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Structural Indicators on Early Leaving from Education and Training in Europe – 2016



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This publication is based on a chapter in the Eurydice report [Structural Indicators for Monitoring Education and Training Systems in Europe 2016](#). The report, which was published in November 2016, provides background information to the [Education and Training Monitor 2016](#). It examines education structures, policies and reforms in five key areas:

1. Early childhood education and care
2. Achievement in basic skills
3. Early leaving from education and training
4. Higher education
5. Graduate employability

The following chapter is re-printed as a separate publication to draw attention to the specific policy area of early leaving from education and training and to reach those who are interested in policy issues in this field.

The information covers 40 European education and training systems. It has been collected through a questionnaire completed by national experts and representatives of the [Eurydice Network](#).

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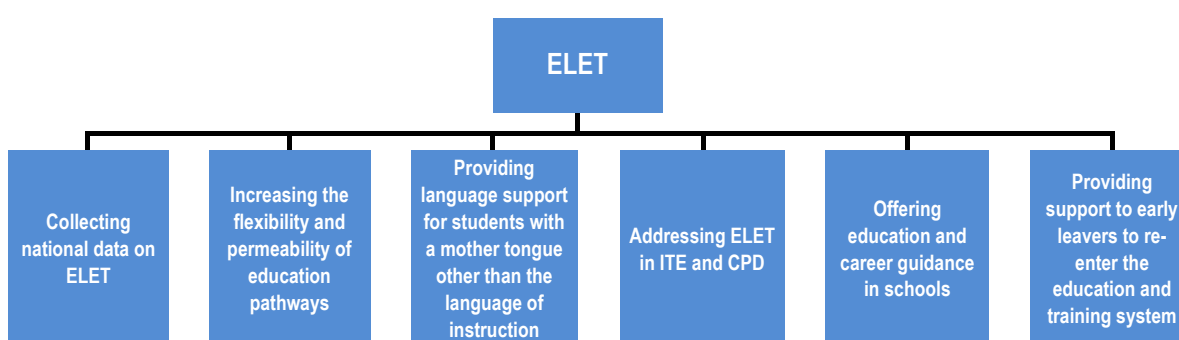
INTRODUCTION

Early leaving from education and training (ELET) is a serious issue in many EU countries and has attracted the attention of many researchers, policy-makers and educators. Although the situation varies between countries and the underlying reasons for leaving school early differ from student to student, the process leading up to it has a number of common elements, including learning difficulties, socio-economic problems, and a lack of motivation, guidance or support.

As a consequence of leaving education and training early, young people may be faced with reduced opportunities in the labour market and an increased likelihood of unemployment and socio-economic disadvantage; and they may be less inclined to participate in political, social and cultural spheres of life. On the other hand, there is an abundance of research indicating that a higher level of education can lead to many positive outcomes for the individual as well as for society. They include improved employment prospects, higher salaries, better health and well-being for young people; and improved social cohesion, lower public and social costs, and higher productivity and growth for societies.

Dealing with the underlying causes of the problem and developing ways to overcome it is therefore a central aim in Europe. One of the twofold headline targets for education in the Europe 2020 strategy is to reduce the rates of early leaving to below 10 % by 2020 ⁽¹⁾. In June 2011, education ministers agreed on a 'Framework for coherent, comprehensive, and evidence-based policies' to tackle early leaving ⁽²⁾. Since then, working groups at European level, bringing together national policy-makers and practitioners, have looked at examples of good practice and promoted an exchange of experiences on fostering educational success and preventing early leaving ⁽³⁾. In November 2015, the conclusions of the Education Council reiterated the need to actively pursue efforts to achieve, and where possible even exceed, the Europe 2020 target ⁽⁴⁾.

The latter document further invites Member States to continue the process of developing and implementing comprehensive strategies or integrated policies. These should comprise evidence-based prevention, intervention and compensation measures, which are embedded in high-quality education and training programmes. Many education policies and measures therefore have the potential to contribute to reducing early leaving. For the 2016 structural indicators on early leaving, a selection of key policies that together cover the three important areas of action – prevention, intervention and compensation – has been made, and is illustrated in the diagram below.



⁽¹⁾ Europe 2020. A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, COM (2010)2020. (http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm)

⁽²⁾ Council Recommendation of 28 June 2011 on policies to reduce early school leaving, OJ C 191, 1.7.2011. (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:191:0001:0006:en:PDF>)

⁽³⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/school/early-school-leavers_en.htm

⁽⁴⁾ Council conclusions on reducing early school leaving and promoting success in school. OJ C 417, 15.12.2015. (<http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14441-2015-INIT/en/pdf>)

The indicators focus on school education: primary education and general secondary as well as school-based initial vocational education (IVET) (ISCED levels 1, 2 and 3). Adult education may be covered too in the context of compensation policies (see Section 6 on providing support to early leavers to re-enter the education and training system).

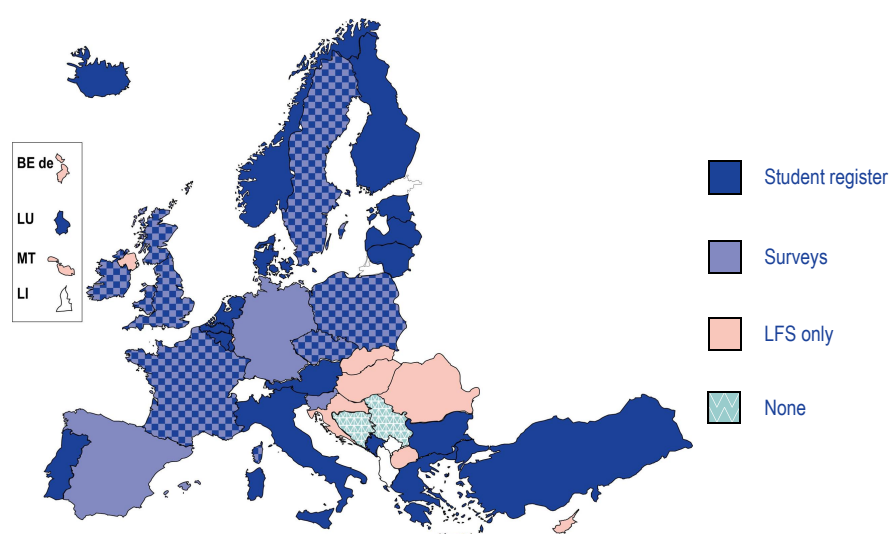
In this analysis, 'early leaving from education and training' refers to students leaving education and training before completing the upper secondary level and obtaining a corresponding school leaving certificate. This broad definition encompasses the young people who according to their own country's definition are considered to be early leavers. This includes, for example, young people who leave (or drop out of) school without completing what is considered in the national context as basic education (usually primary and lower secondary education).

More detailed information on the topic of early leaving from education and training can be found in the Eurydice report *Tackling Early Leaving from Education and Training in Europe: Strategies, Policies and Measures* (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice/Cedefop, 2014). The main findings of this report are also presented in the Eurydice Brief *Tackling Early Leaving from Education and Training* (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015).

1. COLLECTING NATIONAL DATA ON ELET

In order to develop and implement targeted policies to address early leaving from education and training, the scale of the problem and the reasons behind it must be understood. To this end, most European countries have developed specific data collection systems in addition to the data gathered for the EU-Labour Force Survey (see Figure 1). The exceptions are the German-speaking Community of Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Hungary, Malta, Romania, Slovakia, the United Kingdom (Northern Ireland) and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia where ELET data is gathered only through the EU-Labour Force Survey; and in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as Serbia there is no data collection on early leaving.

Figure 1: Sources for the collection of national data on ELET (other than Eurostat LFS), 2015/16



Source: Eurydice.

Explanatory note

ELET data from student registers is collected automatically from school administration systems based on students' personal data. They can be used for an ad hoc assessment of the scale of early leaving at different public authority levels. Quantitative and qualitative surveys are other tools being used for gathering ELET data, which can also contribute to a better understanding of the reasons for early leaving.

In the large group of countries where national data on early leavers is being collected, the main data source is the student register. Although the register may not have been developed with the specific objective of measuring early leaving, the fact that these registers are based on individual student data means that an exact number of early leavers can be obtained by comparing records from one school year to the next. This can also be useful when evaluating the effectiveness of policies to reduce early leaving. Last but not least, student register based data can be employed to monitor absenteeism, thereby acting as an early warning system to alert schools and authorities if they need to intervene to help students at risk of leaving early.

