



# Leaving education early:

putting vocational education  
and training in centre stage



THE NETHERLANDS

# 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](#)

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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 <sup>(1)</sup>.

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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<sup>(1)</sup> 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: [rena.psifidou@cedefop.europa.eu](mailto:rena.psifidou@cedefop.europa.eu)

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## 1. Definitions applying in national and regional context

Questions	Answers
<p>What is the national definition(s) of early leavers from education and training?</p> <p>Who are classified as early leavers from education and training?</p>	<p>The national definition of early leavers from education and training is:</p> <p>Early leavers are youth in the age of 12 until 23, who leave the educational system without a starter's qualification <sup>(2)</sup>. Pupils who are not in education and do not have a job after graduating from basic vocational education (VMBO) are defined as 'early school leaver'. This also applies to youth that leave the educational system with a vocational education – Level 1 (MBO 1) diploma and who are unable to find a job. Students until the age of 23, who are absent for a period longer than one month, also belong to the group of early school leavers <sup>(3)</sup>.</p>
<p>What is the national definition of early leaving from VET?</p> <p>Does it include those in apprenticeships?</p>	<p>There is no separate definition of early leaving from VET, it is included in the national definition of ELET.</p> <p>Youth without a vocational qualification at level 2, 3 or 4 <sup>(4)</sup> that leave the educational system are defined as early school leavers from VET. This means that if the highest earned degree is a vocational education-level 1 or a basic vocational education (VMBO) diploma, this is not seen as a starter's qualification <sup>(5)</sup>.</p>
<p>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).</p>	<p>Basic records database of education (BRON) is a centralised system managed by Education Executive Agency (in Dutch DUO), but facilitated (and financed) by the Ministry of education culture and science. The database maps the entire educational career of young people (e.g. school type, school track and major subjects <sup>(6)</sup>). This data set is used to calculate the ELET figures <sup>(7)</sup>.</p>

<sup>(2)</sup> According to Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, a starter's qualification is the minimum educational level required to have a serious chance at sustainable skilled work in the Netherlands.

<sup>(3)</sup> Herweijer, L. (2008). *Gestruikeld voor de start. De school verlaten zonder startkwalificatie*. Den Haag: Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau (only in Dutch).

<sup>(4)</sup> Level 1,2,3,4 refers to the Dutch education system for vocational education and training. These Dutch levels are equivalent to the levels of EQF 1,2,3 and 4.

<sup>(5)</sup> According to Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, a starter's qualification is the minimum educational level required to have a serious chance at sustainable skilled work in the Netherlands.

<sup>(6)</sup> The BRON database also consists of personal characteristics (e.g., gender, ethnicity) and parents information (e.g. single parents household).

<sup>(7)</sup> Source: interviews with stakeholders at measure-level.

## 2. Rates of early leaving from VET during last five years

Early leaving from education and training (ELET)/early leaving from VET (ELVET) rates are presented below according to the definitions and datasets.

### 2.1. ELET/ ELVET exit rates <sup>(8)</sup>

Vocational education (VET) in the Netherlands has 4 levels <sup>(9)</sup>. The table below gives a specific view of the ELVET rate per level <sup>(10)</sup>.

**ELVET percentages and absolute number of ELVET 2010-14**

Level	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Vocational education Level 1	36.35% (4 167)	36.58% (4 280)	29.03% (3431)	32.23% (3 600)
Vocational education Level 2	12.99% (12 470)	12.23% (11 346)	10.49% (9 186)	9.43% (7 983)
Vocational education Level 3+4	4.14% (11 929)	3.94% (11 376)	3.29% (9 492)	3.01% (8 819)

### 2.2. The drop-out rate from specific types of programmes <sup>(11)</sup>

From the school year 2010 to 2012, ELVET data is available at the level of professional sectors (see table 'ELVET numbers within different sectors of VET'). Which means that all vocational courses are divided into sectors. The category 'combination' means that the programme cannot be placed in a particular sector, for example, a cross between the economy and technology sector. From 2012-13, ELVET data are divided into different occupational fields (see table 'ELVET

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<sup>(8)</sup> The number of students leaving school among all students registered in the same year of study.

<sup>(9)</sup> Level 1,2,3,4 refers to the Dutch education system for vocational education. These Dutch levels are equivalent to the levels of EQF 1,2,3 and 4.

