Cedefop - World Bank Knowledge Exchange Seminar on Early Leaving from Education and Training: Lessons for Romania

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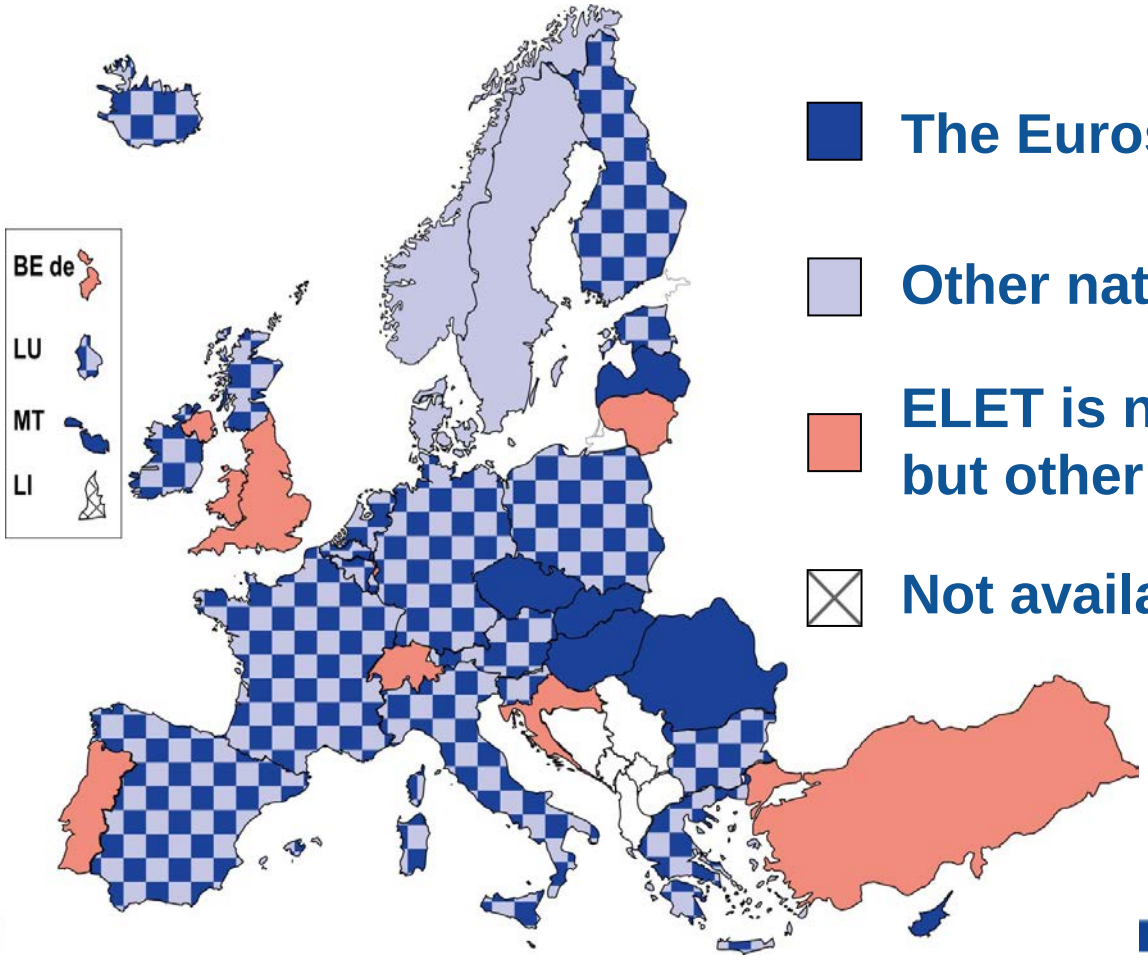
In 2014
4.4 million
young people in Europe,
left education and training
before completing
upper secondary
education

The EU definition and its limitations

- Single definition, different phenomena (e.g. when does drop-out happen, lower or upper secondary)
- Dropping out and early leaving
- Capturing where young people drop out from