The majority of countries collecting ELET data through student registers do so with the objective of producing statistical data. However, in some countries ⁽⁵⁾, these data collections are also intended to be used to track and follow up on individual students; in some cases, this is the main purpose of the data collection.

An example of a data collection used to produce statistics on early leaving can be found in **Poland** where the Education Information System (*System Informacji Oświatowej*, SIO) gathers information about the total number of students who drop out of school in a given school year. It covers the whole population of students up to the age of 18 (ISCED 1-3) in both general education and IVET. The data, which is collected twice a year and aggregated at central, regional, local and school level (except ISCED 3 data, which is only aggregated at central, regional and local level), is used for several purposes: 1) policy-making in education at all levels of administration; 2) supporting an effective funding system for education; 3) analysing the efficiency of the use of public resources on education; 4) coordinating the pedagogical evaluation system across the country and enhancing the quality of education.

In **France**, the ELET data collection based on the student register mainly serves to identify and support individual early leavers. The Inter-Ministerial System for Information Exchange (*Système interministériel d'échange d'informations*, SIEI) makes it possible to identify, contact and support students over 16 years of age who have left the education and training system (general education and IVET) without obtaining a qualification. It is managed by the General Directorate for School Education in the Ministry of Education. Data is collected twice a year and is aggregated at national, regional, local and institutional level. The data is confidential and only available to designated people.

Moreover, eleven countries/regions ⁽⁶⁾ refer to national or regional surveys that have been or are currently being carried out on the subject of early leaving. Their main purpose is the production of sample based statistical data on early leaving; in some cases this is accompanied by qualitative information.

In the **Czech Republic**, for example, the National Institute for Education (NUV) has been carrying out several surveys on an ad-hoc basis providing in addition to quantitative data, facts and contextual information on early leaving from general education and vocational education and training. The latest one, the 2013 'Study on early leaving from education' (*Zpráva o předčasných odchodech ze vzdělávání*) ⁽⁷⁾, provides an overview of the current state of the problem as well as best practices at both national and international level in reducing it, with particular emphasis on success factors. It also provides recommendations for measures to tackle the problem at school level, service provision level and policy level.

In the **United Kingdom (Scotland)**, the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) records the qualification attainment of Scottish school leavers, and Skills Development Scotland (SDS) undertake an annual destination of school leavers survey. The SQA database and the SDS survey are complementary; they are combined to present a picture of how achievement at school influences what happens within the first year after leaving.

In all European countries, data collections on early leaving, based either on student registers or on surveys, cover general education and IVET. The exception is Ireland where only general education is considered. In the Netherlands, on the other hand, ELET data is also gathered at the level of adult education (VAVO) in addition to general education and IVET.

⁽⁵⁾ French Community of Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Greece, France, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Sweden, the United Kingdom (Wales and Scotland), Norway and Turkey

⁽⁶⁾ The Czech Republic, Germany, Ireland, Spain, France, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden and the United Kingdom (England, Wales and Scotland)

⁽⁷⁾ http://www.nuv.cz/uploads/Predcasne_odchody_12_2013.pdf

Given that ELET data produced from a student register is based on individual records, any level of data aggregation is possible, the only limitation being the provisions of data protection and privacy. In most countries, the data is aggregated at the top, regional and local level; school level ELET data can also be obtained in around half of the European countries. Student register based ELET data can be updated in real time through the schools' administrative systems; however, it is generally processed once or twice a year. Most countries publish the data, with the exception of Denmark, Montenegro and Turkey.

ELET data based on surveys is often only aggregated at national level. The data is mostly collected once a year or on an ad hoc basis, and it is published in all the European countries.

Recent policy developments:

Changes made in relation to the collection of data on early leaving have occurred in a number of countries over the last few years, including the implementation of new data collection instruments:

In **Poland**, a qualitative survey is currently being carried out in the context of the 'Reducing Early School Leaving in Europe' (RESL.eu) project ⁽⁸⁾ in addition to the already established student register based ELET data collection. The information gathered through the survey can be used to gain an understanding of young peoples' underlying reasons, opinions and motivations for leaving education and training early.

In several other countries, existing ELET data collections have been expanded or modified:

In **Estonia**, data on early leavers is now also being aggregated at regional and local level in addition to national and school level; and in **Lithuania**, statistical data on young people who have left the education and training system early is now being produced twice a year instead of once a year.

In **Greece**, a ministerial decision was issued on 31 December 2015, which envisages the expansion of the 'MySchool' data collection system, from which ELET data is derived, to schools and institutes of vocational training (SEK and IEK). Moreover, advanced mechanisms will be developed for displaying figures related to early leaving by making use of specific technologies for geographical representations. Advanced information and communication technologies will also be applied for the management of ELET data to facilitate a systematic study of the issue, the factors influencing it and its development over time. And finally, training will be provided to the teaching community in the use of these new applications.

Two other countries are planning future adaptations of their ELET data collection:

The 2015 concept note 'Together against school drop-out' in the **Flemish Community of Belgium** announces plans to integrate ELET data with other indicators (e.g. truancy) to provide more comprehensive information.

In **Hungary**, where there is currently no data collection on early leaving, a pilot data analysis is planned using the Public Education Information System (*Közoktatási Információs Rendszer, KIR*). The implementation of an early warning system is also planned for the second half of 2016. This tool will be mainly used by schools, which will then also be responsible for providing support.

Finally, in contrast to the examples mentioned above, two countries have reduced their ELET data collection activities:

In **Malta**, no other ELET data is being collected apart from that gathered in the context of the EU-Labour Force Survey.

In **Norway**, the 'New Possibilities' project, which was a national initiative to increase the successful completion of upper secondary education and training, ended in 2013. As a result, the Directorate for Education and Training has reduced the frequency of the ELET data collection from twice a year to the original once a year.

⁽⁸⁾ <https://www.uantwerpen.be/en/projects/resl-eu/>

2. INCREASING THE FLEXIBILITY AND PERMEABILITY OF EDUCATION PATHWAYS

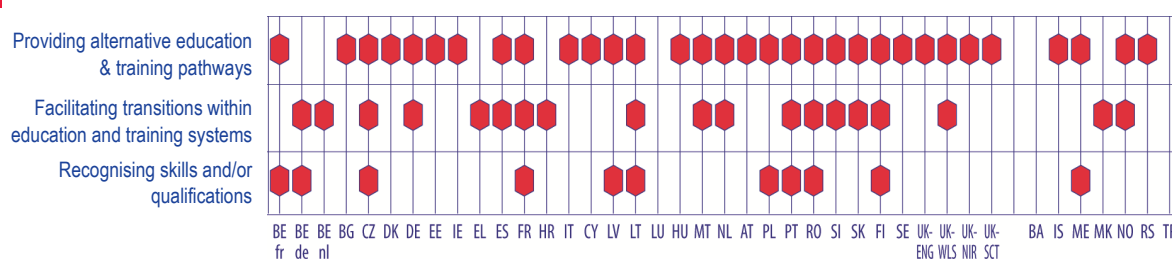
Having to make early choices between education pathways can result in demotivation for students who have not been guided well. Education pathways that are too rigid can, moreover, create obstacles to completing upper secondary education (European Commission, 2013). Policies aimed at increasing the flexibility and permeability of education pathways have the potential to facilitate a smooth transition between education levels or different types of education, e.g. between general education and vocational education and training (VET), thus helping to prevent early leaving.

Across Europe, all countries apart from Luxembourg, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey report having introduced such policies, some only in recent years (see Figure 2). Most countries have developed alternative ways for students to pursue education and training and obtain a qualification. This includes efforts to strengthen the VET sector.

For example, in **Italy**, the reform of upper secondary education in 2010, with a full roll-out in 2014/15, is providing a more coherent and flexible framework of pathways in general, technical and vocational education. Upper secondary education now comprises six types of general education *lyceum* (arts, classical studies, scientific studies, foreign languages, music and dance and humanities) offering five-year programmes. Technical institutes offer five-year programmes, mainly in economic and technological fields (comprising 11 pathways); and vocational institutes under the Ministry of Education offer five-year programmes, mainly in the fields of services, industry and handicrafts (comprising six branches). In both technical and vocational institutes, system flexibility will allow the VET content of study to be widened to meet needs, including the demand for skills in the local labour market. This flexibility is expressed in terms of adapting annual curriculum time. Moreover, in order to provide extra flexibility in education pathways in secondary education, a further IVET offer called 'leFP' targets 14-17 year-olds to help them comply with their obligation to stay in education and/or training until the age of 18 or at least until they acquire a 3-year vocational qualification, if they do so before they reach this age.

