The role of VET in breaking the vicious cycle of early leaving and unemployment

Irene Psifidou
Expert
Department for Learning and Employability

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Cedefop work to combat early leaving

- Supports evidence based policy making
- Promotes cooperation and mutual learning
- Offers guidance and tools for policy makers and VET practitioners
Consequences of leaving education early

Unemployment affects persons with at most lower secondary education

More than half of the 12 million long-term unemployed today are low-educated

Low-educated workers are five times more likely to be low-wage earners

Approximately 60% of those who left prematurely are inactive or unemployed
What EU data tell us

**TARGET:** < 10%

**2016:** 10.7%

**2012:** 12.7%

- Male: 12.2%
- Female: 9.2%
- Foreign-born: 19.7%
- Native-born: 9.8%

Source: Eurostat, April 2017
The EU definition and its limitations

People aged 18-24 who have only lower secondary education or less and are no longer in education or trainings

- Single definition, different phenomena:
  - Drop out from a program
  - Did not register in the next level
  - Did not succeed in the final examination

- Unable to capture where young people drop out from:
  - Lower or upper secondary education? Or the transition?
  - General or VET?
Knowledge gaps

- What type of education/training programme have learners left? Why?
- How many of them return to education?
- How is early leaving from VET understood and measured?
- And how many graduate eventually?
- How is early leaving from VET understood and measured?
- What makes policy makers and VET practitioners to tackle early leaving effectively?
- How to (further) empower their role?
- ...
3 pillars of Cedefop research

Measuring
Data analysis

Understanding
Factors associated with early leaving

Combating
Policies and tools to tackle early leaving
Research methodology

Focus on 16 countries:
Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal and UK

44 measures selected for in-depth analysis

Qualitative analysis: 917 interviews

Quantitative analysis:
Adult Education Survey (AES)
Labour Force Survey (LFS)
Programme for International Assessment of Adult Competences (PIAAC)
National data (FR, NL)
What Cedefop found

- Experiencing dropout ≠ early leaving
  - 58% of ELET are ‘non-starters’
  - 42% have experienced a drop-out event

- 1/3 of people with drop-out experience achieve upper-secondary qualification
  - Most of them achieve VET qualifications

- Still, the majority of those who drop out at one point remain early leavers
VET: a story of contradictions

- Often higher rates of early leaving in VET than in general education (AT, BE, DK, NL, FR)

- The majority of those at risk of EL who shift to VET

- High participation in VET

- High incidence of apprenticeships

- Graduate

- Low drop out rates

- Lower rates of early leaving
Factors leading to early leaving from VET

- Difficulties related to health, well-being, social issues, poverty etc.
- Non-supportive family environment
- Education underachievement
- Students from migrant or ethnic minority origin being more frequently at risk of ELET
- Students' inappropriate orientation
- Inappropriate programme content and organisation
- Negative self-perception linked to education failure
- Lack of readiness to work
- Attraction of the labour market
- Difficult relationships in the workplace and in the classroom
Factors related to LM emphasized by the interviewees

- Academic-achievement
- Learning-difficulties
- Prior-failure
- Wrong-orientation
- Absenteeism
- Conflict-with-teacher/trainer
- Curricular
- Professional-identity
- Negative-choice-of-programme
- Negative-self-perception
- No-aspirations
- School-climate
- Disengagement-from-education
- Lack-of-positive-vision due to low employment rates
- Absence of educational offer
- Basic-skills
- Commitment-to-learning
- School-support
- Image-of-VET
- Preference-for-work-based-learning
- Teachers/trainers-professional-capacity
- Mismatch-in-expectations
- Age-of-entry-to-apprenticeships
- Over-burden
- Conflict-with-peers
- Bullying
- Work-readiness
- Artificial-training-situation
- Early-tracking
- Disconnection-school-apprenticeship
- Fit-with-the-training-company
- No-attendance-to-education
Factors related to LM emphasized by the interviewees

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

1. Understanding learner's profile
2. Providing tailored responses to individual needs
3. Developing comprehensive data collection and monitoring systems
4. Conducting systematic evaluation
1. Understanding learner's profile

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

- Escapist
- Non-conformist
- Lost in transition
- Resigned
- Obligated
- Marginalised

Preventive measures

Intervention measures

Compensation measures
2. Providing tailored responses to individual needs

- Escapist: Counselling, coaching and mentoring, Parents’ engagement, Whole school approach
- Non-conformist: Responsibilise and empower teachers and trainers
- Lost in transition: Developing work readiness, Individualised development and learning plan, Developing social and communication skills, Remediation support to learners in difficulty
- Resigned: Training to upgrade basic skills, Activities aimed at developing self-confidence, motivation and engagement
- Obligated: Opportunities to transit to training/ apprenticeship
- Marginalised: Comprehensive support provided by multidisciplinary staff
3. Developing comprehensive data collection and monitoring systems

- Detecting early the distress signs of learners at risk of dropping out
- Reaching out timely to those who have already left education

What is currently being monitored:

Data on absenteeism

Persons no longer registered in ET

Apprenticeship contract dissolution
4. Conducting systematic evaluation

- Of the 337 VET related policies and initiatives analysed by Cedefop, only 44 were supported by evidence of success.

- Few evaluations analyse the real impact on individual learning pathways.

- Even fewer analyse how and why a given intervention or policy influenced education outcomes.
How to (further) empower VET practitioners and policy makers?
VET toolkit for tackling early leaving

Source of support to policy makers and education and training providers to:

- **identify** early the signs of disengagement and prevent early leaving
- **support** learners at risk of dropping out
- **improve** attendance or reduce dropout
- **monitor** early leavers systematically to reach out to them in time
- **motivate** and re-engage early leavers
- **evaluate** measures targeted at preventing or reducing early leaving from (vocational) education and training
What tools are available?

- **Good practices** – successful measures implemented in different EU countries to tackle early leaving.
- **Quick wins** – relatively simple activities that can contribute to tackling early leaving.
- **Self-reflection tool for policy-makers** to identify the strengths and weaknesses of policies put in place.
- **Evaluation plans** for policy-makers or VET providers to design an appropriate monitoring and evaluation approach.

contact us

**Cedefop**

Irene Psifidou
Expert
Department for learning and employability

vet.toolkit@cedefop.europa.eu
www.cedefop.europa.eu/TEL-toolkit
VET toolkit for tackling early leaving

Source of support to policy makers and education and training providers

What is the VET toolkit for tackling early leaving?

A Europe-wide toolkit inspired by successful VET practices in helping young people to attain at least an upper secondary qualification.

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 re-integrate into education or training and the labour market.

Read more>

WWW.CEDEFOP.EUROPA.EU/TEL-TOOLKIT