



## CONCEPT NOTE

### Cedefop-LLL platform 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

From a lifelong perspective, tackling early leaving from education and training (ELET) is an ongoing process, which requires a multidisciplinary and whole community approach.

The EU currently focuses on young people aged 18 to 24 who have not completed upper secondary education. Evidence shows that skills and competences acquired during the first years of life affect future education and employment prospects. At the same time, thanks to existing support structures, adults who had previously ruled out education and training are increasingly rediscovering their learning potential. This is why tackling early leaving from education and training begins as early as kindergarten (early childhood education), and includes compensation measures to support at least young adults in acquiring an upper secondary qualification.

Cedefop is organising this policy forum in cooperation with the [Lifelong Learning Platform](#) to explore the potential of community lifelong learning centres as one-stop shops for preventing young people at risk and early school leavers from disconnecting. The event will be hosted by the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union in its Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels.

*Community lifelong learning centres* provide a welcoming, non-threatening education environment centred on learners' needs. They typically focus is on non-formal education but can combine both non-formal and formal education approaches. As part of a community outreach approach, such centres are accessible to the local community, both in terms of physical proximity and as places where learners – including marginalised and minority group learners – feel they belong. Learning is learner-centred, starting at each learner's current level and aiming to engage with their life experiences. Such outreach approaches, building on strengths, seek to engage learners who may feel alienated from formal education and from society in general. Some of these centres employ staff from the local community and involve local groups in their management board.

Viewing community lifelong learning centres as *a gateway to multidisciplinary-teams-based* services for those with complex needs, presupposes a collocation between these centres and the teams, as part of a one-stop shop. Of the wider groups attending community lifelong learning classes, a smaller number of marginalised young people and adults will have more complex needs, such as mental health issues, trauma difficulties, experience of domestic violence, bullying, abuse, etc. These community-based centres offer a vital opportunity to engage such individuals with services meeting their needs, in an environment where they already feel at ease and have a sense of belonging.

## Target group

This policy forum will involve approximately 90 participants, including Brussels-based stakeholders from the permanent representations of Member States to the EU, the European Commission, European business and sector associations, trade union and employee organisations, as well as national policy-makers, practitioners and social partners involved in designing and implementing integrated services to tackle early leaving from education and training.

## Focus of the forum

The forum will focus on the potential of multidisciplinary teams in community lifelong learning centres (CLLC) to play a key role in tackling early leaving from education and training (ELET). Cedefop will also launch the new enriched edition of its online resources for tackling early leaving ([www.cedefop.europa.eu/TEL-toolkit](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/TEL-toolkit)).

The forum will be an opportunity for participants to discuss Member State experiences using integrated service delivery (one-stop shops, case management and multi-skilled teams) in different settings. Participants will consider the potential for establishing CLLCs in disadvantaged areas across Europe. These could offer people of all ages access to a wider range of learning opportunities, maximising the support offered by multidisciplinary teams. Participants will also be invited to reflect on the post-2020 agenda in the field to ensure continued progress towards improving EU citizens' qualifications and skills.

## Objectives

- Explore and learn from selected good practices in Europe which provide a more integrated solution to youth at risk through community-based LLL centres.
- Identify key elements to be transferred or replicated from good practices across Europe.
- Strengthen the case for establishing CLLCs across Europe.
- Acknowledge achievements and reflect on the post-2020 agenda for tackling early leaving from education and training.
- Explore the new edition of the [Cedefop VET toolkit for tackling early leaving](#) and its updated resources.
- Get familiar with [Cedefop reflection tools](#) assisting policy-makers and VET providers in taking action towards a comprehensive approach to tackling early leaving from education and training.
- Learn about the role of ambassadors to [Cedefop's VET toolkit for tackling early leaving](#) and join the community of practice.

## Key questions for debate

The event will also invite participants to reflect on the **post-2020 EU and national agendas** on tackling early leaving from education and training and their contribution to raising citizens' skills and improving young people's social inclusion and labour market integration. The following questions will be addressed:

- What is the outcome of current strategies and programmes to tackle early leaving from education and training?
- Is early leaving from education and training still a challenge in Europe? Why?
- What challenges are Member States currently facing in the implementation of their policies to tackle early leaving from education and training? What potential challenges lie ahead?

- What are the ongoing discussions on post-2020 strategies and programmes to tackle early leaving from education and training at EU and national levels to raise citizens' low skills, tackle youth unemployment and increase social inclusion?
- What role can community lifelong learning centres play in EU and national strategies to support the social inclusion and labour market integration of young people at risk?

## Event highlights



The forum's welcome session will be followed by the launch of the new resources for the [Cedefop VET toolkit for tackling early leaving](#).