<sup>(10)</sup> Ministerie van Onderwijs Cultuur en Wetenschap (OCW), Nieuwe Voortijdige Schoolverlaters, cijferbijlage VSV brief 2012, 2013,2014 en 2015 (only in Dutch).

<sup>(11)</sup> The number of students leaving school per sector/programme among all students registered in the same year of study in the same sector.

numbers from specific types of occupational fields') <sup>(12)</sup>, this gives a more specific representation of the ELVET figures within VET compared to previous years.

#### ELVET numbers within different sectors of VET

Level	2010-11			2013-14		
Sector	Students	No of ESL	% ESL	Students	No of ESL	% ESL
Economics	138 655	10 933	7.90%	138 396	10 316	7.50%
Engineering	106 897	6 817	6.40%	105 189	6 411	6.10%
Health& wellbeing	120 650	6 842	5.70%	119 776	6 308	5.30%
Agriculture	22 030	1 390	6.30%	21 788	1 285	5.90%
Combination	7 377	2 584	35.00%	8 416	2 682	31.90%

#### ELVET numbers from specific types of occupational fields

	2010-11			2013-14		
Occupational field	Students	No of ESL	% ESL	Students	No of ESL	% ESL
Timber, maintenance and completion of construction	6 725	486	7.20%	6 205	383	6.20%
Craft, laboratory and health technology	4 478	145	3.20%	4 860	156	3.20%
Construction and infrastructure	13 527	604	4.50%	11 603	459	4.00%
Economics and administration	46 079	2 310	5.00%	45 678	2 156	4,70%
Business and entrepreneurship	3 234	2 541	7.90%	32 816	2 382	7.30%
Catering and bakery	23 013	1 699	7.40%	23 804	1 570	6.60%

<sup>(12)</sup> Ministerie van Onderwijs Cultuur en Wetenschap (OCW), Nieuwe Voortijdige Schoolverlaters, cijferbijlage VSV brief 2014, 2015 (only in Dutch).

Information and communication technology	13 523	815	6.00%	14 767	740	5.00%
Media and design	23 891	899	3.80%	22 864	789	3.50%
Mobility and transportation	14 145	939	6.60%	13 238	811	6.10%
Engineering and process industries	27 672	1.282	4.60%	27 943	1 193	4.30%
Tourism and recreation	11 149	438	3.90%	11 188	372	3.30%
Transportation, shipping and logistics	12 160	852	7.00%	13 247	855	6.50%
Grooming and makeup	12 555	632	5.00%	12 520	546	4.40%
Safety and sports	26 720	1 529	5.70%	27 463	1 245	4.50%
Food, nature and environment	717	57	7.90%	705	50	7.10%
Food, nature and environment (eZ)	21 176	806	3.80%	21 205	776	3.70%
Health and wellbeing	91 713	3 759	4.10%	91 230	3 450	3.80%
Not allocated to occupational fields	7 555	2 316	30.70%	7 363	2 469	33.50%

### 2.3. The drop-out rate and residence years in VET

Table 'Residence years in vocational education' presents the figures of the year of residence of students in vocational education (VET) and the drop-out rate per residence year. The residence year indicates how many years a student remains within the educational system <sup>(13)</sup>. For example, out of 108 119 students enrolled in first year, there are 101 620 VET students that remained in their second year of VET. This is only about the number of years they participate in VET and this does not correspond to a qualification. The table shows that for example two students graduated from VET in 2012-13 after eight years of study.

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<sup>(13)</sup> Ibid.

## Residence years in vocational education

Number of years students remain in VET	2012-13			2013-14		
	Students	No of ESL	% ESL	Students	No of ESL	% ESL
1 year	108 119	6 720	6.2%	110 632	6 341	5.7%
2 years	101 620	7 564	7.4%	101 004	6 782	6.7%
3 years	86 595	4 466	5.2%	86 347	4 224	4.9%
4 years	59 183	2 223	3.8%	57 990	2 065	3.6%
5 years	26 497	922	3.5%	25 791	812	3.1%
6 years	7 044	212	3.0%	6 854	175	2.6%
7 years	79	2	2.5%	80	3	3.8%
8 years	2	0	0.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a

## 2.4. The drop-outs rates in general education

At national level, 25 970 (2013-14) young people have left education without a starter qualification (table 'General drop-out rates at national level for all levels of the Dutch educational system')<sup>(14)</sup>. Tackling the problem of pupils leaving school early is one of the priorities of the Dutch government. The target is to be no more than 25 000 new early school leavers in 2016<sup>(15)</sup>.

