be monitored and/or evaluated



## Evaluation plan for policy makers: what it offers

**This plan is aimed to help monitor and evaluate specific policies and measures**

- It targets policy-makers and other stakeholders who are not experts in the field of evaluation
- It does not define who does what – whether it is the evaluation steering committee, the evaluator or the client commissioning the evaluation. This responsibility will differ from case to case



## Evaluation plan for policy makers: steps

The plan proposes five steps covering the tasks that need to be completed:

- Step 1. Define what is to be evaluated
- Step 2. Determine what constitutes good performance
- Step 3. Define indicators, collect and analyse data
- Step 4. Understand causes of results and impacts
- Step 5. Perform a cost-benefit analysis



# Evaluation plan for policy makers

## ▾ Step 1. Define what is to be evaluated

### ▾ Task 1.1: Specify the policy/measure to evaluate and define the scope of the evaluation

#### **Key question: What does the policy/measure consist of?**

Describe the policy/measure. Be as specific as possible about the elements of the policy/measure.

Example:  
Mentoring activities for learners at risk of early leaving.

#### **Key question: How is it different from other policies/measures?**

Compare here with other similar policies/measures.

#### **Key question: What period of time should be covered?**

Define the period of time that will be covered by the evaluation (from - to).

Example:  
Period of time: from 2012 (when changes to the mentoring programme were introduced) to 2016.

#### **Key question: What is the geographical scope of the evaluation?**

Define the geographical scope of the evaluation.

Example:  
Geographical scope: region X.

To read more about how to define what is to be evaluated go to section 'Deciding what to monitor and evaluate' of the toolkit

### Steps:

- 1 Step 1. Define what is to be evaluated
- 2 Step 2. Determine what constitutes good performance
- 3 Step 3. Define indicators, collect and analyse data
- 4 Step 4. Understand causes of results and impacts
- 5 Step 5. Perform a cost-benefit analysis



# Evaluation plan for policy makers - examples

## Pop-up example for programme theory/intervention logics

### Denmark – Retention caravan

#### The programme theory (simplified version)

This example concerns the programme 'Rete

- Increase the number of young people who make a positive choice to enter vocational education because they believe it is a good choice
- Improve the retention of young people who enrol in VET, with a target of 20% in each of the participating schools

The underlying theory which justifies the choice of this programme is that:

Young people from minority/migration backgrounds and parents are not aware that in Denmark VET can lead to good employment and salary prospects. Therefore, they (and their parents) are more likely to struggle. The more they struggle, the more likely they are to drop out. When they enrol in VET, they have a more negative attitude towards their education.

The programme aims to develop a positive programme theory, frequently, and do so with positive expectations.

#### Intervention logic

This is an example of an intervention logic for a measure offering coaching and mentoring to young people:

INPUTS/PROCESS	OUTPUTS	INTERMEDIATE RESULTS	ULTIMATE RESULTS	IMPACTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding : total budget and human resources</li> <li>Human resources put at the disposal of the intervention - nbr of mentors, other persons</li> <li>Methodologies, training or tools available for mentors/coaches</li> <li>Activities to disseminate programme among target groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of young people who received mentoring</li> <li>Number of contact hours delivered</li> <li>Number of mentors trained</li> <li>Number of support activities delivered per type of activity</li> </ul>	<p>INDIVIDUAL LEVEL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved self-confidence</li> <li>Defined learning and career goals</li> <li>Increased aspirations</li> <li>Improved transversal skills</li> </ul>	<p>INDIVIDUAL LEVEL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attainment of individual learning goals</li> <li>Improved education and training outcomes</li> <li>Improved levels of absenteeism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better retention of learners in education and training</li> <li>Higher programme completion rates</li> </ul>

Input indicators

Process indicators

#### Example:

To evaluate the effectiveness of the Dutch programme Medical Advice for Sick-reported Students (MASS) policy makers used a quasi-experimental design. 7 out of 21 schools for pre-vocational secondary education had been applying the MASS programme, and they were all asked to participate in the study. They were the intervention schools. Within the group of remaining schools, policy makers chose seven to participate in the study as control schools. Control schools were selected by their characteristics to match as much as possible those of the intervention schools in terms of urbanisation, fields of education, and size of the school.

Read the MASS evaluation 2016 study (in English) >



# Reflection tool for VET providers



## Reflection tool for VET providers: what it offers

**This tool is intended to help VET providers to reflect about their actions to tackle early leaving, and provide a method for the development of an action plan to improve them**

- You will be asked to reflect on the trends and features of early leaving in your institution, and analyse the approach taken to tackle early leaving in six areas:
  - Institutional strategy
  - Actors
  - Coordination mechanisms
  - Resources
  - Monitoring
  - Evaluation
- Based on your answers, the tool will help you design an action plan



# Reflection tool for VET providers: steps

## Step-by-step method to analyse your actions to tackle early leaving

This tool proposes a step-by-step methodology to analyse and improve VET providers' approach to tackle early leaving.

