



This project has received funding from the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration under grant agreement no 320223.

Deliverable 5.1

Publication 6.

Finding inspiring practices on how to prevent ESL and school disengagement. Lessons from the educational trajectories of youth at risk from nine EU countries

[2017-12-15]

Responsible institution: Faculty of Education, University of Warsaw

Authors: Hanna Tomaszewska-Pękała
Paulina Marchlik
Anna Wrona



The University Of Sheffield.

Main Authors

University of Warsaw, Poland

Hanna Tomaszewska-Pękała / Paulina Marchlik / Anna Wrona

Acknowledgements: The scientific paper was financed from the funds for science in the years 2013–18 allocated for the international co-financed project.

Contributors

University of Warsaw, Poland

Aleksandra Jasińska-Maciążek

University of Antwerp, Belgium

Lore Van Praag / Rut Van Caudenberg / Ward Nouwen / Noel Clycq / Christiane Timmerman / Mariana Orozco

Middlesex University and University of Sheffield, the United Kingdom

Louise Ryan / Magdolna Lórinç / Neil Kaye / Alessio D'Angelo

University of Porto, Portugal

Helena C. Araújo / Sofia A. Santos / Cosmin Nada / Eunice Macedo

Stockholm University, Sweden

Alireza Behtoui / Marie Bjorklof

Erasmus University Rotterdam, Netherlands

Talitha Stam / Elif Keskiner / Maurice Crul

Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain

Sílvia Carrasco / Laia Narciso / Jordi Pàmies / Bálint-Ábel Bereményi / Isidoro Ruiz Haro

Central European University, Hungary

Julia Szalai / Agnes Kende

Vienna University of Economics and Business, Austria

Erna Nairz-Wirth / Marie Gitschthaler / Melanie Fraisl

Contents

About the RESL.eu project.....	6
Executive summary	7
Part 1. Introduction	10
Educational trajectories of youth at risk of early school leaving.....	10
School (dis)engagement – approaches and components	12
The multilevel approach towards ESL revisited	13
Youth at risk, resilience and needs	13
Methodology and data analysis	15
The quantitative research.....	15
The qualitative research	16
Data analysis	17
Part 2. European policy towards ESL within different education systems	18
ESL as a statistical and political concept	18
ESL as an ill-defined concept.....	20
Addressing ESL within different education systems	22
Part 3. Educational trajectories of youth at risk of ESL in the findings of the survey	25
Background characteristics and the risk of disengagement.....	25
School performance.....	27
Non-linear trajectories.....	28
Social and institutional support	33
Part 4. Typology of educational trajectories of youth at risk of ESL	36
Unanticipated crisis	36
Downward spiral.....	38
Parabola.....	40
Boomerang	43
Resilient route.....	46
Shading out.....	49
Part 5. Where two worlds meet: Conceptual model of inspiring practices in- and outside school to tackle ESL	52
Final remarks. Towards a more inclusive education system for youth at risk of early school leaving	56
References:	58
Publications and final reports – RESL.eu Project.....	65
Publications	65
Project papers	65
WP2 Final Reports – RESL.eu Project	66

List of tables

Table 1. Number of participants in the two waves of the RESL.eu survey	16
Table 2. National targets to reduce the ESL rate in countries participating in RESL.eu project (%).....	19
Table 3. Frequency of ESL and school engagement score; by family background and health and psychological condition	27
Table 4. Qualifications studied for by the respondents in the years 2014 and 2016; by cohort.....	29
Table 5. Mean scores in the factors describing school engagement and relations with parents, teachers and peers; by education status.....	33

List of figures

Figure 1. ESL rates in countries participating in the RESL.eu project (2003, 2013 and 2016).....	18
Figure 2. Countries from RESL.eu project where the ESL rate was below the EU average in the years 2002–2016.....	19
Figure 3. Countries from RESL.eu project where ESL rate is above the EU average in the years 2002–2016.....	20
Figure 4. Probability of ESL and school engagement score by the occurrence of health, psychological or learning difficulties	26
Figure 5. School Engagement mean scores for the types of the family composition; by the educational status	26
Figure 6. Grades at the end of the previous school year (asked in 2014); by the ESL status	28
Figure 7. School engagement mean score; by grades at the end of the previous school year and the ESL status	28
Figure 8. Predicted activity in one year's time according to the respondents not in education or training; by cohort	30
Figure 9. Reasons for dropping out of the higher level of education.....	31
Figure 10. Percentage of students who reported returning to education after a period of not-studying; by cohort and country of survey.....	32
Figure 11. Reasons for returning to education after a period of not studying	32
Figure 12. Frequency of ESL by the awareness of in-school programmes at school and participation in out-of-school programmes	34
Figure 13. Actors delivering out-of-school programmes; by country of survey.....	35
Figure 14. Unanticipated crisis.....	36
Figure 15. Downward spiral	38
Figure 16. Parabola	40
Figure 17. Boomerang	43
Figure 18. Resilient route.....	46
Figure 19. Shading out.....	49
Figure 20. Conceptual model of inspiring practices for in- and out-of-school measures aimed at ESL .	52

Glossary of used terms and abbreviations

ESO – *Educación Secundaria Obligatoria*, compulsory secondary education in Spain

ESL – early school leaving

ESLer – early school leaver

EU – European Union

EWS – early warning systems

GESO – *Graduado de Educación Secundaria Obligatoria*, Spanish certificate of completing compulsory (lower) secondary education

ISCED – International Standard Classification of Education

ISCED 2 – Lower secondary education

ISCED 3 – Upper secondary education

ISCED 4 – Post-secondary education

ISCED 5 – Tertiary education

KomVux – municipal adult education scheme in Sweden

MBO – *middelbaar beroepsonderwijs*, preparatory secondary education in the Netherlands

NEET – not in education, employment or training

NEETs – persons not in education, employment or training

NET – not in education or training

NETs – persons not in education or training

UngKomp – a project working with unemployed youths in Sweden

VET – vocational education and training

VLC – Voluntary Labour Corps, a Polish state organisation offering second-chance vocational training and employment scheme

About the RESL.eu project

The RESL.eu project aims to provide insights into the processes influencing early leaving from education or training. In addition, RESL.eu intends to identify and analyse prevention, intervention and compensation measures that aim to keep pupils in education or training until attaining at least an upper secondary education qualification. Its aim lies in the development of generic conceptual models based on research to predict and tackle early school leaving (ESL), and ultimately, to disclose these insights to various target audiences at the local, national and EU level.

The project's focus is on the development and implementation of education policies, and the transferability of country-specific inspiring practices. RESL.eu also seeks to understand the mechanisms behind, processes leading to and trajectories following ESL through focussing on actions, perceptions and discourses of all youngsters (ESL and not-ESL) as well as those of significant others (family, peer group, school staff). The project builds on existing practices to tackle ESL and intends to develop innovative approaches for regular schools and in alternative learning arenas.

How and where the project operates

In nine EU member states (Belgium, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Portugal, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Hungary and Austria), two local urban research areas were involved in a comparative policy analysis of ESL policies on the EU, national/regional and local level.

New survey data were collected in two waves among at least 1500 youngsters in each country across two different urban research areas (except in Hungary and Austria). In each country, school staff and school administrators were also surveyed.

Qualitative data were collected across seven member states (Belgium, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Portugal, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain). At least two bio-interviews were conducted with 24–32 youngsters per country. In-depth interviews and focus group discussions with students and staff also took place across 28 schools and 24 alternative learning arenas that were carefully selected based on the first wave of the students' survey data and the field descriptions of local educational landscapes.

Executive summary

The results of both the qualitative and quantitative research conducted within the RESL.eu research project show that what puts a youngster at risk of early school leaving is not a single factor but the accumulation or a series of various risk factors. Our investigations of the determinants of ESL were guided by the notions of: school (dis)engagement and educational trajectory. School disengagement was investigated from two complementary perspectives: synchronic (focusing on the components of disengagement and levels of disengagements) and diachronic (trying to capture its evolution in time). We combined the outcomes of previous analyses within the RESL.eu project with the additional primary data analyses leading to the development of a typology of educational trajectories' and we illustrated the results with the example stories of youth.

Our findings show that the youth's educational trajectories are strongly embedded in the macrostructural context (education system arrangements, labour market conditions and social structures) which limits the range of individual choices. As the reduction of early school leaving across Europe has been a priority in the European Union's policy for almost two decades, the educational choices of youth have become a 'highly political' issue. Combatting ESL is reasonably seen as a way to achieve a broader set of objectives: reduction of poverty and social exclusion, promotion of employment. A significant decrease of the ESL rates in the EU throughout the last decade indicates that the European policy framework for reducing early school leaving, including setting a common headline target, has been relatively successful. However there are many deficiencies in the Eurostat's ESL indicator, which makes it difficult to assess the actual impact of the reduction in its rate on the overall improvement of the educational situation of young people.

The policies towards early school leaving in the nine countries vary significantly, nonetheless, four categories of systemic measures, or approaches can be distinguished. The first category focuses on co-operation between various social agents and tries to consolidate it in the form of action plans, or national programmes aimed directly at the ESL phenomenon. The second type aims to create effective monitoring systems in order to track early school leaving, school attendance or absenteeism. The third category of measures includes broader reforms of the education systems. Finally, measures of the fourth type target the most vulnerable groups and socioeconomic inequalities, with the aim to reduce the gap in educational attainment and performance. However, there are still significant disparities conditioned by e.g. different background of the students, which to a large extent determines the social and cultural capital available to them.

Therefore, the focus on the existing background inequalities is not accidental, as they are proven to play a significant role in determining the differences in educational outcomes. The findings of the quantitative study indicate a correlation between gender and migrant background status (having at least one foreign-born parent) with the likelihood of ESL. However, migration background can be a risk factor in some countries and a protective factor in others. In turn, for most youngsters in the qualitative research who had a disadvantaged background, the greatest challenges that we have observed included growing up in a rather poor environment, with a low level of cultural, social and economic capital, health issues, disability of one of the parents, unemployment. Most students had both risk and protective factors at various levels. Only in the case of a few of our interviewees their background could be described as advantageous, i.e. with many protective factors and few risk factors in their life: e.g., caring and protective family environment, supportive education institutions.

The mainstream secondary education often lacks inclusiveness and measures which would be addressed to students with special educational needs, linguistic difficulties, unstable family situation, or students who felt disengaged with education. Both quantitative and qualitative data indicate that this often leads to a higher risk of leaving education among the vulnerable categories of young people. The decision to leave school is often also motivated by the desire to undertake a paid job. However, in the labour market early school leavers encounter other challenges (scarcity of attractive job offers, low salaries, instability and limited possibilities of professional development and promotion) which drive them back to education. In the process of returning to or staying in education, the crucial factor was the support the youngsters received. It was the informational and emotional support of mentors, teachers, college tutors, youth coaches, managers with whom the youngsters established meaningful relations. The school engagement scale used in the quantitative research was significantly correlated with the respondents' academic self-concept and the level of teachers' support. The relations with teachers are also important, with 'teachers' educational expectations' being one of the main predictors of students' educational expectations, alongside 'parents' educational expectations'.

The return to education for youth at risk, especially after a longer break, usually runs through the alternative learning pathways, where the students meet caring staff, where they are considered mature and allowed to have their own voice, and where their basic or specific needs are addressed more appropriately (the alternative learning pathways were usually designed to deal with the categories of young people pushed out of the mainstream education). The concentration of youth with various difficulties and special needs in the alternative learning institutions leads, however, to the stigmatisation of their students and graduates, which further accelerates a vicious circle of social reproduction. Nevertheless, our results show not only the individual educational failures, but also the resiliency of the groups at risk of ESL against the unfavourable structural context.

There is a variety of educational pathways of young people. In order to systematise the complexity of the educational trajectories of youth at risk of ESL, we have arrived at six ideal types of trajectories, which we labelled as follows: *Unanticipated crisis*, *Downward spiral*, *Parabola*, *Boomerang*, *Resilient route*, *Shading out*. The first type (unanticipated crisis) relates to a situation in which the youngster's school career develops quite smoothly and there are relatively few risk factors for early school leaving, but a sudden event leads to a rapid deterioration and the young person stops to deal with the challenges, often obtaining no or insufficient support from the school. The downward spiral refers to the youngsters facing difficult living circumstances outside school, who are particularly vulnerable to the strict educational practices combined with negative treatment in school, which leads to gradual disengagement with education. The parabola trajectory describes a situation of youngsters that face increasing school disengagement, but when they are provided with substantial support, the trajectory changes and moves in the opposite direction. The boomerang is a cycle of leaving and returning to school, which happens repeatedly during the course of one's educational trajectory. The resilient route relates to a situation in which the youngster faces considerable issues at school that negatively affect his/her school engagement, but they are balanced by numerous protective factors and the fact that the youngster actively seeks support. Finally, the shading out trajectory describes a situation in which youngsters experience a gradual accumulation of small issues or problems related to school performance that do not raise concern of the school staff, but lead to school disaffection.

The stories of youngsters reveal the complexities of their educational trajectories and show that the family situation, personal or school experiences, school climate and relations with teachers and peers can affect the young person's decision to remain in education, leave school, re-enrol or re-qualify. At

the micro (individual) level, what influenced the trajectories of the youngsters were primarily: stress of family separation, language difficulties, unclear aspirations, feeling isolated, health problems leading to cognitive and behavioural disengagement, low motivation and poor academic performance, financial difficulties. At the meso (institutional) level, the most prominent risk factor influencing the youngsters' trajectories was the lack of adequate and targeted individual academic, informational or psychological support at school. At the macro (systemic) level, the problems that the youngsters had encountered included: systemic barriers making it difficult to re-engage, shortage of apprenticeships, lack of recognition of informally obtained qualifications and low perceived status of work-based learning.

From the analysis of the educational trajectories of youth at risk of early school leaving we can also draw conclusions for a more tailored prevention, intervention, compensation or reintegration programs. According to our findings, practices to tackle school disengagement and ESL should be based on four pillars: (1) a holistic and comprehensive approach towards youth's needs; (2) orientation towards values, respect and participation of all the stakeholders; (3) evidence-based and strategic approach towards youth's needs; and (4) maximising and empowerment of the individual potential of each young person. If they are to respond to the accumulation of risk factors, support schemes should provide young people and their families with a comprehensive assessment and assistance. They should also focus on the moments of transition to the next stage of education and from school to the work environment, as these periods are crucial for the development of the educational trajectories, and the youngsters often lack guidance in their decision making processes, which is a common cause of mistakes and moves that are not well thought out. The education system should also be flexible in providing sufficient opportunities to change a once-selected pathway/programme and in facilitating informal, as well as work-based forms of learning.

The recommendations for education systems are rooted in an analytical endeavour in which we sought to make sense of the complex and diverse trajectories of youngsters from nine European countries. The main aim of these recommendations is to inspire and motivate various stakeholders interested in reducing ESL and educational inequalities (including researchers, policy makers, representatives of educational institutions etc.) to reflect upon creating education systems that implement the ideals of inclusion and social justice.

Part 1. Introduction

In this publication we want to gain a deeper understanding of the interrelated processes of early school leaving (ESL) and school disengagement through the triangulation of the qualitative and quantitative data collected in Belgium (Flanders), UK, Sweden, Portugal, the Netherlands, Poland and Spain (as well as supplementary data collected in Hungary and Austria). An in-depth and multifaceted analysis of the educational trajectories of youth at risk of ESL from nine countries led us to create distinct types of trajectories that can provide more insight into the multifaceted routes to early school leaving, and which are used for the development of conceptual models of inspiring practices¹ to tackle ESL. Therefore, the main aim of this publication is to provide a link between various educational trajectories and the practices to tackle ESL that can be implemented by schools, as well as other (educational) institutions that work with vulnerable youth, and entities responsible for creating educational policies.

This publication provides the readers with insights into the diversity of the youth's educational trajectories and with possible ways to prevent students from school disengagement. By creating a conceptual model for inspiring practices, we want to ensure that such practices meet the specific needs of young people at risk of early school leaving and that they can be applied in heterogenous institutional educational contexts. For this reason, the model takes the form of general recommendations, rather than detailed, ready-to-use instructions.

The content of the publication is as follows. Firstly, we present the theoretical framework, the key concepts and methodological aspects of the RESL.eu project on which this publication is based. Secondly, in Part 2, we give an overview of the existing policies towards ESL in the countries included in the study. Next, in Part 3 selected results of the students' survey are presented and analysed in order to provide the reader with a broad characteristic of the studied youth at risk of school disengagement and early school leaving. Then, in Part 4 we utilise a micro- and meso-level perspective to present the developed typologies of the educational trajectories of youngsters. Finally, Part 5 of this publication is devoted to the presentation of the conceptual model of inspiring practices for schools and alternative learning pathways², based on the previous findings of the RESL.eu project. In this final section, we want to bring together insights from the micro-, meso- and macro-level in order to address the needs of young people in a holistic way.

Educational trajectories of youth at risk of early school leaving

According to the definition used in the RESL.eu project, early school leavers are young people leaving education un(der)qualified (unqualified or underqualified), without obtaining a degree/certificate of upper secondary education or similar, equivalent to an ISCED level 3 (2011 ISCED scale) (Araújo et al., 2013). Nevertheless, early school leavers do not constitute a homogenous group (Dale, 2010). Referring to someone as an 'early school leaver' tells us little about that person's educational trajectory and the type of school(s) he/she attended, about the reasons for leaving school and about the factors that

¹ We deliberately avoid using the terms *good/best practices* and *promising practices*, as they carry specific connotations and must meet certain conditions such as being controlled, supervised and evaluated.

² *Alternative learning pathways* in education are alternative means of obtaining educational qualifications, other than the traditional means of gaining access to or completing the required study to obtain the educational qualifications. They are often implemented by *alternative learning arenas* and not by mainstream schools, which we understand as regular, full-time education for children and youth.

contributed to such a state of affairs. The results of the longitudinal qualitative research conducted within the RESL.eu project (Van Caudenberg et al., 2017) indicates that ESL is not a 'final' or 'definite' status for the majority of youth, as having an ESL status is often a temporary situation rather than a permanent, unchangeable state. Moreover, the experience of ESL (like other school failures) may also be the cause (and not only the effect) of further educational and social exclusion of young people. Previous studies show that ESL is the result of a long process of school disengagement and alienation that may have been preceded by less severe types of school withdrawal (e.g., truancy and grade retention) (Murray, 2006). Furthermore, periods of ESL are in most cases intertwined with returns to education via various alternative learning pathways, vocational training, apprenticeships, or even mainstream schools.

