

Leaving education early:

putting vocational education and training in centre stage



Introduction

This is one of the 15 country fiches that have been developed as background material to the Cedefop study:

Leaving education early: putting vocational education and training centre stage.

Volume I: investigating causes and extent

Volume II: evaluating policy impact

The publication was produced by Cedefop, Department for learning and employability, under the supervision of Antonio Ranieri.

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Country fiches have been developed and drafted on the basis of desk research and interviews conducted between 2014-15 by ICF consulting services with national stakeholders, social partners, companies, VET providers and practitioners as well as learners who provided country-specific information. They have been validated by selected interviewees (1).

Country fiches are available for: Austria, Belgium-Fr, Germany, Denmark, Estonia, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal and United Kingdom.

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Please note that this is an unedited version.

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⁽¹) The detailed methodology as well as an anonymous list of all interviewees, including information on country, organisation and job position/role, is available on request. Please contact Cedefop expert in charge Irene Psifidou:

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1. Definitions applying in national and regional context

Questions	Answers	
What is the national definition(s) of early leavers from education and training: Who are classified as early leavers from education and training?	In FR, early leavers from education and training refers to either: According to the French education code (article L313-7): a person who has obtained neither the secondary education leaving certificate (baccalaureate), nor a vocational qualification listed in the National Directory of Professional Qualifications and ranked at level V or IV of the interministerial classification of educational levels (CAP or BEP in France (²) — EQF Level 3 and 4) or that has left school at lowersecondary education. (³) According to the statistical office of the Ministry of Education (DEPP) (⁴): young people who have left initial education for more than one year (expect for medical reasons, maternity, etc.) without any qualification or with at minimum the Diplôme national du Brevet (lower secondary education certificate) (⁵). According to the SIEI (⁶) definition (directly linked to the monitoring system): students of 16+ who did not obtained the qualification in which they were enrolled the year prior the time of the SIEI calculation, and who are not enrolled in any education institution at the time of the SIEI calculation. According to the European definition adapted to the French context: young people aged 18-24 who have achieved a lower secondary level of education (i.e. Brevet des Collèges in France) or less (i.e. ISCED level 0, 1, 2 and 3c short) and declared not having received any education or training in the	

- (2) The professional aptitude certificate (CAP- certificat d'aptitude professionnelle) is a two-years VET certificate at EQF level 3. The BEP (Brevet d'études Professionnelles) is a VET upper secondary diploma at EQF Level 4. The BEP has become an intermediate certificate during the first year of VET for students preparing a VET upper secondary baccalaureate. However, it is no longer necessary to obtain the BEP before entering the VET upper secondary baccalaureate track. For more information https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/France:Assessment_in _Vocational_Upper_Secondary_Education#The_certificat_d.27aptitude_professionn elle_.28professional_aptitude_certificate.2C_or_CAP.29 [accessed 2.5.2017].
- (3) Act of 24 November 2009 on lifelong learning and guidance, in Clause L. 313-7 of the Education Code and its Implementation Decree (Decree No. 2010-1781 of 31.12.10) in Cedefop. ReferNet, Survey on Early School Leavers, Country report France, 2013.
- (4) Direction de l'évaluation, de la prospective et de la performance (DEPP)
- (5) Béatrice Le Rhun et Mireille Dubois, « Sortants précoces et Sortants sans diplôme», in Le décrochage scolaire : un défi à relever plutôt qu'une fatalité, Revue Éducation et formations n° 84, décembre 2013, available at http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid76383/le-decrochage-scolaire-un-defi-a-relever-plutot-qu-une-fatalite.html [accessed 2.5.2017].
- (6) Interministerial system of information exchange, see http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid54962/mene1101811c.html [accessed 2.5.2017].