*Note:* in this tool, the term 'early leaving' refers to an interruption of a VET or apprenticeship programme before obtaining the corresponding qualification. Some of these learners may later enrol in another programme or with another education and training provider, and eventually qualify.

**Step 1: Define your starting point**

**Step 2: Understand the current situation**

**Step 3: Analyse your institutional approach to tackle early leaving**

**Step 4: Develop an action plan**

[Go to Step 1 >](#)



# Reflection tool for VET providers: Step 3 (screening tool)

## Screening tool - 3. Coordination mechanisms

### 3.1. Are the implementation responsibilities clearly divided between the different actors?

To answer this question, please consult the following evidence:

Please explain how responsibilities are divided among actors.

### 3.2. Are there clear cooperation mechanisms between the different actors?

To answer this question, please consult the following evidence:

Description of cooperation mechanisms including meetings, written reports, or other.

Actors concerned by each of these mechanisms.

### 3.3. Is there a procedure to support staff dealing with difficult cases?

To answer this question, please consult the following evidence:

Description of relevant procedures.

Please assess the position of your institution in this area based on the evidence collected to answer the previous questions. \*

- 0: There is no strategy or comprehensive set of measures to tackle early leaving.
- 1: There is a strategy or comprehensive set of measures to tackle early leaving but the division of responsibilities is unclear and/or the cooperation mechanisms are weak.
- 2: Responsibilities are divided among actors and communication channels have been established, but there are coordination issues in practice.
- 3: Responsibilities are clearly divided among actors and coordination mechanisms are satisfactory.



# Reflection tool for VET providers: Step 4 (action plan)

## Action plan

This action plan invites you to propose actions for each of the areas and questions in the screening tool (Step 3). You are asked to select your preferred actions from the proposed lists and add additional ones, if you wish to.

If you have completed the screening tool in Step 3, you will see a coloured circle next to each area to help you prioritise. Areas rated at levels 0-1 in the screening tool are signalled with a red circle; areas rated at level 2 are signalled with a yellow circle; and areas rated at level 3 are signalled with a green circle.

If you complete the action plan while being logged in, then you will be able to access it online in the future and export it to PDF.

### 1. Institutional strategy

#### 1.1. Is there an institutional strategy to tackle early leaving?

##### Proposed actions \*

- Establish a procedure for the development of an institutional strategy to tackle early leaving (actors involved, team in charge of first draft, consultation procedures, number and dates of meetings, etc.).
- Establish a procedure to review, update and improve the current institutional strategy to tackle early leaving.
- Consult any available national or regional guidance on how to develop an institutional strategy to tackle early leaving.
- Analyse strategies to tackle early leaving from other VET providers to get inspiration for your own strategy (e.g. by consulting VET schools' published documents or liaising with other VET schools' leadership or companies' departments in charge of VET provision).
- Other.



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Home Identify **Intervene** Evaluate Resources Ambassadors Advanced search About the toolkit Contact the team

## Intervention approaches

In this section we present a list of intervention approaches we propose to tackle early leaving from education and training.  
By clicking on them you will access a list of tips and interesting examples to help you design and implement your interventions.

What are you looking for?

Displaying 17 intervention approaches

- Building motivation to learn
- Community involvement
- Comprehensive support to tackle complex needs
- Counselling to address barriers to learning
- Developing employability skills
- Flexible education and training systems



# Identify

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Home Identify Intervene Evaluate Resources Ambassadors Advanced search About the toolkit Contact the team

## Identify

Timely identification enables early interventions and better results.

It is important to detect students at risk of early leaving as soon as possible. There should also be mechanisms to identify young people who leave education and training in a timely manner to increase their chances of reengaging.

- [How to implement or improve early warning systems to identify those at risk](#)
- [How to develop systems to identify and monitor early leavers at national, regional or local level](#)

The information in this section is based on findings from the Cedefop study 'Leaving education early: putting vocational education and training (VET) centre stage', would you like to know more about the study? [Go to About the toolkit >](#)

**Risk of early leaving**

**Learners at risk of early leaving**

Learners escaping the system	Learners confronting the system	Learners disengaging due to difficulties adapting after transition	Learners disengaging because they cannot find a placement

**Early leavers**

Young people who left education and training because of caring, parenting or working obligations	Young people who left education and training and combine multiple disadvantage, possibly facing health and psycho-social issues



# Identify: identification of learners at risk

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Home
Identify
Intervene
Evaluate
Resources
Ambassadors
Advanced search
About the toolkit
Contact the team

Intervention approach

## Identification of learners at risk of early leaving

### Problem statement

---

**Addressing problem: Recognising the signs of early leaving from education and training**

Learners at risk of early leaving often present distress signs long before they leave. If these signs are detected in a timely manner, there are more chances of reengaging young people with relatively simple interventions. An early intervention allows for better results with fewer resources.