In previous research, scholars often emphasise that it is difficult to determine an exact typology of early school leavers (Bowers & Sprott, 2012a). Most of the typologies constructed so far either distinguish two subgroups: dropouts and non-dropouts or include three, four or five subgroups of early school leavers, classified on the basis of reasons for leaving school early (Dwyer, 1996), on the actual work and education careers after leaving school (Dekkers & Driesen, 1997) or individual characteristics (Janosz et al., 1997). As Bowers and Sprott state, "subgroups of dropouts may differ from each other in their approach to schooling and need different intervention strategies" (2012a, p. 130). Many of these typologies are based on quantitative data: cluster analysis (Fortin et al., 2006; Janosz et al., 2000), growth mixture model analysis (Bowers & Sprott, 2012b; Janosz et al., 2008) or latent class analysis (Bowers & Sprott, 2012a). However, there have also been typologies of dropouts based on qualitative data (see e.g. Dekkers & Claassen, 2001; Menzer & Hampel, 2009; Lessard et al., 2008) or on literature reviews (see e.g. Kronick & Hargis, 1989). The use of typologies has both clear advantages as well as disadvantages. On the one hand, classifications of the types of young people leaving education early are associated with attaching labels to young people, which may lead to stigmatisation. On the other hand, a typology helps to synthesise and generalise research results and enables projecting effective interventions (Beker & Heyman, 1972, after: Etzion & Romi, 2015). Hence, in order to be able to assist policy makers in the prevention of early school leaving, we created a typology of the educational trajectories of youth and not a typology of early school leavers. This allows us to understand how young people's educational trajectories may lead to leaving school without educational qualifications, how distinct factors interplay, and what are the vulnerabilities within each type of trajectory.

An educational trajectory is a sequence of transitions between educational levels and institutions shaped by individual choices, as well as structural and institutional arrangements (Hickman & Garvey, 2006; Orfield et al., 2004; Pallas, 2003). There are various theoretical approaches to delimiting trajectories from other related concepts – pathways and life-courses. In this study we follow the conception assuming that "a trajectory is an attribute of an individual, whereas a pathway is an attribute of a social system. Pathways are of particular interest in their ability to illuminate structures – for example, constraints, incentives, and choice opportunities – that link different social locations within a social system" (Pallas, 2003, p. 168). In this publication we focus on trajectories, as our starting point were the individual cases of youngsters at risk of school disengagement and/or early school leaving. However, the term pathway appears when we refer to specific programmes a young person can choose from within a given education system.

We believe that a thorough understanding of early school leaving requires the study of educational trajectories of individuals who have left school un(der)qualified before completing ISCED 3 as well as those who were at risk of leaving school and falling out of the system but remained in education due to

successful prevention, compensation and/or intervention measures. In order to fully understand these trajectories, it is necessary to identify the events that increase the risk of early school leaving and the critical moments and transitions leading to ESL as well as the measures that help young people at risk of ESL stay in education and obtain qualifications. It is important to note that we aimed to create trajectories which are not based on a single trait or a status of an individual, i.e., social class, family composition, school achievements, ethnicity, etc. in order to avoid stigmatisation, and to move away from a focus on the individual (and his/her 'risk-factors') towards a focus on processes, relationships, educational systems, etc. By working on a typology of educational trajectories (instead of a typology of early school leavers), attention was primarily focused on the sequence and combination of events and statuses leading to school disengagement and early school leaving and the facilitation of individual resiliency.

School (dis)engagement – approaches and components

Defining (dis)engagement is a complex task, therefore it is no surprise that there are various definitions of the concept (Skinner et al., 2009). The concept of school engagement has been thoroughly examined and established in social sciences (Janosz et al., 2008; Newmann, 1992; Rumberger, 2004; Van Houtte, 2004; Wang & Fredricks, 2014) and found useful in the conceptualisation of the youth's participation in their educational career. Hence, it relies on the ideas of commitment and investment (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). However, it "is not a reflection of a trait or characteristic of the child, but instead is the product of the interaction among a host of internal and external factors" (Skinner et al., 2009, p. 5). It is thus a construct of a multidimensional nature (Finn, 1989, 1993; Fredricks et al., 2004; Hancock & Zubrick, 2015; Johnson et al., 2001; OECD, 2003). Therefore, we adopt the definition depicting school engagement as a meta-construct equivalent to the *glue* (Reschly & Christenson, 2012) linking important contexts, like home, school, peers, and community to students and to outcomes such as behavioural participation, school belonging, motivation and aspirations. The notion of engagement has been built upon the need to prevent dropout, and disengaging from school has been shown to be part of a process leading to early school leaving (Alexander et al., 2001; Dale, 2010; Finn, 1989; Kaye et al., 2017; Rumberger & Lim, 2008). In this project, we consider early school leaving not as a phenomenon separate from school disengagement, but as a visible indicator of school disengagement, as a part or a period in the disengagement process (see also Hancock & Zubrick, 2015).

Broadly, we can distinguish two complementary approaches to studying school (dis)engagement, which have been applied within the RESL.eu research: the synchronic and the diachronic approach. The synchronic approach is focused on quantifying the effect of various components and factors of school engagement, at a given moment of time. Within this approach the most common definitions of engagement, used by Fredricks et al. (2004) and Appleton et al. (2008), comprise behavioural, cognitive and psychological or emotional components. The behavioural component is related to student conduct, on-task behaviour, persistence, as well as participation in academic and extracurricular activities, which tend to be combined in a single scale. The emotional component encompasses feelings towards teachers, classmates, and connectedness to the whole institution, while the cognitive component describes "thoughtfulness and willingness to exert the effort necessary to comprehend complex ideas and master difficult skills" (Fredricks et al., 2004, p. 65). However, the studies conducted on school disengagement within the RESL.eu project (Nouwen, 2015) are in line with the thesis of Christenson & Anderson (2002). This thesis states that behavioural engagement can be further subdivided into

behavioural (self-regulated learning) and academic (i.e., amounts of time devoted for school tasks) components, while emotional and cognitive components seem to be in fact closely interrelated (Hochschild, 2003; Turner & Stets, 2005). Furthermore, Hancock and Zubrick (2015) distinguish a few levels of school disengagement differentiating between disengagement with content, people, school and the education system. The synchronic approach was applied within the RESL.eu project, with school engagement being among the crucial factors guiding the analysis of the quantitative data (Kaye et al., 2015).

The diachronic approach looks at the process leading to the development of school disengagement within the educational trajectory of the individual (Lessard et al., 2008). In this approach, early school leaving is studied from a life course perspective. Young people are confronted with many challenges over the course of their school career that gradually lead to disengagement from the schooling process (Bowers & Sprott, 2012a). The diachronic approach does not only take into account the relationship to the school, but also the out-of-school factors affecting the students' attitudes towards education and the youngsters' emotions and views on their lives. This approach was particularly applied in the qualitative part of the RESL.eu project, namely in the analysis of the bio-interviews with youngsters and their affinity groups (Van Caudenberg et al., 2017).

The main aim of this publication is to combine the synchronic and the diachronic approach to early school leaving in order to further distinguish theoretically relevant educational trajectories and link them with the educational institutions in which they find themselves.

The multilevel approach towards ESL revisited

The multilevel approach to ESL processes consists of three levels of analysis, i.e., the individual (micro), the institutional/social (meso) and the structural/systemic (macro) level. This multilevel approach is often referred to as an all-factors framework or a tripartite approach (Dale, 2010; Clycq, Nouwen, & Timmerman, 2014; Lamb et al., 2011). At the micro-level, we focus on the trajectories of disengagement, which may contain periods of ESL, but also how young people overcome hindrances in their school career. The macro-level largely consists of the broader context and the structures in which individuals as well as educational institutions define themselves and operate. The meso-level connects macro- and micro-level factors together and focuses on the relationships individuals establish with different groups of significant others (parents, teachers, peers) and the wider context. The use of this multilevel approach enables us to not only focus on the individual educational 'failures' or factors of resiliency of groups at risk of ESL, but also on how they are embedded within the macro-level context in which they live (e.g., Dale, 2010; GHK, 2005).

Youth at risk, resilience and needs

In this publication, we focus on the trajectory types of youth at risk (see Part 4). The term *youth at risk* refers to youngsters with various educational, health and emotional problems and denotes a set of presumed cause-effect dynamics that place an individual youngster at risk of negative outcomes in the future if intervention is not undertaken (McWhirter et al., 1994). These youth at risk may encounter difficulties in completing school or finding employment and are therefore at risk of social exclusion. At-risk youth face multiple barriers to school engagement and school completion, and may encounter

difficulties in their transition from school into the labour market, as having no or less-esteemed educational (and vocational) qualifications may lead to reduced employment opportunities. However, risk is “a measure of probability, not certainty” (Lessard et al., 2014, p. 109) and the final outcome may not necessarily be a negative one, as long as the youngster has been offered and has benefitted from appropriate support or has found a way to obtain educational qualifications.

There has been a lot of criticism of the term *at risk*, as it tends to concentrate on “what is wrong with youth”, rather than on “what may be wrong with schooling” (TeRiele, 2006, p. 141), which implies that youngsters are responsible for failure or that the locus of responsibility for the risk and failures resides in schools which do not provide adequate content and organisation of work with students and their families (Pellegrini, 1991)³. In addition, the focus on risk does not help to determine who really needs support, which type of support and what will happen in the future (Artz et al., 2004). To avoid the concept of ‘risk’, various other terms have been used to refer to the at-risk group: *marginalised students* (TeRiele, 2006), *at promise* (Zyngier, 2017) or *disenfranchised* (Swadener, 1995). TeRiele (2006) notices that new terms emerge, but the moment they start to lead to negative connotations, newer, more neutral terms are proposed. Groups labelled as being at risk appear to be so only because of the context which the definitions refer to and which often are not properly understood (Pellegrini, 1991). Placier (1993) makes a pertinent contention that all the criticism of the term *at risk* stems from the negative connotations it carries, although when it entered the language its meaning was quite neutral. Aware of these reservations, we still prefer the term *at risk*, as it refers to a group of students that may have higher chances to encounter difficulties during their educational trajectories that could result in early school leaving. This approach is especially interesting as it could possibly include prevention, intervention and compensation measures.

Thus, for this publication, we used the following definition of a *youngster at risk of ESL*: a person in danger of failing to complete (upper) secondary education (equivalent to ISCED 3 level, 2011) and/or failing to complete education with adequate level of qualifications, due to a set of risk factors on macro-, meso- and micro-levels. Moreover, by determining the needs of young people at risk of ESL, we could gain more insights into the processes of school disengagement.

Individual risk factors are quite natural and common, but when there are several types of risk markers at the same time, there may be a concern that such accumulation of risk factors increases the chances of difficulties in the youngsters’ educational trajectories, which could lead to school disengagement and ESL. Such risk markers can be, for example, factors independent of the individual: family income, low socioeconomic status, less positive school climate, numerous psychosocial stressors (e.g., parents’ divorce, severe illness or death of a close person, negative climate in school, family or social group). These factors, as well as individual-specific factors, such as emotional and psychological problems, negative emotions, behaviour and attitudes, inability to cope with stress, can put young people at high risk of school disengagement, absenteeism, early school leaving and further educational and social exclusion (McWhirter et al., 1994; Rustecka-Krawczyk, 2012). It is important to note here that in the RESL.eu project we found that some youngsters repeatedly overcome numerous life (and educational) challenges even though there are many factors that put them at higher risk of school disengagement. The concept of resilience may be very helpful to understand these educational trajectories. Resilience describes a situation in which some young people function well in school, at work and in family life, or overcome predictions of failure (Catterall, 1998), despite being exposed to multiple risk factors

³Pellegrini’s (1991) arguments referred to students’ literacy skills, but can be extended to a wider educational context.

(Garmezy, 1985; Werner, 2000). The concept refers to the dynamic processes and mechanisms conducive to positive functioning in spite of the adversity or trauma that have occurred in the past (Garmezy, 1985; Luthar et al., 2000; Masten, 2007). Early studies on resilience already emphasise personal qualities of ‘resilient children’, such as high self-esteem or autonomy (Masten & Garmezy, 1985, after Luthar et al., 2000). Nevertheless, resilience may be connected to factors which are external to the child as well, such as aspects of their families, and characteristics of their wider social environments (Luthar et al., 2000). Youngsters can overcome numerous life (and educational) challenges, e.g. through positive relationships with parents, peers and teachers (Lessard et al., 2014), presence of significant adults or engagement in education. Last but not least, a motivating school climate could also work as a protective factor (Eccles et al., 1993).

Methodology and data analysis

This publication is based upon the results of the qualitative and quantitative research among youngsters at risk of early school leaving in seven EU countries (Belgium/Flanders, The Netherlands, Portugal, Poland, Spain/Catalonia, Sweden and UK/England) undertaken in the years 2014–2016 within the RESL.eu project. Two other countries (Austria and Hungary⁴) provided secondary and qualitative data that allow us to include them in our analyses except for cases where the survey data is directly addressed. A detailed description of methodologies used, including sampling, research areas, instruments etc., is presented in previous publications (Kaye et al., 2017; Nouwen et al., 2016; Van Caudenberg et al., 2017) and project papers (Clycq et al., 2014; Kaye et al., 2015; Nouwen et al., 2015; Van Praag et al., 2016).

The quantitative research

An international, longitudinal survey of young people was conducted to identify the risk and protective factors of early school leaving. This survey took place in seven RESL.eu countries within two different urban areas per country. The areas selected are characterised by relatively high youth unemployment and/or specific demographic or socioeconomic challenges. Thus the datasets are not nationally or regionally-representative samples of young people. The quota sampling method was applied in the study, with at least 1,500 respondents per country. The participants were selected from within two cohorts. One cohort were students in the last year of the ISCED 3 education or in the last year of compulsory education and the other cohort consisted of students who were two years younger. Overall 19,586 young people took part in the first wave of the survey in 2014. The students were asked a wide range of detailed questions on socio-demographic characteristics as well as behaviours, attitudes and perceptions related to education and training. Two years later (in 2016) the second wave of the survey took place. The questionnaire used for the follow-up survey was much shorter than the one used before and designed exclusively to measure the participants’ trajectories from school towards further training, higher education or the labour market. 7,072 young people responded to the follow-up survey with a retention rate of 36.1% for the whole sample. Those respondents who took part in the second round of the survey reported having higher grades in the first round than those youngsters who did not take part in the second round.

⁴ Primary research did not take place in Austria and Hungary but both partners provided material for comparative qualitative analyses of educational trajectories of youth at risk.

Table 1. Number of participants in the two waves of the RESL.eu survey

Country of survey	Number of respondents		Retention rate
	1 st wave (2014)	2 nd wave (2016)	
Belgium (Flanders)	2,790	1,289	46.2%
Netherlands	2,647	840	31.7%
Poland	3,148	1,512	48.0%
Portugal	2,223	1,035	46.6%
Spain (Catalonia)	3,712	1,137	30.6%
Sweden	2,048	416	20.3%
UK (England)	3,018	843	27.9%
All countries	19,586	7,072	36.1%

After: Kaye et al., 2017, p. 8.

Further details on the socio-economic characteristics of the sample as well as the results of the analyses related to risk factors and the protective factors associated with (the risk of) ESL can be found in RESL.eu Publication 4 (Kaye et al., 2017).

The qualitative research

The qualitative data used for the analysis, aiming at creating the educational trajectory types of youth at risk and enabling triangulation, come from in-depth semi-structured face-to-face audiotaped interviews with 252 youngsters between 16 and 24 years of age from 7 countries⁵. All interviews took place between September 2014 and October 2016. The interview protocol was the same for all the countries with topic guides first created in English and then translated by each partner into their country's language. The interviews with young people concerned: their aspirations, educational plans and trajectories, their attitude towards school and the youth's social networks (family, peers and institutional agents) (Van Caudenberg et al., 2017).

The respondents were selected in order to represent three different groups in terms of educational status at the moment of the first interview. The first group (N=115) included students from mainstream education institutions who took part in the first wave of the RESL.eu survey. The students were selected for individual interviews based on their survey scores on the declared level of school engagement and support from parents and peers in combination with (not) having an at-risk profile for ESL⁶ (Clycq, Nouwen, Braspenningx, Timmerman, D'Angelo, & Kaye, 2014). The second group (N=69) consisted of participants of various alternative learning pathways (four in each country) who left mainstream education before attaining an ISCED 3 qualification. The last group (N=65) were youngsters with ESL or NEET status declared at the moment of the first interview.

⁵ In the case of 171 youngsters (21–32 per country) the interviews took place twice, whereas the rest were interviewed once.

⁶ An at-risk profile was created according to students' socio-demographic and educational background variables extracted from the most important risk indicators from (country-specific) ESL statistics.

As no data collection took place in Austria and Hungary, additional case studies were provided based on data from similar research projects. Data collected in Austria stemmed from a qualitative longitudinal study on the causes and consequences of early school leaving conducted between 2009 and 2014 (Nairz-Wirth, Gitschthaler, & Feldmann, 2014). The Hungarian data was collected in May 2017 in a small city and in a village in one of most deprived regions of north Hungary. Two interviews with ESL youngsters, out of six, were selected for this publication. All the Hungarian interviewees attended an alternative learning centre, the so-called ‘tanoda’ programme.⁷

Data analysis

In this publication, we present the findings of data triangulation understood as combining qualitative and quantitative data obtained within the RESL.eu project to let the data communicate and interact with each other (Mertens & Hesse-Biber, 2012). With the use of quantitative data of the students’ survey we describe the non-linear character of the educational trajectories of youth at risk of school disengagement and early school leaving. Comparing the educational status of the respondents in the first (2014) and second (2016) wave of the survey, we focused on the episodes of returning to education after a period of not-studying and unsuccessful attempts of some youth to re-enrol to school. We also present the relation of certain background characteristics, social and teacher support, as well as in-school and out-of-school measure with the level of school engagement and the risk of ESL.

As part of the data triangulation, we carried out additional qualitative analyses, which – in the several steps described below – led us to distinguish the types of at-risk trajectories. We selected six interviews with students from alternative learning pathways and early school leavers from each country. In a preliminary analysis, a multidimensional grid was developed, which helped to organise the combination of attributes that would be the basis for distinguishing the types of educational trajectories (Kluge, 2000). The grid consisted of a timeline organising the sequence of transitions within a given trajectory and the occurrence of risk factors related to ESL and school disengagement, such as grade retention, truancy and being a victim of bullying. Risk factors and crucial moments (e.g., significant changes in personal situations, crises, institutional support received) were inserted into the grid in order to indicate the educational stage and/or age of the young person when they took place. Subsequently, some additional information about the youngsters’ views and attitudes on the value attached to education, educational and occupational plans and aspirations was added in a systematic way to the grid. The next step took place after 42 interviews were placed into the grid. The occurrence of certain combinations of attributes and dimensions was analysed and this resulted in the development of six trajectory types. Furthermore, each country team constructed two stories of youth as an illustration of a particular type of the educational trajectory that we distinguished.

⁷ In this publication, when we write about seven EU countries we refer to data collected in all partner countries except for Austria and Hungary. When nine countries are mentioned, we also include the Austrian and Hungarian data.