- **Defining ELVET: what are the ideal set of variables to measure ELVET?**

National definitions of early leaving differ



The Eurostat definition is used

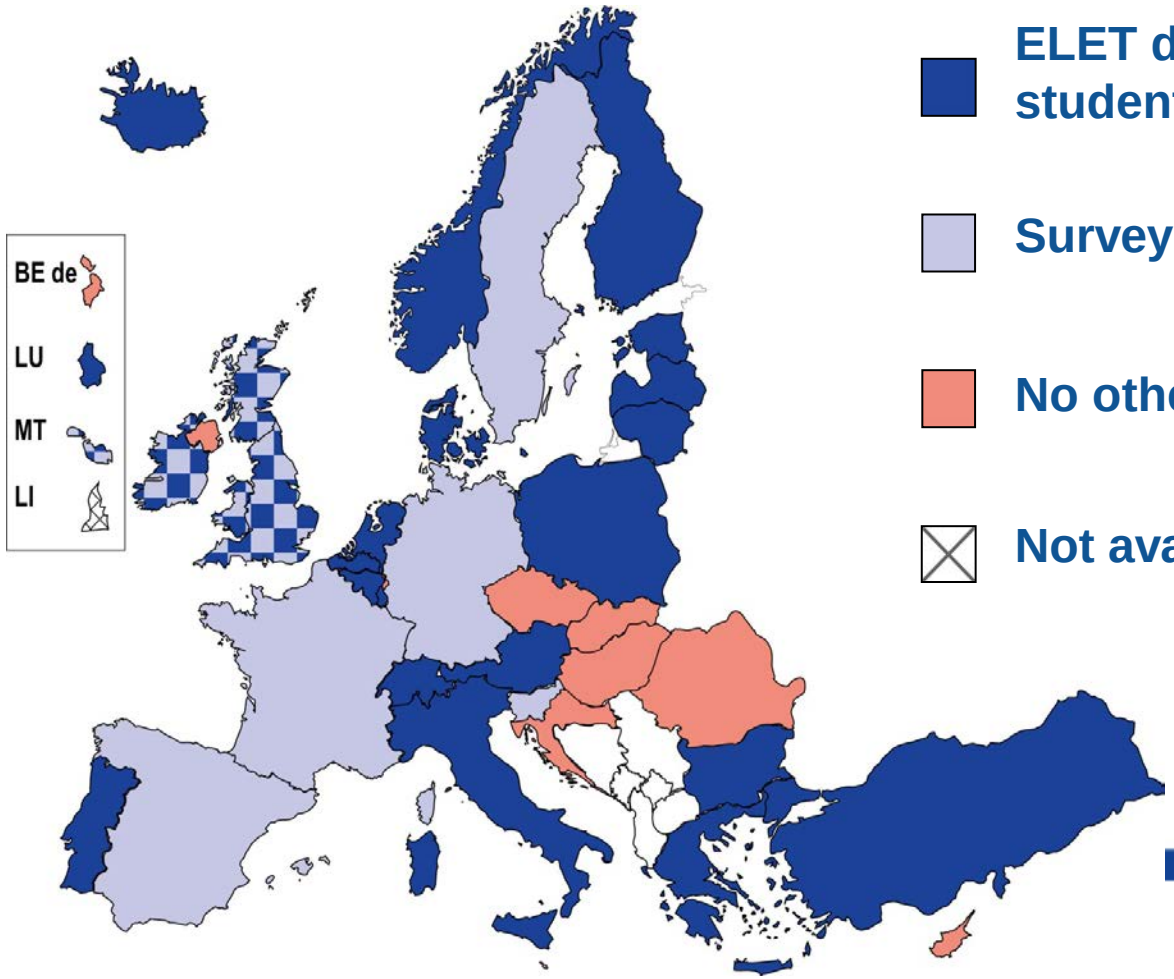
Other national definitions are used

ELET is not officially defined but other concepts are used

Not available

Source: Eurydice-Cedefop, 2014

Sources used for production of national data on ELET vary



ELET data collection based on student register/database

Surveys/statistics on ELET

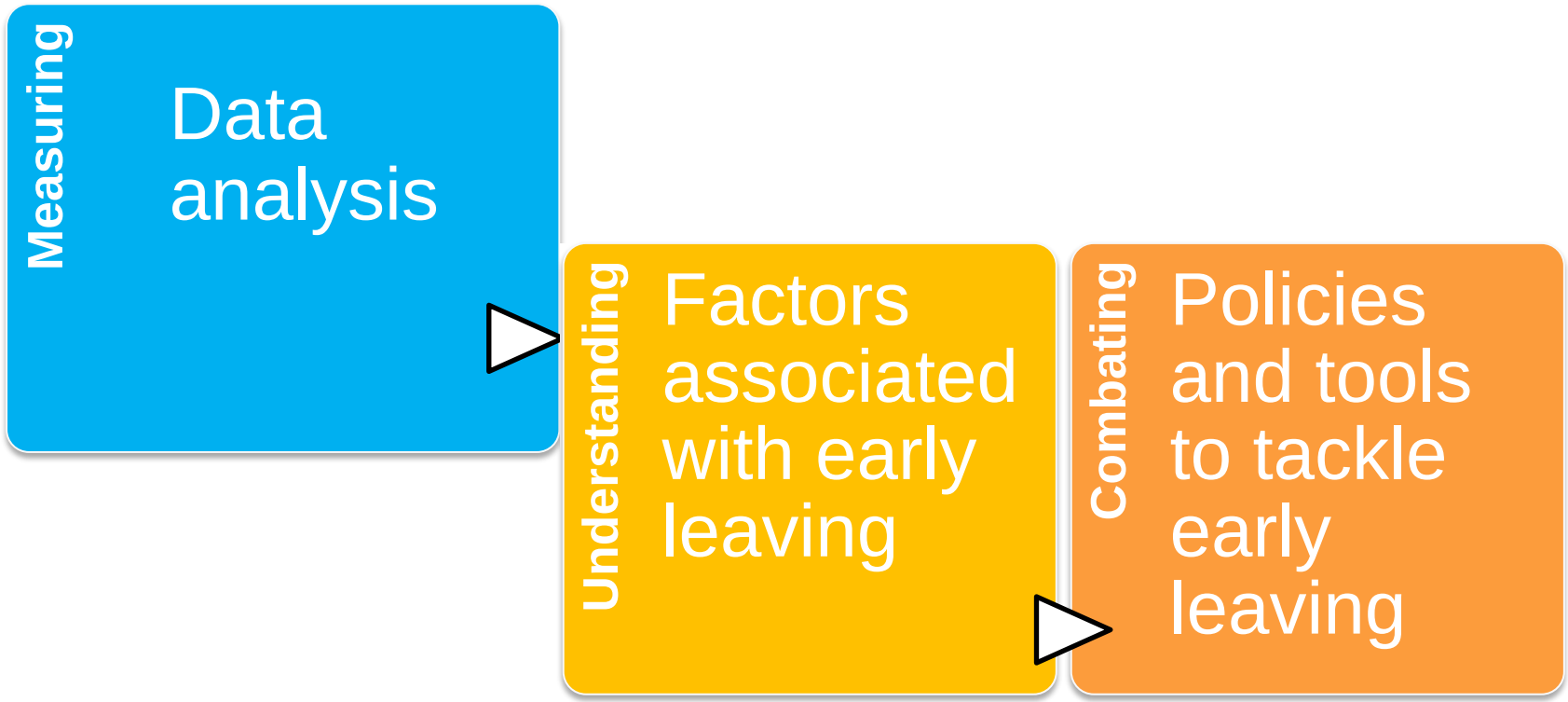
No other data collection than the LFS

Not available

Source: Eurydice-Cedefop, 2014

What role for VET?

Session 1


Measuring
Data analysis
Understanding
Factors associated with early leaving
Combating
Policies and tools to tackle early leaving

Research methodology

- **Focus on 16 countries**

  Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal and UK

- **44 measures selected for in-depth analysis**

- **Qualitative analysis**: 837 interviews

- **Quantitative analysis:** Adult Education Survey (AES); Labour Force Survey (LFS); Programme for International Assessment of Adult Competences (PIAAC); national data (FR, NL)

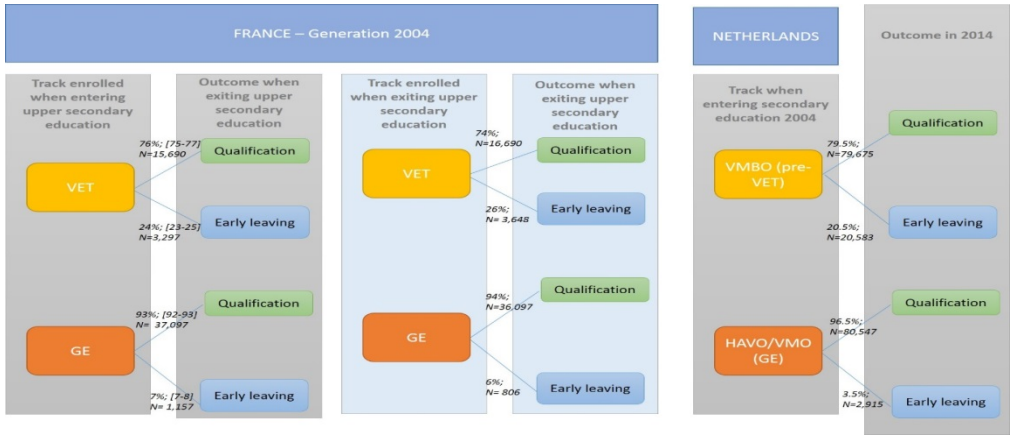
What did we find?

- Experiencing dropout ≠ early leaving:
  - 58% of ELET are ‘non-starters’ – 42% have experienced a drop-out event
  - 1/3 of people with drop-out experience achieve upper-secondary qualification
  - Most of them achieve VET qualifications
- Still, the majority of those who drop out at one point **remain early leavers**

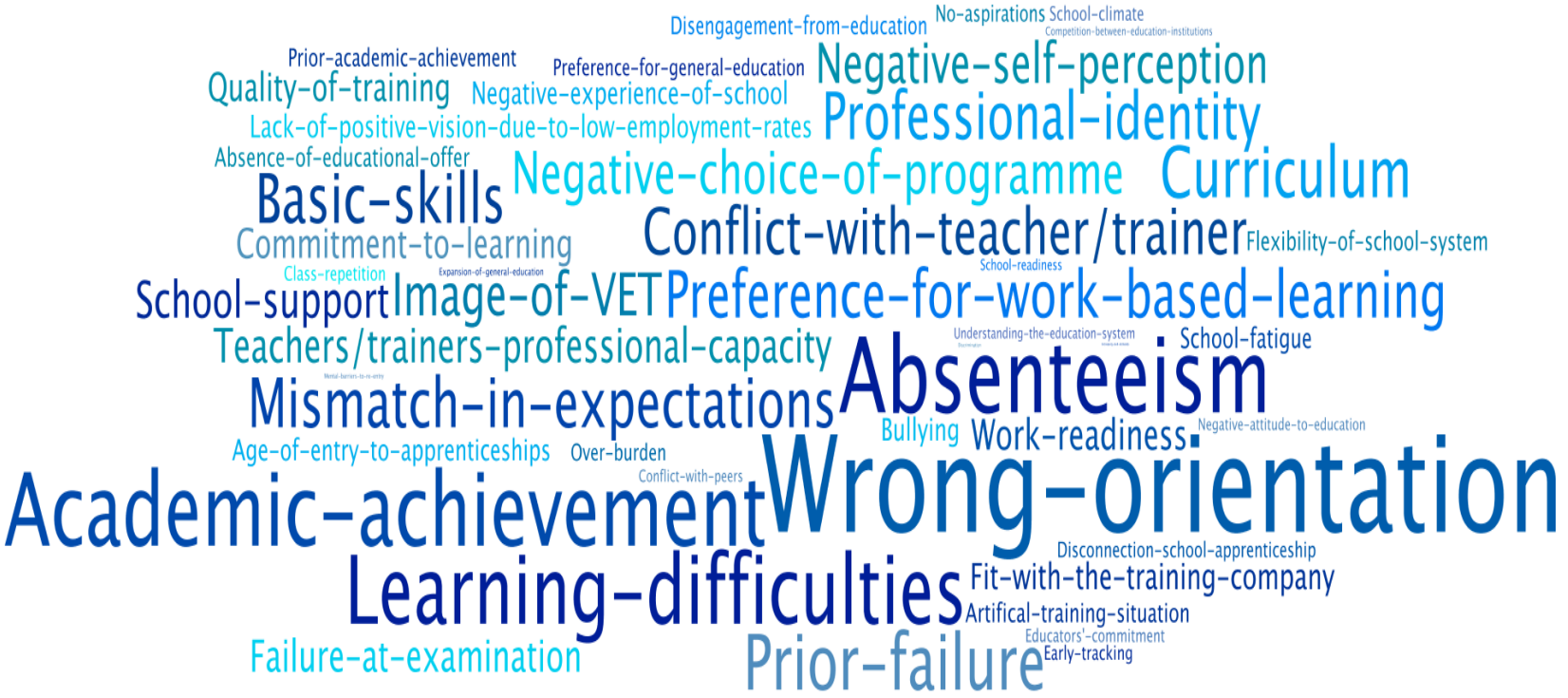
Icons: Freepik

VET: part of the problem

- Often higher rates of early leaving in VET than in general education
- Rates differ between types of VET (school-based vs. work-based), sectors and professions