Questions	Answers
	four weeks preceding the EU Labour Force Survey (i.e. Enquête Emploi en continue of INSEE in France) (7).
What is the national definition of early leaving from VET? (Does it include those in apprenticeships?)	There is no separate specific definition for early leaving from VET. The definitions presented above refer to young people in all types of education systems excluding those in apprenticeship centres (CFAs (8)). However, the monitoring system SIEI partially collects data from apprenticeship centres and tries to cope with this problem.
What are the data used to inform this definition and who is responsible for it? (i.e. which data set(s) provide information that is used to compute ELET indicators and who sponsors the collection and collects these data).	The definitions presented above are used to inform the data collection. Data from the DEPP (Statistical office of the Ministry of Education) is used to calculate rates of early leaving and to inform policymakers about the overall situation of the French educational system. The SIEI system is used by the Directorate for school education (DG ESCO) for identifying early leavers. The SIEI data is not collected for scientific/policymaking purposes but rather to quickly identify early leavers and offer them second chance opportunities. (9) The SIEI is thus an instrument that is part of the national strategy to fight against early leaving (10). The directorate collects twice a year, via the SIEI, administrative data from schools under the national education system, Ministry of Agriculture' schools, public employment services, and partially from apprenticeship centres (CFAs). It thus cross-references data between the various systems providing education and training—although to a less extent for the CFAs as the apprenticeship centres do not systematically transfer the data to the central services. Note: a major difference between data from the DEPP and the SIEI system, is that the INSEE/DEPP dataset does not count leavers who already obtained a qualification (CAP or BEP) but nevertheless continued on education to obtain a 'Bac Pro' but failed to obtain it, whereas the SIEI counts them as leavers from the new qualification they were enrolled.

⁽⁷⁾ Ministry of Education, Sortants sans diplôme et sortants précoces, Note d'information No 12.15, Septembre 2012, available at http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid61581/sortants-sans-diplome-et-sortants-precoces.html [accessed 2.5.2017].

⁽⁸⁾ CFA stands for Centre de Formation d'Apprentis.

⁽⁹⁾ Source: national-level interviewees.

⁽¹⁰⁾ http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid54962/mene1101811c.html [accessed 2.5.2017].

Rates of early leaving from VET during last five years

2.1. DEPP data

According to the DEPP data, there are on average 101 000 early leavers (EL) between 2010-12 (11).

Early leaving is mostly to be noticed in VET education. There is for 2012 (12):

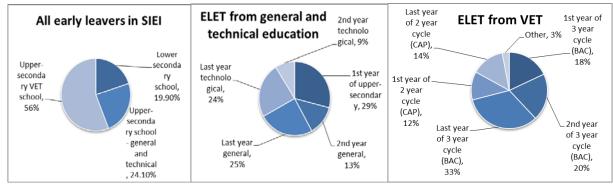
- (a) 17.1% of EL in lower secondary education;
- (b) 28.2% of EL in upper general and technical education;
- (c) 49.0% of EL in VET upper secondary education;
- (d) 5.8% of EL in other types of specialised education.

2.2. SIEI data

In October 2013, 156 386 of 16+ young people were identified as early leavers. They represent 7% of all 16+ young people attending school. This figure might change at the next SIEI counting, as some of these leavers will probably be enrolling in a new qualification/school.

The figure below presents the rates of early leaving by type of education.

Early leavers in France according to the initial education programme from which they dropped out (2013, SIEI data – monitoring system of early leavers)



NB: The first chart is the overall overview. The second chart gives the detail for the segment 'upper-secondary school – general and technical. The third chart gives the detail for the segment 'upper-secondary VET school'.

Source: Ministère de l'éducation nationale (2014) Mobilisation contre le décrochage scolaire Bilan de l'action entreprise sur l'année 2013 et perspectives pour l'année 2014 (13)

⁽¹¹⁾ Source: DEPP, Enquête emploi INSEE, annual average 2010-12.

⁽¹²⁾ DEPP data. http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid66441/lancement-dispositif-objectif-formation-emploi-pour-les-jeunes-decrocheurs.html [accessed 2.5.2017].

