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The composition by origin of Spanish youth has changed radically in the last 20 years due to international immigration that began in the second half of the nineties. Currently, one in four young people aged 15 to 29 years have a foreign-born parent. However, the youth of foreign origin have had to cope with a brutal economic crisis at the time of entering the workforce and planning to be independent, with poorer educational preparation and lower social capital. In most EU member states, both first- and second-generation young people suffer more youth unemployment than their counterparts of European origin, and are more likely not to follow educational or vocational training programs. According to the report Migrant Integration Indicators 2015, the Early School Leaving (ESL) rate among students born outside the EU is almost double that of the population as a whole, with a difference of 18 points in the case of Spain, one of the countries where this difference is most pronounced, despite having one of the highest average ESL rates. Furthermore, the Eurostat 2011 report on immigrants in Europe also showed that these figures are higher among young second-generation children of immigrant parents in the case of Spain. In the context of the European project FP7 RESL.eu (Reducing Early School Leaving in Europe), this chapter will comparatively analyse the academic careers and the conditions for social integration of young people of immigrant and non-immigrant origin in various programmes and measures to combat ESL (preventative, interventional and compensatory) through a selection of case studies.

In, out or away from education and training: Portuguese young adults have a say

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Early school leaving (ESL) is still a major problem of social and educational justice in the European Union. This includes Portugal where ESL rates are still high, even if they have decreased significantly in the last decade. In order to understand school trajectories that contribute to define the contours and the push and pull factors of ESL, this paper explores differences and similarities in the views of three groups of young women and men who: a) were still in mainstream schools, b) left school without attaining upper secondary qualification or c) opted for organisations that provide alternative education and/or training, leading to the direct or indirect attainment of ISCED 3 (International Standard Classification of Education) but are not upper secondary schools.

This paper is based on more than 50 interviews. 20 participants were interviewed twice for longitudinal purposes. We selected young adult views on i) connectedness to school and education; ii) school-related and study behaviour and iii) perceived challenges and resilience out of the eight categories that were object of content analysis. Context-specific factors such as the ones related to school or the characteristics of the labour market are taken into account in the analysis.

Our findings show that belonging to one specific group does not define student's positions towards education. However disconnection from mainstream school is the common factor, in spite of the internal differences. Some strong tendencies can be identified when comparing the three groups in terms of school-related and study behavior: truancy, bullying and the emotional dimension of learning. In terms of challenges, all participants faced great diversity in their educational trajectory, (e.g. imposition of educational choices, poverty, labour market attraction). ESLers were the most affected and in an increased way, when compared to others.

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