The toolkit, first launched in 2017, was the outcome of three years of Cedefop research, which brought new evidence to light on [investigating causes and extent](#) of early leaving from VET and [evaluating the impact of VET policies](#) to tackle early leaving in 17 European countries.

The Europe-wide toolkit is inspired by successful VET practices in helping young people to attain at least an upper secondary qualification. It provides practical guidance, tips, good practices and tools drawn from VET to feed into activities and policies aiming at:

- helping young people at risk of becoming early leavers to remain in education and training and qualify;
- helping early leavers to reintegrate into education or training and the labour market.

The toolkit supports policy-makers and practitioners working in ministries, VET schools, companies, guidance centres, public employment services, social services or youth organisations, looking for ways to:

- support learners at risk of dropping out by identifying signs of disengagement early;
- monitor early leavers systematically to reach out to them in time;
- motivate and re-engage early leavers to bring them back to education and training.

The toolkit provides different [intervention approaches](#) and gives tips for their successful implementation. [Good practices and quick wins](#) illustrate successful measures implemented in different EU countries to tackle early leaving.

Participants will get familiar with new online Cedefop tools, including [reflection tools](#) for policy-makers and VET providers which help develop action plans for a comprehensive approach to tackle ELET.

Cedefop's work is complemented by the LLLPlatform's recent work on community-based LLL centres. The forum will continue with a presentation on key messages from the recent LLLP briefing paper *Implementing a holistic approach to lifelong learning – Community lifelong learning centres as a gateway to multidisciplinary support teams*. Professor Paul Downes will focus on the following points:

- the triangle of need (universal, selected, indicated prevention) and how this relates to both multidisc teams and LLL centres;
- key concepts of community and individual outreach to distinguish it from information;
- explanation of the gateway and one-stop shop concepts;
- locating these in current EU policy contexts, especially ELET.

The presentation will be followed by an interview conducted by Ms Brikena Xhomaqi, Director of LLLP with Professor Paul Downes and Ms Shanti George. Questions will include:

- Why combine multidisciplinary teams and community LLL centres?
- Given the importance of belonging, how can we make community LLL centres places where people feel they belong?
- What barriers are there for people in accessing community LLL centres in marginalised communities?
- Where can these one-stop shops be located?
- Can non-formal and formal education be combined in one location?
- Is there tension between a learner-centred and an outcomes approach?
- What is VET's role in these one-stop shops?
- How can we create these to bring together existing local services?
- How can we develop capacity building in local community? How can we empower local stakeholders and communities to develop and run such centres?

In a lively session with representatives of good practices in Europe, participants will have an opportunity to learn how multidisciplinary teams in community lifelong learning centres can play a key role in tackling early leaving from education and training, and gain insights from successful practices in different European countries. A panel discussion with practitioners of selected good practices will debate and reflect on the creation of a model for integrating multidisciplinary teams within community-based LLL centres in Europe. Topics to be discussed include:

- How strong is the community lifelong learning centre feature of your work and the multidisciplinary team-based part? Do you already operate a gateway service?
- What additional resources would you need to develop a gateway service for your projects?
- What obstacles do you envisage in having a one-stop shop?
- How have you made your service a welcoming environment for marginalised groups?
- How do you think the referral process would work for people in your service to access multidisciplinary teams?
- Who needs to be part of these teams? Emotional counsellors, play therapists, nurses, family support workers, family outreach care workers, speech and language therapists, others?
- Where is the system currently failing the needs of your services' users?
- How can we develop a supportive policy climate at national and regional levels for one-stop shops and such gateway services? What kinds of funding strand are needed?
- How do these one-stop shops link in with schools/VET institutions or with other services?
- What risk groups are not suitable for such a one-stop shop model, if any?
- How can VET be further linked with community lifelong learning centres and with multidisciplinary teams in one stop shops?

Box 1 below includes a short summary of good practices to be presented and discussed at the forum.

In the afternoon session, national and European policy-makers and social partners will discuss the road travelled so far in the fight against early leaving from education and training and youth unemployment and reflect on the way ahead.

The Europe 2020 Strategy set targets on early leaving from education and training and on employment, with visible progress made in these two areas over recent years:

- There has been a consistent fall of the EU-28 rates of early leavers between 2008 (14.6%) and 2017 (10.6%).
- EU-28 unemployment peaked at 10.9% in 2013 and has consistently decreased since then down to 6.8% in 2018.

However, these EU averages hide important disparities between countries and regions and between different groups of people. Youth unemployment rates are generally double or more than double the unemployment rates for all ages and surpass 30% in Greece, Italy and Spain. At EU level, nearly 5.5 million young people aged 18 to 24 (14.3%) were in 2017 neither in employment nor in education or training.