### General drop-out rates at national level for all levels<sup>(16)</sup> of the Dutch educational system

National level	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Goal	35 000	32 000	29 500	27 200
Realisation	39 110	36 560	27 950	25 970
% ELET 15	3.0%	2.8%	2.1%	1.9%

<sup>(14)</sup> De ESL percentages are calculated over the learners within secondary schools (Voortgezet onderwijs) and vocational education and training (MBO).

<sup>(15)</sup> Ministerie van Onderwijs Cultuur en Wetenschap (OCW), Nieuwe Voortijdige Schoolverlaters, cijferbijlage VSV brief 2015 (only in Dutch).

<sup>(16)</sup> % ELET is the realised number of drop-outs divided by total number of students.

The numbers of those that were ESLs but have re-entered ET via VET. Research did not yet result in information on this topic.

## 2.5. National and regional strategy to tackle ELET

There is an overarching strategy in the Netherlands namely the ‘Drive to reduce dropout rates’ to tackle ELET. There are various initiatives that have been launched on regional level to support the ‘drive to reduce dropout rates’ strategy. Those have different sub aims among tackling ELET and ELVET. They are described in the boxes below.

Scope	Description
National and/or regional strategy/action plan to reduce ELET	<p><b>‘Drive to reduce dropout rates’ (since 2008)</b></p> <p>National policy initiated by Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. The regions are responsible for the implementation of this policy.</p> <p>Goal of the covenant ‘drive to reduce dropout rates’ is to decrease the number of early school leavers in 2016 to no more than 25 000 <sup>(17)</sup>. This together with all parties concerned (schools, municipalities, Regional Registration and Coordination Centre (RMCs <sup>(18)</sup>), care institutions, employers, police, justice, parents and students) in decreasing the number of new school dropouts.</p> <p>Core activities of schools and municipalities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) increased attention for a smooth transition from basic vocational education (VMBO) to vocational education (VET);</li> <li>(b) better career orientation, choice of study and guidance;</li> <li>(c) more and better care at school; offering provisions for appropriate care for overburdened students (dealing with multiple problems and at risk of dropping out). Schools are free to take measures, which varies from coaching in the classroom to setting up special locations for these overburdened students. These students are for example receiving adjusted classes (smaller in size) or different teaching methods. This supports students to remain at school and to gain a</li> </ul>

<sup>(17)</sup> In the year of 2013/14 the number of new early school leavers were 25 970.

<sup>(18)</sup> Regional registration and coordination centre coordinates the reporting and recording of early school leavers and ensure referral and relocation opportunities in education. The Netherlands has 39 regional registration and coordination centers across the Netherlands.

	<p>basic qualification;</p> <p>(d) more attractive education, with sport and culture, to keep young people at school;</p> <p>(e) more space for basic vocational education (VMBO) pupils who learn best working with their hands; by establishing basic vocational education that focus on craftsmanship, students who prefer to work with their hands, get the opportunity to obtain their basic qualification within basic vocational education;</p> <p>(f) more tailored programmes to prevent dropouts;</p> <p>(g) 20 000 recognition of prior learning (EVC) programmes, for dropouts aged 18 to 23 years.</p> <p>How this is carried out:</p> <p>(a) better registration and analysis of early school leavers and absence of students provided by the Dutch government (ministry of education, culture and science);</p> <p>(b) the ministry then informs regions which then are responsible for reducing ELET within the group of youngsters and to accompany them to a starter qualification. The Ministry of Culture, Education and Science will support these regions until 2016 with data documents and account managers of the Ministry <sup>(19)</sup>.</p> <p>As an additional incentive to the (performance driven) covenants, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science makes funding available until 2016 for municipalities and schools.</p>
<p>Elements of the strategy that are explicitly linked to VET</p>	<p>This policy is for both secondary education <sup>(20)</sup> (VMBO) and VET schools.</p> <p>Elements that are explicitly linked to VET schools are:</p> <p>(a) better career orientation, choice of study and guidance;</p> <p>(b) more and better care at school;</p> <p>(c) more attractive education, with sport and culture, to keep young people at school;</p> <p>(d) more tailored programmes to prevent dropouts;</p> <p>(e) 20 000 recognition of prior learning (EVC) programmes, for dropouts aged 18 to 23 years.</p>

<sup>(19)</sup> Letter from Ministry Education, Culture and Science to Parliament's second chamber, March 2015 (only in Dutch).