VET related factors



Pull and push factors of the labour market

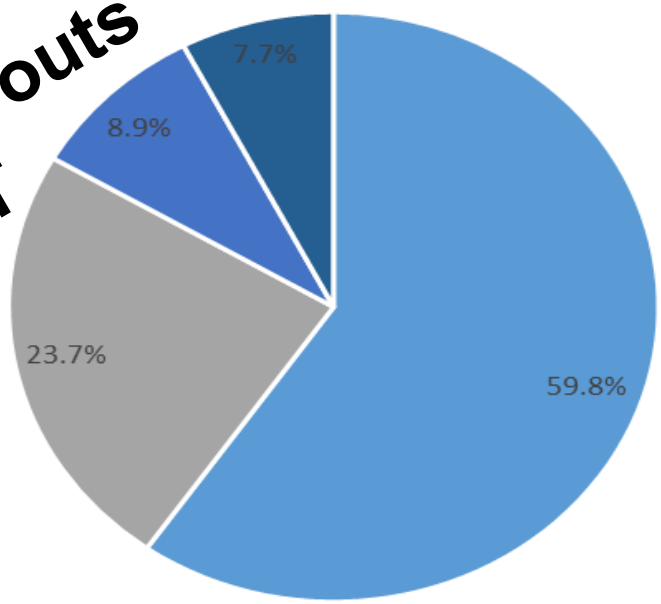
Fit-with-the-company
Bankruptcy-(apprenticeship)
Understanding-the-labour-market
Low-pay (apprenticeships)
Distance-to-job/apprenticeship
Size-of-the-company
Requirements-of-the-profession
Attraction-of-the-labour-market
Availability-of-unqualified-jobs
Supply-of-apprenticeships
Need-money
Working-hours
Working-conditions
Selectiveness-of-companies
Image-of-the-profession

VET is part and parcel of the solution
VET helps prevent EL

- The majority of those at risk of EL who shift to VET ➔ graduate
- High participation in VET ➔ low drop out rates
- High incidence of apprenticeships ➔ lower rates of early leaving

VET can remedy EL

The majority of drop outs qualify through VET

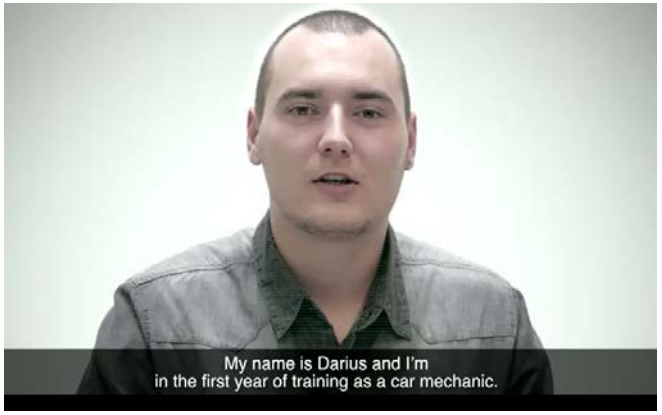


- Dropped out at ISCED 3 or below and are early leavers
- Dropped out at ISCED 3 or below and achieved ISCED 3 or 4 through VET
- Dropped out at ISCED 3 or below and achieved ISCED 3 or 4 through General Education
- Dropped out at ISCED 3 or below and achieved ISCED 5 or above

Data, data and…more data!

- ✓ Improve the EU indicator to measure:
  - Orientation of the ISCED 3 qualification attained
  - Experience of dropping out
  - Level and orientation of programme
  - Current status
- ✓ Improve national data infrastructure:
  - Strengthen coherence and quality of different databases and sub systems
- ✓ Targeted policy making
  - Feedback to local authorities
  - Simple indicators to understand, interpret and use
  - ‘Real time’ information for timely action

VET empowers people to say… YES to education!

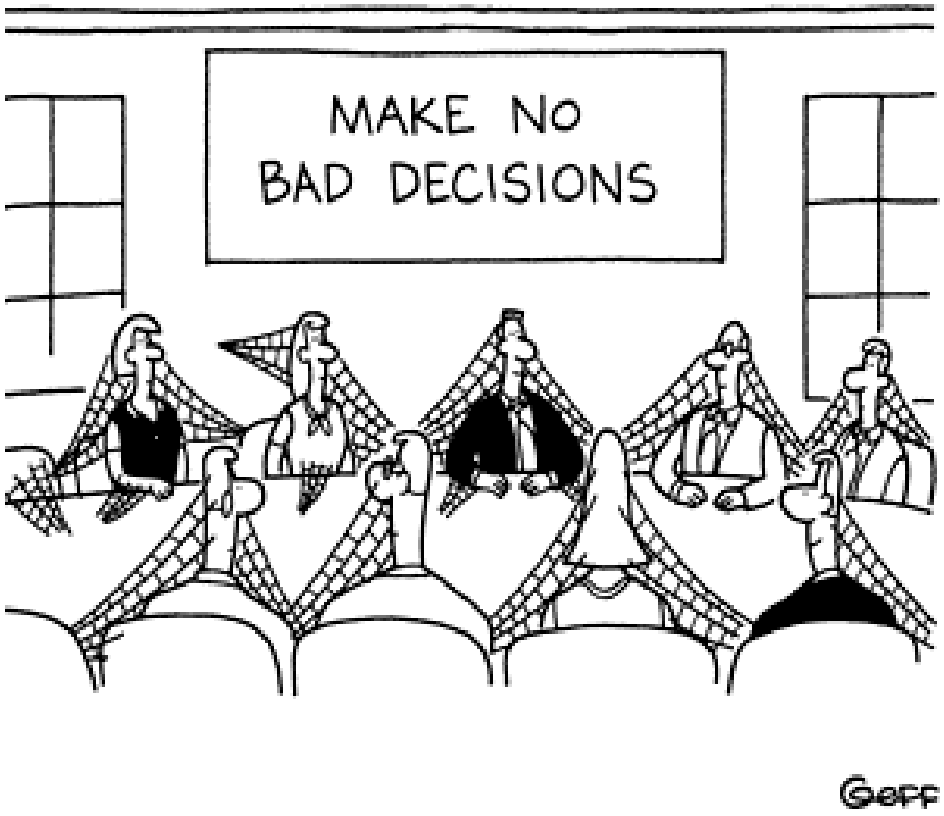


Questions for discussion

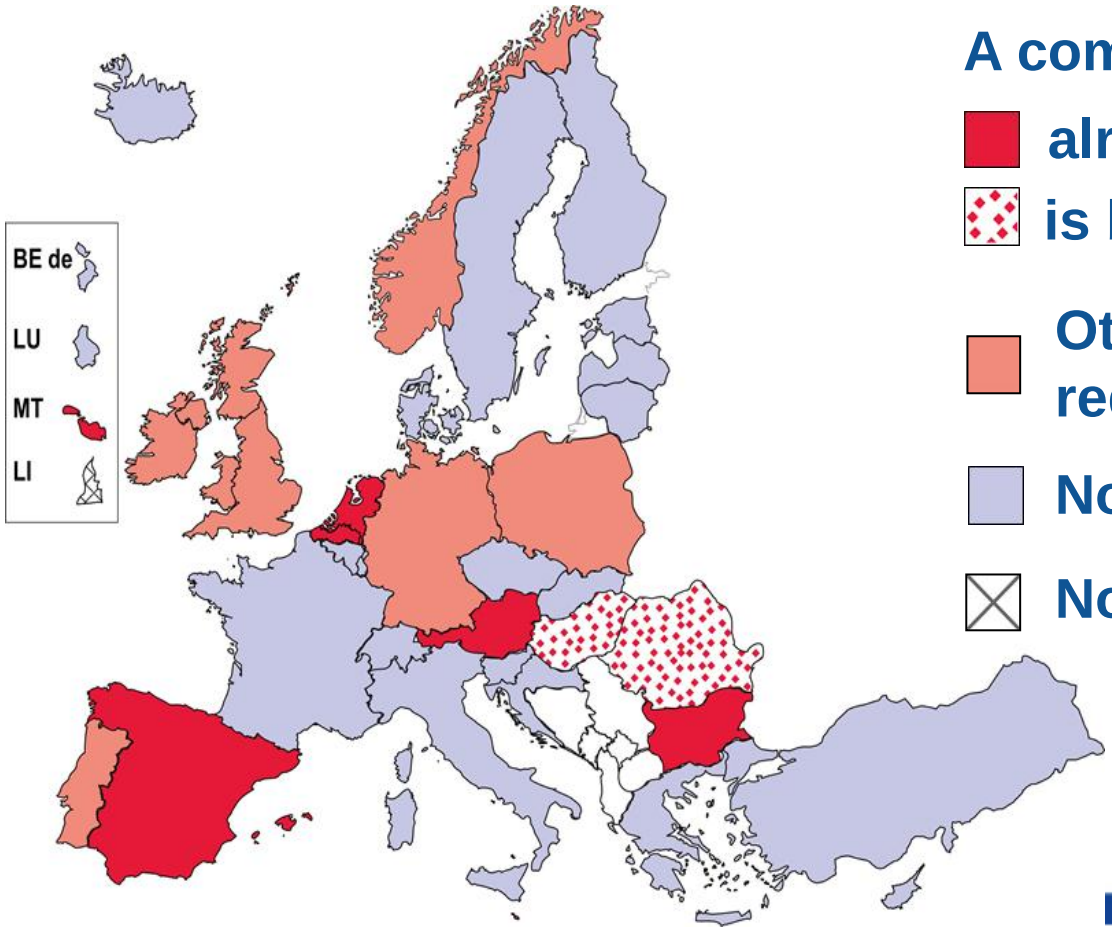
- How is ELET defined in Romania?
- What are the major challenges encountered to measure ELET at national level?
- What is the role of VET to address ELET?