2.3. European indicator of early leavers (labour force survey)

The rate of early leavers from education and training in France is below the EU average: 11.9% in 2011, 11.6% in 2012 and 9.7% in 2013 compared to the EU average of 13.5% in 2011, 12.8% in 2012 and 12.7% in 2013. (14)

2.4. Enquête emploi INSEE (French labour force survey using the DEPP definition of early leaving)

Average rate of early leavers (flux annuel moyen) for the years of 2009-11 (15):

- (a) 16% are early leavers. among those:
 - (i) 9 % have left initial education with any qualification;
 - (ii) 7% with only the *Brevet des Collèges* (lower secondary education).

For the years of 2010-12, the percentage of early leavers was of 15%.

National and regional strategy to tackle ELET

There are various strategies in place in France to tackle ELET. There is a strong political will to fight early leaving and to reduce the numbers of early leavers by half by 2017. Since the 1980s, attention has been given to tackling early leaving and providing support mechanisms to young early leavers. A considerable political investment has been put in tackling early leaving in the 2000s with the creation of a specific data system for identifying and reach out early leavers. In 2014, a specific strategy was designed – the action plan against early leaving – in order to reinforce the fight against early leaving.

⁽¹³⁾ http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid76190/mobilisation-contre-le-decrochage-scolaire-bilan-2013-et-perspectives-2014.html [accessed 2.5.2017].

⁽¹⁴⁾ Source: Eurostat.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Source: DEPP, Enquête emploi INSEE. Agathe Dardier, Nadine Laïb et Isabelle Robert-Bobée*, Les décrocheurs du système éducatif : de qui parle-t-on? , INSEE, 2013, available at http://www.insee.fr/fr/ffc/docs_ffc/FPORSOC13a_VE1_educ.pdf [accessed 2.5.2017].

Scope	Description
National and/or regional strategy/action plan to reduce ELET	Name and year: national plan 'acting for youth' (<i>Agir pour la Jeunesse</i>) 2009 (¹⁶). Brief description: the national plan stresses the emphasis on the fight against early leaving in France and the obligation to follow up young people between 16 to 18 years old without a degree and no job, so that none of them is left outside any training system, insertion or employment support. It creates the main instruments to identify and offer support to early leavers and obliged each educational institution to report early leavers at central-level. The legal framework for implementing the platforms to support early leavers and the monitoring system was created.
Elements of the strategy are explicitly linked to VET	There are no direct links to VET in the action plan. It is an overall action plan to fight against early leaving and define tools for offering support to all early leavers.

Scope	Description
National and/or regional strategy/ action plan to reduce ELET	Name and year: interministerial system of information exchange (SIEI), and creation of the platforms for monitoring and offering support to early leavers, 2011 (¹⁷). Brief description: the SIEI is a tool which helps to identify early leavers age 16+. The SIEI identifies these young people not on the basis of declarative information, but by cross referencing data from different systems (e.g. Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agriculture, apprenticeship centres to some extent). Twice a year, a list of early leavers aged 16+ is transmitted to the local coordinator of the platforms for monitoring and offering support to early leavers. The platforms are a network of all local actors that provide guidance support to early leavers. The platforms were created for ensuring better coherence between all support services at local-level. Today, there are 383 platforms.
Elements of the strategy are explicitly linked to VET	There are no direct links to VET. Nevertheless, the platforms orientate early leavers to second chance opportunities which can include VET second chance opportunities, among other solutions for returning to education and training.

Scope	Description
National and/or regional	Name and year: action plan against early leaving, 2014. (18)

⁽¹⁶⁾ http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid54962/mene1101811c.html [accessed 2.5.2017].

⁽¹⁷⁾ http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid55632/la-lutte-contre-le-decrochage-scolaire.html [accessed 2.5.2017].

⁽¹⁸⁾ http://www.gouvernement.fr/action/le-decrochage-scolaire and http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid84031/tous-mobilises-pour-vaincre-decrochage-scolaire.html [accessed 2.5.2017].