<sup>(20)</sup> Secondary education (VMBO) refers to ISCED 2 level.

Scope	Description
National and/or regional strategy/action plan to reduce ELET	<p>Regional Registration and Coordination Centre <sup>(21)</sup> (RMC Centre already exists since 1994, so before the policy ‘drive to reduce drop-out rates’).</p> <p>RMC centres have a legal responsibility to reduce early school leavers.</p> <p>The arrival of the national policy (drive to reduce drop-out rates) and its associated covenants has contributed to the fact that the RMC’s have been given a more prominent role.</p> <p>Goal of the RMC-centres is to follow young people up to their 23rd until they have obtained a basic qualification. As Youngsters over 18 years without a starter’s qualification are under the RMC legislation, it is a regional responsibility to coordinate and monitor ESL.</p> <p>Core tasks of the RMC region are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) referral and placement of ESLs <sup>(22)</sup>;</li> <li>(b) encouraging cooperation between all parties in the region that deal with young people up to 23 years;</li> <li>(c) achieving a comprehensive approach with a customised programme for young people that accompanies them to work or education.</li> </ul>
Elements of the strategy are explicitly linked to VET	<p>The strategy refers to all educational levels including VET schools.</p> <p>All elements of this policy are linked to VET schools.</p>

Scope	Description
National and/or regional strategy/action plan to reduce ELET	<p><b>Early school leavers: one year later (since 2013)</b></p> <p>National policy as part of ‘the drive to reduce drop-out rates’ strategy. The regions (RMSc) are responsible for the implementation of this policy.</p> <p>Goal: following up dropouts for a year, with the ambition that 70% of these young people will no longer be an ESLer or will be employed a year later <sup>(23)</sup>.</p>

<sup>(21)</sup> Regional registration and coordination centre coordinates the reporting and recording of early school leavers and ensure referral and relocation opportunities in education. The Netherlands has 39 regional registration and coordination centers across the Netherlands.

<sup>(22)</sup> RMC’s receive weekly (personalised) reports from DUO about students who unsubscribed from of school and have no basic qualification. The RMC regions work based on these data.

	<p>Core tasks:</p> <p>(a) the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science facilitates the RMC centres with data (based on the data of BRON) of young people that have no basic qualifications and education a year after they drop-out of school. RMC employees contact the youngsters (via letter or telephone) for an appointment. Based on that interview a programme is set up (this is not a fixed process but tailor made) with the aim of enabling youngsters to obtain a basic qualification or guidance to work;</p> <p>(b) the RMC centres support early leavers in terms of getting back to education or work to gain a basic qualification. The RMC centres are responsible to make tailor-made agreements with institutions and other organisations regarding coaching youngster back to either VET or work.</p>
Elements of the strategy are explicitly linked to VET	<p>The strategy is implemented in all educational levels including VET schools.</p> <p>Elements that are explicitly linked to VET schools are: the moment a VET student (18 plus) is a drop-out, the RMC centre is informed (based on the data that is maintained at national level and at the level of VET schools).</p>

### 3. Recent policy initiatives

Scope and questions	
<p>New policy initiatives being undertaken that include a role for VET to reduce ELET: either</p> <p>(a) reduce ELET from VET;</p> <p>(b) reduce ELET (in general) through VET</p>	<p>Various types of policy initiatives (preventive, intervention or compensation) are being developed each school year based on facts and figures of BRON<sup>(24)</sup>, digital absence portal and the performance of VET schools regarding ELVET.</p> <p>Extra attention to lagging VET schools in 2015:</p> <p>(a) 'Top-6 approach' is an intervention to reduce ELET from VET<sup>(25)</sup>. Meetings are organised with the six VET school with the highest rates of ELVET. The Minister of</p>

<sup>(23)</sup> Ministerie van Onderwijs Cultuur en Wetenschap (OCW), Nieuwe Voortijdige Schoolverlaters, cijferbijlage VSV brief 2015 (only in Dutch).

<sup>(24)</sup> BRON is a unique registered data set of all Dutch students. The database contains learners' specific information about his/her personal characteristics (e.g., gender, ethnicity and receives special care at school), schooling (e.g., school type, school track and major subjects) and about the parents of the learner (e.g., single parent household).

<sup>(25)</sup> Letter from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science to Parliament's second chamber, March 2015 (only in Dutch).