What role for policy?

Session 2



Strategies for tackling ELET



A comprehensive ELET strategy

- already exists
- is being adopted
- Other strategies contributing to reducing ELET exist
- No comprehensive strategy
- Not available

Source: Eurydice-Cedefop, 2014

Typology of measures addressing ELVET

Prevention	Intervention	Compensation
Reforms of VET, initiatives to improve VET availability, quality, attractiveness, relevance		
VET bridging and preparatory programmes, incl. career exploration	Early warning systems and units	Opening up VET for new groups of learners
Financial incentives to reduce ELVET	Professional support: counselling, guidance, mentoring and case management	Second chance VET programmes
ELVET resources or expertise for VET schools		
Training of teachers and in-company trainers to deal with ELVET	Short term time out measures	Second chance comprehensive reengagement programmes making use of VET programmes

I. Linking factors to key features of measures

Factor leading to ELET	Key features related to this issue
Non-supportive family environment	■ Parental involvement, giving parents the tools to support the education progression and choices of their children ■ Informing them about the education choices their children face
Difficulties related to health, well-being, social issues, poverty, etc.	■ Case-management. Work in parallel on the full range of challenges the person faces Young person is in contact with one intermediary ■ Stabilisation of the personal situation of young person
Students from migrant or ethnic minority origin being more frequently at risk of ELET	■ Involve parents and inform them about the education system of the country ■ Desegregate the education system ■ Make certain pathways that can lead to success attractive to young people with minority background

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II. Linking factors to key features of measures

Factor leading to ELET	Key features related to this issue
Education underachievement	■ Remedial training, tutoring as part of mainstream programmes ■ Training covering basic skills depending on individual's needs ■ Individualised learning plans ■ Activities aimed at building confidence and motivation
Students' inappropriate orientation	■ Youngster-centred development of goals through coaching and mentoring ■ Tasting of different professional orientations
Negative self-perception linked to education failure	■ Motivational and confidence building activities including sport or cultural activities ■ Engaging students in general and in a concrete profession
Programme content and organisation	■ Integrating work-based learning and simulations ■ Organising theoretical and practical learning to enable rapid transfer between the two contexts ■ Individualised programmes

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III. Linking factors to key features of measures

Factor leading to ELET	Key features related to this issue
Lack of readiness to work	■ Develop work-readiness by working on skills: time-management, communication, working in a team ■ Provide work-based learning and close-to-real simulations as a motivational measure ■ Cooperate with employers
Relationships in the workplace and in the classroom	■ Accountability for all teachers and trainers to tackle the problem of ELET ■ School-level action plans to tackle ELET ■ Support not only the young person but also the apprenticeship company in conflict resolution
Attraction of the labour market	■ Provide young people with a vision of their future beyond the qualification – offer positive role models ■ Remuneration of apprentices

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Profiles of early leavers vary

Escapist	• Frequently absent and not interested in education/ training
Non-conformist	• Frequently absent, poor education achievement, negative attitude to school
Lost in transition	• Does not adapt to the requirements and expectations of the new programme
Resigned	• Does not find a suitable place due to lack of required skills
Obligated	• Decides to drop out for economic or family reasons
Marginalised	• Accumulates disadvantage and challenges

Bringing all elements together

Type of measure	Key features and their objective	Profiles of young people
Preventive measures	▪ Counselling, coaching and mentoring – setting objectives, developing a plan ▪ Parents' engagement – encouraging and raising aspirations; ▪ Whole school approach – school-level action plan ▪ Responsibilise teachers and/or provide training or mentoring to teachers	Escapist Non-conformist
Intervention measures	▪ Developing work readiness ▪ Individualised development and learning plan ▪ Accompany the young person to develop a career plan/ set objectives ▪ Flexible programme and educational arrangements ▪ Work-based learning or close-to-real simulation ▪ Social and communication skills - everyday routines and social contact ▪ Remediation support to learners in difficulty	Lost in transition Resigned
Compensation measures	▪ Accompany the young person to develop a career plan/ set objectives ▪ Developing work readiness ▪ Work-based learning or close-to-real simulation ▪ Individualised development and learning plan ▪ Social and communication skills - everyday routines and social contact ▪ Training to upgrade basic skills ▪ Flexible programme and educational arrangements ▪ Activities aimed at developing self-confidence, motivation, engagement ▪ Opportunities to transit to training/ apprenticeship ▪ Case management/ Comprehensive support provided by multidisciplinary staff	Obligated Marginalised

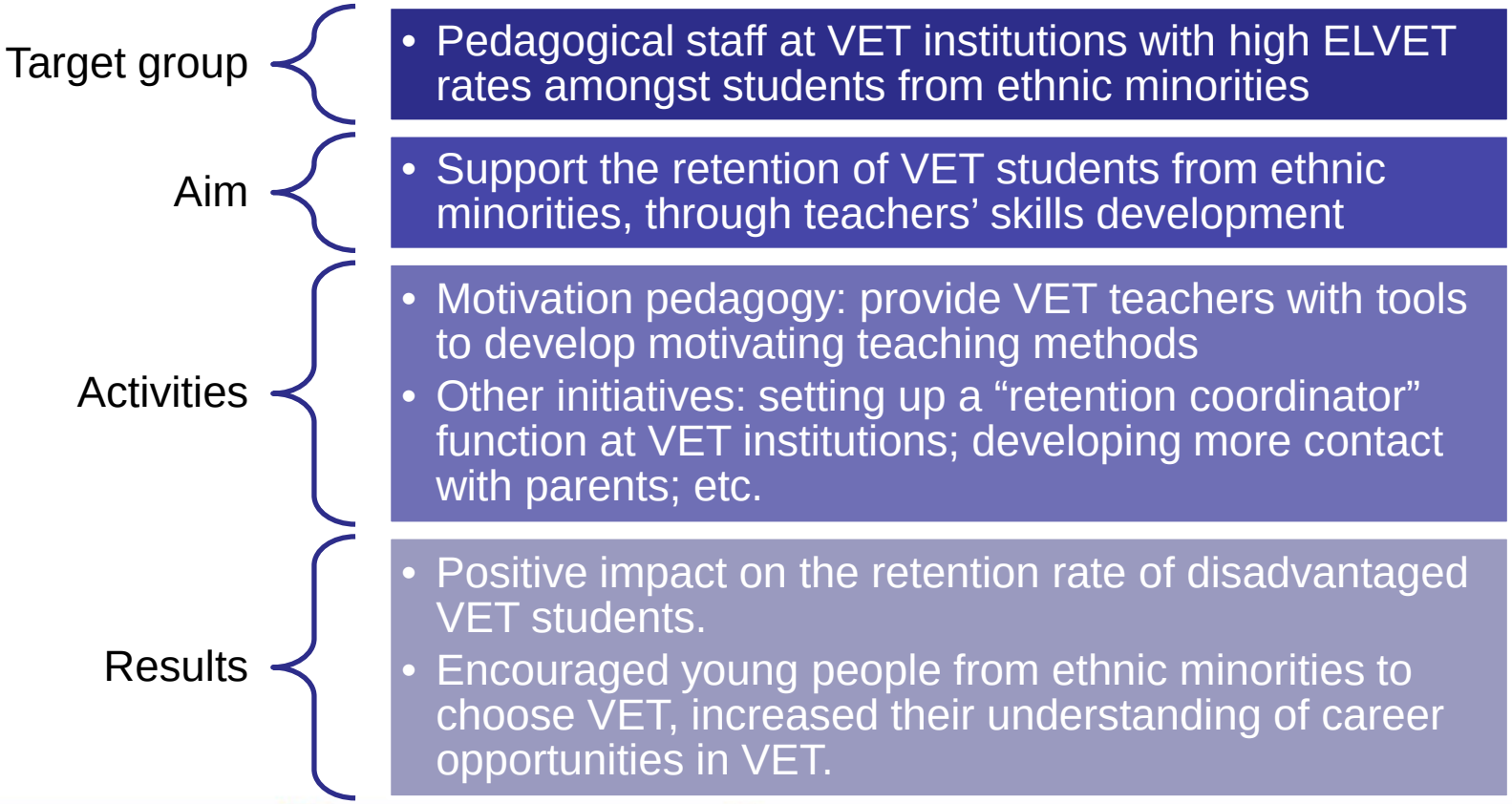
Other critical factors

- ✓ Identifying and recruiting learners
- ✓ Developing a relationship based on trust and follow-up in the long-term
- ✓ Coordinating with other measures and pooling together specialised resources
- ✓ Strengthening contacts between education and training providers and companies
- ✓ Changing mind set of education and training professionals
- ✓ Ensuring sustainable funding that goes beyond projects

Example 1
Vocational orientation programme (DE) (2008)

Target group	• Students in the 7th, 8th and 9th year of schooling
Aim	• To give students an insight into a wide range of professions
Activities	• An in-depth analysis of the learner's potential (2-3 days, usually conducted in the 7th year). • Two weeks of workshop days (usually in the 8th year). Students try 3 different vocational areas.
Results	• 80 % of students now know which professions they feel are not suitable for them; more than 60% now know which professions are indeed suitable for them

Example 2
Retention Caravan / Retention taskforce (DK) (2008)



Discussing preventive measures in Romania

Are the following features part of preventive measures in your country?