Scope	Description
strategy/action plan to reduce ELET	Brief description: in 2014, the government reinforced the fight against early leaving. The main objectives are to: reinforce intervention and remediation actions; prioritise preventive actions and develop a public policy based on partnerships. It has set up a clear objective of cutting the number of early leavers (currently, 140 000) by half by 2017. The main axes of the plan are: (a) gather all actors (schools, parents, local educational authorities, etc.) in the fight against early leaving, organising specific information campaigns. A specific campaign (website and hot line) was created for informing young people and families. Young people are offered a guidance interview within 15 days of their request (¹⁹); (b) develop a national plan of initial and continuous training for educational staff and teachers on early school leaving issues (e.g. Identification of warning signs), and on alternative pedagogies to be used with learners at risk of dropping out (e.g. use of ICTs, etc.). It has also the aim to help school better track truancy and put in place individual
	support for learners at risk of dropping out. Interviewees also noted that the plan also aims at deconstructing stereotypes around the topic of early school leaving and the image of VET. This plan will start to be implemented in September 2015; (c) provide flexible pathways for learners (e.g. certification per unit, easy the transfer of learners between general, technological and VET tracks), remedial school support when failing an exam, and opportunities for easily returning to education and training. Two specific decrees were created (²⁰): (i) a Decree (2014/1453) enabling each early leaver between 16 and 25 years old (without a qualification) to obtain a qualification via an apprenticeship or internship or to re-enter a general education track; (ii) a Decree (2014/1454) enabling young people between 16 and 25 years old who have a diploma no matter what level (e.g. general education, tertiary education diploma) but not a VET qualification to enter a VET/apprenticeship opportunity.
Elements of the strategy are explicitly linked to VET	The national action plan encompasses the different axes of prevention, intervention and compensation. Within the third goal of providing new opportunities for learners to return to education and training, there is a direct link to VET.

⁽¹⁹⁾ http://www.gouvernement.fr/action/le-decrochage-scolaire [accessed 2.5.2017]. (20) http://www.gouvernement.fr/action/le-decrochage-scolaire [accessed 2.5.2017].

Recent policy initiatives

Scope and questions

New policy initiatives being undertaken that include a role for VET to reduce ELET: either

- (a) reduce ELET from VET;
- (b) reduce ELET (in general) through VET

As part of the political priority to fight against early leaving, various policy initiatives have been developed or streamlined. These are very diverse and the examples presented below are non-exhaustive.

Various in-school individualised support measures have been developed in all type of education, including VET, to ensure that students have the necessary support to successfully complete the year. Specific institutions and VET sections (21) have also been created to welcome students who have serious learning difficulties and/or behavioural/absenteeism problems. All schools since 2013 under the national education system – including VET schools – have to appoint a reference person in charge of early school leaving issues. This person has the role to identify at-risk of dropping out students and to support the return to education and training of early leavers, elaborating internal or external solutions of school remediation or compensation support. Within the scope of the national action plan to fight against Early Leaving, the 'week of perseverance' was created. Its purpose is to publicise the actions carried out by the Ministry of Education, but also collectively emphasise the need to engage with young people and encourage them in their efforts towards success. It aims to mobilise all the actors in charge of the fight against school dropout (e.g. schools, parents, young people, local educational authorities), enhance young people's commitment and give visibility to the commitments reinforcing the educational community's ability to provide diverse responses to early school leavers (22).

In order to ensure a better transition to VET and a relevant orientation, transition measures have been introduced. For instance, individual orientation interviews are undertaken at school-level by the orientation and psychological staff (²³). These are supposed to inform the student about the labour market and VET secondary or higher education opportunities. New individual

⁽²¹⁾ Such as: the *dispositifs Relais* which are specific classes welcoming young people with strong motivational problems or with high rates of absenteeism, with the aim of encouraging them to go back to school and to resocialise them. This initiative was successful in avoiding dropping out – 82% of pupils go back to high school; the School Reinsertion establishments (*établissements de réinsertion scolaire* – ERS) which are mainly residential schools welcoming young people with serious learning difficulties and/or social problems or disabilities; and the special general and vocational education sections (*sections d'enseignement général et professionnel adapté* – Segpa) which welcome young people starting secondary education who have not acquired the basic knowledge and skills expected at the end of primary school, offering either VET training or general education leading to a certification.