The rates of early leavers from education and training remain well above the EU target in Malta (18.6%), Spain (18.3%) and Romania (18.1%). There are strong regional disparities in southern and south-eastern countries with rates above 20% in southern Spain; Mallorca; Sicily; the Azores and Madeira; rural regions in Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary; and Reunion. The rate of early leavers among foreign born (19.4%) is double that of native-born (9.6%) citizens <sup>(1)</sup>.

At the same time, monitoring data available on early leavers often do not allow thorough understanding of the phenomenon, e.g. no distinction is made between those who drop out from VET and those who drop out from general education, or between those who drop out and become early leavers and those who move to a different programme. Further, despite the multiplicity of actions to tackle early leaving across the EU, evaluation of these actions is far from systematic; this poses limitations to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of national strategies to combat early leaving.

The question the panel will set out to answer is which post-2020 strategies and programmes to tackle early leaving from education and training will ensure continued progress towards raising citizens' qualifications and skills and improving youth labour market integration and social inclusion.

---

<sup>(1)</sup> 2017 data. <https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/document-library-docs/volume-1-2018-education-and-training-monitor-country-analysis.pdf>

## Box 1. Summary of community-based LLL centres to be presented at the forum

- **FamiliBase** is a centre for children, young people and families based **in the community of Ballyfermot, Dublin 10**. FamiliBase consists of a multi-disciplinary team with staff recruited from the following range of disciplines; early years, arts, social care, youth work, youth & community work, formal education, addiction counselling, business, administration and finance. FamiliBase has three programme delivery pillars: early years supports, child and parent supports and youth and community supports. Programme delivery in FamiliBase occurs at a range of different levels, from universal level to intensive wrap around practice for those with multiple or more complex needs. Young people can access a youth café one or two evenings a week offering social and recreational opportunities. Through the youth café, young people with more complex needs then effectively access further support, e.g. counselling, family support, advocacy, support with navigating systems/structures. In FamiliBase's experience, a case-management approach is the most effective for young people with more complex and/or multiple needs. This includes proactive and, where required, intensive outreach and engagement strategies, including school/training morning programmes, weekly home visits, support with statutory appointments, street work, individual key working. From FamiliBase's perspective the 'how' of what it delivers is as important as the 'what'.
- The **Creative Communities Group UK (CCGUK)** empowers people, locally, nationally and internationally for positive change through volunteering and community engagement. They support university and community partners in a variety of activities including, the arts, sciences, history, health and social awareness. The CCGUK supports creative teaching as a pathway to inclusion and accessible education; this includes the work they do with Creativity Works Preston [CWP], in the education and delivery of creative teaching to excluded and disengaged young people. 'Towards a better tomorrow' is their dedicated classroom seminar and conference workshop that they have successfully delivered throughout the UK in academies, colleges and universities. For more information see here: <http://www.ccguk.org/>, <http://creativityworkspreston.org.uk/>, [http://www.ccguk.org/d/Russell\\_Hogarth](http://www.ccguk.org/d/Russell_Hogarth)
- **In Sweden, the PES created multi-skilled teams to support young people with complex needs (UngKOMP)**. The teams were created to improve the efficiency of the PES and strengthen cooperation with municipalities in supporting unemployed young people with complex needs. The success of this initiative comes from being designed from the viewpoint of young people, providing a holistic approach where different actors work closely to support the young person as effectively as possible. It also uses a more casual approach when engaging young people, for example by hosting meetings in a lounge-inspired environment. The voluntary participation and a welcoming and relaxed atmosphere in which the teams interact with young people were identified as key elements in increasing their active participation and remaining in the programme. The team is always around and can be approached any time by the participants without prior appointment. The aim is to foster an environment that encourages open dialogue and exchange. This initiative has reached 8 584 young people, of which 63% left the project to pursue further education and employment. The project is financed by the ESF.
- Based on a federal programme *Learning on site*, the **Munich municipality** decided to establish a local education management, an integrated approach for developing education improvement districts, the so-called **BildungsLokale**. Aiming to develop structures of participation and cooperation, the local education management works together with a local education counselling service to promote access and boost appreciation of education in a low-threshold way. There are two dimensions of education: one in the context of the individual, life-long learning and social integration, and the other, in the function of revaluation of segregated areas ('education as a means of city-district development'). The sub-spatial expression of this integrated education development strategy is the so-called BildungsLokale as local, non-formal education neighbourhood centres. For more information see: [www.muenchen.de/bildungslokale](http://www.muenchen.de/bildungslokale)