Each learner is different and so are his or her ways of showing that something is not going well. Absenteeism, low academic attainment, and disruptive behaviour in the classroom are often linked to potential early leaving. Other signs such as emotional distress can easily go unnoticed.

Practitioners are best placed to recognize distress signals and spot pupils at risk as they are in direct and regular contact with the learners and they track absenteeism and academic attainment in their daily work. However, they often do not have the ability, time or resources to identify and act upon signs of risk. The use of a systematic approach to identifying learners at risk of early leaving by education and training providers is the first step to tackling early leaving.

### Addressing the problem

---

**Tips: How can VET providers identify learners at risk of early leaving?**

The following tips intend to help education and training providers develop or improve their systems for identifying learners at risk of early leaving. The information is based on Cedefop research into existing early warning systems.

**Tip 1. Define the purpose of data collection**

It is important to define the purpose/s of data collection before choosing indicators and determining how to collect data. The main purpose of

*On this page:*

- ① Problem statement
- ② Addressing the problem
- ③ Expected outcomes
- ④ Related resources



# Identify: profiles

**Risk of early leaving**

Learners at risk of early leaving

Learners escaping the system

Learners confronting the system

Learners disengaging due to difficulties adapting after transition

Learners disengaging because they cannot find a placement

Early leavers

Young people who left education and training because of caring, parenting or working obligations

Young people who left education and training and combine multiple disadvantage, possibly facing health and psychosocial issues

## Learners escaping the system

*Silvia is in the last year of lower secondary education. Her grades have been average in recent years but now she is at risk of having to repeat the grade due to high absenteeism. She enjoys going to school to be with her friends but feels that classes are boring and that 'school is not her thing'. The only subject she likes is science because they often perform experiments and this helps understand the concepts explained. Her parents would like her to continue studying but they did not finish school themselves and do not know how to help her.*

*Some learners are still at school but their minds are often elsewhere. They come to school because it is an opportunity to see their friends, or because they like some of the subjects or teachers. Their prior educational achievements can be average or below average, and they are often absent. They have low aspirations that can be linked to a lack of family support. Some may have health issues such as depression.*

### Related intervention approaches

Identification of learners at risk of

Flexible education and training

## Ambassadors tackling early leaving from VET



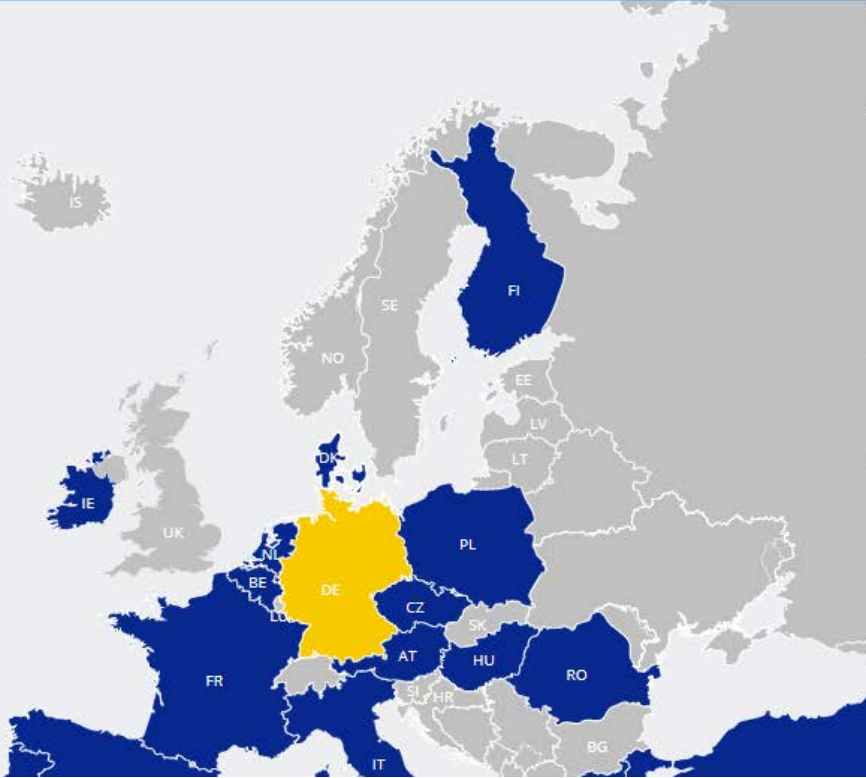
Dr Irene Psifidou  
Toolkit coordinator

Ambassadors are policy makers, learning providers, experts and other key stakeholders involved in tackling early leaving from VET at national, regional or local level in Europe.