⁽²²⁾ http://www.ac-grenoble.fr/admin/spip/spip.php?article3595 [accessed 2.5.2017].

⁽²³⁾ http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid2573/la-voie-professionnelle.html#les-entretiens-personnalises [accessed 2.5.2017].

Scope and questions

orientation sessions are planned to be launched in September 2015. These should be available to all students age 12+ throughout their pathway and are aimed at informing them about the professional and economic world as well as their correspondent VET education.(²⁴)

Various employment and VET support measures also exist and provide both work-based learning and second chance opportunities to early leavers from education and NEETs more generally. Among others (²⁵):

- (a) the social life integration contract (*Contrat d'insertion dans la vie sociale*, CIVIS) offers 16-25 year olds with difficulties in entering the labour market an opportunity to enter a one year apprenticeship scheme and receive individualised guidance (²⁶);
- (b) apprenticeship opportunities available to early leavers, in particular in areas with strong recruitment needs in collaboration with the apprenticeship training centres (CFA) and the continuous training centres (GRETA network)(²⁷);
- (c) social partners adopted an agreement in 2011 for providing 18 months internships for young people under 21 who have only a qualification of EQF level 4 or below;
- (d) the Youth Guarantee pilot, which was introduced in September 2013, offers NEETs a second chance opportunity to enter training or the labour market in collaboration with the local youth employment agency. The young people in the scheme receive a minimum living allowance. The objective is to reach 100 000 young people per year as from 2016;
- (e) micro-lycées welcome early leavers aged 16-25 who have dropped out from education for at least 6 months before entering of finalising upper secondary education. They are small structures with the objective of re-motivating young people to obtain their upper secondary leaving certificate (general or technical) (²⁸);
- (f) second chance schools (Écoles de la deuxième chance E2C) for 18-25 year olds offer early leavers the

^{(&}lt;sup>24</sup>) http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid55632/la-lutte-contre-le-decrochage-scolaire.html [accessed 2.5.2017].

⁽²⁵⁾ Cedefop. ReferNet (2013). Survey on early school leavers. Country report France.

⁽²⁶⁾ http://www.pole-emploi.fr/candidat/le-civis-@/suarticle.jspz?id=4763 [accessed 2.5.2017].

⁽²⁷⁾ GRETA are local networks of public institutions which mutualise their resources for organising continuous training/lifelong learning training. http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid50753/la-formation-continue-des-adultes-a-leducation-nationale.html [accessed 2.5.2017].

⁽²⁸⁾ http://eduscol.education.fr/cid53699/presentation.html [accessed 2.5.2017].

Scope and questions	
	opportunity to undertake a VET or apprenticeship training in order to obtain a VET degree (²⁹); (g) the public defence integration establishments (Établissements publics d'insertion de la défense – Épide) welcome young unemployed volunteers aged 18 to 25 who are without a qualification and have educational problems, in a residential scheme for 8 to 10 months. The establishments provide vocational pre-training in a partnership with companies, support to improve basic skills, etc. (³⁰). Example of one action plan developed at local-level: The educational authority of Nantes (<i>Académie</i>) has launched its own Action plan based on the objectives of the national-level action plan. It has three main axes: (a) ensure that aspiring teachers and in-service teachers, via initial and continuing training, are trained on the issue of early leaving and on strategies to detect early signs; (b) ensure a coherent piloting of the actions on the territory, involving all relevant stakeholders; (c) encourage schools to develop their own actions plan to prevent and fight early leaving. Specific guidelines and examples of measures they could implement are provided to schools.
Is the role of VET in reducing ELET assuming greater or lesser importance? Why?	There are various compensation measures identified in France which offer VET second chance opportunities to early leavers or NEETs. However, we cannot say that VET is assuming a greater or lesser role in reducing ELET. National strategies for tackling early leaving have been focusing on policies that act at prevention, intervention and compensation and that encompass all types of education tracks (not only VET) and learners/early leavers. As interviewees mentioned, although VET is a dynamic tracks for fighting against early leaving, it is not portrayed as 'the solution' for tackling early leaving. National strategies aim at ensuring that school actors and education policies answer the issue of early leaving at all levels, i.e. prevention, intervention and compensation. There is also a political will to strengthen prevention measures (e.g. via the plan of initial and continuous training for educational staff and teachers) as it is where the success of the fight against early leaving lies – i.e. better preventive measures will enable to reduce early leaving rates.