- Links between VET and other kinds of schools, and opportunities for students to change school type and programme
- Career guidance supports for VET students
- VET schools have a whole school approach (school level action plan) as a written strategy to preventing early school leaving
- Development of an individual learning plan for each VET student
- Opportunities for VET students to engage in a process to identify their skills, talents
- Short career exploration activities for students before choosing a VET programme
- Professionals at school or municipality with a concrete role to engage with parents
- Opportunities for initial and continuous professional development of VET teachers, e.g. on strategies to work with learners at risk of ELET, to deal with bullying, etc.

Discussing preventive measures in Romania

What measures are in place to provide top-down support to schools participating in the ROSE project, to help them develop a plan to prevent early school leaving?

Example 3
Coaching and mentoring - Association AFEV (FR) (2009-2012)

Target group	• VET students from disadvantaged backgrounds at upper-secondary
Aim	• to provide long-term individualised support to reduce absenteeism and risk of dropping out due to low academic achievement

Activities	• Volunteer university students offer individual support for the whole academic year for 2 hours/week.
	  • Provide methodological help for studying general courses
	  • Accompany the learner in its orientation and professional project
	  • Accompany the learner in its personal development in order to increase its autonomy and mobility

Results	• Increased self-confidence; better image of VET; stronger commitment towards their education; broader views of their opportunities and improved knowledge on support services

Discussing intervention measures in Romania

Are the following features part of intervention measures in your country?

- Mediation
  - ❑ Mediators between schools and families of marginalised students
  - ❑ Employment of mediators from minority groups
  - ❑Training courses to prepare mediators
- Coaching and mentoring
  - ❑ Coaching and mentoring schemes for specific target groups of ethnic minorities / disadvantaged learners
  - ❑ Case management
  - ❑ Development of learning career goals (and personal goals)

Example 4
Lycée Nouvelle Chance, Académie de Lyon (FR)

Target group

- 18-25 year-olds, registered in the PES for young people, who have interrupted at least for one year upper secondary level

Aim

- Help participants to achieve a vocational qualification at ISCED level 3 (vocational baccalaureate) over a period of 2 years.

Activities

- Provision of vocational training:
  - Typically 2 days per week are spent in enterprises
  - Students' allowance paid by regional administration or PES
  - Individual monitoring and tutoring
  - Comprehensive support
  - Extra-curricular activities to foster personal development

Results

- No evaluation. Positive effect on attitude towards VET. Positive impact on attendance and commitment of pupils. High share of pupils obtaining a qualification (over 90%). The year after graduation: 44.6% obtained a job and 40.6% continued their education and training

Discussing compensation measures in Romania

- **Is the new 3-year initial vocational education and training strand considered a second chance VET programme? And the two-year long dual learning VET pathway? What are the characteristics of these programmes?**

  - ❑ Accompany the young person to develop a career plan/ set objectives
  - ❑ Developing work readiness
  - ❑ Work-based learning or close-to-real simulation
  - ❑ Individualised development and learning plan
  - ❑ Social and communication skills - everyday routines and social contact
  - ❑ Basic skills
  - ❑ Flexible programme and educational arrangements
  - ❑ Activities aimed at developing self-confidence, motivation, engagement
  - ❑ Opportunities to transit to training/ apprenticeship
  - ❑ Case management/ Comprehensive support provided by multidisciplinary staff

What role for Romania?

Session 3

Questions for discussion

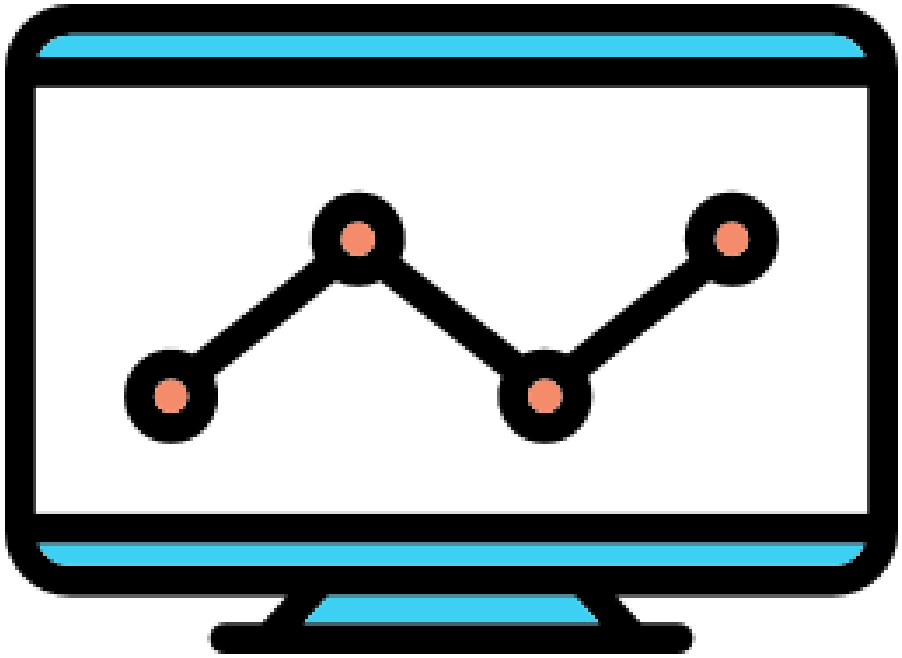
Exercise

What role for monitoring and evaluation?

Session 4

"Your performance rating is terrible, Fenwick, but I like your looks."

Monitoring



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Monitoring systems – a tool for practitioners

To provide support, practitioners need to know:	The monitoring systems analysed:
Who is at risk of early leaving?	Identify individuals
Who is an early leaver?	Require practitioners to approach these individuals to offer support
	Are accompanied with other tools that help reengage, re-motivate and possibly re-orient the young person

What is being monitored?

Data on absenteeism

Goal: identify those at risk

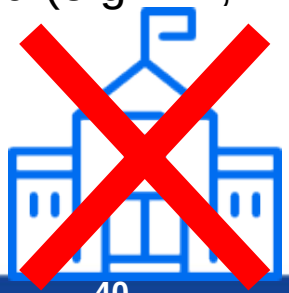
Examples: BE fr

Persons no longer registered in ET

Goal: identify those who dropped out

In some countries: just numbers of people (e.g. IT, BE fr)

In others the names are identified (e.g. DK, FR, BE nl)



Apprenticeship contract dissolution

Goal: identify those who dropped out

Example: DE

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What is being done with the monitoring information?

- Names of young people at risk or who just dropped out are identified and passed on to a service that is required to establish contact
- e.g. BE fr, DK, LU, FR

- Schools/ training centres have to establish action plans to diminish the number of drop outs
- e.g BE nl, DK, NL

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Example – Luxembourg student register

- Student register is held centrally and updated every month
- Register is shared with local action for youth
- As soon as a person appears as early leaver → contact by local action
- Local action: finds out about reasons from dropping out and offers support to reintegrate ET

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Example – Belgium Flanders school overview reports

- Every school receives a report produced by the statistical department
- It is based on student register
- Contains statistics on early leavers
- Every school is benchmarked against comparable schools (without naming and shaming)

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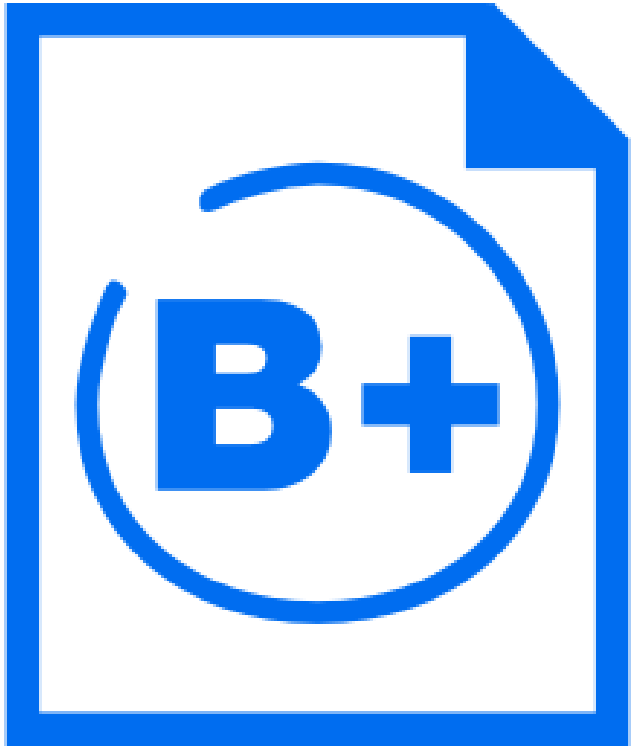
Evaluation