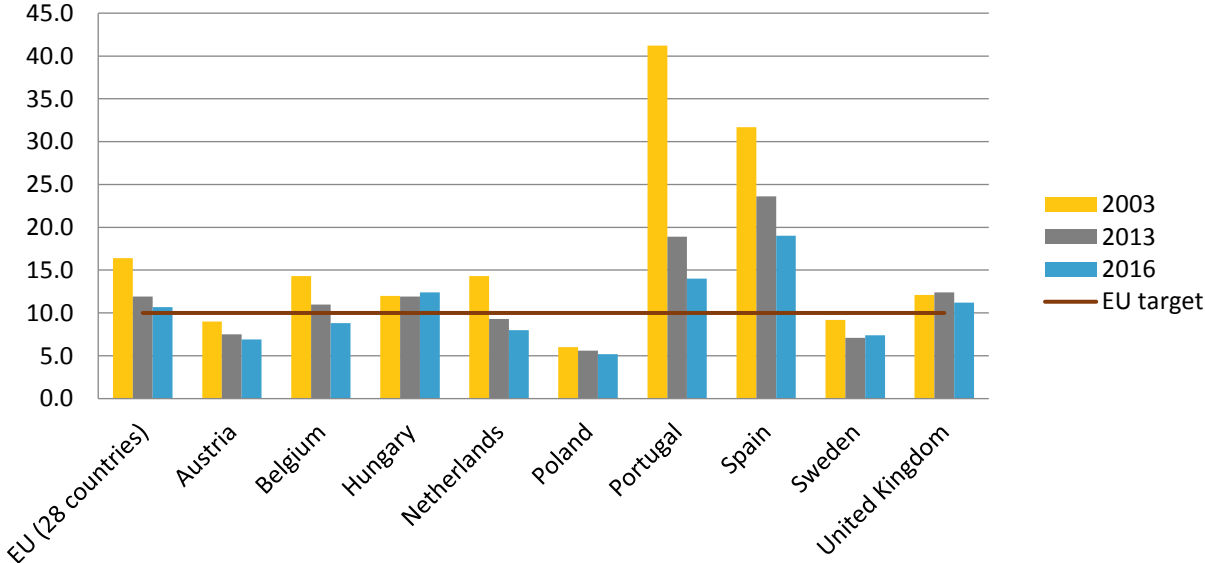
Part 2. European policy towards ESL within different education systems

ESL as a statistical and political concept

For almost two decades, under the Lisbon Strategy (2001) and within the Europe 2020 (2010) strategy, the European Union has been making efforts to reduce to 10 per cent the number of young people who leave education before or just after graduating from lower secondary school, labelled as *early leavers from education and training*. The ESL indicator, defined by Eurostat as a percentage of the people aged 18 to 24 who have completed at most lower secondary education and are not involved in further education or training, has become one of the ways of comparing and assessing the effectiveness of educational policies in member states. However, it is worth asking whether the European ESL indicator is a well-defined concept that can be applied to various education systems. Another concern is how education policies in different countries address the phenomenon of early school leaving.

Starting from an analysis of ESL rates from distinct waves of the Eurostat data, we can notice that ESL rates have decreased in most EU member states (see: Figure 1). However, there remain large discrepancies between countries; not only with regard to the current ESL rate, but also the pace of change, the trend and variability, etc.

Figure 1. ESL rates in countries participating in the RESL.eu project (2003, 2013 and 2016)



Source: Eurostat [edat_lfse_14]

The educational policies and recommendations on early school leaving in the EU were developed and later accepted on the basis of the Open Method of Coordination. This method establishes voluntary cooperation between Member States on common goals. By contrast, the ways to reach these objectives may be different, and tailored to the country-specific and/or local conditions. This is the reason why some countries have set their own targets for ESL reduction and have developed different policies to reduce ESL, taking their specific position and national circumstances into consideration. Some countries enacted an obligation for young people to participate in education and training until the age of 18 (Austria, Portugal), others implemented multidimensional reforms of the whole education system (Portugal). Several countries opted for the creation of specific strategies directed at ESL (Belgium

(Flanders), Austria, the Netherlands), whereas in other countries the issue of early school leaving was not seen as a priority of education policy (Poland), or they focused on closely related phenomena. The latter is for instance the case in Spain, where there is a huge problem with students leaving compulsory education (which in Spain is obligatory until the age of 16) and therefore the ESL issue (as defined by Eurostat) is not sufficiently addressed (Carrasco et al., 2013). Finally, in this regard, the United Kingdom has never explicitly aimed to reduce the number of early school leavers in their education reforms (Ryan et al., 2013).

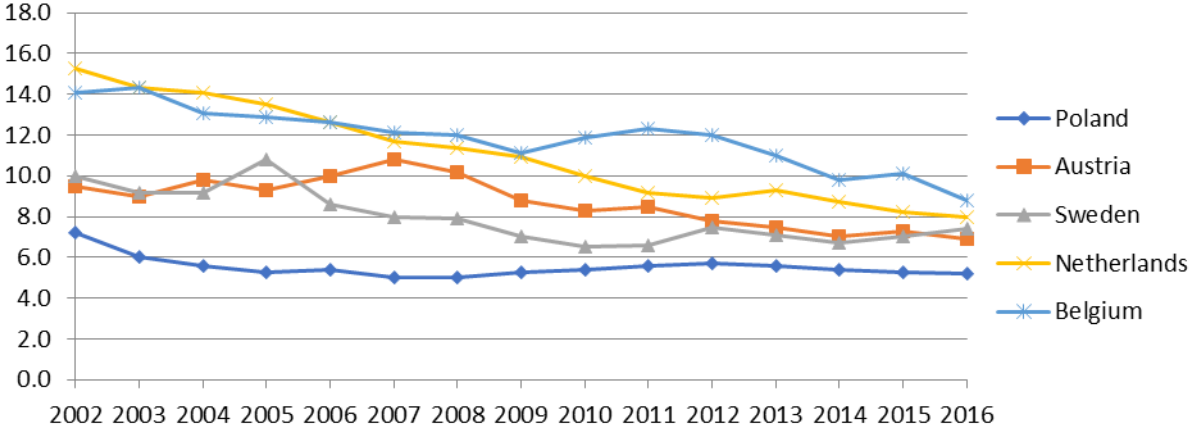
Table 2. National targets to reduce the ESL rate in countries participating in RESL.eu project (%)

AT	BE	HU	NL	PL	PT	ES	SE	UK
6.0	9.5	10	<8	4.5	10	15	<10	-

Red colour – the national target not achieved by 2016; green colour – the national target already achieved by 2016; “-” – no national goal set

In general, it can be said that the ESL rate in the European Union is gradually declining, and this also applies to most EU countries. Some countries (Belgium, Sweden) have already met or exceeded their national targets for this indicator before the assumed time. Other countries, such as Portugal and Spain, have made significant progress, but because they initially had to deal with a higher rate of ESL, their goal has not yet been achieved. Interesting cases include Poland and Hungary, which share a similar communist heritage but have a completely different situation in relation to e.g., the structure of the education system or ethnic diversity, and both struggle to achieve their national goals in reducing ESL. The differences between countries are even more visible when we analyse the trends in the long term.

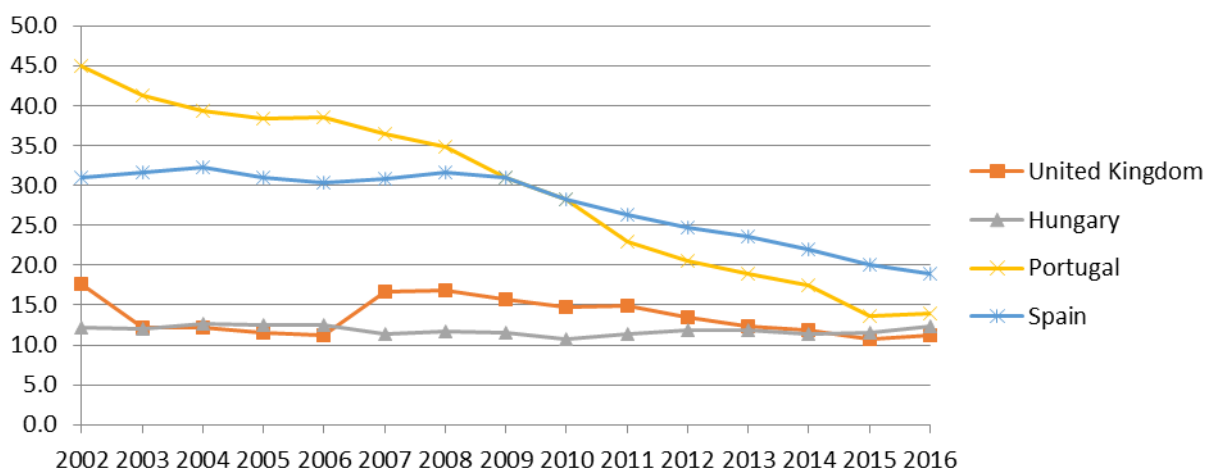
Figure 2. Countries from RESL.eu project where the ESL rate was below the EU average in the years 2002–2016



Source: Eurostat [edat_lfse14]

It is interesting to note that in some countries already in 2002 the ESL rate was lower than the EU average (Poland) or around 10 per cent (Austria and Sweden). However, all countries (except for Poland and the Netherlands) experienced significant increases and decreases in different periods. These fluctuations can be linked to country specific circumstances and/or the possible impact of the economic crisis in 2008. We can only observe a relatively stable, regular decline in the Netherlands (see: Figure 2). In Poland, the rate stabilised at around 5 per cent as early as in 2004.

Figure 3. Countries from RESL.eu project where ESL rate is above the EU average in the years 2002–2016



Source: Eurostat [edat_lfse14]

Similarly, for the four countries shown in Figure 3, the data tell us four different stories. In the case of the two countries that make up the Iberian Peninsula, there was a significant decrease in the ESL rate, although this decline was much faster and more pronounced in Portugal. In 2002, Portugal had a significantly higher ESL rate than Spain (by more than 15 percentage points) and actually the second highest in the EU, but achieved exactly the same results as its neighbour in 2009–2010, and then left Spain behind. In the case of Spain, the downward trend was also preserved, but the decline was more moderate and there were periods of stagnation and even a temporary rise in the ESL rate. The situation in the UK can be divided into three phases – the stage of decline (2002–2006), the phase of quite significant growth (2006–2008), another phase of decline (2008–2015); the last three years (since 2013) are aligned with the level recorded in 2002–2006. In 2016 the rate is exactly the same as ten years earlier. Last but not least, in Hungary, the ESL rate decreased from 13.9 to 10.5 per cent from the turn of the 21st century until 2010. The rate has been increasing since 2010, and reached 12.5 per cent again in 2016, the same as at the beginning of the 2000s. One of the reasons for this increase could be the change in the compulsory school age which was lowered from 18 to 16 years old in 2012 (Mártonfi, 2015).

ESL as an ill-defined concept

Combatting ESL overlaps with a broader set of objectives, such as the fight against poverty, social exclusion, the promotion of high levels of education and employment in society. Therefore, the reduction of early school leaving across Europe is high on the agenda of the European Commission as this phenomenon hinders smart and inclusive growth (European Commission, 2014).

Leaving education early has a negative impact on one's situation on the labour market and increases the individual risk of poverty and social exclusion. It cannot be denied that there is a link between ESL and other factors of social disadvantage, such as unemployment or low paid jobs (Vallejo & Dooly, 2013), probability of committing a crime (Smale & Gounko, 2012), or the reproduction of poverty and marginalisation in the case of pupils from disadvantaged families (Van Alphen, 2012). As Ross and Leathwood (2013) underline, the most important reason why ESL is worth attention is the improvement

of the overall quality of life and the prevention of further social disadvantage and marginalisation of certain groups.

European policies have been relatively successful in improving educational indicators, such as tertiary education attainment or early childhood education and care, but not as effective in reducing other social issues, especially youth unemployment and NEETs. For policy makers, education was supposed to be the main weapon for eliminating social inequalities. However, some scholars (Bridges, 2008; Depaepe & Smeyers, 2008) suggest that holding education accountable for social problems might overestimate its impact, and question the extent to which it is 'appropriate' to ask educational institutions to solve social and economic problems (Bridges, 2008). Moreover, creating educational policies based on a set of comparable, universal indicators can lead to the 'fetishisation of benchmarks' at country level. Such focus on benchmarks may strengthen the discourses of 'naming, blaming, and shaming' those countries who fail in education. However, it is particularly discouraging as it puts the national reputation under scrutiny (Araújo et al., 2014). This leads to a situation in which countries with 'worse' indicators and slower target achievement are, in international comparisons, identified as countries with less effective policies. Such approach does not take into account the fact that there are so many different factors that affect both the appropriateness of indicators for a specific country as well as the dynamics of change, irrespective of the effort made by policy makers to reduce ESL.

Findings of our research also indicate that focusing solely on the phenomenon of ESL and its measurement is not a sufficient response to the complexity of young people's situation (Van Caudenberg et al., 2017), although the increase of completion rates for upper secondary education remains a pivotal issue for many countries. Hence, doubts may arise regarding the definition of ESL itself, and its usefulness for the education policy and international comparisons, and the notion that the reduction of ESL is the one and only answer to economic crisis and youth unemployment (Ross & Leathwood, 2013). There are three important caveats that should be kept in mind when interpreting the ESL rates and making international comparisons or country-specific evaluation of changes over time.

First of all, ESL, as defined by Eurostat, simplifies a complex phenomenon, and is unable to capture the specifics of country education systems and the diversity, multiplicity of 'variants' of the same phenomenon (De Witte et al., 2013), nor does it fully capture the nature of ESL. Various scholars point out the limitations of the ESL measurement used by the European Commission. These limitations range from shortcomings related to accuracy, representativeness, comparability of data (Jugović & Doolan, 2013; Melnik et al., 2010), to the ability to address ESL when exclusively adopting a policy measurement perspective (Vero, 2012). The current ESL measurement/indicator actually depicts the cumulative rate of early school leaving within a certain age group (i.e., age 18–24) without measuring and monitoring the annual increase of the numbers of 'new' early school leavers. It also does not indicate when and at what age (between 18 and 24) someone left education (GHK, 2005). Another shortcoming of the Eurostat definition is that it focuses on a four-week period prior to the survey in which the respondent could have undertaken education or training (defined very broadly) (Dale, 2010). Furthermore, many early school leavers move frequently between educational institutions, programmes and work, which often complicates their detection.

Secondly, the educational benchmarks set by the European Commission and used to measure the reduction of early school leaving across European countries, are not neutral but normative. This means that the creation and setting up of benchmarks seemed to have prioritised some issues over others.

Hence, as a side-effect, these benchmarks also determine which issues are overlooked, neglected or absent from the public discourse.

A third and final caveat that should not be neglected is that it is often assumed that early school leavers are themselves responsible for their problems – their reluctance to learn, their low motivation, their lack of discipline are often mentioned as causes of ESL. This paradigm of individual responsibility for ESL and more broadly for one’s educational and professional situation (Vero, 2012; Downes, 2013), is highly problematic as it objectifies a young person and expects them to fit into a certain, desirable scheme. In this process of objectification, young people tend to lack voice, and it is exactly the same lack of voice that is also among the root causes of early school leaving. Young people tend to feel more alienated from the education system when they feel their opinions are ignored by the school and it makes them quit education at the earliest opportunity (Downes, 2013). The European Union underlines that the reasons why young people leave education or training are very individual (European Council, 2011). This emphasis on individual responsibility puts the blame for unfavourable labour market conditions on young un(der)qualified people instead of focusing on systemic barriers. The findings of the RESL.eu project actually show that early school leaving is a complex and multi-layered phenomenon that entails many factors from various levels, including the macro/systemic, meso/institutional and micro/individual ones (Van Caudenberg et al., 2017). Identifying, assessing, monitoring and finding the effective measures that inform these factors – or the interaction of these factors – is essential for tackling early school leaving.

Despite the difficulties in grasping, measuring and dealing with early school leaving at all policy levels, the greatest contribution of the EU to the reduction of ESL is that it has made education and training a very important part of its policy and has devoted much attention and resources to the reduction of early school leaving in Europe. This has influenced the understanding of policy makers at the European, national, regional and local level, that investment in this area is the best and wisest way to achieve sustainable and equitable development for all.

Addressing ESL within different education systems⁸

Countries differ in the degree to which they consider ESL a significant problem requiring systemic education or social policy solutions. The perception of ESL and its causes, as well as the structural characteristics of the education systems, or the socio-economic situation in a given country, also have an impact on the types of initiatives that are being implemented to reduce ESL. Country-specific solutions (including those at national, regional or local level) can be grouped into several categories.

The first category of initiatives includes measures that attempt to consolidate ESL policies in the form of action plans, national programmes focusing on co-operation between various social agents, e.g., ministries, central, regional or local authorities. Such initiatives could involve, for example, the application of an integrated ESL approach, which focuses on the cooperation of Education, Welfare and

⁸ This section is based mainly on the analyses of educational policies towards ESL derived from unpublished reports prepared within RESL.eu project by all country teams in the years 2013–2014: Araújo et al., 2013; Carrasco et al., 2013; Crul et al., 2013; Marchlik & Tomaszewska-Pękała, 2013; Nairz-Wirth, Gitschthaler & Brkic, 2013; Nouwen, Clycq & Timmerman, 2013; Rudberg, 2013; Ryan et al., 2013; Szalai & Kende, 2013. Additionally, in order to update the data we analysed country specific recommendations (CSRs) published by the European Commission for each member state on 22 May 2017 assessing the progress of countries in implementing the most important reforms as well as individual country reports published by the European Commission in Education and Training Monitor 2016 (European Commission, 2016).

Employment sectors (e.g. in Flanders, Belgium) or the creation of a framework for education stakeholders and regional institutions in which specific measures are proposed to tackle ESL (e.g. in Spain).

The second type of initiatives focuses on creating effective early school leaving as well as school attendance or absenteeism monitoring systems, like in Austria, the Netherlands and Flanders (Belgium). This way, the processes leading to ESL are targeted earlier and one could prevent students from leaving school early.

The third type of measures implemented to tackle ESL includes broader reforms which counteract the educational inequalities within the systems' structural arrangements. This category of measures includes: changes in the length of compulsory education (e.g., increase in the length of compulsory education to 12 school years in Portugal, and the obligation to participate in education or training until the age of 18 in Austria); unsuccessful reform of lowering the school starting age (from 7 to 6 years old in Poland) as well as the implementation of new types of schools or the reform of traditional types (e.g., the creation of a new type of middle school *Neue Mittelschule* in Austria). Some of those reforms are aimed at providing the infrastructural and financial basis for the functioning of educational systems through the modernisation of schools (e.g., investing in the development of sports infrastructure or access to new technologies in Poland, improving school infrastructure in Flanders (Belgium), changes in the funding systems and financial support schemes (e.g., system of bursaries in the United Kingdom) or the increase of the autonomy of schools (e.g. within the Portuguese Programme for Priority Intervention Educational Areas (*TEIP – Territórios Educativos de Intervenção Prioritária*)). In many countries, vocational education and counselling have a special place in counteracting ESL. The dual system is well established in Austria, shorter paths to gain professional skills and faster introduction of young people to the labour market are initiatives undertaken in Hungary, the Netherlands, Sweden and Poland. In turn, the importance of counselling and coaching has been recognised in Austria (youth coaching initiative and career guidance as compulsory school subject) and Flanders (Belgium) (Jo-Jo youth coaches).