In **Finland**, 'Flexible basic education' at lower secondary level has been found to be an effective measure to prevent early leaving from education and training. According to the Basic Education Act, a local authority may provide flexible basic education activities as part of grades 7-9 of basic education to the extent decided by the local authority. The objective is to reduce drop-out from basic education and to prevent exclusion. Instruction is provided in small groups at school, in workplaces and in other learning environments, making use of multidisciplinary cooperation, support and counselling services. Admission to the activities is based on an application submitted by a student or his/her parents or guardians. Flexible basic education activities aim to reinforce students' motivation to study and develop their life skills in a holistic manner. In addition to completing the basic education syllabus, the objective is to support students in their transition to upper secondary level and to strengthen their capacities to cope with their studies. Special attention is focused on working approaches that consolidate the common educational work of parents and guardians and everyone working within 'Flexible basic education'.

Figure 2: Focus of policies and measures for increasing the flexibility and permeability of education pathways, 2015/16



Source: Eurydice.

Explanatory note

Policies for increasing the flexibility and permeability of education pathways generally seek to minimise the risk of early leaving by offering students a wider choice of programmes or alternative pathways (academic, technical or vocational), as well as providing opportunities for students to change tracks or programmes which do not meet their needs. Other policies are designed to ensure a smooth transition between education levels and programmes (especially from general education to VET programmes). Measures to improve the recognition of skills and qualifications can help students progress to the next level or re-engage in education or training if they have left the system prematurely.

Around half of European countries aim to increase the flexibility and permeability of education pathways through policies that facilitate transitions between levels of education or from general school education to VET programmes.

For example, in **Spain**, the 2013 'Act on the Improvement of the Quality of Education' aims to increase flexibility in compulsory and post-compulsory education by, amongst other things, building bridges between all training pathways as well as within them so that students' decisions are not irreversible. For instance, students who hold the basic vocational training certificate may obtain the lower/compulsory secondary education certificate by sitting the final test at the end of compulsory secondary education; similarly, students holding a technical or advanced technical certificate may obtain the upper secondary (*Bachillerato*) certificate by sitting the final test at the end of upper secondary education. Another example of a bridge between training pathways applies to students who do not successfully complete the vocational training cycles but, nevertheless receive a certificate for the modules, units or subjects they passed. This certificate has academic validity and provides partial accreditation of the professional competences acquired in relation to the 'National System of Qualifications and Vocational Training'.

One of the areas of focus of the strategic plans undertaken by the **Maltese** Ministry for Education and Employment is on providing improved support for the transition of young people both within different tracks of the education system as well as from education to employment. One such measure is the setting up of a network across sectors and among different educational institutions to provide information to students and parents about the different education and training pathways available, thereby enabling students to make more informed choices and helping to avert early leaving. The methods used include online blogs, career fairs, and the provision of qualified career advisors throughout the summer.

Finally, in several countries/regions⁽⁹⁾, the policies for increasing the flexibility and permeability of education pathways encompass the recognition of skills and/or qualifications acquired through prior learning, including in some cases through non-formal learning.

Recent policy developments:

Policies to increase the flexibility and permeability of education pathways play an important role in ensuring that students successfully complete their education and training and obtain a qualification. Therefore, many European countries have either implemented new policies in this area in recent years, or they have further developed and adapted existing policies. Amongst the latest reforms are those to improve vocational education and training programmes:

In the context of the second volume of the 'Regional Development Project' (REK, 2015-2019) in the **German-speaking Community of Belgium** and the 'Long-term Plan for Education and the Development of the Education System of the **Czech Republic**' (2015-2020) emphasis is being put on increasing the permeability of vocational education by, amongst other things, reinforcing the common elements of the vocational fields of education.

The 'Education development guidelines 2014-2020' in **Latvia** provide young people with an opportunity to undergo training in short (12 to 18 months) vocational education programmes. Similarly, the education reform in **Iceland** aims to increase the number of graduates until 2018 by investigating ways to shorten vocational programmes. Vocational education is being reviewed in order to simplify basic programmes and develop a tertiary vocational education level.

Other reforms to be implemented from the 2016/17 school year are intended to facilitate transitions within or between education and training programmes and to improve the recognition of skills and/or qualifications acquired through prior learning:

With the implementation of the new **Bulgarian** 'Pre-school and School Education Act', which will become effective as of August 2016, conditions will be provided for the validation of the competences acquired through non-formal learning and informal learning. It is envisaged that the validation, which will compare the competences acquired through non-formal education and informal learning with those required for the completion of the grade, stage or level of education and/or a professional qualification, will be used to issue an official document that will allow access to the education system, access to training for vocational qualifications and facilitate access to the labour market.

⁽⁹⁾ French and German-speaking Communities of Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Finland and Montenegro

Amendments to legislation in **Greece** ⁽¹⁰⁾ are reforming the secondary cycle of VET from the 2016/17 school year. The streamlining aims to reduce early leaving by improving links with work settings. It also enhances the permeability between programmes within a more flexible framework so as to increase the number of students enrolling and staying in education and professional training.

In **France**, young people who fail the examinations of a general, technical or vocational programme will be able to keep the benefit of any pass marks and simply re-visit the topics that they have failed; they will also receive individualised support throughout the year. Moreover, a period of consolidation and confirmation will be implemented at the beginning of vocational education and training programmes to enable students to change their specialty or be re-directed towards general education or technical programmes in the case of a mismatch.

In **Croatia**, 'Regulations on the Conditions for and Methods of Continuing Education for Higher Level Qualifications' were passed in January 2016 by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, which enable students who obtained a low level qualification at ISCED 3 (mostly in VET) to continue their studies in order to achieve the qualification required to enrol in higher (university) education.

Finally in the **Netherlands**, from the 2016/17 school year, institutions will also be able to offer a continuous learning route across different pathways: from VMBO to MBO level 3 (in addition to the route for craftsmanship to level 2). Moreover, institutions can also offer a continuous learning route from VMBO (middle-management vocational (KB), combined (GL), theoretical (TL)) to MBO level 4. This is an expansion of the technology route. The government expects that this will help young people to see vocational education as an attractive alternative to general education.

3. PROVIDING LANGUAGE SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH A MOTHER TONGUE OTHER THAN THE LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

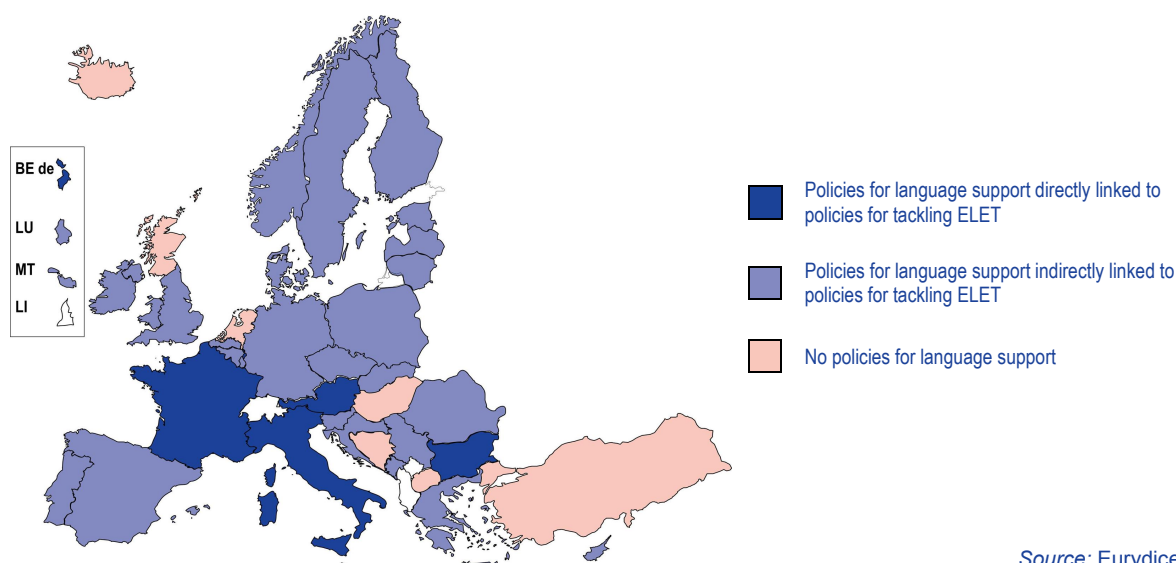
Empirically, young people born abroad tend to be over-represented among those leaving education and training early in many European countries ⁽¹¹⁾. Insufficient skills in the language of instruction are amongst the factors that can have an impact on the education attainment of students from a migrant or ethnic minority background (European Commission, 2013). They may therefore require support to acquire or improve their competences in the language of instruction in order not to fall behind in their studies.