5. Stakeholder cooperation

Questions	Answer
What are and have been	The system developed in France for identifying and reaching out

^{(&}lt;sup>29</sup>) http://www.reseau-e2c.fr/ [accessed 2.5.2017].

⁽³⁰⁾ http://www.epide.fr/ [accessed 2.5.2017].

Questions

the main influences of stakeholders in the development and implementation of VET related policies specifically to reduce ELET;

- (a) employers;
- (b) trade unions social partners;
- (c) VET institutions;
- (d) other learning providers (please specify)?

Answer

to early leavers is an example of thorough cooperation between different stakeholders at national and local levels.

The SIEI data collected and cross-referenced at central level by the Ministry (DG ESCO) is sent back to each stakeholder for them to confirm the names of the early leavers identified or to update the list. A final list of names appears after the final check.

This final list of names is then transmitted to people and organisations (e.g. the platforms monitoring and providing support to early leavers, local missions for young people) identified by the president of the Region. The platforms monitoring and providing support to early leavers gather representatives of all local actors dealing with young people in education and training with the objective to better rationalise the remedial measures offered in the territory. As a final step, the platforms have to reach out to each early leaver in their region and offer them a guidance interview in order to redirect them to second chance opportunities.

The SIEI data thus enables to inform the piloting of policies at each level (national, regional, departmental, local as well as at school-level) and to improve inter-institutional dialogue – all actors at local-level collaborate to find early leavers and offer them a second chance opportunity. Interviewees stressed that increased emphasis has been given to cooperation in the fight against early leaving. It is the aim to mobilise all stakeholders (different Ministries (e.g. Education, Employment, and Agriculture), Regions, local authorities, schools, local support structures (e.g. youth local mission, centres for orientation and guidance, etc.) around the fight against early leaving. Regions are in charge of coordinators the implementation of national policies tackling early leaving on their territory and on ensuring that all stakeholders efficiently cooperate.

One of the goals of the Action Plan against Early Leaving of 2014 is to strengthen partnerships at regional and local-level at prevention, intervention and compensation levels.

6. Monitoring systems

Question	Answers
What specific early leavers monitoring systems exist?	Name/descriptor: interministerial system of information exchange (SIEI) (³¹). Aims: to develop a thorough data collection system of school administrative data, cross referencing all systems providing education and training in order to identify early leavers and confirm that they are not registered in another education system. Year introduced: 2011

⁽³¹⁾ Interministerial system of information exchange, see http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid54962/mene1101811c.html [accessed 2.5.2017].

Question	Answers
	Coverage: (a) it cover all types of schools (including school based VET) and partially apprenticeships centres (CFAs). Note that it aims to include data from all CFAs in the future. The work on this issue is on-going; (b) implemented at National-level; (c) what is measured: the SIEI is not used to measure early leaving but rather to identify who and where early leavers age 16+ are and offer them support. There is an additional follow up and statistical software – the RIO – which enables: (a) local actors (platforms providing support to early leavers, other support structures) to monitor young people during the period s/he receives support; (b) stakeholders at different levels (national, regional/educational authorities) to monitor the activities and results of the platforms providing support to early leavers).
What information is monitored/collected?	Numbers of drop outs: yes (however, these are not publicly available). Reasons for dropping out: no Background characteristics of drop outs/those at risk (i.e. gender, age, language, educational pathway etc.): not clear. Through the SIEI, the Directorate for school education (DG ESCO (32)) collects, twice a year, administrative data about all students enrolled and those who left without qualification. The data is collected from schools falling under the ministry of national education, ministry of agriculture, public employment services that follow students after they leave education, and partially from apprenticeship centres (CFAs). It cross-references data between the various educational systems to result in a list of young people who have been enrolled in education in the past year, who have not reached a qualification and who are no longer registered in any formal education and training. In addition, the RIO system enables to collect: (a) information on where the young person stands during the process of finding a new opportunity. (b) the number of young people contacted, to be contacted, awaiting for a solution, etc.
What are the data used for? How it is used by VET institutions/ providers?	The SIEI is a tool to enable the identification of early leavers and hence a key tool to engage in outreach and offer remedial measures. The SIEI data enables to identify a list of early leavers. This list is subsequently divided according to regions (i.e. 'academies' in