The last – broad and varied – category of measures is dedicated to the most vulnerable groups that live in a particular country as significant gender, ethnicity and socioeconomic background inequalities tend to be reproduced by national education systems, resulting in a gap in educational attainment and performance. A wide divide between genders as well as native-born and foreign-born students still remains a challenge in some countries, e.g., in Belgium and Spain. The ESL rate is also linked to the existence of other school failures (such as grade retention), as well as to school segregation practices and (early) tracking, which, in turn, leads to intergenerational reproduction of low schooling levels and lack of qualifications among the most vulnerable groups. Regional, urban – rural disparities in educational outcomes and access to high-quality education have a negative impact on the situation of young people coming from neglected areas. In Hungary, a special place in the policy towards the reduction of ESL is focused on the Roma population, and in the Netherlands or the United Kingdom, particular attention is paid to pupils with special educational needs. Separate programmes dedicated to the integration of refugees and immigrants exist in Austria and Portugal. In turn, students experiencing educational failures or in transition are targeted by specialised support schemes in Portugal, Flanders (Belgium) and Sweden.

This short overview of national policies towards ESL already shows that there exists a great diversity of measures implemented to tackle early school leaving across European countries. At the same time,

there are striking similarities in the systemic conditions that contribute to increased risk of ESL among specific groups and are associated with persistent educational inequalities. These inequalities, in turn, are linked to differences in the level of social, economic and cultural capital and are maintained, or even reproduced, by education systems through institutional arrangements such as: early tracking, procedures of selection, grouping practices. The phenomenon of early school leaving is a lens that focuses on various negative aspects of the functioning of education systems, showing their shortcomings and challenges to be addressed.

The aim of Part 2 of this publication was to show the important role of the broader context in the process of understanding youth's educational trajectories. Young people and their educational choices are immersed in certain systems which are highly structured and which designate the range of accessible options as well as the conditions of their availability. Without proper understanding of the macro-structural determinants of educational inequalities (including ESL), it would be impossible to adequately read the data from different countries that are presented in Part 3 and 4. Moreover, not taking macro/systemic factors into consideration makes it impossible to build effective measures to help young people at risk of school disengagement and early school leaving.

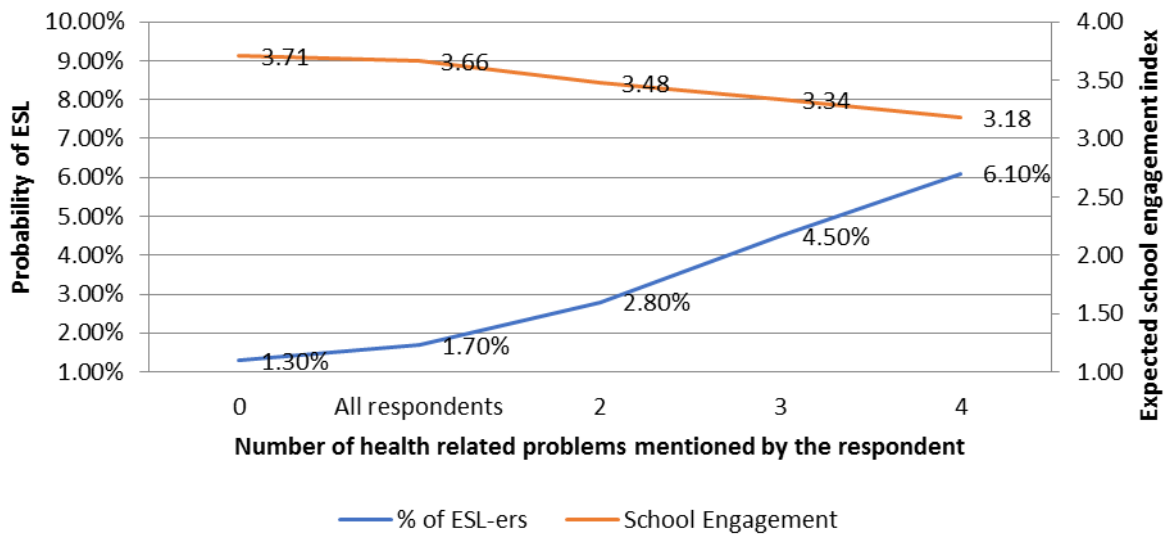
Part 3. Educational trajectories of youth at risk of ESL in the findings of the survey

The students' survey conducted within the RESL.eu project was measuring the broad scope of the attitudes and features of youth, which in the literature are connected to the risk of becoming an early school leaver. School engagement was among the crucial factors guiding the analysis. It was computed out of 21 primary variables encompassing the scales of school belonging, importance of education, academic self-regulation, academic resilience and behaviour at school (for more details see: Kaye et al., 2015). In this part of the publication we relate this factor to selected variables, which the qualitative analysis and desk research confirmed to be important for shaping the educational trajectories of youth. We also show the frequently non-linear character of the educational trajectories of youth, with episodes of leaving education followed by returns to school, in order to reveal the complexity of the ESL phenomenon, exceeding far beyond the rather narrow Eurostat definition. We also relate these trajectories to the levels of social support and various measures applied in school and out-of-school context.

Background characteristics and the risk of disengagement

The influence of students' socio-economic background on their school performance has long been among the most studied phenomena in educational research (Archer & Yamashita, 2003; Lareau, 2003; Reay, 2006; Reay et al., 2001; Vincent & Ball, 2007), especially since Pierre Bourdieu's seminal works gained prominence also in the Anglo-Saxon mainstream social science (Weininger & Lareau, 2003). Particular emphasis has been placed on the influence of SES, ethnicity, or gender. Those factors were among the key variables investigated within the RESL.eu quantitative students' survey, together with other background characteristics, such as the physical and mental health condition. The findings of the questionnaire survey of students stay in line with the findings of Anne Lessard and colleagues (2014), who mention having a weak or difficult relation with one of the parents, and experiencing learning or health difficulties among the main factors increasing the risk of disengagement. In addition, they find social participation, mother's support, having a good relationship with at least one supportive teacher and the ability to ask for help as the main sources of resilience. The health-related difficulties seem to be a crucial background characteristic that can trigger disengagement with education, but the types and intensity of these problems vary. In the RESL.eu students' survey respondents could select: (1) physical illness, disability or infirmity, (2) mental health condition, or (3) learning difficulties, or (4) other conditions that affect their daily activities in any way. Not surprisingly, the accumulation of such difficulties visibly decreased the scores of school engagement and increased the risk of ESL (see Figure 4).

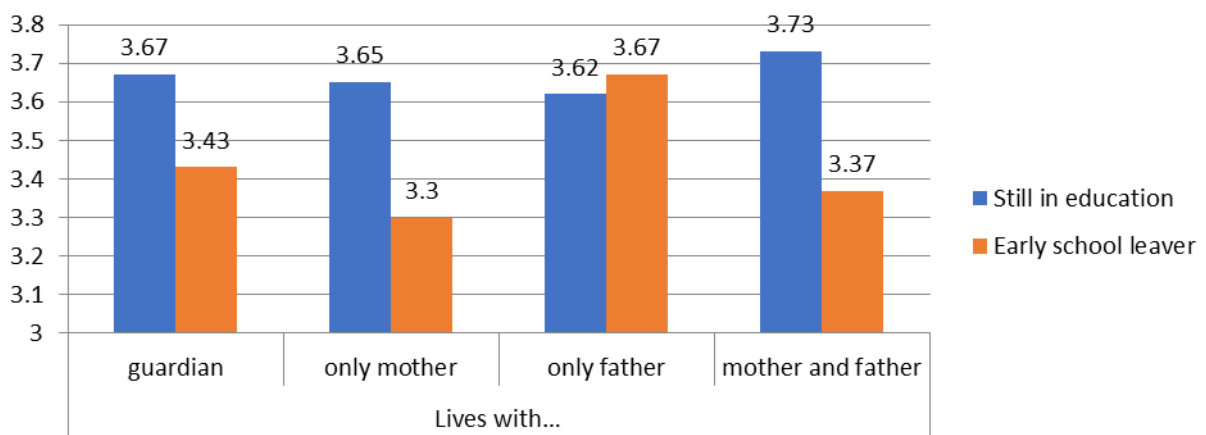
Figure 4. Probability of ESL and school engagement score by the occurrence of health, psychological or learning difficulties



Source: RESL.eu students' survey, for school engagement N=15,972 (data from the 1st round of the survey), for the rate of ESL N=6,245.

The family environment is a similarly important factor of school engagement. The results of the quantitative survey indicate that youth living with a guardian (and with no parent) reported a much lower average score for the social support scale (Kaye et al., 2015). The average school engagement rates differed significantly between early school leavers and respondents still in education, especially when the family type was taken into account. ESLers living with both parents or only with the mother had a very low school engagement rate (see Figure 5). In turn, early school leavers living only with the father had the highest average score of school engagement. However, their number in the sample was very low, which may explain the specific results.

Figure 5. School Engagement mean scores for the types of the family composition; by the educational status



Source: RESL.eu students' survey, N=5,856

Moreover, youth's educational expectations relatively strongly correlate with the aspirations of parents for the respondents' education (Kaye et al., 2017).

When looking at the occurrence of health or psychological difficulties, parents' highest level of education and family composition together, it can be observed that respondents with low educational background, from single-parent or blended/binuclear families and with health-related difficulties (including mental health) scored lower on the scale of school engagement, and, consequently, were at a much higher risk of becoming early school leavers (see Table 3). However, even an accumulation of difficulties seldom leads to the students leaving school early, also among the respondents who were most at risk. Interestingly, the group with the lowest risk of ESL seem to be respondents with health-related problems, but living in highly educated families with both parents, despite rather moderate scores of school engagement. It may suggest that children with health or psychological difficulties, but coming from families with higher social and cultural capital, can overcome the barriers and successfully follow the educational path.

Table 3. Frequency of ESL and school engagement score; by family background and health and psychological condition

Health or psychological difficulties	Family composition	Parents' highest level of education	N	Mean score for School Engagement	Frequency of ESL
No	Single-parent, blended family, or guardian	Primary or below	129	3.70	3.9%
		Secondary	614	3.66	1.1%
		Tertiary	424	3.68	1.2%
	Two-parent family	Primary or below	434	3.76	2.1%
		Secondary	1,598	3.73	0.9%
		Tertiary	1,068	3.74	0.6%
Yes	Single-parent, blended family, or guardian	Primary or below	29	3.28	6.9%
		Secondary	151	3.39	5.3%
		Tertiary	129	3.41	3.9%
	Two-parent family	Primary or below	52	3.51	3.8%
		Secondary	314	3.48	1.9%
		Tertiary	231	3.52	0.4%
Total			5,173	3.70	1.4%

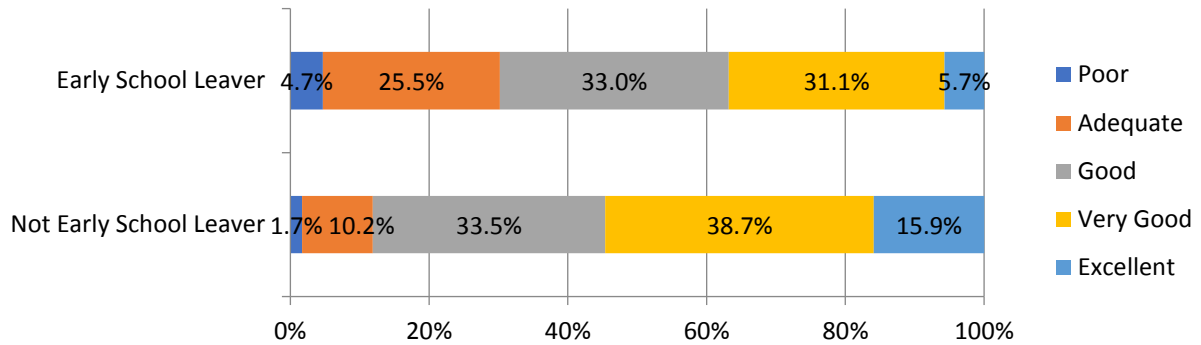
Source: RESL.eu students' survey, N=5,173.

School performance

Noticing the importance of a disadvantaged background for the risk of disengagement and ESL, we should also be aware that early school leavers do not differ significantly from their peers continuing education, which was one of the most important findings of our qualitative research (Van Caudenberg et al., 2017). Both groups encounter various challenges, hardships and tensions in their educational trajectories, as well as in the life out of school. However, many youngsters at risk of ESL successfully deal

with these difficulties throughout their school career. A majority (69.8 per cent) of the early school leavers from our questionnaire sample received good or even very good grades at the end of the previous school year, so they were usually well achieving students (see Figure 6 **Fout! Verwijzingsbron niet gevonden.**).

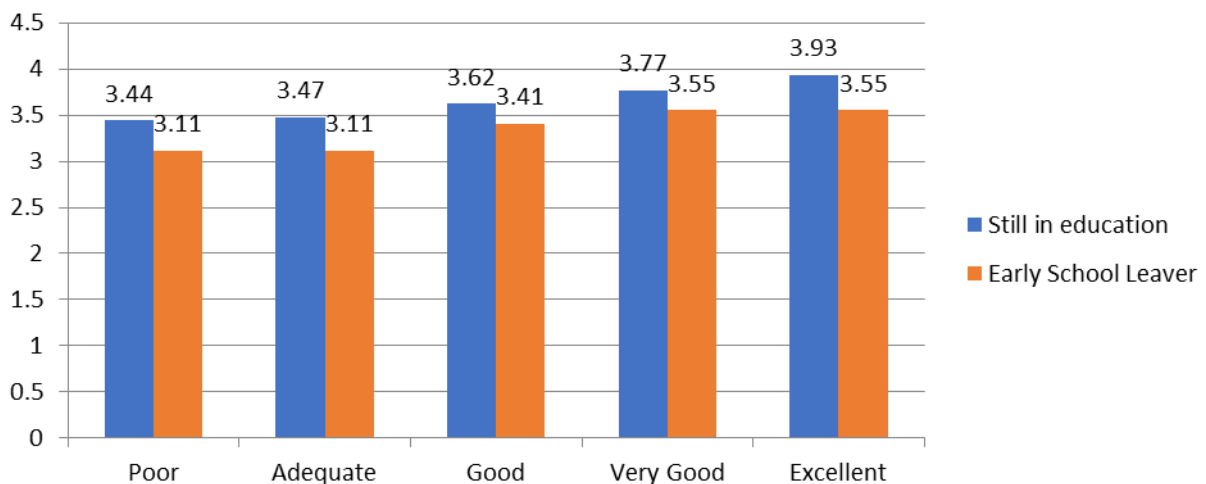
Figure 6. Grades at the end of the previous school year (asked in 2014); by the ESL status



Source: RESL.eu students' survey, N=6,080.

In turn, the rates of school engagement among the early school leavers were usually lower than among those who did not leave school early, irrespective of the academic grades. Even for early school leavers with very good grades the levels of school engagement were similar to those who were still enrolled in education, but reported poor or adequate grades (see Figure 7). Although the differences were not very strong, the data suggest that engagement in education can act as a protective factor, and even to some extent counterbalance low study achievements.

Figure 7. School engagement mean score; by grades at the end of the previous school year and the ESL status



Source: RESL.eu students' survey, N=6,080.

Non-linear trajectories

In the aforementioned context this is not surprising that episodes of leaving education might happen to a large share of the youth at risk, which was also revealed in the findings of the students' survey. However, early school leaving seldom becomes a permanent and fixed status, but is rather of temporary

nature. Moreover, many youngsters from our study presented high levels of resilience to various life difficulties. Although the fieldwork in the RESL.eu survey was designed to catch primarily youth at risk of ESL, during the second wave of the survey the vast majority (87.8 per cent) of our respondents were still continuing education, many of them at ISCED level 4 or 5 (see Table 4). Those who abandoned schooling did so usually after completing ISCED level 3 education, so most of them were not early school leavers. In the first (younger) cohort as many as 96.2 per cent of the respondents were continuing education in some form. In this cohort leaving education was most prevalent among those who were studying at ISCED level 2 during the first round of the survey. The students of vocational schools were far less likely to continue education on a higher level, which is not surprising, given that this school type usually prepares youngsters for early entry into the labour market.

Table 4. Qualifications studied for by the respondents in the years 2014 and 2016; by cohort

Qualifications being studied for in 2014	Qualifications being studied for in 2016 ⁹							
	Not in education or training	Other	ISCED 2	ISCED 3C	ISCED 3A/B	ISCED 4	ISCED 5B	Total
1st cohort								
ISCED 2 General	3.1%	6.7%	1.3%	2.9%	82.9%	1.6%	1.5%	100.0%
ISCED 3 General	2.6%	1.1%	0.5%	3.8%	86.7%	2.5%	2.8%	100.0%
ISCED 2 Vocational	9.1%	0.0%	1.1%	55.6%	33.2%	0.5%	0.5%	100.0%
ISCED 3 Vocational	5.2%	1.8%	1.8%	17.6%	65.4%	5.3%	2.8%	100.0%
Total	3.8%	2.6%	1.1%	10.0%	77.2%	2.9%	2.4%	100.0%
2nd cohort								
ISCED 3 General	10.8%	4.0%	0.3%	0.7%	11.2%	1.1%	71.7%	100.0%
ISCED 3 Vocational	39.8%	1.8%	0.3%	13.8%	17.9%	4.0%	22.3%	100.0%
Total	23.3%	3.1%	0.3%	6.4%	14.1%	2.3%	50.5%	100.0%

Source: RESL.eu students' survey, N=6,939.