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What is being measured? (based on existing evaluations)

Most evaluations capture process and outcomes	**Fewer measure results and outcomes**	**Only few assess the relationship between the intervention and results**

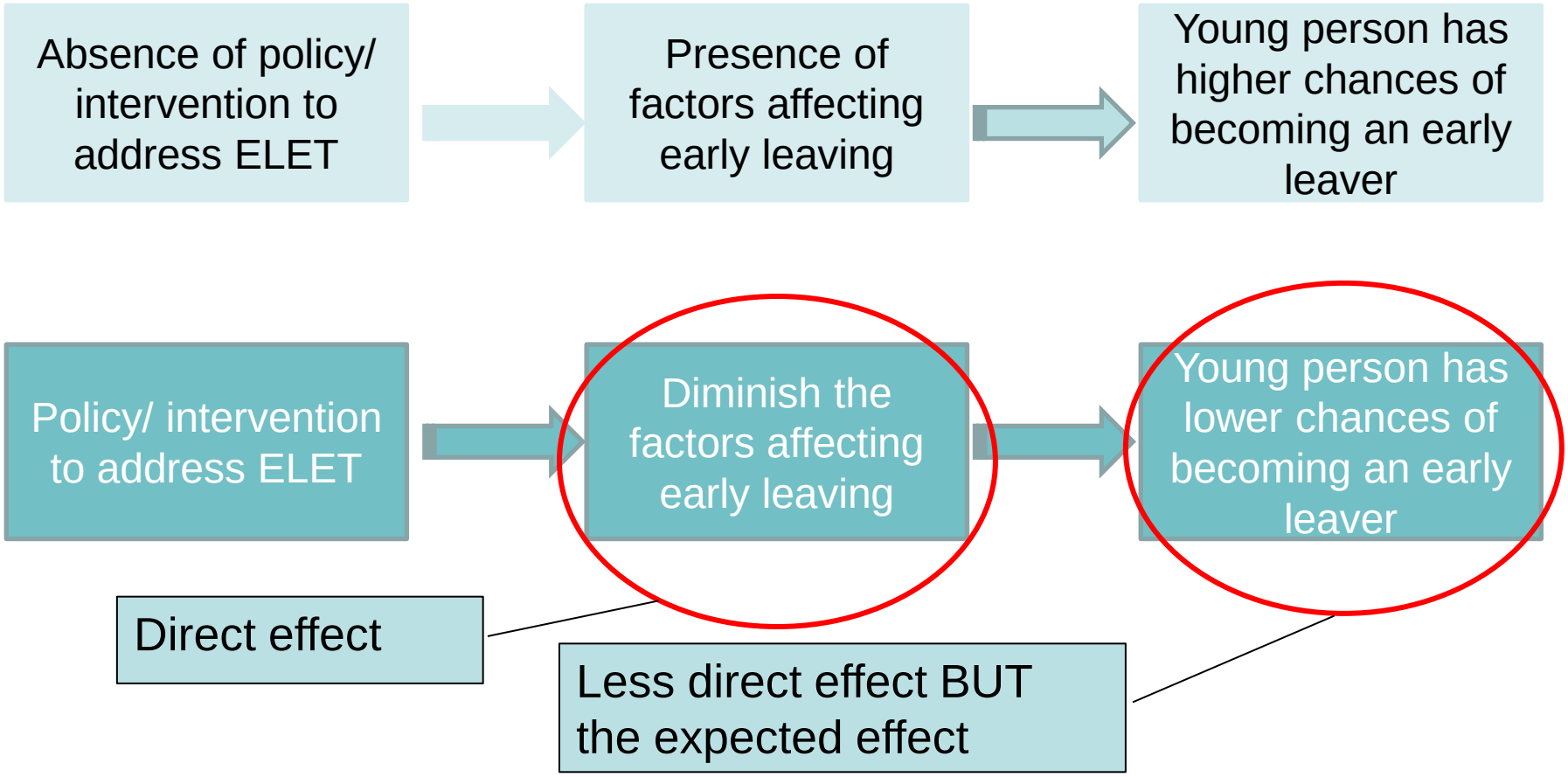
What should be measured depends on:

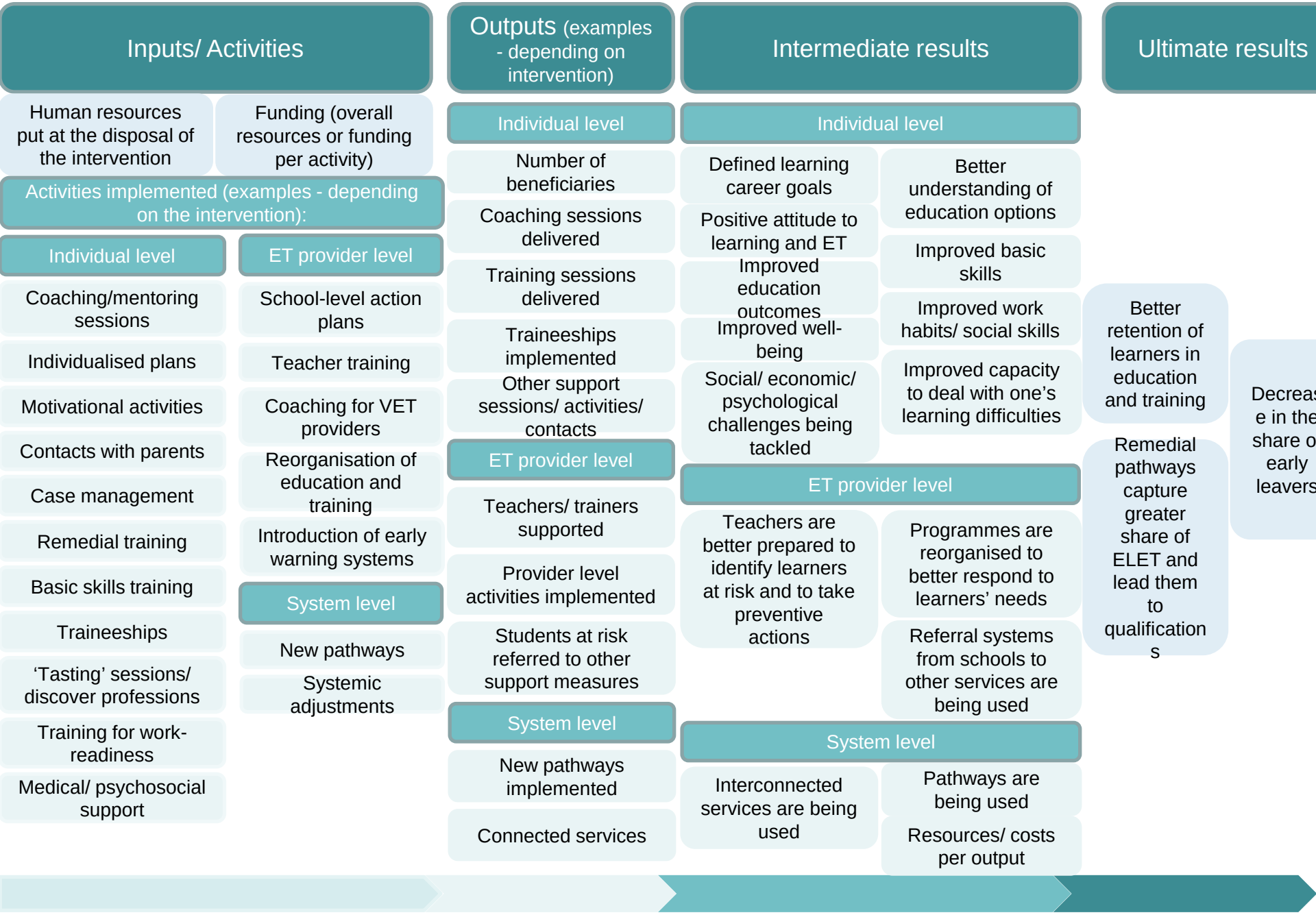
- Theory based intervention logic drives the choice of indicators
- Time frame for the evaluation