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education culture and science, Jet Bussemakers, talks periodically with the boards of these institutions and the responsible alderman about the latest ELVET developments on institution and regional level and the measures they are taking to reduce ELVET <sup>(26)</sup>;

- (b) project absence 18+ we miss you is an Intervention to reduce ELET from VET<sup>(27)</sup>: In this project, the staff of the regional registration and coordination centres (RMC) received professionalisation training, allowing more attention to addressing absenteeism of students older than 18. RMC centres and VET schools work on a joint agenda for reducing absenteeism;
- (c) earlier application <sup>(28)</sup> is preventative to reduce ELET form VET. It aims at improving the intake procedure at VET schools in order to contribute to a smoother transition to VET. Early registration of students wishing to enter VET was made compulsory in the view of the Ministry of Culture, education and Science. Earlier application contributes to the early identification of youngsters who have not chosen for a study after graduating from basic vocational (VMBO) schools or youngsters who are in doubt of which study they want to follow. This way, schools (VMBO in particular) know that these youngsters need more guidance to choose for the appropriate study within VET;
- (d) strengthening of career orientation (LOB) is a preventative and an intervention initiative to reduce ELET from VET <sup>(29)</sup>. Further investment in career orientation within VET, so that the career orientation of students are strengthened and anchored in policy and execution. This should result in further reduction of ELET and efficient learning routes;
- (e) education that fits <sup>(30)</sup> with the labour market is a preventative and an intervention initiative to reduce ELET from VET: VET schools must continue to adapt to the changing labour market. There is still room for improvement. From 1st August 2015 the law 'macro efficiency VET' takes effect. With this law, VET schools are required to provide objective information about quality and relevance of the education regarding the labour market to their potential students. This should enable new students to make a substantiated choice when choosing an education.

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<sup>(25)</sup> Source: Interviews with stakeholders at measure-level

<sup>(27)</sup> Letter from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science to Parliament's second chamber, March 2015 (only in Dutch).

<sup>(28)</sup> Ibid.

<sup>(29)</sup> Ibid.

<sup>(30)</sup> Ibid.

## 4. Stakeholder cooperation

Questions	Answers
<p>What are and have been the main influences of stakeholders in the development and implementation of VET related policies specifically to reduce ELET?</p> <p>(a) Employers,            (b) trade unions social partners,            (c) VET institutions,            (d) other learning providers.</p>	<p>Regarding the policy 'The drive to reduce drop-outs'.</p> <p>The three responsible parties namely Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Dutch municipalities and educational institutions (both basic vocational education and VET) have signed a tripartite agreement also called a covenant to reduce the ELET rate. The Dutch municipalities and the educational institutions possess the funds they receive from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. During administrative consultations between the alderman, the executive boards of VET schools and the principals of secondary education (voortgezet middelbaar onderwijs) they look at ways to use the funds to reduce ELET. The account managers of the ministry of education, culture and science overlook that these meetings are planned and they discuss the ELET numbers at regional level with the educational institutions and municipalities. That means that an initiative to reduce ELET is always commissioned by one of the signatories of the covenant.</p> <p>An example of an initiative could be the decrease of the risk of school failure for vulnerable (at risk) young people with little or no internship opportunities during their study. Employers are approached by VET schools within the same region (one of the signatories of the tripartite agreement) to increase the prospect of internships for the vulnerable youth by focussing more on cooperation between VET schools and employers <sup>(31)</sup>.</p>

## 5. Monitoring systems

Question	Answers
<p>What specific early leavers monitoring systems exist?</p>	<p>There are two monitoring tools used in the Netherlands provided by the government: BRON and the digital absence portal.</p> <p>Name/descriptor: basic records database of education (BRON) is a centralised system, 2005</p> <p>Aims: all pupils have been allocated an education number, which makes it possible to track them. Each pupil at a publicly funded secondary or VET schools is registered in</p>

<sup>(31)</sup> Source: Interviews with stakeholders at measure-level.