Moreover, over one third (34.1 per cent) of the respondents not in education or training during the second survey planned to return to some form of studying within one year's time. Such expectations were particularly frequent in the younger cohort, almost half (48.6 per cent) of whom declared the

⁹ In the survey, asking about the parents' qualifications, the ISCED 97 scale was used in order to differentiate between the various types of upper secondary education. Levels of qualification standardised across countries according to The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) 1997 are as follows:

ISCED 2 – Lower secondary education;

ISCED 3A – Upper secondary education, designed to provide direct access to ISCED 5 (academic);

ISCED 3B – Upper secondary education, designed to provide direct access to ISCED 5 (technical);

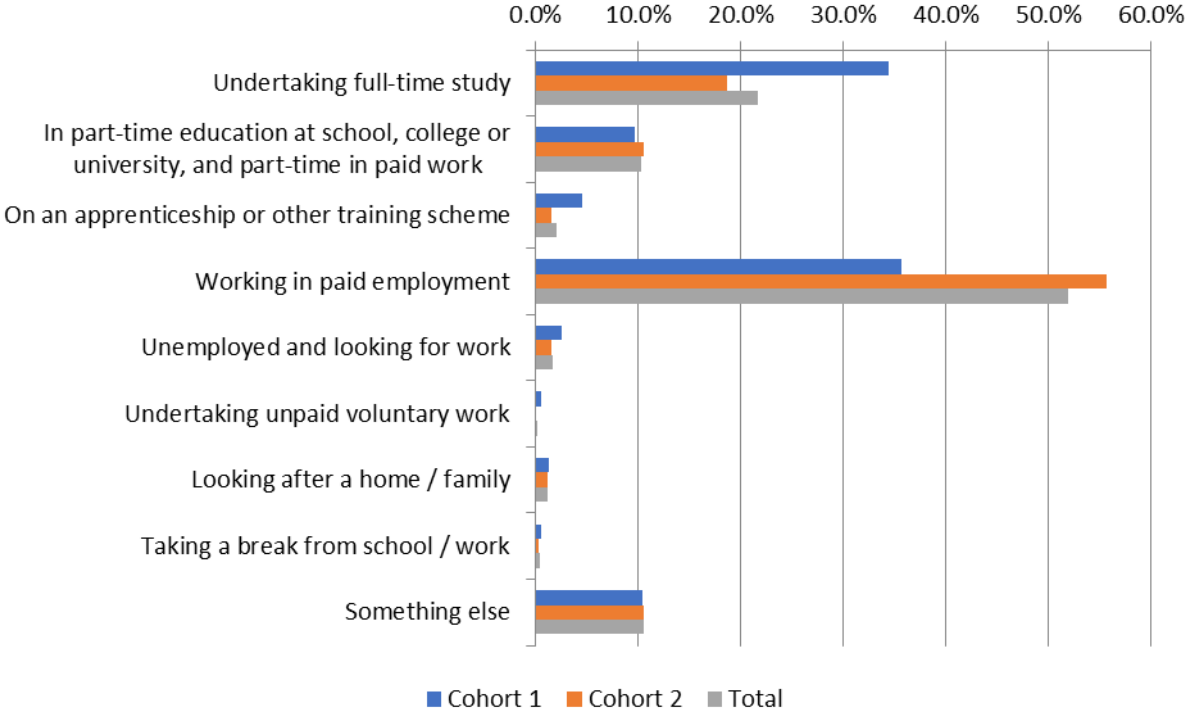
ISCED 3C – Upper secondary education, not designed to lead directly to ISCED 5;

ISCED 4 – Post-secondary education;

ISCED 5 – Tertiary education.

willingness to re-enrol to education or training. Most of them were planning to undertake full-time study (see Figure 8). The other very common expectation was to work in paid employment, which was indicated by 51.9 per cent of the respondents, mostly from the second cohort. A desire to undertake a paid job was confirmed also in our qualitative research to be an important distractor from education (Van Caudenberg et al., 2017).

Figure 8. Predicted activity in one year’s time according to the respondents not in education or training; by cohort

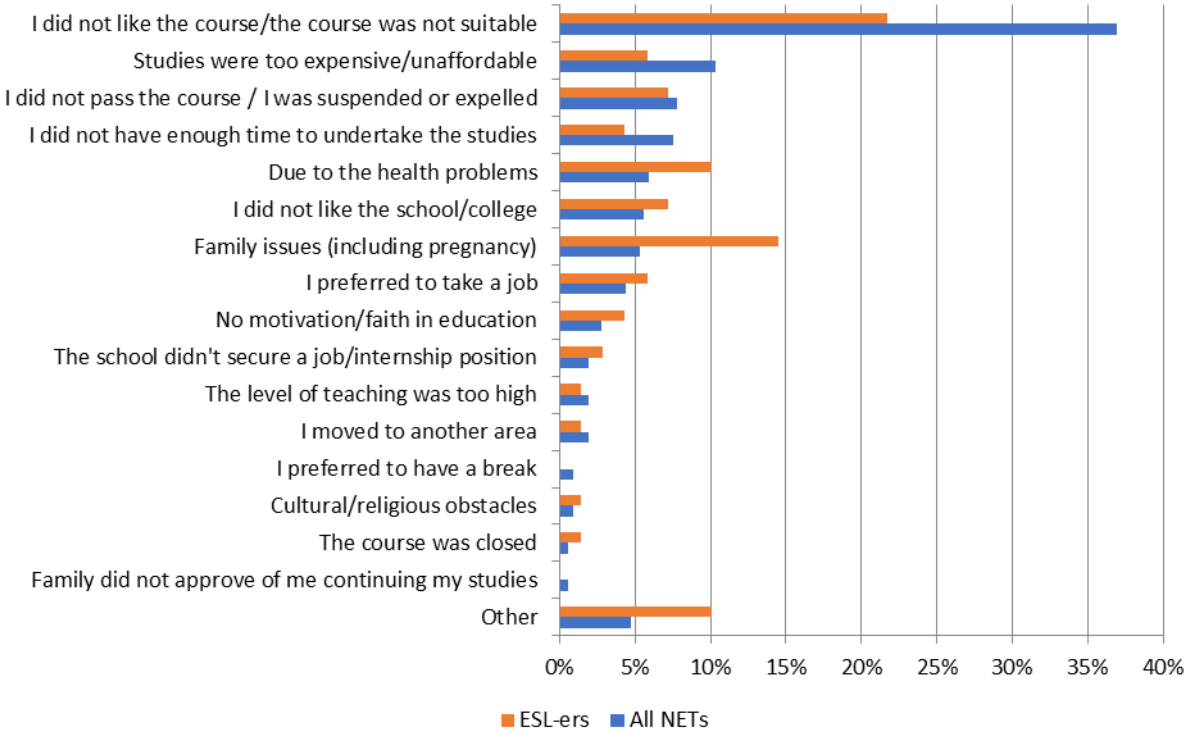


Source: RESL.eu students’ survey, N=802.

A large share (41.7 per cent) of the respondents currently not in education or training (NETs¹⁰) during the second wave of the survey declared that they had tried a higher level of education than the one already achieved, but they dropped out. Among the reasons for leaving education selected by those youngsters, prominent indications included family or health issues, the most common of which was pregnancy (see Figure 9). These reasons for quitting education were particularly frequent (about 25 per cent) among early school leavers, who were also less likely to select such answers as *I did not like the course*, or *Studies were too expensive*, than the NETs who completed ISCED level 3 education.

¹⁰ NETs, as opposed to NEETs (who are not in education, employment or training), is a much broader category and includes also people who work. In addition, NETs, in contrast to ESLers, may have completed an upper-secondary school.

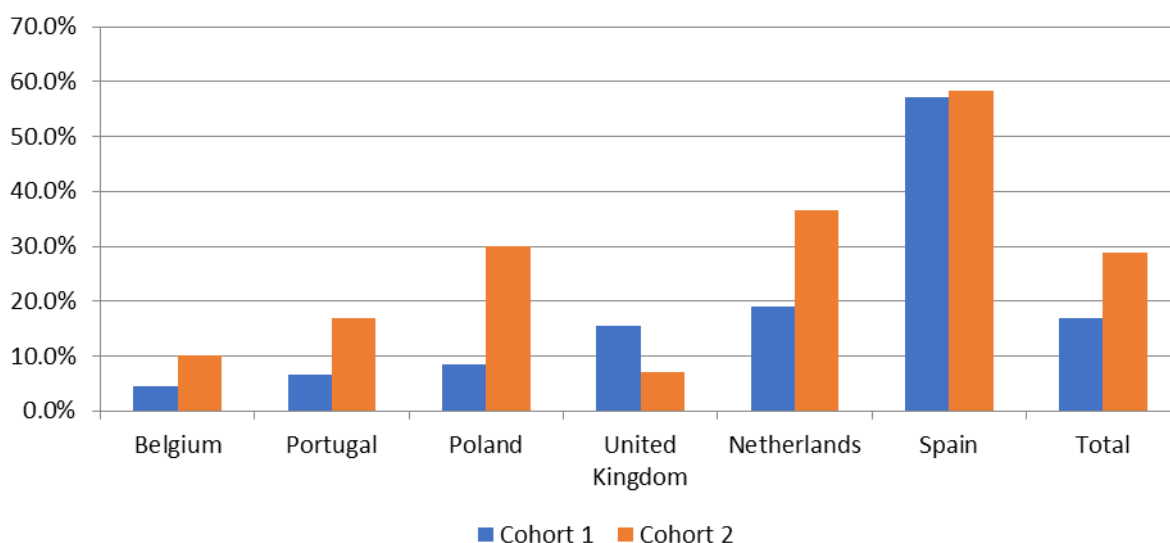
Figure 9. Reasons for dropping out of the higher level of education



Source: RESL.eu students' survey, N=320.

The non-linearity of the educational trajectories of the youth at risk of ESL can also be observed in the questionnaire responses of those who were still in education during the second wave of the survey. Over one fifth (21.7 per cent) of them declared that they returned to education after a period of not studying (see Figure 10). This group was particularly numerous in the Spanish sample, where a majority of the respondents (57.7 per cent) reported such a period of staying out of education. The general pattern was that the breaks were more often reported in the older cohort. Such events are thus accumulating in the educational trajectories of youth, which stays in line with the findings suggesting that the level of school engagement is usually decreasing during the life-course (Skinner et al., 2009).

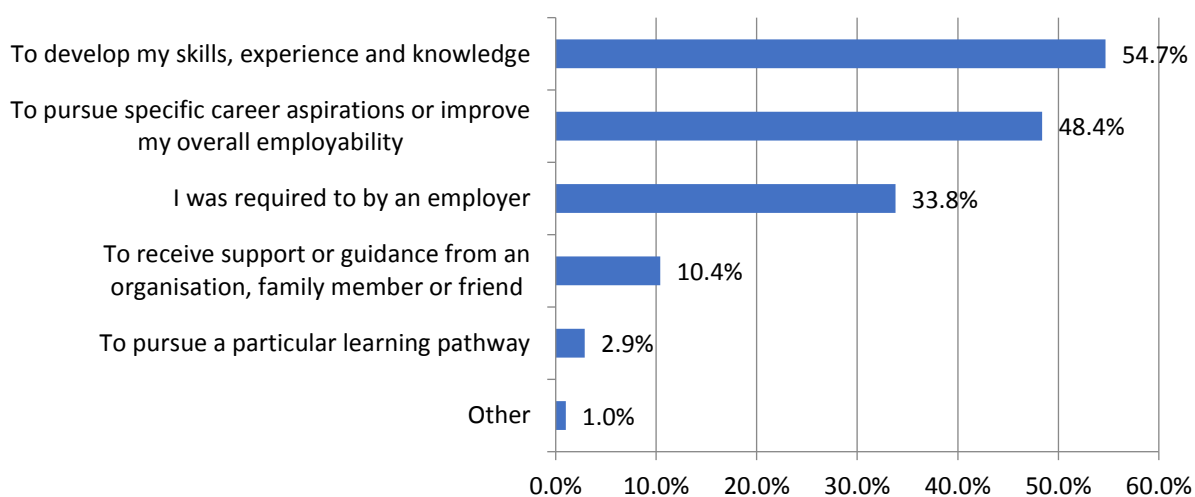
Figure 10. Percentage of students who reported returning to education after a period of not-studying; by cohort and country of survey



Source: RESL.eu students' survey, N=5,591¹¹.

The interconnection of the labour market and education is at stake once more. Major drivers bringing the respondents back to school included the desire to develop skills or the pursuit of specific career aspirations, and for every third returning student it was the requirement of the employer (see Figure 11). The analysis of educational trajectories of youth at risk of ESL (Van Caudenberg et al., 2017) also indicates that youth in unfavourable financial conditions often prefer early entrance into the labour market, but they find it difficult to find a job without educational qualification or work experience, which drives them back to education.

Figure 11. Reasons for returning to education after a period of not studying



Source: RESL.eu students' survey, N=1,052.

¹¹ The subsample for Sweden not sufficiently numerous in 2016.

Social and institutional support

Our findings indicate that the support that the youngsters are provided with should be in the centre of the analyses of school disengagement and early school leaving. This involves not only the learning support, but also the feeling of being supported more generally. In addition, our findings confirm the importance of the students' social relations and support obtained from parents and the local community. The survey data suggest that the respondents who returned to education after a period of not studying could be characterised by high school engagement scores, but also had high levels of peer support and high peer aspirations (see Table 5). In turn, those youngsters who tried to complete a higher level of education but left before completing it had the lowest average levels of support from both peers and parents.

Table 5. Mean scores in the factors describing school engagement and relations with parents, teachers and peers; by education status

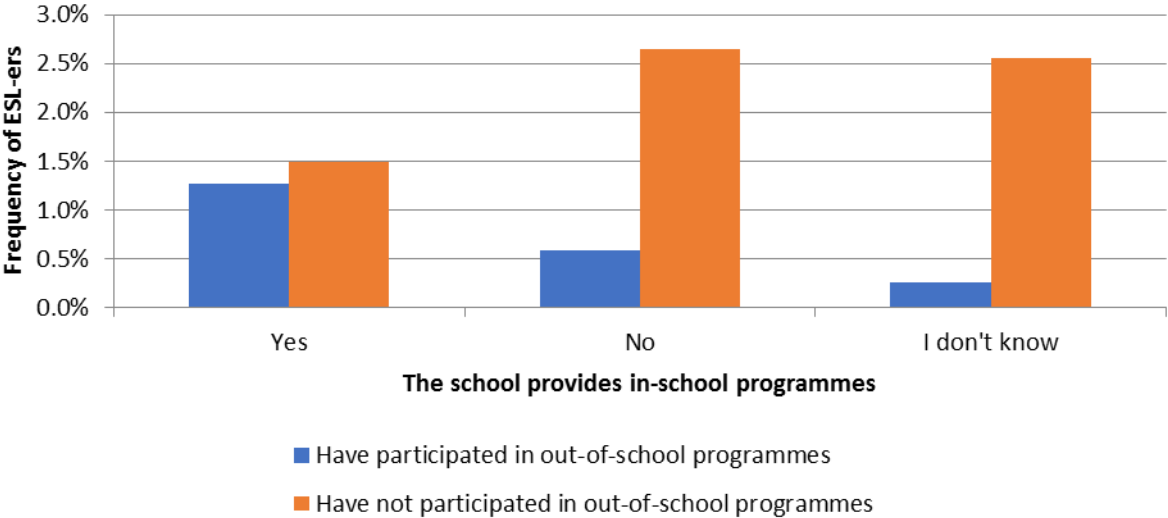
Factor	In education		Not in education			
	Returned to education after a period of not studying	No periods of not studying	Dropped out of a higher level education		No attempts to pursue a higher level of education	
			Not Early School Leaver	Early School Leaver	Not Early School Leaver	Early School Leaver
School Engagement	3.73	3.71	3.55	3.31	3.64	3.39
Teacher Support	3.55	3.51	3.57	3.38	3.55	3.47
Negative teacher-student interaction	3.62	3.64	3.59	3.40	3.60	3.32
Parental Support	4.06	4.10	4.10	4.08	4.07	3.91
Parental Involvement	3.31	3.36	3.14	2.96	3.13	3.15
Parental Control	3.90	4.01	3.68	3.54	3.87	3.85
Peer Aspirations	4.08	3.99	3.74	3.71	3.86	3.78
Peer Support	4.12	4.02	3.94	3.66	3.98	3.83

Source: RESL.eu students' survey, N=6,750

Parents’ and teachers’ expectations are among the main variables explaining the level of youth’s educational expectations (Kaye et al., 2017). In turn, school engagement correlates with the perceived teachers’ support and peer aspirations, although they are weaker predictors than in-school experience and attitudes of individuals toward education. Further analyses (Kaye et al., 2017) indicate that the student-teacher relations (i.e. teacher support) explain the respondents’ rate of school belonging much better than cultural and demographic background, parental or peer relations, although cohort and perceived importance of education play an important role as well.

Even though some studies (e.g., Dolata et al., 2013) suggest that additional learning support does not increase school achievement, in the second wave of the survey (2016) the risk of becoming an early school leaver was visibly higher among the respondents who in the first wave of the survey declared that they were not aware of prevention or intervention programmes at school and did not participate in any out-of-school programmes.

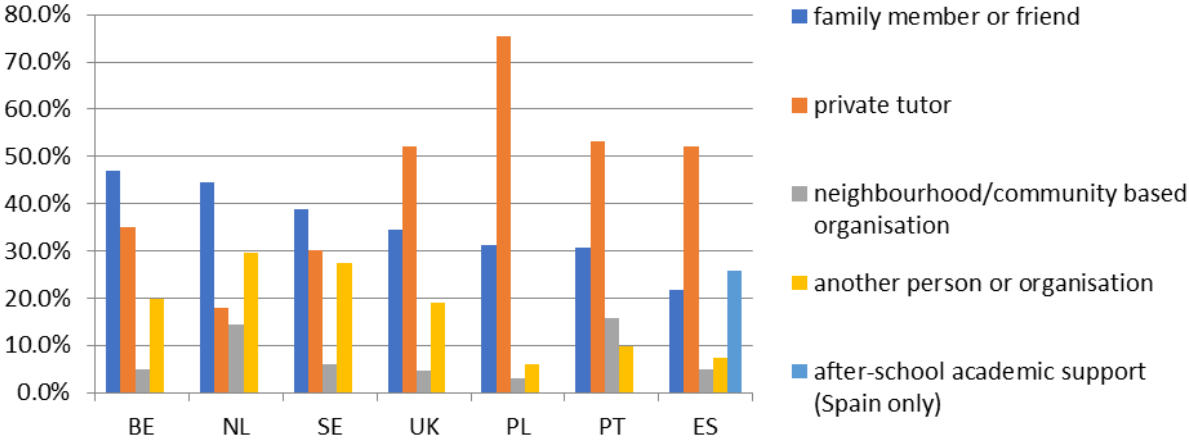
Figure 12. Frequency of ESL by the awareness of in-school programmes at school and participation in out-of-school programmes



Source: RESE.eu students’ survey, N=6,200.

The out-of-school educational support was provided by various actors and the sources were distributed unevenly depending on the country of survey. In Belgium (Flanders) and the Netherlands a significant role was played by the family, while in Poland, UK, Portugal and Spain, private tutoring was the most important.

Figure 13. Actors delivering out-of-school programmes; by country of survey



Source: RESL.eu students’ survey, N=4,839.

The quantitative analyses may approximate the non-linearity of the trajectories at risk of disengagement, and try to measure the institutional and social hindrances which the youth at risk of ESL have to deal with. However, the qualitative data are necessary for a more in-depth understanding of the sequence of events forming one’s educational trajectory and the interconnection between various risk and protective factors appearing at the various stages of this trajectory. Therefore, qualitative data analysis is presented in the following part of this publication – Part 4.

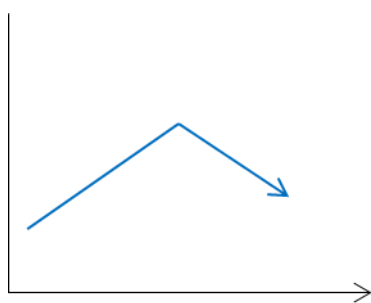
Part 4. Typology of educational trajectories of youth at risk of ESL

In this part of the publication, we present the identified non-linear educational trajectories of youth at risk of early school leaving. They are based primarily on qualitative data. In order to systematise the complexity of the educational trajectories of youth at risk of ESL, we have arrived at six ideal types of trajectories, which we labelled as follows: *Unanticipated crisis*, *Downward spiral*, *Parabola*, *Boomerang*, *Resilient route*, *Shading out*. In the following sections we describe these types of trajectories, and illustrate them with condensed narratives that are written in the third person to indicate researchers' presence in the process (Lessard et al., 2014; Rhodes, 2000).