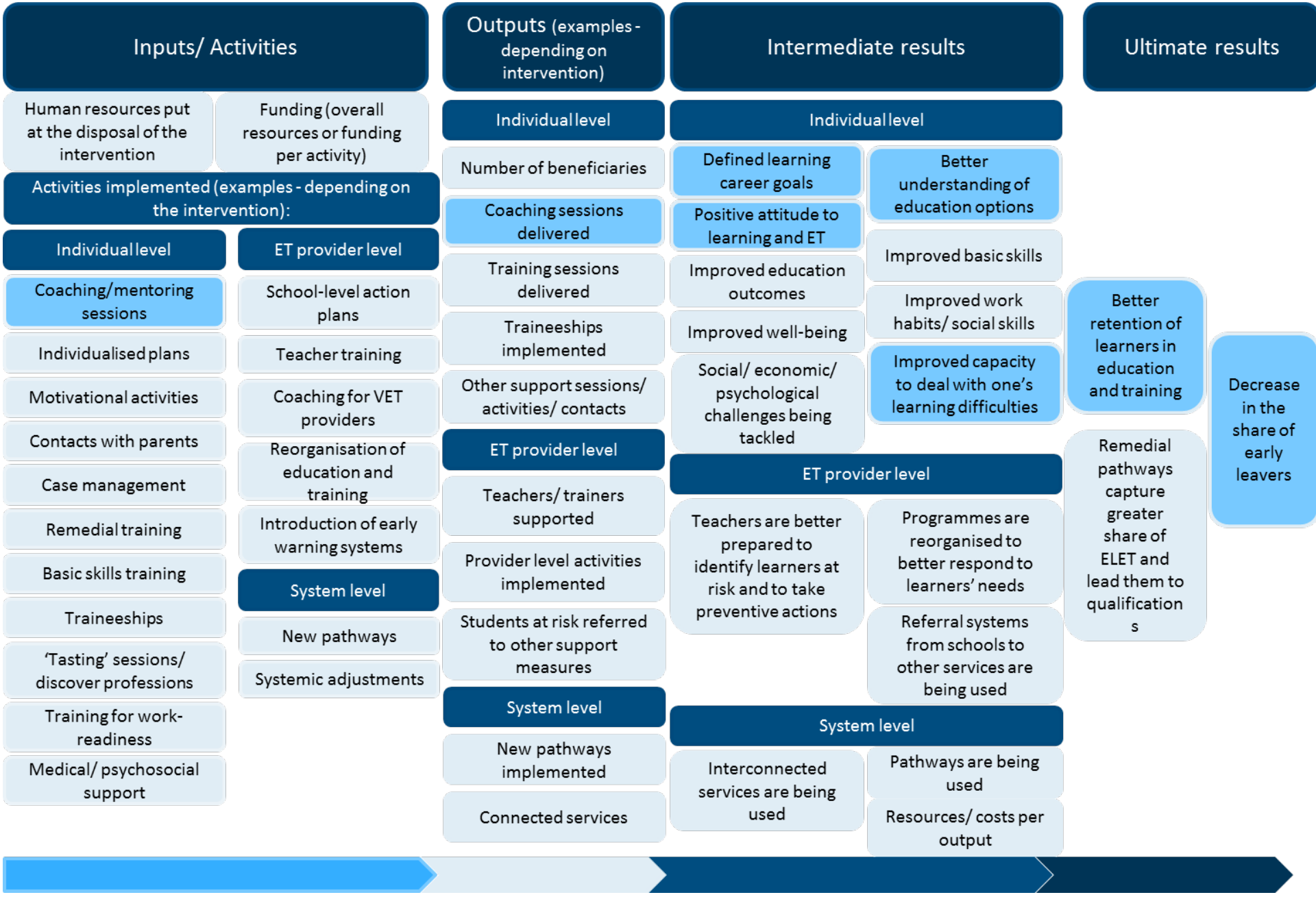
Key points

Don't	Do
Just measure participation/ outputs	Measure change that can be attributed to the activities
	Measure also longer term outcomes
Compare with a control group that has very different characteristics	If using control groups make sure to compare alike situations

The importance of intervention logic




Inputs/ Activities
Outputs (examples - depending on intervention)
Intermediate results
Ultimate results
Human resources put at the disposal of the intervention
Funding (overall resources or funding per activity)
Activities implemented (examples - depending on the intervention):
Individual level
Coaching/mentoring sessions
Individualised plans
Motivational activities
Contacts with parents
Case management
Remedial training
Basic skills training
Traineeships
'Tasting' sessions/ discover professions
Training for work-readiness
Medical/ psychosocial support
ET provider level
School-level action plans
Teacher training
Coaching for VET providers
Reorganisation of education and training
Introduction of early warning systems
System level
New pathways
Systemic adjustments
Individual level
Number of beneficiaries
Coaching sessions delivered
Training sessions delivered
Traineeships implemented
Other support sessions/ activities/ contacts
ET provider level
Teachers/ trainers supported
Provider level activities implemented
Students at risk referred to other support measures
System level
New pathways implemented
Connected services
Individual level
Defined learning career goals
Positive attitude to learning and ET
Improved education outcomes
Improved well-being
Social/ economic/ psychological challenges being tackled
Better understanding of education options
Improved basic skills
Improved work habits/ social skills
Improved capacity to deal with one's learning difficulties
ET provider level
Teachers are better prepared to identify learners at risk and to take preventive actions
Programmes are reorganised to better respond to learners' needs
Referral systems from schools to other services are being used
System level
Interconnected services are being used
Pathways are being used
Resources/ costs per output
Better retention of learners in education and training
Remedial pathways capture greater share of ELET and lead them to qualifications
Decrease in the share of early leavers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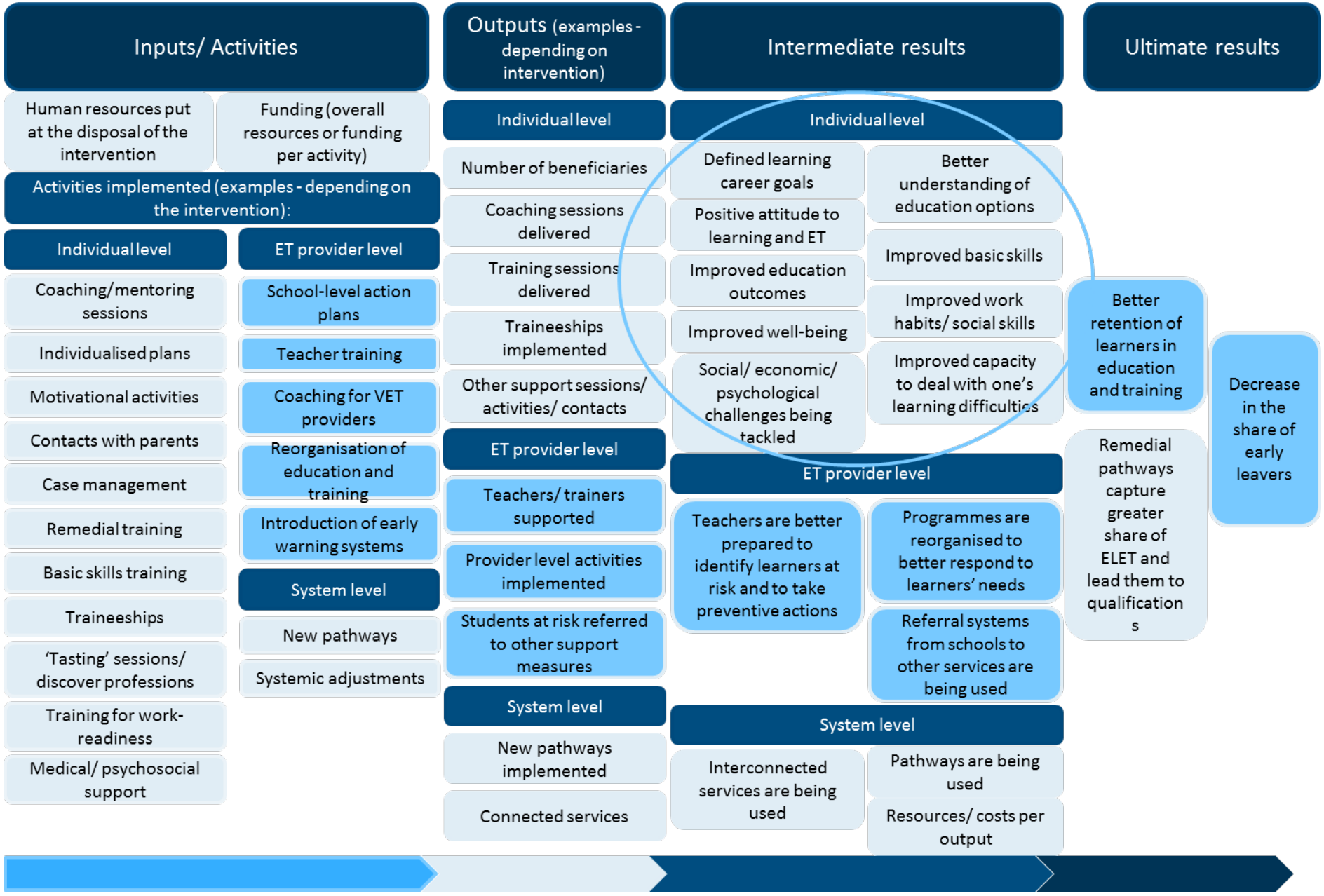
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Remedial pathways capture greater share of ELET and lead them to qualifications
Decrease in the share of early leavers