^{(&}lt;sup>32</sup>) Ministry of Education, DG School Education (*Direction générale de l'enseignement scolaire*).

Question	Answers
	French) and sent to the coordinator of the regional platform for monitoring and providing support to early leavers (PSAD (³³)). The PSAD brings together all institutions engaged in fight against early leaving (different authorities governing schools, employment services and NGOs). The PSAD is responsible to make sure that all young people on the list are contacted, offered a guidance interview in order to find a second chance solution and to monitor their evolution (³⁴).
How is the monitoring system linked with offering support measures? (i.e. is it being used to contact those who have dropped out to provide support to find employment, education or further training?)	Early leavers are identified via the SIEI dataset and their names transmitted to the regional platforms for monitoring and providing support to early leavers, which in turn have to contact early leavers on their territory and redirect them to second chance opportunities according to their profile and interest. However, local actors do not wait for the biannual lists of the SIEI data to identify potential early leavers in their territory. Identification of early leavers is an on-going process in which all local actors are involved in collaboration with the regional department to fight against early leaving (<i>Mission de lute contre le décrochage scolaire</i>) and occurs in parallel with the SIEI counting.
What role is/ has the monitoring system played in the design, development or implementation of the policies, strategies and initiatives?	It was the development of the different strategies for tackling ELET that created the need for developing monitoring tools that could streamline the monitoring of ELET at regional and local-level. Prior to the introduction of the SIEI, early leavers were not effectively identified. The creation of the SIEI is thus a consequence of the overall objective of tackling early leaving. In order to effectively tackle early leaving, a specific tools was needed.

7. Effect of the economic crisis

Question	Answers
In what ways has the role of VET in reducing ELET been influenced by the economic crisis: (please consider): (a) supply of VET places; (b) demand for VET places; (c) qualifications of	There is no official analysis of the link between the economic crisis, early leaving and VET. Interviewees have observed that due to the difficulty of finding a job, VET learners tend to pursue their VET education until the end of upper secondary education or to post-secondary VET. However, it is impossible to know whether this factor is due to the economic crisis. It might be also due to the recent legislations (July 2013) that encouraged post-secondary/ university institutions to accept learners with a VET upper secondary leaving certificate.
VET students (increasing	Interviewees noted that overall there is an increased difficulty of labour market insertion of young people whereas the rates of
decreasing);	early leaving are decreasing. It is not the economic crisis that

^{(&}lt;sup>33</sup>) Plates-formes locales de suivi et d'appui aux décrocheurs.

⁽³⁴⁾ National and site-level interviewees from the first assignment.

Question

Answers

- (d) popularity and perception of VET;
- (e) increase/decrease in public resources for VET;
- (f) access to 'second chance' VET opportunities.

encouraged the development of policies for tackling early leaving but rather the drawbacks observed of the school system which tended to easily exclude students with learning difficulties. Local level authorities in the region of Nantes, noticed that due to the crisis employers were less keen in hiring apprentices whereas the region faces a demographic increase. The demand for VET tracks is high in the region due to its economics (e.g. construction, aeronautics, etc.). However, there is a lack of VET offers for the current demand. Therefore, in order to avoid early leaving, the Region has developed a pilot project (2014-15) enabling young learners to enrol in an apprenticeship centre without having a contract with an enterprise – i.e. they can start their training at the centre (school-based VET) and complete short-time internships until they are offered an apprenticeship contract. The project was reconducted for a year (2105-16).