They help disseminate the toolkit and enrich its resources by sending good practices, news, publications and statistics. They are invited to contribute to online discussions, web seminars and Cedefop related events for the further development of the toolkit.



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 **Germany**  
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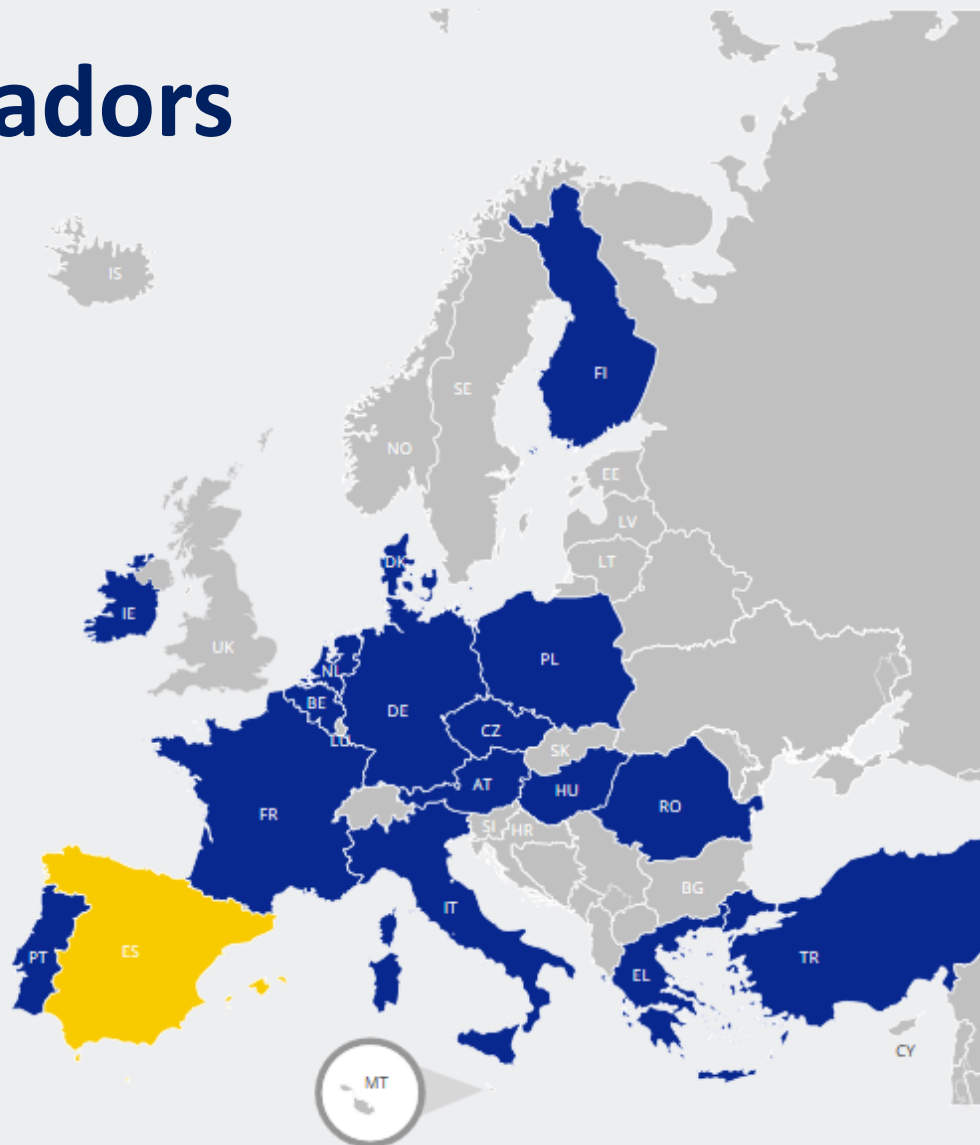
-  **Dr Sabine Beck**  
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# Ambassadors



Spain

17 Ambassadors



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- Home
- Identify
- Intervene
- Evaluate
- Resources
- Ambassadors**
- Advanced search
- About the toolkit
- Contact the team

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