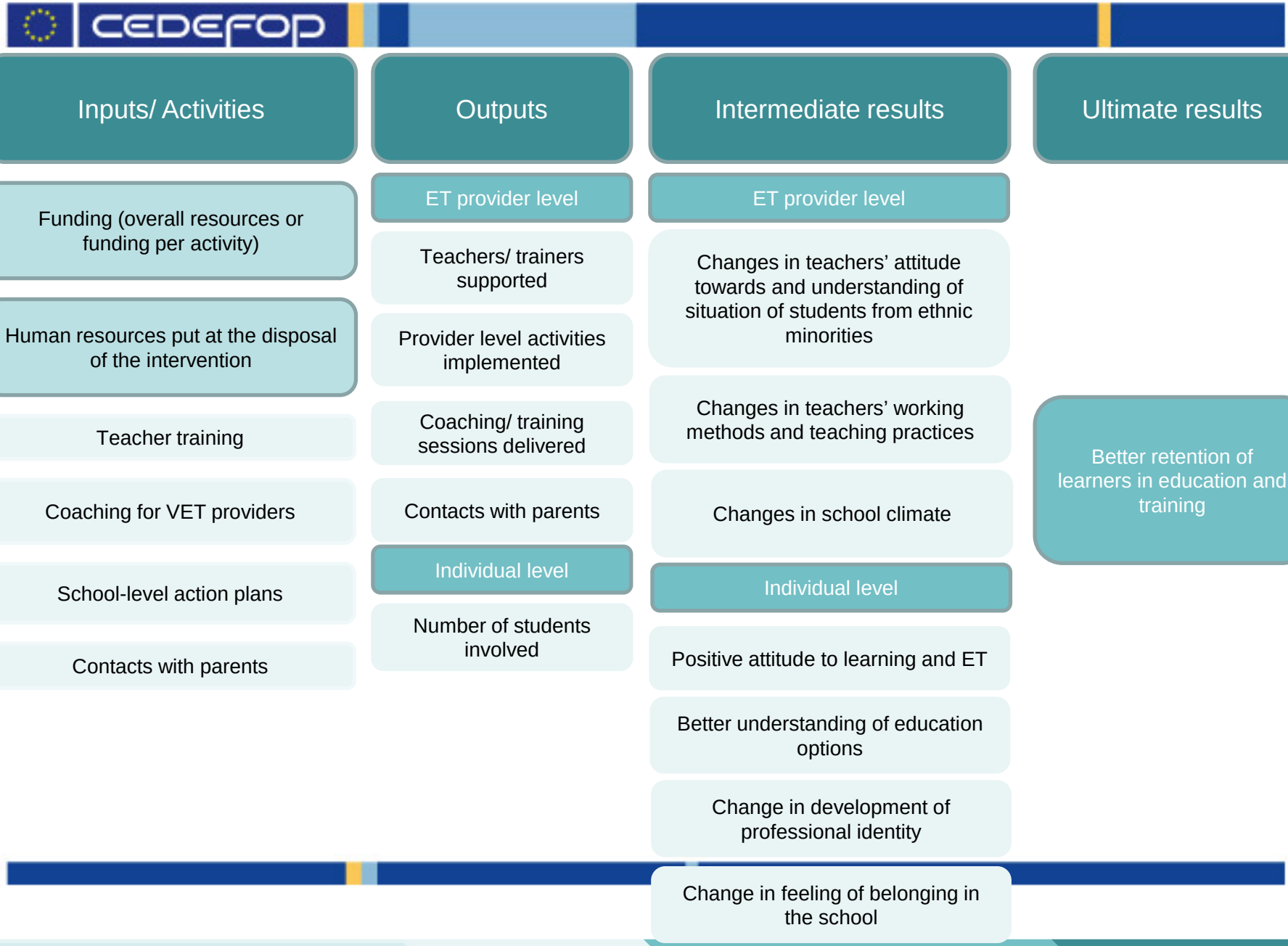
Example – evaluation of the retention caravan DK (I)

General objectives

- Increase young people's motivation for choosing VET (non-Danish background)
- Increase the retention of young people who have started VET (quantitative target of 20% improvement)

Specific objectives

- Support VET institutions and the teachers in developing ways to tackle ELVET amongst ethnic minorities
- Engage parents in their children's education
- Develop tools that could motivate the VET students from ethnic minorities and make them feel welcome and "wanted" at the schools and in the future labour market


Inputs/ Activities
Outputs
Intermediate results
Ultimate results
Funding (overall resources or funding per activity)
Human resources put at the disposal of the intervention
Teacher training
Coaching for VET providers
School-level action plans
Contacts with parents
ET provider level
Teachers/ trainers supported
Provider level activities implemented
Coaching/ training sessions delivered
Contacts with parents
Individual level
Number of students involved
ET provider level
Changes in teachers' attitude towards and understanding of situation of students from ethnic minorities
Changes in teachers' working methods and teaching practices
Changes in school climate
Individual level
Positive attitude to learning and ET
Better understanding of education options
Change in development of professional identity
Change in feeling of belonging in the school
Better retention of learners in education and training

Example 1
Evaluation of the retention caravan DK (III) – indicators used

Outputs:

- Number of schools taking part in the intervention;
- Number of students involved;
- Number of teachers involved;
- Number of parents involved;
- Number of courses/ sessions delivered in schools.

Intermediate results:

- Change in teachers' understanding of how to work with young people at risk of early leaving (qualitative feedback);
- Change in teachers' teaching practice/ methods (qualitative feedback);
- Change in teachers' capacity to interact with students from various backgrounds (qualitative feedback);
- The nature of the relationship between teachers and mentors (qualitative feedback);
- Young persons' development of professional identity (qualitative feedback);
- Change in young persons' self-confidence

Ultimate results

- Change in retention rate of young people in ET;
- Compared the retention of students with Danish and non-Danish origins.
- Control group of schools that did not take part in the Retention Caravan.

Example – evaluation of the retention caravan DK (III) – possible additional indicators

Outputs:

- ✓ Number of counsellors involved
- ✓ The number of sessions delivered could have been broken down by type of session
- ✓ Number and type of materials developed

Intermediate results:

- ✓ Change in parents' attitude to and understanding of their children's' education pathways
- ✓ Change in young persons' feeling of belonging
- ✓ Change in school climate
- ✓ Change in young persons' aspirations

Example 2
Remedial training and coaching by volunteers - FR (I)

General objectives

- Provide long-term individualised support to disadvantage VET students in order to reduce absenteeism and risk of dropping out due to low academic achievement

Specific objectives

- Providing a methodological help for studying general courses
- Accompany the learner in his/her orientation and professional project;
- Accompany the learner in his/her personal development in order to increase autonomy and mobility,

Example 2
Remedial training and coaching by volunteers - FR (II)

Inputs/ Activities	Outputs	Intermediate results	Ultimate results
Funding to ensure coordination of volunteers and core activities ensured by the NGO	Individual level	Individual level	
Human resources: Number of volunteers mobilised	Number of students involved	Improved education outcomes	
Human resources: Number of hours volunteers spend preparing and delivering activities	Number of contact hours delivered	Improved transversal skills	
Methodologies, training or tools available for volunteers	Number of support activities delivered per type of activity	Improved well-being in school	Better retention of learners in education and training
		Defined learning and career goals	
		Improved work-readiness	
		Improved parents' engagement	
		Improved levels of absenteeism	

Example 2

Remedial training and coaching by volunteers - FR (III)

Intermediary outcomes

- Change in education outcomes in general education subjects (maths, etc.)
- Changing in learning to learn capacity;
- Change in digital competence
- Change in well-being at school (active participation in courses, boredom, understanding what the professor explains, anxiety, attitude towards going to school)
- Change in one's positive vision of his/her future and understanding of professional possibilities
- Change in parents' attitudes on training of their children
- Change in students capacity to seek for traineeships and in their work-readiness
- Change in absenteeism
- Change in participation of other places in the town which provide resources for one's development (libraries, etc.)
- Change in civic attitude

Example 2

Remedial training and coaching by volunteers - FR (IV) – possible additional indicators

Inputs:

- The number of volunteers intervening;
- The number of hours a volunteer invests in the activities;
- The funding AFEV received to organise the activities of volunteers and implement the project.

Outputs:

- Number of hours the volunteer students spent with the beneficiaries;
- The number of activities implemented per type of activity;

Ultimate results:

- Change in completion of education and training

Assessing change and contribution

- Baseline comparisons
- Quasi experimental design – control groups (are they really comparable though?)
- Qualitative methods to understand contribution

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What works…and what not?

- ✓ Systematic and conclusive evaluations of VET policies
- ✓ Conditions for policy learning and mainstreaming
- ✓ Emphasise the positive role of VET
  - VET in national strategies addressing ELET
  - VET in EU policy initiatives and thematic working groups

Questions for discussion

- Is there a monitoring system to identify learners at risk or those who dropped out in RO and how is it connected with support measures?
- To what extent are indicators in RO focused on understanding intermediary results (unpack the black box)?
- The Rose project intends to use a control group of schools not receiving grants – are these schools comparable to those receiving the support?