Providing language assistance for students who have a mother tongue other than the language of instruction is part of the on-going support in many European countries (see Figure 3; and for information on language support provided in ECEC see European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2016, Chapter 1). In most countries, the focus is on providing support in learning the language of instruction; and a few countries, such as Denmark, Luxembourg, Austria, Poland, Slovenia, Finland and Sweden, systematically provide lessons or assistance in the migrant students' mother tongue. Countries reporting that there are no policies for language support for students with a mother tongue other than the language of instruction include Hungary, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom (Scotland), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Law: 4386/11.05/2016/(Gov.Gazette: A' 83): www.minedu.gov.gr/eidiseis/20132-09-05-16-oi-allages-stin-texniki-epaggelmatiki-ekpaidefsi-mia-nea-arxi-gia-ta-epal.

⁽¹¹⁾ Eurostat (EU-LFS, 2014) [edat_lfse_02]

Figure 3: Links between ELET policies and language support policies for students whose mother tongue is other than the language of instruction, 2015/16



Source: Eurydice.

Explanatory note

Students with a mother tongue other than the language of instruction include first- and second-generation migrants as well as students from an ethnic minority background.

Where policies for language support exist, in most cases they are not directly aimed at reducing the numbers of students leaving education and training early, but rather to help students from a migrant/minority background access the curriculum and adapt to school life. However, in five countries – the German-speaking Community of Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Italy and Austria – the policies for language support are clearly linked to measures for tackling early leaving.

In both **Bulgaria** and **Austria**, additional support in the language of instruction for students with a different mother tongue is included as an action in the respective strategies for reducing the numbers of those leaving education and training early.

In the **German-speaking Community of Belgium**, **France** and **Italy**, policy documents concerned with the integration of newly arrived migrant students refer to language support as an essential measure to promote the achievement of these students and reduce the risk of them leaving education and training early.

Recent policy developments:

Several countries have introduced recent changes to their policies on language support that are indirectly linked to efforts to reduce early leaving from education and training:

In December 2015, the **Estonian** Ministry of Education and Research and the Foundation Innove signed a contract under which the Foundation will provide additional financial support in 2016 for Estonian language studies in basic schools. It will be used for remunerating teachers who work with students in content and language integrated study groups or with newly arrived migrant students acquiring Estonian as the language of instruction.

In both Italy and Cyprus, the recent developments target in particular unaccompanied foreign minors:

In **Italy**, special attention is being dedicated during the 2015/16 school year to resourcing and monitoring schools attended by unaccompanied foreign minors through a specific project with earmarked resources. The Ministry's regional branches have selected 60 projects submitted by schools or networks of schools following the criteria specified in a national call. The call made specific reference to the number of unaccompanied foreign minors registered in Italy since June 2015, with particularly significant figures in the regions of Sicily, Latium, Lombardy and Calabria.

The **Cypriot** Ministry of Education and Culture, applying European directives for the education of all underage persons, has prepared a special programme for the education of unaccompanied minors. During the 2015/16 school year, the programme is being implemented in two general secondary schools and two vocational schools in Cyprus and involves 55 unaccompanied minors. These children take classes in Greek as a second/foreign language as well as common core courses.

Finally, in Latvia, the language support measures envisaged for the near future are intended to directly impact on the number of students leaving the education and training system early:

Educational support (through formal and non-formal education activities) for students with a different mother tongue is included in the **Latvian** curriculum. Under the objective of 'reducing early school leaving by implementing preventive and intervention measures' in 2017, the support for students with a different mother tongue will be intensified.

4. ADDRESSING ELET IN INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION AND CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The role of the teacher is key in helping learners fulfil their potential. If students are to succeed in school, it is particularly important that teachers know how to detect learning difficulties and signs of disengagement at an early stage. Strengthening teachers' capacities to take immediate action to support students who are struggling at school is therefore essential for tackling some of the root causes of early leaving. The skills teachers need include the ability to provide active and differentiated teaching and learning, undertake formative assessment, manage diversity, build relationships (including with parents and external partners) and resolve conflicts. Initial teacher education (ITE) and continuing professional development (CPD) should address these and other related issues. Teachers should be provided with opportunities to gain practical experience in dealing with the educational needs of students at risk and as well as the chance to engage in peer learning and to collaborate with other teachers and schools confronted with high levels of socio-economic disadvantage and school drop-out (European Commission, 2015).

Because higher education institutions as well as the providers of teacher training are usually autonomous institutions, this means in practice that the content of ITE and CPD is often unknown at government level. However, national policies promoting the inclusion of matters related to ELET within teacher training can help ensure that student teachers as well as those who are already part of the teaching workforce can gain skills or improve their practice in this area.

Across Europe, only five countries – Germany, Ireland, France, Austria and Slovenia – have policies in place that promote the inclusion of early leaving or related issues in ITE (see Figure 4a). In Germany, France and Austria, ELET is explicitly addressed in ITE policies:

In **Germany**, the 'Action Framework for Reducing the Number of Early Leavers from Education and Training' ⁽¹²⁾ specifies the need to improve the knowledge and skills of teachers with regard to the pedagogical and psychological foundations of teaching and learning through ITE. This includes training in analysing students' competences, developing adapted forms of learning assessment and providing individually tailored learning support.

The **French** 'Framework of Professional Skills for Teachers' states that teachers must take into account student diversity and learn to detect early signs of possible dropping-out. They must also be aware of the role of the various stakeholders involved in preventing early leaving and base the support provided on teaching and learning plans. This framework underpins the Master's ITE programme 'Careers in Education, Teaching and Training' (*Métiers de l'enseignement, de l'éducation et de la formation*, MEEF). Moreover, since September 2015, the 'National Training Plan for Initial and Continuing Training' has included a specific module on early leaving (i.e. training in identifying early signs of disengagement and potential drop-out). This training module is part the 'National Plan to Combat Early Leaving'.

⁽¹²⁾ http://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/Dateien/veroeffentlichungen_beschluesse/2007/2007_10_18-Handlungsrahmen-Schulabbrecher_01.pdf

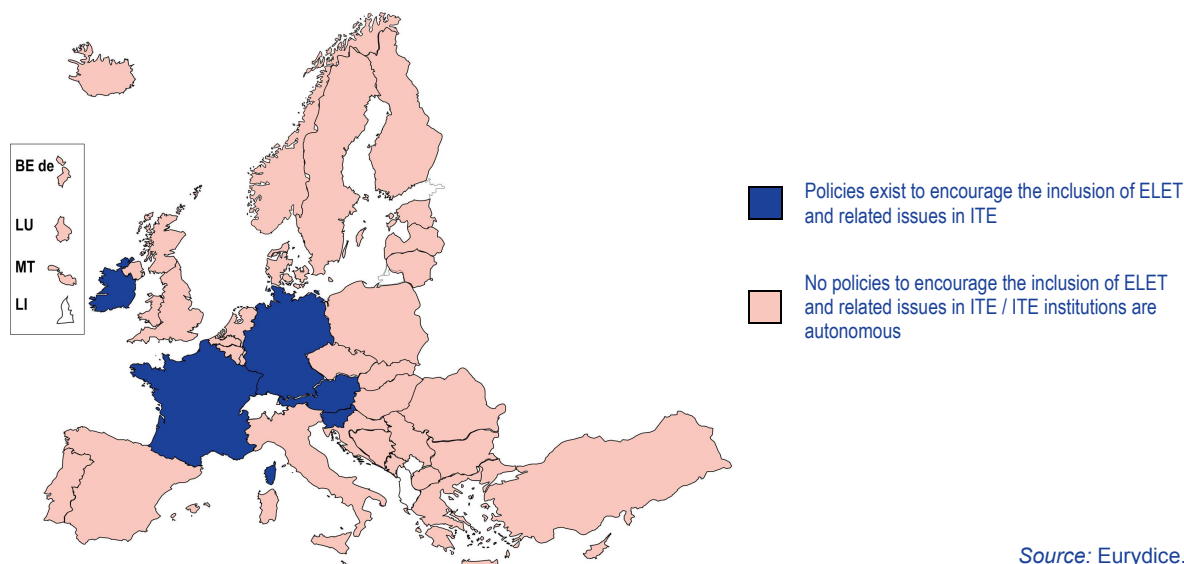
In the process of implementation of the 'New Teacher Training' scheme in **Austria** in 2015/16, a 'Central Guideline on Professional Competencies for Teachers' ⁽¹³⁾ is being applied. With regard to leaving education and training early, this guideline highlights that future teachers must be provided with the skills to understand the challenge of early leaving, detect early warning signs and be aware of their own role in supporting students at risk. The curricula are drafted by the university colleges of teacher education and are approved by the Quality Assurance Council (*Qualitätssicherungsrat*) as well as the Ministry of Education.