	<p>BRON with a unique number, name, address, date of birth, school, and school type. A young person who is no longer registered in BRON is classified as an early school leaver. This measuring system means that no early school leaver remain unregistered (<sup>32</sup>).</p> <p>Year introduced: 2005</p> <p>Coverage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) it enables to breakdown data on early leaving to regional, local as well as school-level;</li> <li>(b) the database identifies as early leavers all those young people who were enrolled in formal education in the previous year, who have not gained a qualification and who are no longer recorded as students in the year of measurement;</li> <li>(c) schools submit the data but it undergoes an external audit by the ministry of education, culture and science before its validation;</li> <li>(d) general education, VET schools included.</li> </ul> <p>Important note: VET schools can choose for which type of monitoring system (e.g. EduArte) they want to work with. EduArte is a student information system used for VET. Teachers can keep track of personalised data like presence, registration and grades. Also, study guidance (studieloopbaan) conversations can be tracked. A school system like EduArte is complementary to the data from BRON.</p>
<p>What are the data used for? How it is used by VET institutions/providers?</p>	<p>VET schools use the data from their own system (e.g Eduarte) to develop interventions at individual level, which for example are carried out by career counsellors (mentors). The interventions are also developed for specific target groups (at risk students). Additionally, the monthly reports (facilitated by the ministry of education, culture and science which are based on BRON data) are being used at regional and school level to discuss the ELVET numbers within the 39 regions. During administrative meetings between municipalities and educational institution, the ELVET monthly reports serve as input to develop projects to further reduce ELVET percentages.</p>
<p>How is the monitoring system linked with offering support measures? (i.e. is it being used to contact</p>	<p>Within VET schools, 'education centres' are provided. When youth are at risk of dropping out, an employee of the educational centre starts a conversation with them and tailored programmes will be organised with the aim that</p>

<sup>(32)</sup> The approach to early school leaving, policy in the Netherlands and the provisional figures of the 2012-13 performance agreements.

those who have dropped out to provide support to find employment, education or further training?)	these young at risk get a basic qualification. Combining work <sup>(33)</sup> and education (dual track) could also be an example of a tailored programme <sup>(34)</sup> .
What role is/ has the monitoring system played in the design, development or implementation of the policies, strategies and initiatives?	<p>Based on the data of the BRON new policies are developed by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. The 'Top 6 approach' to reduce the percentage of ESL (see chapter 'recent policies and initiatives') is an example of this.</p> <p>Results of the monitoring system help VET schools to develop local initiatives by engaging in partnerships (with for example employers) to provide students with internships or work. The initiatives differ because the local population of young people differ per region <sup>(35)</sup>.</p>

Question	Answers
What specific early leavers monitoring systems exist?	<p>Name/descriptor: digital absence portal is a centralised system.</p> <p>Aims: the purpose of the digital absence portal is to utilise a simplified, computerised reporting procedure so as to focus time and effort on engaging with truants and guiding them back to school. Data from the portal makes it possible to generate monthly reports on pupils who are 'absent' or who are deregistered without a basic qualification.</p> <p>Year introduced: 2009</p> <p>Coverage:</p> <p>(a) all schools report data on student absences in this register and this is done on daily basis. If a student has been absent more than 16 hours in four weeks, the family of the student are contacted by the school attendance officer;</p> <p>(b) the school attendance officer is a person employed by the municipality and in charge of monitoring this data and engaging with young people and parents.</p> <p>(c) information from this system is reported on monthly basis to municipalities as well as to schools.</p> <p>Important note: VET schools can choose for which type of monitoring system (e.g. Eduarte) they want to work with. EduArte is a student information system used for VET. Teachers can keep track of personalised data like</p>

<sup>(33)</sup> Combining work and education means that the education is combined with a permanent employment.

<sup>(34)</sup> Source: interviews with stakeholders at measure-level.

<sup>(35)</sup> Ibid.

	presence, registration and grades. Also, study guidance (studieloopbaan) conversations can be tracked. A school system like EduArte is complementary to the data from the absence digital portal ( <sup>36</sup> ).
What are the data used for?  How it is used by VET institutions/providers?	VET schools solely provide the data on their students' absences to the digital absence portal.  Results of the monitoring system help VET schools to develop local initiatives by engaging in partnerships (with for example the health sector) to provide students with care at school. Schools are offering provisions for appropriate care for overburdened students (dealing with multiple problems and at risk of dropping out). Schools are free to take measures, which varies from coaching in the classroom to setting up special locations for these overburdened students. These students are receiving adjusted classes (smaller in size) and different teaching methods. This supports students to remain at school and to gain a basic qualification.
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?)	Data from the digital absence portal makes it possible to generate monthly reports on learners who are 'absent' or who are deregistered without a basic qualification". On a national level, the digital absence portal is generating monthly reports based on anonymised data. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science uses these reports as benchmarks for regions. VET schools receive monthly personalised reports from the digital absence portal. Schools use these reports to inform teachers (teams) about the absence of their students. The teachers based on this information can undertake actions.
What role is/ has the monitoring system played in the design, development or implementation of the policies, strategies and initiatives?	Based on the data of the digital absence portal, new policies are developed for example by the Ministry of Education culture and science. The 'project absence 18+ we miss you' to reduce the percentage of ELET (see chapter 'recent policies and initiatives') is an example of this.