Factors positively contributing to the effectiveness of VET in reducing ELET

8.1. National/regional policy factors

- (a) The existence of a strong political will for tackling early leaving with clear definition of objectives (e.g. reducing the number of early leavers by half) and of action plans. This will is then transferred to the level of educational authorities which can implement and encourage local actions on their territory. It creates a top-down dynamic and incentivises partnerships.
- (b) The existence of specific tools, i.e. the SIEI data monitoring system that enables to effectively identify early leavers and to offer second chance opportunities, consequently increasing the number of returns to education and training.
- (c) The increased focus on preventive actions that will enable to better tackle risks of early leaving. The action plan on providing training for educational staff and teachers (e.g. on the phenomenon of early leaving and on strategies to better identify and provide support to learners at risk of dropping out, on guidance processes and image of VET) is being implemented. It is aimed at becoming one of the major strengths of the early leaving policy in France.
- (d) VET has been valorised via the creation of Campuses of trades and qualifications (35). The campuses bring together stakeholders involved in

⁽³⁵⁾ http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid79563/les-campus-des-metiers-et-des-qualifications.html [accessed 2.5.2017].Campuses were created following the law for

vocational training around an economic sector (e.g. aeronautics, green energies, etc.). The aim is to create synergies between VET schools, apprentice training centres, training organisations, higher education institutions, research laboratories and companies. It includes at least one local public educational institution. The campuses offer a range of general training, technological and professional to the highest levels, in a specific field of interest for the local economy. They offer qualifications from upper-secondary VET to Master degrees. They allow companies to hire well-trained employees and promote regional economic development and employability of young people.

8.2. Systematic features of the (VET) education system

(a) Considerable orientation/guidance is provided to young people. Efforts have been put in reaching out young people with educational guidance and information in Youth information centres, schools, etc. In addition, specific training will be provided to educational staff on how to better orientate pupils and on how to maintain an individual guidance support across the learner pathway (i.e. in case a learner wants to change field/track).

Factors constraining the effectiveness of VET to reduce ELET

9.1. Systematic features of the (VET) education system

The school culture is not based on providing support to learners. This culture is difficult to change. The different action plans introduced (e.g. action plan against early leaving (³⁶)) aim at changing the school culture and at re-integrating early leavers into the school's scope.

It is also often assume that it is normal that some learners fail of leave education. This culture should also be changed. There is a need to give a change to all learners. In order to break this negative assumption, teachers need to be

the refoundation of the school of July 8, 2013 which fixed to the nation the goal of enhancing vocational education.

⁽³⁶⁾ http://www.gouvernement.fr/action/le-decrochage-scolaire and http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid84031/tous-mobilises-pour-vaincre-decrochage-scolaire.html [accessed 2.5.2017].

part of the process and be aware of signs of learning difficulties/early leaving. The Académie of Nantes has integrated head of schools and school staff in the fight against early leaving encouraging them to be aware and fight against early leaving at the level of the school, e.g. by ensuring an individualised follow up throughout the year of new VET students.

The lack of knowledge of educational staff, guidance officers, teachers on the VET careers and opportunities. This hinders effective guidance to take place. Various action plans are being implemented in order to train guidance officers and educational staff on the different VET careers that exist and on the stereotypes of VET.

9.2. Features of the labour market

There are apprenticeship placements issues. Enterprises do not invest enough on training of apprentices. On the one hand, there are VET tracks with high employment rates however with a low rate of candidates for apprenticeships (e.g. industry, mechanical precision, braking systems). On the other hand, there are fields for which there are too many apprentices and a lack of placements (e.g. bakery). It is important to ensure that candidates for apprenticeships correspond to the labour market needs. Regional authorities are in charge of mapping the VET offer on the territory and analyse whether it corresponds to the labour market needs. This helps ensuring adequacy between the VET offer and the labour market needs and that VET offer is relevant for young people (i.e. that they will find a placement/job).