While in Ireland and Slovenia, early leaving is not explicitly mentioned in ITE policies, curriculum content and teacher competences directly related to the prevention of early leaving are included in official regulations. In both countries, requirements for the inclusion of topics related to early leaving are included in the criteria for the accreditation of teacher education programmes:

All ITE programmes in **Ireland** must have accreditation from the Teaching Council. The Council's 'Criteria and guidelines for programme providers' ⁽¹⁴⁾ specify mandatory areas of study and outcomes for graduates, which include specific course content on diversity, groups at risk of social or school exclusion and cooperation and collaboration with parents and external agencies. According to the 'Criteria and guidelines', the graduate teacher is required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the factors that promote and hinder learning, the impact of students' backgrounds and identities on learning and the need to provide for the holistic development of the learner, particularly through differentiated approaches.

Similarly, in **Slovenia**, the 'Criteria for the accreditation of the study programmes for teacher education' determine that graduates must acquire specific competences, including taking account of developmental differences in learners; effectively personalising learning content and differentiating between students; using diverse methods of monitoring and assessing students' learning progress and giving constructive feedback; creating a safe and supporting learning environment where students feel accepted, where differences are respected and where independence and responsibility is promoted; expressing positive attitudes towards students, based on understanding and knowledge of their social, cultural, linguistic, religious background as well as other personal circumstances; and gaining the cooperation skills needed to work with colleagues, education specialists and parents.

Figure 4a: Policies to encourage the inclusion of ELET and related issues in ITE, 2015/16



Source: Eurydice.

Explanatory note

Including ELET issues in ITE serves to improve teachers' understanding of the challenge of early leaving. Policies cover, for example, the underlying causes, the main triggers and early warning signs, as well the teacher's own role in both preventing early leaving and supporting students who are at risk. ELET related issues include, for example, support for students from disadvantaged backgrounds and diversity awareness.

⁽¹³⁾ https://www.bmbf.gv.at/schulen/lehr/labneu/paedagoginnenkompetenzen_26988.pdf?4dzqm2

⁽¹⁴⁾ <http://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/Publications/Teacher-Education/Initial-Teacher-Education-Criteria-and-Guidelines-for-Programme-Providers.pdf>

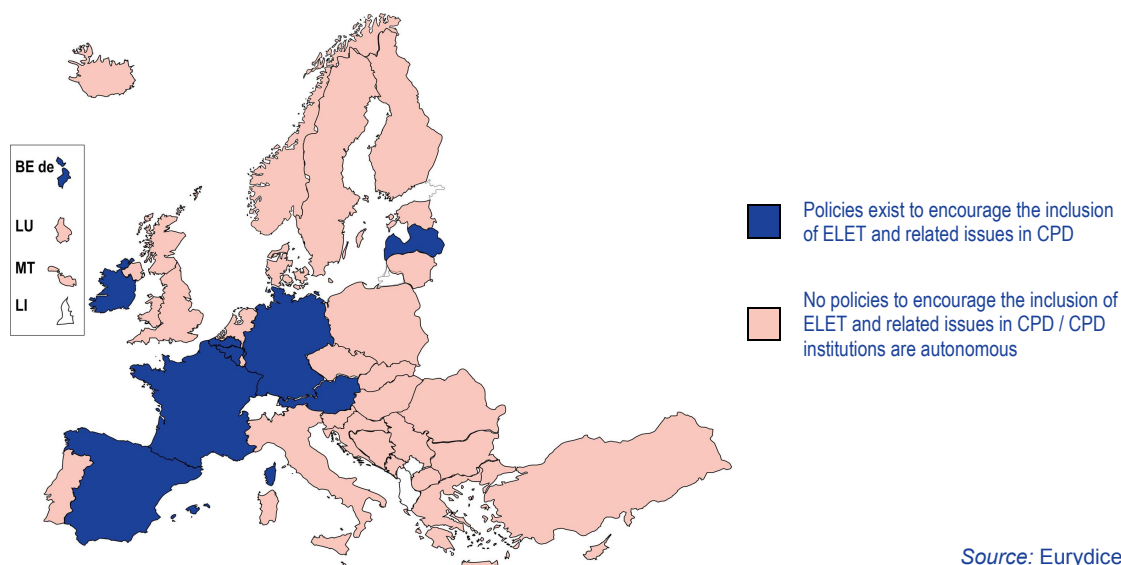
With respect to CPD and the inclusion of issues related to early leaving, nine European countries/regions – all three Belgian Communities, Germany, Ireland, Spain, France, Latvia and Austria – have policies in place that ensure relevant training for teachers (see Figure 4b). The French and Flemish Communities of Belgium, Germany, Spain, France and Austria are amongst those countries with policies ensuring CPD for teachers on the specific issue of early leaving.

For example, every three years the government of the **French Community of Belgium** publishes its priorities in terms of the direction and themes for teachers' CPD organised by the Institute for In-service Training (*Institut de la Formation en Cours de Carrière*, IFC). For the past two years as well as for 2016/17, early leaving has been one of the priorities. IFC offers two specific courses addressing early leaving in its annual training programme. The first one is open to all teachers, regardless of the education level at which they teach, as well as to the employees of the psycho-medico-social centres (*Centres psycho-médico-sociaux*, PMS). The second programme is targeted at teachers at secondary education level and PMS centre employees. The issues covered during the (voluntary) training programmes include: identifying factors and situations that can increase the risk of early leaving; exchanging information between the various professionals in contact with the students in difficulty; providing education and career guidance; and using different strategies that can help students to re-engage in their studies.

Existing policies in the German-speaking Community of Belgium, Ireland and Latvia, on the other hand, address issues which are associated with early leaving.

In **Ireland**, for example, 'Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS), the Action Plan for Educational Inclusion', is the Department of Education and Skills' policy instrument to address and prioritise the educational needs of children and young people from disadvantaged communities, from pre-school through second-level education (3 to 18 years). CPD is provided to primary and post-primary teachers teaching in schools designated disadvantaged under the DEIS programme. It includes in-service training and school-based support in gathering relevant data, analysis of this data, development of related targets, identification of actions, implementation of actions and review.

Figure 4b: Policies to encourage the inclusion of ELET and related issues in CPD, 2015/16



Source: Eurydice.

Explanatory note

Including ELET issues in CPD serves to improve teachers' understanding of the challenge of early leaving. Policies cover, for example, the underlying causes, the main triggers and early warning signs, as well the teacher's own role in both preventing early leaving and supporting students who are at risk. ELET related issues include, for example, support for students from disadvantaged backgrounds and diversity awareness.

Recent policy developments:

In addition to the above mentioned recent developments in the French Community of Belgium, France and Austria, some current reforms to strengthen teachers' skills in dealing with issues related to early leaving can be found in the German-speaking Community of Belgium and in Spain:

In the **German-speaking Community of Belgium** the project 'Personalised Support for Pupils', which is part of the 'Regional Development Project' (REK, 2015-2019), envisages the further development of education and training for teachers in various fields linked directly or indirectly to the aim of reducing early leaving⁽¹⁵⁾. Amongst other topics, CDP is provided on intercultural pedagogy and integrated language support as well as on supporting students with additional learning needs.

Each year, the **Spanish** Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports, through the National Institute of Educational Technologies and Teacher Training (INTEF), issues instructions for teacher training activities. In the instructions for 2015, leaving education and training early has been emphasised. This includes, in particular, training in the different dimensions of diversity in schools and its implications, as well as the identification and early treatment of learning difficulties and meeting students' educational needs. Other areas of focus are collaborative working and coordinating teaching strategies, and managing tools and resources to support student diversity and prevent early leaving.

In Greece and Malta, reforms are planned which will promote the inclusion of early leaving related issues in the training of teachers:

The 'Strategic Policy Framework for Tackling Early Leaving from Education and Training' in **Greece** adopted by the Ministry of Education envisages an action plan for the support and reinforcement of teachers in early childhood education and care, primary and secondary education with the aim of averting early leaving from education and training⁽¹⁶⁾.

The **Maltese** Faculty of Education is currently engaged in reforming ITE. One of the objectives of the reform is to ensure that student-teachers receive training on how to identify students at risk of early leaving and on how to assist them in their learning experience.