## 6. Effect of the economic crisis

Question	Answers
In what ways has the role of VET in reducing ELET been influenced by the economic crisis:	Effects of the economic crisis on VET: (a) employers have less time for supervision of interns and there are less internships available. This way, there are fewer learning opportunities for VET students in

<sup>(36)</sup> Ibid.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) supply of VET places;</li> <li>(b) demand for VET places;</li> <li>(c) qualifications of VET students (increasing decreasing);</li> <li>(d) popularity and perception of VET;</li> <li>(e) increase/decrease in public resources for VET;</li> <li>(f) access to 'second chance' VET opportunities.</li> </ul>	<p>organisations. Chance of failure, specifically for youth at risk, has therefore increased <sup>(37)</sup>.</p> <p>(b) because of the economic crisis many jobs were cut in the labour market. Therefore VET schools often have an insufficient fit with the labour market, which results in training and education of students for jobs that no longer exist. This decreases the chances for students to find an internship, which increases chances of dropping out <sup>(38)</sup>.</p> <p>Note: the resources and budgets that are made available by the government to counter ELET were not reduced despite the economic crisis. Budgets are structurally defined and are now prolonged to the school year 2015-16 <sup>(39)</sup>.</p>
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## 7. Factors positively contributing to the effectiveness of VET in reducing ELET

Stakeholders interviewed mentioned several factors positively contributing to the effectiveness of VET which in turn can reduce ELET/ELVET. The factors reported are:

### 7.1. National/regional policy factors

- (a) Solid national monitoring systems (BRON, digital absence portal) on which new interventions to reduce ELET are based.
- (b) The political attention given to ELVET encourages schools, municipalities and the ministry to act and prevent/combat ELVET.
- (c) The increased collaboration between different actors ensures (e.g. ministry of education, culture and science, municipalities and VET schools, etc.) developing projects tackling ELET/ELVET.
- (d) ELET/ELVET has been on the political agenda for years, despite the economic crisis, the budget is not reduced and resources are still placed at disposal.

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<sup>(37)</sup> Source: interviews with stakeholders at measure-level.

<sup>(38)</sup> Ibid.

<sup>(39)</sup> Ibid.

- (e) To make the policy 'drive to reduce drop-outs' work, a covenant has been prepared to create a more clear view on ownership of the various actors (schools, ministry and regions) to reduce ELET.

## Systemic features of the (VET) education system

- (a) The quality agreements (e.g. reduce ELVET, professionalise teachers, etc.) that apply in school based VET are linked to a performance subsidy. The vocational schools receive these subsidies when they reach the quality standards; this causes a decrease in ELVET.
- (b) Earlier application (vroeger aanmelden voor het MBO) is an important intervention that helps improve the transition from secondary education (VMBO) to VET school. Improvement of the intake procedure results in a more fluid transition to VET and will result in fewer youngsters dropping out. The legislation initiated by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science will start in the school year 2016/17 <sup>(40)</sup>.

## 8. Factors constraining the effectiveness of VET to reduce ELET

Stakeholders interviewed highlighted various factors, which constrain the effectiveness of VET to reduce ELET/ELVET.

### 8.1. National/regional policy factors

Research did not yet result in information on this topic.

### 8.2. Systemic features of the VET education system

- (a) When young people leave the educational system without basic qualifications, and want to reintegrate VET, they have to start at the first level of vocational education. This often results in unmotivated students, because they are not assessed on their actual level. This may lead to difficulties in reintegration.

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<sup>(40)</sup> Letter from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science to Parliament's second chamber, March 2015 (only in Dutch).

- (b) Often there are not enough resources (time, teachers, etc.) to design and implement tailor-made programmes for youth at risk.
- (c) Not every teacher has the appropriate education or skills to cope with youngsters at risk of dropping out of school. This makes it difficult to provide the support they might need.