Unanticipated crisis

The first type of educational trajectory that has been identified relates to a situation in which the youngster's school career develops quite smoothly and there are relatively few risk factors for early school leaving. He/She goes to school regularly and copes with everyday duties and his/her trajectory seems to be a linear one. The young person may experience some level of school disengagement (e.g., related to a particular subject or teacher) or periods of poor functioning in school, but there are few signs of high school disengagement which might lead to negative outcomes such as grade repetition or non-completion of school. Suddenly something happens (i.e., there might be various critical events such as an accident, death in the family, pregnancy, etc.) and the youngster falls behind. The school situation is deteriorating abruptly and the young person stops to deal with the challenges that have at this point taken control of his/her life. Often no measures have been applied or the school reacted too late because the staff were attached to their previous evaluation of the student, when everything seemed fine from the outside: the youngster's behaviour was not perceived as 'challenging' and his/her school work did not cause any concerns. Hence, this trajectory to early school leaving is frequently overlooked by schools.

Figure 14. Unanticipated crisis



Simon

One of the students whose educational trajectory has been identified as unanticipated crisis is **Simon from Austria** (25 years old), who in primary school and at the beginning of lower secondary school, was perceived as a model student. His relationships with classmates were also quite good. Simon grew up in a relatively balanced environment: both parents working and two older siblings, who graduated from

upper secondary education. This, however, did not protect him from leaving school early. Simon's parents divorced when he was 12, which had a dramatic effect on Simon's educational trajectory.

First, as a reaction to the new situation, he put on a lot of weight and was bullied by other students. Later, he became interested in sport, lost weight, even became a heartthrob and influenced the classroom dynamics a lot. At the same time, he started losing interest in schoolwork and became increasingly disengaged from school by 1st grade of upper secondary school. This lack of engagement was accompanied by high absenteeism, behavioural problems and conflicts with teachers. Eventually, he needed to repeat a year (grade 9), after which he left the academic school. Later he enrolled at a higher vocational school, which he left after one semester, as the course curriculum was not what he had expected, as he did not perceive it as cognitively challenging.

For him this decision to quit school was "a liberating experience". Simon experienced failures and had developed negative relations with teachers at the academic school. He left education at the age of 16 for good and still states that he does not regret his decision. Now, he occasionally works as a technical assistant at events and is developing a computer game, which, he hopes, will bring him financial profits. He has not made any concrete decisions about returning to education and training or not.

The significant factor in Simon's trajectory was the unanticipated crisis that took place after his parents' divorce. The problems he later encountered in his personal life and social relations did not seem to have been identified sufficiently by the school staff and he was not provided with adequate emotional support. Also, the following change in his academic and behavioural performance could have been avoided if the problem had been noticed by the school and proper preventive measures had been applied. Instead, when Simon started to show some problem behaviour, he was urged to leave the school, which only intensified his process of school disengagement, as Simon felt the teachers wanted to get rid of him.

The identification of personal problems and needs is pivotal in the prevention of ESL and school disengagement. Therefore, schools could implement early warning systems (EWS) which would help school staff to notice problem issues and to take appropriate action as early as possible. However, our previous analyses (Nouwen et al., 2016) reveal that most early warning systems assess behavioural and academic indicators of school disengagement, such as: grades, truancy, or lack of compliance, while only a minority of them also systematically track students' emotional well-being and contextual factors of their academic outcomes. In order to assess the latter, schools rely on one-on-one contacts between the staff and the students, which although necessary, often prove to be insufficient in diagnosing the ESL risk factors. Furthermore, schools often use suspension and expulsion mechanisms as disciplinary measures, which negatively affects students' school engagement and the already low motivation. These disciplinary measures often accelerate students' disengagement processes leading them to leave school early. One solution in order to avoid that could be the creation of multidisciplinary teams consisting of school teachers, school psychologists, social workers and career counsellors that would provide integrated support embracing various dimensions of well-being: social, emotional, academic and behavioural (Nouwen et al., 2016).

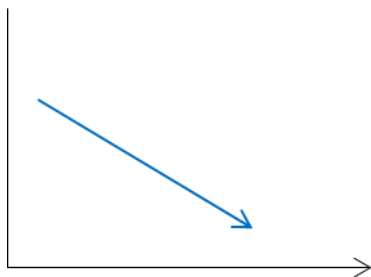
In conclusion, students that are faced with a so-called unanticipated crisis during their school career, are often difficult to detect for schools and policy makers. Therefore, it is important that educational institutions carry out specific systematic procedures that also assess early signs of disengagement processes, such as loss of motivation, lack of patience, irritability, sudden deterioration in learning outcomes, deteriorating well-being, etc. Equally important are proper early intervention procedures

delivered immediately, as well as cooperation with other specialists or institutional agents outside school.

Downward spiral

The educational situation of the youngsters whose educational trajectories can be described as a downward spiral was never easy or smooth. The reason for this could be the issues related to his/her disadvantaged background or other aspects of his/her functioning (including: learning difficulties, behavioural issues, etc.). For many of these students, the situation at school is gradually getting worse, leading to serious problems with learning and/or conduct, higher levels of school disengagement and eventually leaving school. The first signs of difficulties/problems leading to school disengagement and/or early school leaving may appear in lower secondary education, when the students have to adjust to an entirely different schooling than in primary school (Hugon, 2010; Thibert, 2013) or even as early as in primary school (Vallée & Shore, 2013). In many of these cases, over the years, youngsters become completely detached from school and education in general, despite the support provided at school, as this support often does not seem to be tailored to the youngsters' needs; these measures are short-term, *ad hoc* and/or insufficient to counteract this downward spiral.

Figure 15. Downward spiral



Pedro

Pedro from Portugal (20 years old) has an immigrant background (half-Angolan, half-French) and had very challenging conditions in childhood. First of all, Pedro grew up without his father and most of the time also without his mother, as he spent a great part of his childhood in a children's home (due to his mother's inability to provide care caused by financial difficulties), which affected his educational trajectory. At school, although he was one of the best students, he frequently misbehaved. His passion was drawing and he wanted to pursue it as a career. He became independent quite early, though, given his situation, he remained highly suspicious of other people's support. As youngsters from care institutions were grouped together in one class, in the 5th grade, Pedro, became part of a group that acted like a gang and got involved in conflicts. He gradually became more aggressive and, in the 6th grade, he got suspended. At the beginning of lower secondary school, students from his class were placed in vocational courses but Pedro did not like that idea and did not want to attend school anymore. Pedro felt disengaged with school, which he felt treated his classmates differently than others and did not give them the opportunity to make their own choices, just because they were seen as 'problematic'. In the 10th grade (upper secondary school) he started an Arts School and received the maximum score.

Full of expectations, he soon started to feel disappointed with the competitiveness and the emphasis placed on theory to the detriment of practice. He felt disengaged with the education system in general, and he did not attach any value to education or vocational training. In addition, he experienced language difficulties and had a troublesome relation with teachers. Furthermore they reduced the amount of scholarship he received. All this was accompanied by the necessity to help his mother financially, and he decided to leave school. Back then, he regarded his decision as temporary. Both teachers and his mother tried to convince him to stay but they were unsuccessful, since he always did what he wanted. His educational trajectory was a downward spiral and he left education for good. He also decided to leave the youth home, because the strict rules did not suit him.

After leaving school, he worked in a supermarket for one year and tattooed in his spare time. Occasionally, he worked as a dancer in a nightclub. Initially, he was living with his grandmother and mother, but then she got a boyfriend and left, leaving him in charge of the house. In his opinion, not having obtained ISCED 3 education was not a hindrance in finding work, since employers were always looking for the cheapest workers. In spite of his troublesome situation, he was never contacted by social services. After one year, he left the supermarket and started working at the café of his girlfriend's aunt, but he did not get along with her. He left and broke up with his girlfriend. After these unsuccessful work experiences, he decided to apply for the army and, at the time of the second interview, he was still awaiting an answer. His aspiration to work for the army revived the interest to return to school, given that the completion of the 12th grade is a condition for pursuing a military career in Portugal.

The trajectories classified as downward spiral show various multiple complexities of biographies, connected to micro-, meso-, macro-level risk factors. In Pedro's case, the factors connected to his personal life include being raised in a children's care institution due to his mother's inability to provide for him.¹²

The story of Pedro illustrates that over the course of students' educational trajectories the schools do not seem to be able to meet the needs of students who are already encountering some difficulties outside school, which often results in a spiral of factors that lead to disengagement from school and eventually early school leaving. Firstly, grouping all institutionalised youngsters from care institutions in the same class did not seem to be the best option, as it increases segregation. Secondly, directing these students coming from care institutions towards vocational education did not seem to work as well due to the social stigma associated to it. This devalues the potential of VET for those interested in gaining professional qualifications.

The qualitative data indicate that after a long-lasting accumulation of difficulties a youngster manifests a complete detachment from school and education in general, despite the fact that the school provides some form of support. In Pedro's story, the existence of a supportive early warning system (mainly on academic and socio-emotional and behavioural support) would have been crucial to keep Pedro in education. Suspension and disciplinary intervention was mainly supposed to punish him for not being compliant with the school's regulations. Therefore, his trajectory would have benefitted from a more proactive approach towards one-on-one emotional and behavioural support, in order to prevent motivational problems and stigmatisation. As Pedro reported, there was no such response from the school.

¹² In previous studies (e.g., Lessard et al., 2014) mother's support was found to be a significant protective factor.

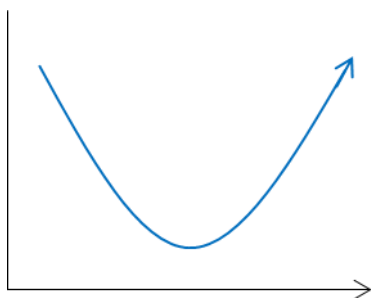
The downward spiral trajectory frequently leads to individuals leaving the education system completely. These trajectories often occur when youngsters are enrolled in schools with a poorly functioning support system, in which inadequate and insufficient support is offered to youngsters, or in which the needs of young people are taken insufficiently into account and/or schools offer solutions that are not adequate for the interests and dreams of these youngsters.

To sum up, the educational trajectories that can be best categorised as a downward spiral often lack a more comprehensive approach towards the assessment of the complex needs of youngsters and their families and/or to addressing them in a satisfactory way. Therefore, it is important that educational institutions also implement a family-focused approach that tries to engage and support the entire family. This may be especially useful as many parents have experienced educational failures themselves or have a limited access to resourceful social networks. Additionally, to compensate for the lack of support at home, academic support schemes should be available in- and outside school. As youth with downward spiral trajectories may have experienced previous failures and stigmatisation, they may fear evaluation and comparisons with peers. Therefore, they could benefit from one-on-one academic support (e.g., peer mentoring or tutoring).

Parabola

The third type of trajectory we have distinguished is a parabola. This type of trajectory describes a situation of youngsters who face considerable issues that gradually worsen their school engagement. There might be significant problems with attendance, discipline as well as academic performance. The motivation towards learning is decreasing. However, when a youngster is provided with substantial support (formal or informal), the trajectory changes and moves in the opposite direction. This may mean that the youngster stays in education or returns to school after a break and successfully completes school. Furthermore, it may also refer to a situation in which a youngster, provided with support, gains a new perspective and tries to do everything he/she can to return to education and obtain at least minimum qualifications. What distinguishes this trajectory from others is not only the presence of support, but the readiness of the young person to accept it and to benefit from it.

Figure 16. Parabola



Marcelo

The youngster whose educational trajectory has been identified as a parabola is **Marcelo from Spain**, who is of immigrant origin and had a challenging life situation from the start. He came to live in a new

country at the age of 7, a few years after his parents migrated from Ecuador. His father is unemployed and his mother works as a geriatric assistant. The long period of separation from parents in early childhood had a negative influence on family relations and also had a detrimental effect on Marcelo's school performance and motivation. When interviewed for the first time, Marcelo was 17 years old and was enrolled in an alternative learning arena, doing a training programme of transition to work. Marcelo completed lower secondary education but did not pass and obtain the compulsory (lower) secondary education certificate (*GESO – Graduado de Educación Secundaria Obligatoria*). His grades were already low in the last term of year 1 but he never received any extra academic or psychological support. The school provided the usual temporary support focusing on language learning (Catalan) and academic reinforcement but it did not target emotional support, which would have been essential to help him cope and probably improve his motivation and performance.

Marcelo experienced household and school mobility: when the family moved to a different neighbourhood, Marcelo transferred to another public high school. This negatively affected his educational trajectory further: he was advised to take the access test to intermediate VET tracks but he failed and then decided to repeat ESO (*Educación Secundaria Obligatoria*, compulsory secondary education) year 4, and he was not able to pass all the pending subjects from previous years. At that moment, he gave up and left school. When he was looking for information about the access tests again, he was informed about the training programmes of transition to work and decided to enrol. The school psychologist had already suggested these alternative training programmes. However, earlier, he had thought that those kind of courses were intended for kids that misbehaved and did nothing in school: "I didn't see myself like that, it's less than the ESO".

In the first interview Marcelo was enthusiastic about the change from high school to the training centre, where he appreciated the teachers' closeness and more engaged classmates. He was especially satisfied with the period of practice in a real firm. By the time of the second interview, however, he had taken the access test to VET and failed again. He felt so discouraged that he was about to leave the training programme he participated in, but ultimately didn't, thanks to significant support from one of his teachers in the alternative learning arena. The teacher even helped to improve Marcelo's relationship with his mother and achieve a better atmosphere at home.

In spite of his repeated attempts to complete compulsory education, Marcelo blames himself for his poor results due to his "lack of interest" and thinks they would have been better if he had made greater efforts. However, at the time of the second interview, Marcelo was confident he was going to complete the training course and he also planned to enrol in an adult education centre to obtain the GESO diploma and do it "just for himself".

Marcelo's story is unfortunately quite common among the children of immigrants of the intense immigration flows to Spain at the beginning of the 21st century (Gibson, Carrasco, 2009). In his case, due to the stress of family separation and the later changes of country and education system that affected many other children of immigrants, Marcelo felt rather isolated. The school provided the usual temporary support focusing on language learning (Catalan) and academic reinforcement but not the targeted emotional support that would have been essential to help him cope and would probably improve his motivation and performance. Later in his trajectory, Marcelo went through school mobility – adding another change with emotional impact for him – and school year repetition. Both experiences are regarded as having a negative influence on the risk of ESL. Finally, the youngster made several efforts to complete lower secondary education and enrolled in an out-of-school compensatory measure to gain practical experience to find a job and also as a longer path to re-enrolment in a VET track. In the end,

however, he did not obtain educational qualifications because he failed the entry exam for those without a lower secondary education certificate.

Schools' responses to the needs of immigrant children who experience processes of reunification seem to be misguided and schools should provide emotional support rather than focus solely on learning and adding new efforts required from them. Many immigrant children experience further mobility – changes of residence, school, locality, etc. – in the process of settlement of their families, and schools should cooperate to ensure smooth transfers between schools. Furthermore, alternative paths to access upper secondary tracks should not include contradictory systemic barriers that render them almost unattainable for students who struggle to avoid ESL but have had difficult educational trajectories.

Daniel

Another youngster whose educational trajectory can be described as a parabola, is **Daniel from Sweden**. He used to be a good student who always got good grades without too much effort. This became a problem later, as Daniel never learnt how to study properly. When learning became more difficult, Daniel struggled at school because he was used to doing well without having to study hard. When he was 12 years old (grade 6), school became harder to cope with. He had attended three different upper secondary schools when he became ill with depression, which eventually led to him leaving school at the age of 18. After a while he tried to go back to school, as his ambition was to enter higher education after completing ISCED 3, but it did not work, so he looked for a job instead. Daniel sought help from *UngKomp* (a project working with unemployed youths) and was able to do a labour market training course to become a butcher.

At the time of the second interview, Daniel had finished the training course in an adult education institution to become a butcher and had also found a part time job at the meat counter in a grocery store, a job that he enjoyed a lot. At that time, his plan was to work part time while at the same time completing his upper secondary school degree by taking courses through the municipal adult education scheme (*KomVux*). His goal was to continue with this until finishing his upper secondary school degree so that he could apply for university studies later. Daniel maintains that for him the right decision was to quit school, because his illness (depression) made it impossible for him to continue his studies. However, because both of his siblings had also dropped out of upper secondary school and later completed their studies through municipal education for adults, he knew he could enrol as well, when he was ready. He always saw municipal education for adults as a possibility to return to education later on. Although Daniel did leave school without achieving his goal of entering higher education, he later received support to enter the labour market.

Daniel had thought a lot about his educational trajectory since leaving school, and also about his future goals. For him, the key protective factor in the difficult period of his life had been the support he received from the adults around him. Also, the ability to reflect upon his mistakes can be considered a protective factor. Daniel admitted to being quite hard on himself sometimes and was working on not demanding too much from himself. With time, Daniel felt more ready to ask for help when he needed it.

Daniel's case shows that supportive adults play a very important role both in the process of school (dis)engagement, as well as in motivating to continue education. Daniel was lucky to live in a family that was able to financially support him during his illness, while school staff and medical personnel listened to his needs and allowed him to be very much involved in the decisions that were taken.

In the process of returning to or staying in education, the crucial factor was the support the youngsters received. It was the informational and emotional support of mentors, teachers, college tutors, youth coaches or apprenticeship managers with whom the youngsters established meaningful relations. The knowledge of alternative learning pathways, and the accessibility of these pathways, is therefore also important. In Sweden, the financial study support available to those over 20 years old further facilitates attending adult education and makes it accessible to a broad range of people as it guarantees an income during the studies. Therefore, second chance education in this case seems to have provided for a new opportunity to become motivated to study. The availability of and access to education and career counselling is also another important factor in helping and motivating those who risk leaving school early to continue or return to their education.

This trajectory type describes students who do receive adequate support from adults (teachers, educators, mentors etc.) and try to make the most of it, which changes their outlook on life and their life approach. Here again, however, there can be various 'end' results, regardless of the youngsters' efforts, as they may encounter systemic barriers and limitations of different kinds.

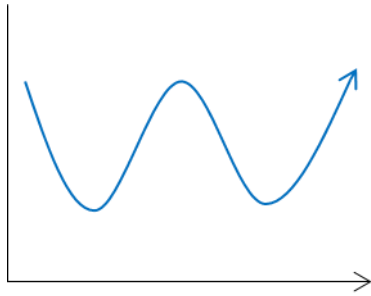
In the case of learners whose educational trajectories could be described as a parabola, it is very important to provide flexible and alternative learning pathways (e.g., second chance schools, schools for adults) as youngsters often experience learning disruptions, but after receiving support they return or wish to return to the education system. Young people after episodes of school leaving could also receive specific incentives to undertake or continue further education. This would allow young people to learn despite the financial difficulties.

To conclude, youngsters with parabola trajectories often associate going to school with negative experiences, so it is important that there are educational institutions that support young people in an open environment, not necessarily at school. It is essential that the support provided involves not only educational but also emotional or psychological issues. However, mainstream schools should take care of developing a positive school climate, giving young people the opportunity to express their opinions and engaging them in various extracurricular activities in order to prevent youth from leaving education.