5. OFFERING EDUCATION AND CAREER GUIDANCE IN SCHOOLS

Education systems generally have a duty to provide education and career guidance as one of the main elements of the education process. Its role in preventing students from leaving education and training early has been widely acknowledged. Moreover, education and career guidance can help to ease transitions between education levels or pathways and between education and training and employment (European Commission, 2015).

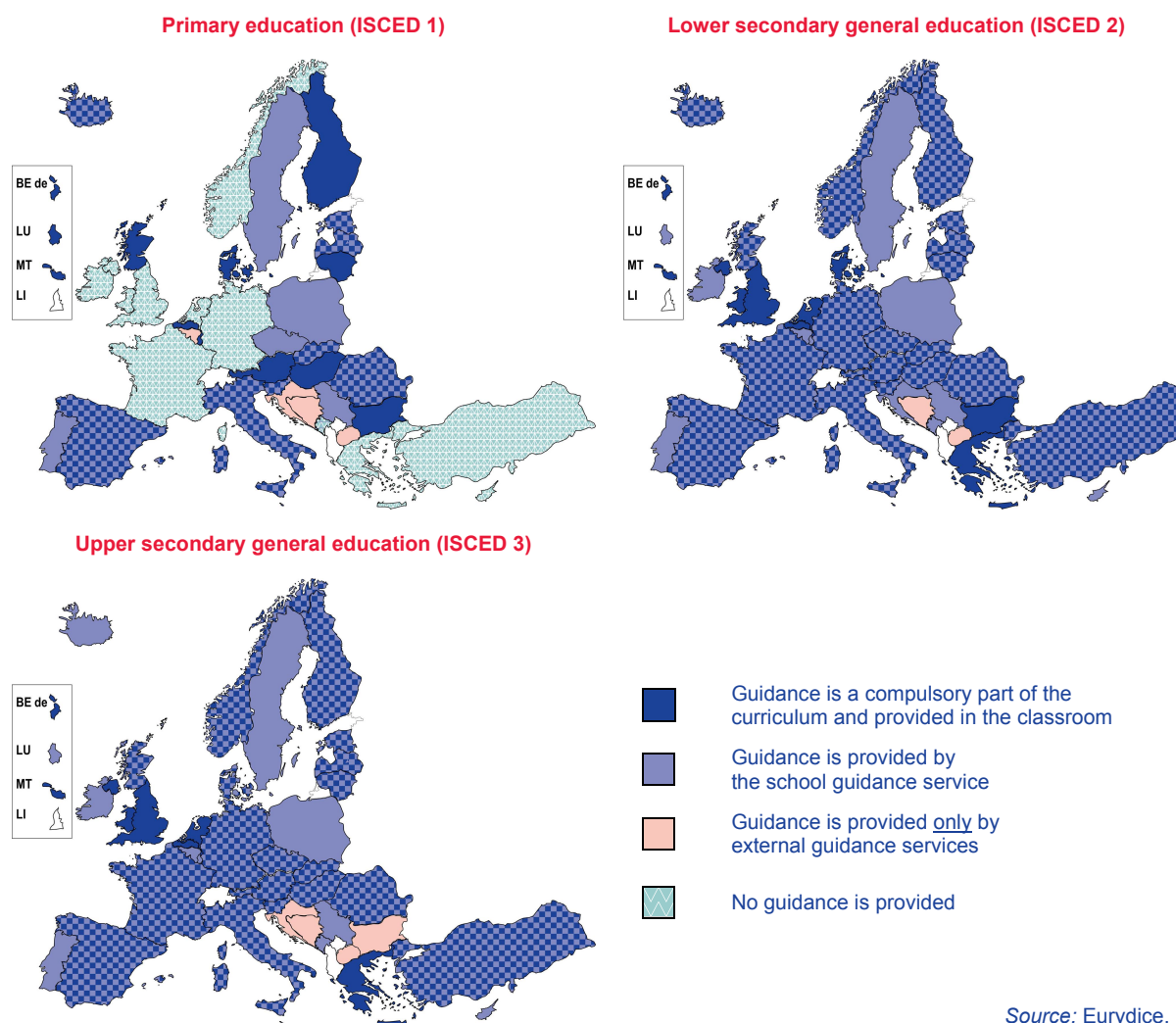
Education and career guidance is traditionally delivered through formally established school-based guidance or counselling services available to students (mainly on an individual basis). However, it has become increasingly popular as an area within national core curricula which have guidance-related objectives to be implemented in the classroom (Sultana, 2004). Consequently, when educational and career guidance is a compulsory curriculum subject, it is systematically provided to all students, thus acting as a preventative measure to help all students stay in education and training. However, when it is left to guidance services to deliver, it may reach only those with specific needs, therefore serving rather as an intervention measure for those already at risk of leaving early (or a compensation measure for those who have left the education and training system early, see Section 6).

Figure 5 presents these two main approaches to delivering education and career guidance in schools in Europe. It also shows which countries provide educational and career guidance only through external services. External guidance services are provided in all European countries. They are often set up as public agencies, specialised in education, training and/or employment, but they may also be NGOs or private enterprises. They often have a wide portfolio and so may complement the services provided within schools. Their role is especially important where guidance is not included in the compulsory curriculum or provided by the school guidance service, as in the case of the French Community of Belgium (at primary level), Croatia (at primary and upper secondary level), Bulgaria (at upper secondary level), and Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (at primary, lower and upper secondary level).

⁽¹⁵⁾ http://www.dglive.be/PortalData/2/Resources/downloads/rek/REK4-72dpi-KORR_23sept.pdf

⁽¹⁶⁾ <http://www.minedu.gov.gr/espa>

Figure 5: Education and career guidance in schools, 2015/16



Source: Eurydice.

Explanatory note

Education and career guidance is a service that provides pupils and students with information as well as support for developing their decision-making and other skills important for managing their educational and/or career choices. Guidance may also include psycho-social work or counselling to help students, in particular those at risk of leaving early, as they progress through education and training. Education and career guidance may be part of the curriculum (included in official steering documents), offered through a formally established in-school guidance service, and/or provided through an external guidance service, i.e. outside of schools.

Country-specific note

Germany: At upper secondary level, education and career guidance is currently provided through the curriculum in five out of 16 *Länder* (North Rhine-Westphalia, Baden-Wuerttemberg, Thuringia, Hamburg and Hessen); the aim is to put this approach in place in the remaining 11 *Länder*. The 'Skills Analysis' tool used (which is part of the 'Educational Chains' initiative), is being implemented in all schools. The Federal-*Länder* agreements currently being negotiated (see below in the section on recent policy developments) are expected to lead to a country-wide implementation of this approach in the near future.

The figure shows that all European countries have arrangements in place to make education and career guidance available to students in at least one level of education. However, it also demonstrates that in 12 countries/regions⁽¹⁷⁾, guidance is provided to students in secondary education and is not available to those at primary level. Examples of countries where education and career guidance is

⁽¹⁷⁾ Germany, Ireland, Greece, France, Cyprus, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom (England, Wales and Northern Ireland), Montenegro, Norway and Turkey

provided in the classroom as a compulsory part of the curriculum at primary level include Austria and the United Kingdom (Scotland).

In **Austria**, education and career guidance is provided through the primary school curriculum subject 'Personal and Social Education' (*Sachunterricht*), a subject familiarising pupils with scientific and technical phenomena as well as with social, economic and historical aspects of their environment. As part of this subject, pupils' parents come into school to talk about their profession and working life, and themed visits are made to firms and work-places, thus giving children practical experience and their first taste of career guidance.

The 'Career education standard 3-18' ⁽¹⁸⁾ in the **United Kingdom (Scotland)** is one component of the all age careers service delivered in Scotland. It recognises the journeys that children and young people make as they progress from age 3-18 and aims to ensure that young people can relate their learning to a future career path of their choosing and through this drive up attainment.

When looking in more detail at the ways in which education and career guidance is provided across the three levels of education, it becomes clear that at secondary level, slightly more countries deliver support for students through a school guidance service than through the curriculum. In some countries, this is the only way guidance is provided in schools, or it is the only form of guidance provision at certain levels of education. This is the case at primary level in the Czech Republic; at lower secondary level in Croatia; at lower and upper secondary level in the French Community of Belgium, Ireland, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Poland and Montenegro; at upper secondary level in Germany and Iceland; and at all three levels of education in Portugal, Sweden and Serbia.

Education and career guidance may also be an integral part of national curricula at one or more education levels. About half of all education systems provide curriculum-based guidance in the classroom starting at primary level, but more countries do so at the level of lower and/or upper secondary education. European countries generally recommend a broad approach to education and career guidance which links the different forms of provision and incorporates a wide range of methods. However, it should also be noted that the high level of school autonomy in some countries, means schools are free to plan and organise their own guidance activities.

Recent policy developments:

As a result of recent policy developments, the provision of education and career guidance has been strengthened in Germany and in France:

In **Germany**, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) and the Federal Employment Agency (BA) consolidated and expanded certain funding measures for education and career guidance. The 'Educational Chains' initiative (*Abschluss und Anschluss – Bildungsketten bis zum Ausbildungsabschluss*) aims to provide 'Skills Analyses' for students in school, and career start coaching for up to 115 000 students at around 2 550 schools between 2015 and 2018. These activities will be supplemented by careers orientation measures, career entry support activities and special training support measures. Negotiations between the Federal and *Länder* governments are almost finalised, which will ensure the successful implantation of the 'Educational Chains' approach in the regular *Länder* education and training systems through Federal-*Länder* agreements.

In **France**, the 'Future Journey' initiative (*Parcours avenir*) has been rolling out since September 2015 resulting in the provision of information, guidance and experience of the economic and professional world to individual students at lower and upper secondary level through the compulsory curriculum. During compulsory education, the knowledge and competences that students acquire in the framework of this initiative are taken into account in the evaluation of learning outcomes.

In two other countries – Latvia and Cyprus – education and career guidance, which was previously also provided as a compulsory part of the curriculum in the classroom, is now only provided through in-school guidance services:

⁽¹⁸⁾ https://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/CareerEducationStandard0915_tcm4-869208.pdf

In **Cyprus**, from the 2015/16 school year career guidance will still be provided by an in-school guidance service, but not as part of the curriculum at lower secondary level. In practice, guidance practitioners visit school classes, at both lower and upper secondary level, and introduce students to the principles of career education for between 3-6 teaching hours in one school year. Outside of this, students can obtain education and career guidance through school guidance services and further time can be spent on personal or group guidance interviews.

The 'Career education plan for general education institutions and vocational education institutions 2015-2020' in **Latvia** promotes career education and counselling in schools and fosters career competence for teachers⁽¹⁹⁾. However, as a result of this plan, guidance at primary level is provided only through the school guidance service and is no longer part of the compulsory curriculum.

Finally, two countries/regions have announced future plans for the development of education and career guidance in school:

In the **German-speaking Community of Belgium**, the second volume of the 'Regional Development Project' (REK, 2015-2019) envisages a more intensive use of the 'Skill guide to career choice preparation and career guidance' (*Rahmenplan: Schulische Berufswahlvorbereitung und Berufsorientierung*) providing students with information and guidance on educational and vocational paths as well as employment opportunities.

In the **former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**, career guidance provided in schools is currently being planned and prepared by the Ministry of Education and Science. Under the supervision of experts in the field, a pilot project for career guidance is being developed in several schools in the country. The national Centre for Vocational Education and Training may become involved in the process of providing career guidance for students in VET.

6. PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR EARLY LEAVERS TO RE-ENTER THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM

Whilst effective policies for reducing the numbers of students leaving education and training early should be focussed on its prevention, compensation measures are also necessary for students who, for different reasons, have left the education system prematurely. Such measures are intended to help early leavers re-engage in education and training and obtain necessary qualifications and skills (European Commission, 2013a).

All European countries/regions (except for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia) have such policies and measures in place (see Figure 6). In most cases, they are second chance schemes, which provide early leavers with alternative education and training pathways leading to a formal qualification and/or they prepare them for employment.

For example in the **Flemish Community of Belgium**, early leavers are identified by the Flemish Employment Services and Vocational Training Agency (VDAB). The VDAB offers several qualification pathways for young people who have left school with or without a qualification. Well-known pathways, are the so-called OKOT-pathways (Dutch acronym for pathways leading to an educational qualification) where a jobseeker with a VDAB training contract follows a qualifying pathway in an educational centre. These OKOT-pathways focus on job sectors in which there is a shortage of skilled workers. The qualifications obtained through these OKOT-pathways are at different levels: vocational, general secondary education or a professional bachelor's degree. Second chance education provided through this programme is fully subsidised by VDAB and organised in cooperation with the institutions for adult education.

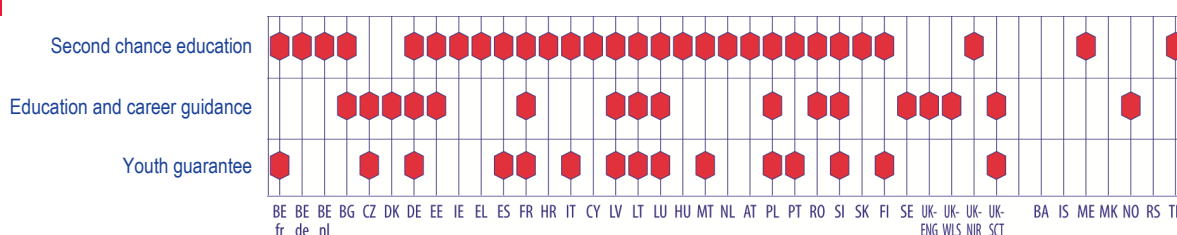
In **Poland**, as in many other countries offering second chance schemes as a compensation measure for early leavers, young people over 18 years, who are no longer under the compulsory education obligation, can complete or complement their general education and/or gain a professional qualification directly in adult education institutions. This pathway offers a range of education and training opportunities, including general skills training according to the general education core curriculum, training based on the core curriculum for particular professions and professional skills training run in cooperation with the labour offices and based on labour market needs.

⁽¹⁹⁾ <http://likumi.lv/ta/id/278999>

In several countries/regions, including the French and German-speaking Communities of Belgium, Malta and Slovenia, the main emphasis of second chance schemes is on individually tailored programmes that focus on the re-integration of early leavers into mainstream education.

For example in **Slovenia**, a non-formal, publicly recognised and funded programme helps early leavers gain basic skills and become motivated to re-enter formal education (or in some cases to enter employment). The programme is targeted at young people age 15 to 25, who have left education early and have not completed basic or upper secondary education. It mainly aims to help young people improve their knowledge and skills and increase their opportunities to re-enter formal education. It combines different approaches for raising the participants' level of basic skills, enhancing their motivation to learn, and providing them with career guidance and support to develop a vision for their lives.

Figure 6: Focus of policies and measures to help early leavers re-enter the education and training system, 2015/16



Source: Eurydice.

Explanatory note

Policies and measures that help young people who have left education and training early to re-enter the system include initiatives aiming to identify and contact individuals, provide special education and training programmes that allow early leavers to complete their studies and obtain a qualification, and offer guidance and counselling services.

In more than one third of the European countries/regions, the main emphasis of these compensation measures is to provide the young people with education and career guidance. Often this is combined with practical skills training, one-to-one or group counselling and similar support measures.

An example of this approach can be found in **Denmark**, where the municipal youth guidance centres receive information from the central data base and contact young people up to the age of 25 who have not completed an education programme and are not in education, training or employment. The guidance counsellors discuss with the young person different options and schemes that may help them get back into education, training or employment. Cooperation across sectors is a key concern for this guidance service. The aim is to ensure a coherent guidance system and a regular exchange of experience, knowledge and best practice. The youth guidance centres are thus obliged to cooperate closely with primary and lower secondary schools and youth education institutions as well as with local businesses and the public employment services.

Finally, in fifteen countries/regions ⁽²⁰⁾, some of the main efforts to help early leavers re-engage in education and training and obtain a qualification take place within the context of 'Youth Guarantee' related policies and measures. The 'Youth Guarantee' is an approach to tackling youth unemployment, endorsed by the EU countries in April 2013 ⁽²¹⁾. It seeks to ensure that all young people under 25 – whether registered with employment services or not – get a good quality, definite offer within four months of leaving formal education or becoming unemployed. This offer should be for a job, apprenticeship, traineeship, or continuing education and should be adapted to each individual's need and situation.

For example, as part of the Youth Guarantee scheme in **Portugal**, apprenticeship courses are offered that are initial professional training courses designed for young people between 14 and 24 years of age who have not completed upper secondary education. The aim of these courses is to enable young people to continue their studies and to prepare them for working life. The apprenticeship

⁽²⁰⁾ French Community of Belgium, the Czech Republic, Germany, Spain, France, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Finland and the United Kingdom (Scotland)

⁽²¹⁾ Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee. OJ C 120, 26.4.2013. ([http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32013H0426\(01\)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32013H0426(01)))

courses, which are part of the National Qualification System, are equivalent to upper secondary education and training and award dual certification, academic and vocational. They include several support measures for trainees, such as study grants and meal and transport allowances.