Boomerang

The cycle of leaving and returning to school often happens repeatedly during the course of one's educational trajectory. Thus, the trajectories of students who have experienced periods of temporarily being out of education and having returned to education can be categorised as a boomerang. Students who return to education often enrol in a different type of school, track or educational programme. Those youngsters may have had breaks in their educational career, related to a change of plans or a change of track. Furthermore, they may have experienced unexpected or unplanned life events, such as pregnancy, accident, illness, or they may have been expelled or failed to meet formal requirements: e.g., did not pass an exam at school. However, youngsters whose educational trajectory can be described as a boomerang often find their way back to education in alternative learning arenas.

Figure 17. Boomerang



Pamela

Pamela from the UK, had a large support network through her family, friends and peers and seemed to develop strong relationships with teachers at school and managers and colleagues at work. Nevertheless, she had low motivation to engage in school. Although she attended school regularly, she struggled at school and eventually became disengaged from education (both with school and with content). Because of that, Pamela was assigned to the lowest attainment groups without any possibility to get into a better performing group, which had a negative impact on her motivation. In secondary school, she found classes distracting and she did not seem to get any additional support there. At home, parents declared support, but in fact expected her to contribute to care over the young children the family was fostering, which also affected her studies. She left education at the age of 16 with very low qualifications and started working at an ice-rink. She worked there for four years, during which she enrolled in three different vocational courses in different colleges, but only finished an introductory course to Health and Social Care.

As Pamela failed her school examinations, when she returned to education, she enrolled in a training through an apprenticeship and she did well. Pamela received support from her tutor at the college where she was studying after she returned to education to complete an ISCED3 level vocational training in Health and Social Care and her manager at the local authority where she completed her training. For Pamela, a very effective form of support was also more personal and focused monthly supervision with her manager at the apprenticeship.

She completed a level 3 apprenticeship qualification and got a stable job. When she was interviewed for the second time, she was doing well in her job and was planning to go to university to obtain higher qualifications in her field of work. Pamela completed an apprenticeship at a further education college. After four years of going in and out of education, she was able to obtain valuable qualifications and find a secure job as an Occupational Therapist Assistant in a local hospital immediately after completing the course. She was planning to enrol in a part-time university course to further her career and progress into an Occupational Therapist role and was determined to achieve her aspirations and also felt that she had sufficient social support around her (family, friends, and colleagues). She felt confident and proud of herself, had clear and well thought-through career plans for the future.

Pamela's example shows that finding the appropriate learning environment and adequate support can make a difference in a young person's life. Her story also exemplifies the interplay between the labour market and school engagement.

Good apprenticeships – that provide high quality learning and training – are especially useful for 'more practical' learners failed by the mainstream, academically inclined schooling. Apprenticeships can equip young people with qualifications, valuable skills and experience that are highly valued by employers,

and help them regain their self-esteem and confidence in their academic abilities. However, the cross-case analyses of work-based learning (Nouwen et al., 2016) highlighted that although for the most vulnerable and disengaged students taking an apprenticeship can provide a refuge from the exclusionary mainstream education, the work-based learning systems can also have selective character. Emphasis was placed on the scarcity of apprenticeship positions, especially for students at the highest risk of ESL, particularly in Spain and Hungary.

Schools and teachers should pay more attention to those low and middle-attaining students who do not exhibit behavioural problems, have regular attendance, and in general, do not cause any problems at school. As Pamela's school experiences show, these pupils can easily get overlooked in schools, and as a result, they do not receive appropriate support, and are at risk of not achieving their potential. Such learners might benefit from focused support in a small group setting, or after-school/ homework classes. Having a 'mentor' – for example a teacher or other school staff member – with whom they have regular contact overseeing their academic development might also have a positive impact on their educational outcomes.

Brahim

Brahim from Belgium (19 years old) is a boy of Moroccan origin, who was frequently changing between different secondary schools and tracks. He also repeated a few years throughout his educational career until, at one point, he started feeling too old. He felt that the teachers were unsupportive and that the schools did not provide the kind of connection and trust he needed to stay engaged; he became tired of school and withdrew from education.

However, Brahim eventually did benefit from support he received from his mentor from a community-based youth organisation in his neighbourhood that he had been attending since his childhood. Within this community-based organisation, he was able to find the connection and the support he missed in the secondary schools he attended. From his mentor, Brahim received information about the possibility to enrol in the central examination commission where he would be able to obtain his diploma through a system of self-study; another counsellor accompanied him a few times to Brussels where he had to take the exams. Another significant protective factor was the fact that his friends within the youth organisation often were (or had been) in a similar position and that they often exchanged course material and studied together. Eventually, Brahim obtained his upper secondary school diploma via a system of self-study. He is also hoping to enrol in higher education in the near future. In the meantime, he is looking for a job or a professional training.

Brahim's experience shows that young people need to have someone they feel they can relate to and connect with within the school environment, which – especially for youngsters with a migration background – is often hard to find among a school staff body that is still predominantly (or in many schools exclusively) of native (in this case – Flemish) background¹³.

The educational trajectory of Brahim illustrates, however, that the community based (youth) organisations can provide disengaged students with the connection and support they miss in secondary schools. From a policy perspective, Brahim's case shows the importance of cooperation between schools and the communities of youngsters at risk of ESL. Involving the community could serve as an important protective factor for youngsters like Brahim whose educational trajectories are often a matter

¹³ A large share of staff with migrant origin can be, however, noted in English schools (see: Kaye et al., 2016).

of navigating an institutional context in which they struggle to find a school where they feel sufficiently respected by their teachers and where they can develop a sense of belonging.

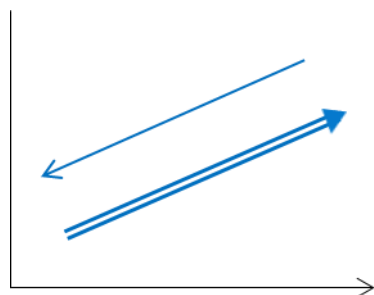
Both Brahim from Belgium and Pamela from the UK struggled in school, felt disengaged from school and perceived a lack of support from the teachers at school. Both youngsters initially left school without educational qualifications. However, in the end they re-engaged with education and training and successfully completed the ISCED 3 level education. They are also hoping to obtain higher education diplomas in the future.

To conclude, we can say that youth whose trajectories can be described as a boomerang would benefit from systematic professional career counselling with focus on developing career planning skills. It is also important for schools and other educational institutions to provide them with reliable information about available educational options and the consequences of their choices. Supporting young people in transition periods and helping them to make rational, fact-based decisions is also crucial. The reason for frequent changes of educational pathways/programmes in case of youth with boomerang trajectories may be also due to insufficient awareness of their personal weaknesses and strengths, and lack of clearly defined aspirations. That is why the recognition of one's potential, strengthening of interests and abilities can be a good way to help them find their place in the educational 'jungle' and in life. On the systemic level, offering flexible educational pathways and withdrawing from early tracking which limits later opportunities for continuing education remains an important challenge.

Resilient route

The type of trajectory described as the resilient route relates to a situation in which the youngster faces considerable issues at school that negatively affect his/her school engagement. There are numerous adversities in the educational trajectory of the youngster, but they are counterbalanced by numerous protective factors. Such factors are: the youngster's readiness to accept support and the act of actively seeking the support of others, his/her internal psychological strengths and ability to successfully adapt to life tasks, positive relations with parents, teachers, and/or peers, as well as determination to achieve something. These protective factors are significant enough for the youngster's educational trajectory to have a (possibly) positive outcome – staying in education with a view of obtaining ISCED 3 level qualifications and maybe moving further. In the resilient route, the protective factors are constantly present and counteract the adverse effects of parallel risk factors. Moreover, the RESL.eu quantitative analyses suggest that the academic self-concept and self-esteem are among the crucial variables for explaining the level of youth's school engagement (Kaye et al., 2017).

Figure 18. Resilient route



Mariola

Mariola from Poland (20 years old) grew up in a large family with a low socio-economic status – she has five older siblings. Her mother, who is of poor health, is unemployed. Her father, who has alcohol problems, tormented his family mentally and physically for a long time and spent several years in prison. Although her parents only have primary or basic vocational education, all of Mariola’s older sisters have university degrees.

Mariola had been a victim of peer violence in lower secondary school. This experience had a great influence on her later disengagement from school. After these events, Mariola enrolled at an alternative learning arena (VLC – Voluntary Labour Corps), where she trained as a hairdresser. However, she felt harassed at the workplace, and eventually resigned from her practice. At her new school, she experienced stress associated with one teacher who was very demanding and unsupportive. Despite the difficulties, she was able to finish lower secondary school and planned to continue education at a vocational school. However, due to the difficult economic situation at home, she decided to enrol in a weekend course at a school for adults¹⁴, to be able to work and financially support her mother. A few months later, she started having health problems and spent a part of the semester in hospital, which eventually resulted in her leaving school.

After another break of several months, determined to complete upper secondary school and with plans to go to college in the future, Mariola decided to enrol in a different school. Although she experienced breaks in education, at the moment of the second interview, she was back in education. She strives to achieve more than her parents – to have a better education and a better economic situation in the future. Mariola believes that it is a success that she did not give up completely although she had such difficult experiences: “For me it’s a success that I managed to stand up on my own two feet, that I haven’t given up and haven’t hit rock bottom.”

Mariola’s example shows a complex and multidimensional educational trajectory of a person who left school early. Mariola has experienced many difficulties – lack of support in the family, at school, in the peer group. Peer persecution, alcohol abuse and harassment at home, low socioeconomic status of the family and the need to undertake paid work to help the family financially, stressful living conditions, health problems, suicide attempts are all significant risk factors. That could be enough for Mariola to give up school education completely. Nevertheless, the presence of loved ones, whose support she can always count on (siblings), the support of professionals such as the psychologist and the educators working at the VLC (Voluntary Labour Corps – an alternative learning arena), having optimistic outlook on the future, recognising the value of education and a belief in her own potential are strong protective factors against ESL. In spite of many difficulties, Mariola has not stopped in her endeavour, she did not leave school completely – after a break due to health problems, she re-enrolled at a school for adults.

Jenny

Jenny from the Netherlands had a relatively good relation with her family in general, but her relations with parents were quite difficult and she experienced many conflicts with them. Her father had worked for the same company for 40 years and her mother used to work as a secretary (though she was unemployed at the time of the first interview). Her brothers had stable jobs and one of them attended

¹⁴ In Poland, upper secondary schools for adults provide only general education courses.

higher education. Jenny experienced peer violence in primary school. However, despite a difficult environment at school, she remained in school and continued studying.

Although at the moment of the second interview Jenny was out of school, she was planning to go back to education. She already obtained two diplomas with minimum qualifications (MBO level 2)¹⁵ in two different areas: Hospitality and Catering as well as Health and Social Care. Nevertheless, she wanted to continue studying in the next level (MBO level 3), but she was unable to do so, as she did not have the funds to pay for her education¹⁶. The best solution for her would have been to enrol in dual track, combining learning and working, but that was not easy, either. During the second interview, she was working in a call centre; a position that had nothing to do with her previously obtained educational qualifications. Unfortunately, the hospital she had worked for had merged with another institution and Jenny lost her job. Since she did not have any practical training in health or care work, Jenny was not able to find any job in the area of her study. Moreover, she realised that in order to find employment in health and care (she actually wanted to become a maternity nurse), she would need an additional degree. As she is not able to afford the higher level course, Jenny mentioned feeling disappointed with the systemic barriers which she is unable to overcome and considers her education as a waste of time.

One of the problems Jenny had to face during her school-to-work transition was that her training was interrupted by the closing down of the institutions where she was working and learning. It resulted in her disappointment and disengagement with education in general, and she had a temporary break in education. However, what seems to be a very strong protective factor in her case is the fact that she does see the value of education and is determined to obtain higher qualifications than the ones she has already obtained.

Jenny's case shows us the importance of practical experience in vocational training in the Netherlands, and that those who lack it face serious risks in making youth transitions. In that sense all upper secondary vocational institutions should foster providing technical skills in the sector of health and care.¹⁷ Next, her case also illustrates the problem of the limited financial means faced by many young people paying for their studies. The Dutch system is really focused on the minimum degree requirement – this fixation also leads to young people limiting themselves to such degrees and not realising their potential. The study finance system in the Netherlands offers loan options and scholarships yet in the case of failure in higher levels (such as level 3 or 4) these loans and scholarships all turn into a debt that they need to pay back. Considering the fact that most young people already need to make a living, studying becomes an additional risk which they fear to take. As a result, rather than getting fixated on the minimum degree, which in Jenny's case also did not offer any secure employment, the system should concentrate on helping young people to realise their potential.

The interviews with the youth at risk of ESL reveal a broad scope of challenges which many of them face in the family and peer relations. In line with the existing studies (e.g., Dołęga, 2003), the role of peers and their aspirations seems to be particularly important for the respondents' level of school

¹⁵ MBO – *middelbaar beroepsonderwijs*, preparatory secondary education in the Netherlands. MBO 2 ('basic VET' (basisberoepsopleiding)) is the desirable official minimum qualification level for every citizen on the labour market (Cedefop, 2016).

¹⁶ In the Netherlands training is provided free of charge until the students receive the minimum qualification; the degrees higher than minimum qualification require them to pay and if they fail the study they are faced with a considerable debt. So in theory youngsters can retake the courses or requalify a number of times, but in practice it is possible as long as they can afford this kind of education. If they fail – they often resign, as this is connected with a considerable amount of money, which they don't usually have.

¹⁷ For example, some institutions in Rotterdam did offer these skills, which puts the graduates of these schools at an advantage.

engagement. Both Mariola and Jenny had been victims of peer violence. In the case of both youngsters, this experience had a great influence on their processes of disengagement from school. When Mariola opened up about the problem and tried to seek help from the school in that matter, the school authorities' only reaction was the suggestion that she move to another school. In that way, the school proved their inability to counter violent behaviours or pretended not to see any problems or recognise the students' needs. Jenny was ashamed of being bullied for four years and only discussed this issue in lower secondary school. Jenny was better supported than Mariola. In Jenny's school, the staff intervened and she felt that she could count on the support of her teachers.

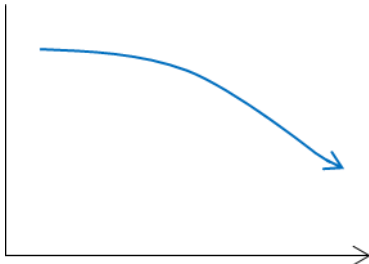
Both schools lacked early warning systems, did not notice or ignored aggressive peer behaviours, such as bullying and did not offer professional psychological support. Mariola and Jenny experienced mental health problems, but had the support of psychologists (Mariola) or psychiatrists (Jenny) outside school. Because of this support outside school, they were able to face the difficulties they encountered and they managed to stay in education. The cases of Mariola and Jenny show how important early warning systems are in schools, which would allow school staff to detect problems at an early stage in order to provide youngsters with adequate emotional support.

Young people whose educational trajectories have been classified as resilient can often count on out-of-school support from family or significant others. That is why it is so important to use this potential and to establish good cooperation and engage support systems to assist young people in learning. It is also important to nurture the high (and at the same time adequate) aspirations of young people, to offer them support and to respond to all of their needs. Finally, in our research a few youngsters with a resilient trajectory experienced peer bullying or abusive relations with teachers. These cases remind us of the need to develop strategies to prevent and combat school violence in all educational institutions and at the systemic level.

Shading out

The last trajectory type identified is the shading out, which describes a situation in which youngsters experience small issues or problems related to school performance and functioning that do not raise concern of the school staff. However, these small issues gradually accumulate, leading to the loss of motivation towards learning and an increase in school disaffection. As the existing problems that young people experience are not necessarily externalised, many of these problems go unnoticed by school staff. Therefore, minor problems could gradually lead to disengagement with education and by extension, the broader system, and the youngster slowly shades out of school and finally quits education.

Figure 19. Shading out



Sander from Hungary, a Roma man living in a disadvantaged middle-sized town, experienced some difficulties in his childhood. At the age of 2, his young father died of cancer. His widowed mother met her present partner a few years later. Both Sander's mother and stepfather have only completed primary school (eight grades), while the grandparents completed even fewer grades. Nobody in the family has obtained higher educational attainment than this. Sander has two younger brothers. The elder one of his brothers is also an early school leaver, and Sander does not think the younger one, who is 16 now, will finish primary school.

Sander was already 8 years old when he started primary school. He was quite a good student in lower primary education. He stayed at the after school programme providing extracurricular activities (*tanoda*)¹⁸ from the beginning of school. In higher primary education, Sander's school performance was becoming weaker; his grade average was getting lower; even though the teachers did their best, he did not care about studying at all and he would not complete his homework. Sander really enjoyed participating in *tanoda*'s activities. He said it was much better to study there, as the same teachers who were teaching them at the school in the morning were much less strict when dealing with them at the *tanoda*. He also liked it that the number of students at the sessions was only four.

Sander's parents insisted that in order to succeed in life he should learn a trade by all means. That is why he ended up in the integrated technical and vocational school. Again, he did not care about studying at all and skipped school a lot because of doing student work. Sander finished the 9th grade but in the 10th grade he failed mathematics and did not appear at the re-examination, even though his teachers claimed his skills would have allowed him to pass this re-examination easily. Having skipped the re-take exam, he had to repeat the grade. Instead, Sander started a training programme in welding that did not provide a high school degree. However, he did not like this training programme either, and was frequently absent during practical training, as he was required to perform tasks that did not have anything to do with welding, like picking pondweed in the nearby lake. Eventually, he abandoned the welding training programme and returned to the previous programme, where he registered to the 10th grade for the third time. However, he did not finish this year either. He then enrolled in a course of industrial engineering in the same school. He was already 19 years old at this point and he would have needed another 2 or 3 years to complete this training programme, which he was reluctant to accept, so he completely withdrew from education.

Sander regrets not having finished school and even more not having obtained any professional qualifications. However, his present job does not allow him to go back to school. In Sander's opinion, when a child sees that everyone around him/her has low educational qualifications and can manage nevertheless, he/she will question the value of studying. Sander would like to go abroad to work, assuming he would not need a certificate confirming vocational qualifications there. In fact he has a

¹⁸ *Tanoda* is a Hungarian after school programme providing extracurricular activities out of the original school building. *Tanoda* was established in order to support the educational success of disadvantaged pupils, mainly of Roma origin. The main goals of the measure are: to foster basic skills development of the pupils, to reduce the effects of social disadvantages of the youth and to strengthen the cultural identity of the participants. *Tanodas*, having alternative, innovative methods and approach, originally worked only with teachers who were not from the local schools, but in fact in many small towns and villages they employ teachers from local schools, due to the lack of specialists in those villages. All *tanodas* are run by non-state organisations, such as NGOs, churches and Roma minority self-governments. The activities serve to prevent school dropout and strengthen educational achievements and attainment levels of students and put great emphasis on drawing in and engaging parents and communities in the educational process. (Beres, 2017).

stable job now in his home country, producing heating wires for a decent salary. However, he claims the work is “overwhelming and does not leave the weekends free, either”. Sander wants to obtain qualifications in order to get a better job and make enough money to relieve his partner from work once they have a child.