Similarly in **Finland**, the 'Young Adults' Skills Programme' (NAO), administered by the Ministry for Education and Culture, was implemented in 2013-2016 as a part of the Youth Guarantee system. The target group of the programme is young adults aged 20-29 who do not have an upper secondary qualification. They are offered the opportunity to obtain a vocational upper secondary qualification, a further vocational qualification or a specialist vocational qualification or to get credits for parts thereof. The programme has been implemented in approximately 60 educational institutions across the country.

Recent policy developments:

Changes to the policies and measures to help early leavers re-enter the education and training system focussing on the three broad areas mentioned above – second chance education, youth guarantee and education and career guidance – have occurred recently in the French Community of Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece and the United Kingdom (England and Wales).

In the **French Community of Belgium**, one of the objectives for the implementation of the Youth Guarantee in 2016 is to strengthen the coordination of provision. Through the initiative 'Find-Mind-Bind' of the Brussels-Capital Region, this area and two community committees, the Flemish Community and the Walloon Region, collaborate to identify young people who have left school but are not registered as job seekers. These youths are then provided with the guidance and support needed to start a training course, an internship or employment.

In **Bulgaria**, a new regulation has been in place since January 2015 which allows for the recognition of the professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal education or learning. It also facilitates access to training that leads to a professional qualification which, in turn, provides access to the labour market.

The **Greek** 'Strategic Policy Framework for the Elimination of ELET' (2014-2020) includes as a priority the establishment of a system of second chance schools as a point of reference for early leavers. It promotes a model of cooperation between the different institutes offering second chance education. This requires greater access to and permeability of programmes as well as investing in training for teachers to use more relevant pedagogies that meet the needs of the early leavers. The strategic framework further highlights the need to make concerted efforts to identify and support persons with disabilities who are not in education, training or work.

A recent policy development in the **United Kingdom (England and Wales)**, the 'Youth Obligation', means that from April 2017, young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) will participate in an intensive regime of support from the first day of their benefit claim, and after six months they will be expected to apply for an apprenticeship or traineeship, gain work-based skills, or go on a mandatory work placement to give them the skills they need to move into sustainable employment.

In the **United Kingdom (Wales)**, additional funding was announced in October 2015 to help reduce the number of young people who are NEET. Under the 'Communities for Work' programme, youth mentors and Job Centre Plus specialist employment advisors based in Wales' in 52 'Communities First' areas will provide intensive, one-to-one guidance to help young people access education, training and employment. The project will support them to overcome the challenges they are facing, such as a lack of confidence, skills or experience, and help with the costs which may be a barrier to getting a job, such as the travel costs of attending an interview or buying suitable clothing.

GLOSSARY

Country codes

EU/EU-28	European Union	NL	The Netherlands
BE	Belgium	AT	Austria
BE fr	Belgium – French Community	PL	Poland
BE de	Belgium – German-speaking Community	PT	Portugal
BE nl	Belgium – Flemish Community	RO	Romania
BG	Bulgaria	SI	Slovenia
CZ	Czech Republic	SK	Slovakia
DK	Denmark	FI	Finland
DE	Germany	SE	Sweden
EE	Estonia	UK	United Kingdom
IE	Ireland	UK-ENG	England
EL	Greece	UK-WLS	Wales
ES	Spain	UK-NIR	Northern Ireland
FR	France	UK-SCT	Scotland
HR	Croatia		
IT	Italy	EFTA/EEA	and Candidate countries
CY	Cyprus	BA	Bosnia and Herzegovina
LV	Latvia	ME	Montenegro
LT	Lithuania	MK*	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
LU	Luxembourg	NO	Norway
HU	Hungary	RS	Serbia
MT	Malta	TR	Turkey

MK*: ISO code 3166. Provisional code which does not prejudice in any way the definitive nomenclature for this country, which will be agreed following the conclusion of negotiations currently taking place under the auspices of the United Nations (http://www.iso.org/iso/country_codes/iso_3166_code_lists.htm)

Key definitions

Continuing professional development (CPD) refers to in-service, formal and non-formal professional development activities, which may, for example, include subject-based and pedagogical training. In certain cases, these activities may lead to further qualifications.

Early leaving from education and training (ELET) refers to all forms of leaving education and training before reaching the end of upper secondary level and an equivalent school leaving certificate. This broad definition encompasses countries' own definitions of who in the national context is considered to be an early leaver. It includes, for example, countries who refer to young people who leave (or drop out of) school without completing what is considered in the national context as basic education (usually primary and secondary education), as well as those who define early leavers as young people who leave school without an upper secondary school leaving certificate.

Education and career guidance refers to a service seeking to provide pupils and students with information as well as to develop their decision-making and other skills important for managing their educational and/or career choices. It may also include psycho-social work or counselling to help students, in particular those at risk of early leaving, in their progression through education and training. Education and career guidance may be part of the curriculum (included in official steering documents), offered through a formally established in-school guidance service, and/or provided through an external guidance service, i.e. outside of schools.

ELET data may be collected through student registers, i.e. retrieved automatically from school administration systems based on students' personal data. They can be used for an ad hoc assessment of the scale of early leaving at different public authority levels. Quantitative and qualitative

surveys are other tools being used for gathering ELET data, which can contribute to a better understanding of the correlations and reasons for early leaving.

Informal learning means learning resulting from daily activities related to work, family or leisure and is not organised or structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support; it may be unintentional from the learner's perspective.

Initial teacher education (ITE) comprises both pre-service, general education and professional training. The latter provides prospective teachers with both a theoretical and practical insight into their future profession. In addition to courses in psychology and teaching methods, it usually includes unremunerated in-school placements.

Non-formal learning means learning which takes place through planned activities (in terms of learning objectives and learning time), where some form of learning support is present (e.g. from a tutor); it may cover programmes to deliver work skills, adult literacy, and basic education for early school leavers. Very common examples of non-formal learning include in-company training, through which companies update and improve the skills of their workers such as ICT skills, structured on-line learning (e.g. by making use of open educational resources), and courses organised by civil society organisations for their members, their target groups or the general public.

Language of instruction refers to the main language that is officially used in education at ECEC and school level. It may not be the first or home language for all pupils.

Policies for increasing the flexibility and permeability of education pathways have the objective to ensure a smooth transition between education levels (esp. from compulsory to post-compulsory education) or between education pathways (academic, technical or vocational). They generally aim to minimise the risk of early leaving by increasing the study choices as well as the opportunities to change to a different track or programme.

Second chance education is typically defined by the type of participant, usually young people who have left the school system prematurely or who have otherwise disengaged from school. It offers alternative education and/or training pathways leading to a formal qualification and/or preparing young people for employment.

Socio-economic status of students is defined as a combined measure of students' or their families' economic and social position relative to others, based on income, education, and occupation. When analysing a family's socio-economic status, the household income (combined and individual) is examined as well as the education and occupation of earners. Parents' educational attainment is often taken as a proxy measure for socio-economic status.

Youth guarantee is an approach to tackling youth unemployment, endorsed by the EU countries in April 2013 ⁽²²⁾, which ensures that all young people under 25 – whether registered with employment services or not – get a good-quality, concrete offer within 4 months of them leaving formal education or becoming unemployed. The good-quality offer should be for a job, apprenticeship, traineeship, or continued education and be adapted to each individual need and situation.

⁽²²⁾ Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee. OJ C 120, 26.4.2013. ([http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32013H0426\(01\)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32013H0426(01)))

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Structural Indicators on Early Leaving from Education and Training in Europe – 2016

This publication reviews key structures, policies and reforms in the area of early leaving from education and training (ELET) in Europe. It contains six indicators on policies for collecting national data on ELET, increasing the flexibility and permeability of education pathways, providing language support for students with a mother tongue other than the language of instruction, addressing ELET in initial teacher education and continuing professional development, offering education and career guidance in schools and providing support to early leavers to re-enter the education and training system. The publication is based on a chapter in the Eurydice report [Structural Indicators for Monitoring Education and Training Systems in Europe 2016](#).

The Eurydice Network's task is to understand and explain how Europe's different education systems are organised and how they work. The network provides descriptions of national education systems, comparative studies devoted to specific topics, indicators and statistics. All Eurydice publications are available free of charge on the Eurydice website or in print upon request. Through its work, Eurydice aims to promote understanding, cooperation, trust and mobility at European and international levels. The network consists of national units located in European countries and is co-ordinated by the EU Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency. For more information about Eurydice, see <http://ec.europa.eu/eurydice>.