Although there was no significant rupture in Sander’s school career, the immediate reason of leaving school in his case was grade repetition, due to failure, absences and frequent change of programme. When he finally found what he wanted to do in education he realised that it was too late. Sander, already 19 at this time, would have had to invest another two or three years to acquire a profession. He could not afford to wait for such a long time. Instead, he decided to start his adult life without a professional degree.

Sander’s case illustrates the need for flexible learning systems that allow young people with non-linear trajectories to re-engage and to reconcile school, work and other responsibilities. Furthermore, as Sander was switching between training programmes, he might have benefitted from proper career counselling when he was choosing his programme. Sander’s case shows how important it is to have proper career guidance in the youngsters’ educational trajectories. It is pivotal to offer good professional support to young people in decision-making, particularly in the transition between educational stages or in crisis situations.

Furthermore, in the case of youngsters with trajectories that gradually shade out, what is of utmost importance to stop the progressively increasing school disengagement is the need for prevention strategies based on youth’s empowerment, building self-confidence and positive academic self-concept. As youth with shading out trajectories often experience different school failures, it is crucial to provide them with academic support. At the same time, because they often feel not connected to school as such, a rich offer of varied extracurricular activities provided free of charge could help to keep them in education. Building further on this ideal type, some questions can be raised with regard to the frequently occurring educational practices, such as grade retention, as they do not motivate young people to learn, but rather seem to increase their disengagement from school and, in general, from education.

To conclude, the distinct types of educational pathways of students at risk that we distinguished and described are a good starting point to try to answer the question of what kind of measures might be the most adequate to prevent ESL in each specific situation. In the case of trajectories such as shading out and unanticipated crisis, early warning systems based on procedures for continuous assessment and comprehensive monitoring of students’ situation seem to be most effective. Having a comprehensive EWS would help to capture those teenagers who do not exhibit behavioural problems and in general, do not cause any issues in school but have other signs of school disengagement related for instance to their psychological well-being. In addition, youngsters who have experienced personal and educational difficulties could benefit from one-on-one academic and emotional support schemes, such as (peer) mentoring or tutoring.

At the same time, there are some common principles and guidelines for developing effective measures aimed at tackling ESL and school disengagement in spite of the variations in the individual trajectories or the diversity of the education systems. The presentation of this universal base in the form of a conceptual model of inspiring practices can be found in the next, fifth part of this publication.

Part 5. Where two worlds meet: Conceptual model of inspiring practices in- and outside school to tackle ESL

The analysis of various trajectories indicates that there are many needs of young people which are not fulfilled by schools or other educational institutions. Unmet needs directly relate to the risk of school disengagement and ESL. At the same time, in the context of the school (dis)engagement processes, recognising and addressing those needs is pivotal for developing successful inspiring practices to tackle ESL.

The needs revealed by the analysis of the trajectories of young people include: the need to be (well) informed, to feel supported, to feel accepted and respected, to be heard, to establish and maintain meaningful relationships, to participate and decide and finally to get adequate and/or immediate help in case of crisis or specific challenges.

The conceptual model of inspiring practical measures is designed for both mainstream secondary schools and alternative learning arenas. The model we present is, in general, based on the similarities between all the countries involved in the RESL.eu project and is mainly intended to serve as an ideal type. Thus, this ideal type does not contain concrete ways of implementing it in particular settings. Rather, this conceptual model can be understood as a basis for various inspiring practices to prevent young people from school disengagement and early school leaving.

At the core of the conceptual model lie the needs of young people. These needs should determine the direction of the institutional reaction. Consequently, adequate measures should be a direct response to the needs of a particular youngster.

Figure 20. Conceptual model of inspiring practices for in- and out-of-school measures aimed at ESL



The foundations for the construction of inspiring practices to tackle school disengagement and ESL include four pillars: (1) the approach towards youth's needs should be holistic and comprehensive; (2) it should be based on values, respect and participation of all the stakeholders involved; (3) the approach towards youth's needs should be evidence-based and strategic; and (4) the measure should maximise and empower the individual potential of each young person. These four pillars are explained more in detail below.

- 1) **Holistic approach towards youth's needs** refers to the multilevel nature of the process of school disengagement and ESL. Effective strategies aimed to tackle these phenomena must address the individual, institutional and systemic level in order to respond effectively to the complex needs of young people. In addition, the measures must take into account the basic, emotional, social, physical, spiritual needs, and not just focus on the youth's academic performance.

The holistic approach should be based on a **comprehensive assessment** measuring not only the school performance and the behavioural signs of school disengagement but also the youth's needs, well-being, attitude towards education, etc. Such assessment should be the basis for determining the direction of further steps undertaken by the school staff, professionals, various institutions (if necessary). Moreover, it should inform the young person about his/her strengths, weaknesses, talents, potential. It is important for the assessment not to place emphasis on deficits or shortcomings. The assessment should be conducted in a way that minimises the risk of stigmatisation.

As the situations of youth at risk are usually complex and multi-faceted, the effective response requires the involvement of various professionals, different institutions. Educational institutions should be the first link in the support chain, but not the only one. It is also crucial to **engage** other available **support systems (such as: family, peers, community)**. This might be particularly important in addressing the needs of pupils coming from different ethnic backgrounds, for whom it may be more difficult to find such support in school.

In general **cooperation in and outside school** between teachers, other institutional agents, professionals, various organisations, authorities should create a positive social network serving young people and their families.

- 2) Inspiring practices should be **based on values, respect and participation** of all the actors involved. This second pillar directly relates to the needs of young people to be respected, to be heard, and to participate and decide. Furthermore, this idea is in line with the main rationale of most educational institutions, which want to **treat everyone equally** regardless of individual differences. As emphasised by Ainscow, Booth & Dyson (2006), school improvement is not a technical process of increasing the capacity of schools to accomplish particular results. It requires dialogue about ethical principles of curricula, teaching and learning processes, and the building of relationships within and beyond schools. Schools must be **clear about the values** that underlie the changes undertaken to improve them.

Therefore it is pivotal to **respect the youth's values, beliefs and perceptions** and to take their **voices, expression and ownership into account**. Young people are less likely to leave a school where their voice is taken into account and where they are treated as partners and have the ability to make decisions, than one in which they are disregarded and their authorship is severely limited (Downes, Nairz-Wirth, & Rusinaité, 2017). In turn, the lack of participation does not only contribute to a decrease in school engagement, but also lowers the youth's self-esteem and self-efficacy.

That is why it is so crucial to listen to young people and to engage them in concrete activities. **Youth participation** can take various forms, from participating in class or school student council through volunteering for school, to participation in school elections.

Consequently, the respect and participation are rooted in **good interpersonal relationships and a positive climate**. RESL.eu project findings clearly demonstrate the key role of teachers and the positive relationship between students and teachers in building students' school engagement. The development of positive, interpersonal relationships flourishes in the context of an educational institution characterised by a climate of mutual respect, understanding and acceptance, including all parties involved such as students, teachers, other staff, administration, parents, the local community etc.

- 3) The practices to tackle school disengagement and ESL should be **evidence-based and strategic** and not accidental or *ad hoc* in nature. They ought to be part of the school policy, concrete actions and ongoing everyday practices. Furthermore, schools could benefit from a more **evidence-based approach** in which all initiatives are recorded and **evaluated**. This way, they could serve as an example in subsequent, similar cases. This requires teachers and staff in the educational institutions to develop competencies and skills in research, methodology and evaluation, but also to ensure that educational institutions have access to a reliable knowledge base that brings together 'good' practices.

Formulating a strategic approach – which is planned and intentional – is also important because it assumes that we follow common, **equal procedures for everyone** involved. Based on long-term thinking, continuous data collection and the analysis of the consequences of previously undertaken or discontinued actions, institutions must build consistent procedures that allow them to embed their activities in a broader context and help to link them to other already existing, effective practices. In order to be able to assess whether the undertaken measures are effective, it is necessary to subject them to a rigorous evaluation or to refer to such practices that have been **empirically proven to be effective**.

Finally, it is crucial that all school actors have guaranteed access to **reliable, accurate information** on the functioning of a given educational institution as well as the whole education system.

- 4) The last pillar of inspiring practices involves **maximising and empowering individual potential**. It stems from the idea that educational institutions should provide the possibility of a holistic development of the young person in all aspects: psychophysical, mental, social, spiritual, etc., so that everyone can fully recognise and exploit their individual capabilities. It also concentrates on the increase in young people's **self-reliance and autonomy** in building one's own life trajectory, following the pace of students' individual development process. The development of young people's **aspirations** is crucial to stimulate their engagement towards school and the motivation to continue education.

However, we noted that, due to a variety of complex factors, in many cases young people's aspirations, skills and abilities are not in line with the previously made educational choices. Moreover, students also need to feel supported by their immediate environment and feel that their parents and teachers also have high aspirations for them and expect them to achieve well in school. Educational institutions can not only make their school personnel aware of the ways they look at their students, but also stimulate young people to explore what they would like to do in their future

lives and gradually develop aspirations that are in line with the students' abilities, skills and interests.

The availability of professional **career guidance, counselling** should also accompany the consecutive stages of young people's development and continually confront their expectations with the realities and demands of the labour market. It should take place several times in crucial moments of youth's educational trajectories (such as transition periods) – depending on the education system and its structure. At the same time, it must take into account the dynamic development of adolescents in puberty and the possibility of far-reaching individual changes. Receiving support during these changes is particularly important during their transitions to the next educational stage, new school, new class.

As many young people are facing a variety of life challenges, they have to weigh out the costs and benefits of being enrolled in school and leaving school early. For many young people, the decision to stop education is a choice related to other important necessities, such as the need to earn a living, to take care of a family etc. Therefore, measures that support young people need to be **tailored to their real needs**, but they also need to take into account other constraints (e.g., time, spatial, economic, etc). In order to be able to deal with the difficulties young people encounter, educational institutions could benefit from a more **flexible approach** so that students would be better able to **reconcile between school, work and other responsibilities**.

As the analysis has shown, the trajectories of young people at risk of ESL are often non-linear, characterised by the occasional moments of being in and out of education, breaks and returns. Research shows that practices for students irregularly attending school, such as grade retention, suspension or expulsion have adverse effects for both the young people and the education system that uses them. Young people should be able to return to education at any time and to complete their training. Furthermore, **educational qualifications** that are **based on the recognition of acquired competences** and not primarily on school attendance may provide positive stimuli to **reintegrate** in education. Therefore, it is important to formally recognise previously gained competences.

Young people also need support, assistance in determining the direction and the goals they can strive for. Many of the choices students have to make at the beginning of their school career have to be in line with the long term prospects and aspirations. The development of these **long term perspectives** may serve as a guidance and a protective factor to prevent students from early school leaving.

Final remarks. Towards a more inclusive education system for youth at risk of early school leaving

In line with Council Recommendation of the 28th June 2011 on policies to reduce early school leaving, many scholars and policy makers have discussed indicators and features of education systems to reduce early school leaving (Downes, Nairz-Wirth, Rusinaitė, 2017; European Commission, 2011, 2013, 2015; GHK, 2011; [School Education Gateway](#)). Various types of tools have been developed for policy-makers at national, local and regional level, and for other stakeholders (teachers, school principals, parents etc.) to help them to assess whether their actions have the potential to effectively counteract educational exclusion (Cedefop, 2017; [European Toolkit for Schools](#); Jasińska-Maciąg & Tomaszewska-Pękała, 2017; Nairz-Wirth, Feldmann, & Diexer, 2012).

Building further on these policy recommendations and objectives, the findings of the RESL.eu project also underline that policy measures, based on the principles of inclusion and social justice, and with a more comprehensive and holistic character, often entail the seeds of more effective prevention, intervention and comprehension of youth at risk of early school leaving. Hence, we intended to formulate some general recommendations for policy makers to change educational systems in a more structural way, in order to prevent early school leaving.

According to Booth and Ainscow (2002), inclusion in education is about the active involvement of all children and young people (not only of those who need special attention) in the learning and teaching environment assuming that various barriers to learning and participation can be reduced for every student. This is the way in which schools and education systems can improve according to inclusive values. Moreover, inclusive education is characterised by: valuing all students and staff equally; improving education institutions for both students and staff; reducing the exclusion; responding to the diversity of students and viewing the differences between pupils as a valuable resource, enrichment of learning and not as an obstacle to overcome, and recognising that inclusion in education is part of a more general concept, i.e. inclusion in society (Booth & Ainscow, 2002). According to these assumptions, such a system is open, cooperates with the immediate environment, and gives every member of the school community the opportunity to benefit from optimal development of their potential.

Education systems should offer comprehensive support schemes/strategies for youth (e.g., not only focus on academic support). This is important as the findings of the RESL.eu project indicate that difficulties in staying in education are often the result of the accumulation of risk factors related to the different levels and contexts of functioning of young people (families, schools, labour market, etc.). Therefore, support schemes should provide both young people and their families with a comprehensive assessment and assistance (e.g., emotional, economic, health or spiritual), whenever necessary.

Developing strategies to support the transition to the next stage of education and from school to the work environment is another very important task of the education system. Young people and their families do not have sufficient knowledge about the requirements of the contemporary labour market or the consequences of specific educational choices. Schools are often insufficiently aware of the need of students and families to be better informed and supported when making their choices. Additionally, they often do not know how to move beyond the provision of information and how to actively engage all the actors in the decision-making processes. Moreover, transitions between schools or from school

to college should be monitored more closely, making sure that vulnerable, disadvantaged students do not get lost in their transition from one school to another.

When designing the structures of education systems, policy makers should avoid solutions that make it impossible to change a once-selected pathway/programme. The characteristic features of adolescence and early adulthood are variability, gradual crystallisation of potential, interests, aspirations. Young people reach maturity in its various aspects (physical, emotional, social, cognitive, behavioural) at different pace (APA, 2002). That is why there should be enough opportunities to change the direction the students are heading to, so that education pathways are more in line with students' developments during puberty and their school career. Furthermore, it should be stressed that at the same time, more flexibility should be accompanied with more institutionalised guidance and support of school actors that assist young people when making educational choices. Special attention should also be paid to the possibilities for students with non-linear educational trajectories to return to education, or change educational trainings and programmes, without putting unnecessary additional requirements, including financial ones.

Special attention should be paid to the quality of vocational education. Care must be taken to ensure that vocational training is not a dead end, a last-chance education but a truly full-fledged, valuable alternative to academic education. Therefore, it is essential that vocational education offers the opportunity to gain first-hand practical experience on the labour market, helps to develop aspirations and demonstrates the value of education. Consequently, vocational education should also offer different forms of apprenticeship tailored to the needs of learners, or offer educational pathways to reconcile work with education.

Education systems should recognise the competences acquired through informal, non-formal education so that young people do not repeat a year/grade unnecessarily or start learning within programmes designed for people with lower skill levels. Being older than others in class or studying a programme which does not match one's skills and expectations are among the important causes of increase in school disengagement. Preventive measures, modularisation models and corresponding support frameworks can help to reduce grade retention, school changes and thus also the stigmatisation and the loss of social relationships (Downes, Nairz-Wirth, & Rusinaitė, 2017; Jimerson & Ferguson, 2007; Lamote et al., 2014; Lessard et al., 2014).

Grade retention, expulsions or suspensions of students are practices that not only negatively impact young people's motivation and school engagement but also create a picture of the school as an institution that builds its authority on the power relations imposed on the learner, requiring subordination rather than co-operation and co-responsibility. To avoid suspension and expulsion mechanisms, schools should provide individual education and health plans, and involve multidisciplinary teams. Additionally, mediators can help to resolve certain problems at schools, such as the presence of authoritarian teaching styles (Downes, 2011; Downes, Nairz-Wirth, & Rusinaitė, 2017).

References:

- Ainscow M., Booth T., & Dyson A. (2006). *Improving Schools, Developing Inclusion*. Routledge.
- Alexander, K. L., Entwisle, D. R., & Olson, L. S. (2001). Schools, achievement, and inequality: A seasonal perspective. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 23(2), 171–191.
- Appleton, J., Christenson, S.L. & Furlong, M.J. (2008). Student engagement with school: Critical conceptual and methodological issues of the construct. *Psychology in the Schools*, 45(5), 369–386. DOI: 10.1002/pits.20303.
- American Psychological Association (2002). *Developing adolescents: A reference for professionals*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
<http://www.apa.org/pi/families/resources/develop.pdf>
- Archer, L., & Yamashita, H. (2003). 'Knowing their limits'? Identities, inequalities and inner city school leavers' post-16 aspirations. *Journal of Education Policy*, 18(1), 53–69. DOI: 10.1080/0268093032000042209.
- Artz, S., Nicholson, D., Halsall, E., Larke, S, & Boya, S. (2004). Need and risk and how to tell the difference. *Journal of Child and Youth Care Work*, 19, 109–117.
- Beker, J., & Heyman, D. S. (1972). A critical appraisal of the California differential treatment typology of adolescent offenders. *Criminology*, 10(1), 3–59. DOI: 10.1111/j.1745-9125.1972.tb00544.x.
- Beres, T. (2017). „Some go well, some go not so well”. Autonomia Foundation.
<http://autonomia.hu/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/About-the-operation-of-Tanodas-%E2%80%93-Extracurricular-education-method.pdf>
- Booth, T. & Ainscow, M. (2002). *Index for inclusion: Developing learning and participation in schools*. Bristol: Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE).
- Bowers, A. J. & Sprott, R. (2012a). Why tenth graders fail to finish high school: A dropout typology latent class analysis. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk (JESPAR)*, 17(3), 129–148. DOI: 10.1080/10824669.2012.692071.
- Bowers, A. J. & Sprott, R. (2012b). Examining the multiple trajectories associated with dropping out of high school: A growth mixture model analysis. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 105(3), 176–195. DOI: 10.1080/00220671.2011.552075.
- Bridges, D. (2008). Educationalization: on the appropriateness of asking educational institutions to solve social and economic problems, *Educational Theory*, 58(4), 461–474. DOI: 10.1111/j.1741-5446.2008.00300.x.
- Catterall, J. S. (1998). Risk and resilience in student transitions to high school. *American Journal of Education*, 106(2), 302–333.
- Cedefop (2016). *Vocational education and training in the Netherlands: short description*. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Cedefop information series. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2801/476727>
- Cedefop (2017). *Self-reflection tool for policy makers*. <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/toolkits/vet-toolkit-tackling-early-leaving/evaluate/self-reflection-tool>
- Christenson, S. L. & Anderson, A. R. (2002). Commentary: The centrality of the learning context for students' academic enabler skills. *School Psychology Review*, 31, 378–393.
- Council of The European Union (2011). *Council Recommendation of the 28 of June 2011 on policies to reduce early school leaving*. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:191:0001:0006:en:PDF>

- Crul, M.R.J., Schneider, J., & Lelie, F. (Eds.) (2012). *The European second-generation compared. Does the integration context matter?* (IMISCOE Research). Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam.
- Dale, R. (2010). *Early School Leaving. Lessons from research for policy makers*, Independent report commissioned by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture of the European Commission and delivered by the Network of Experts in Social Sciences of Education and Training (NESSE). <http://www.nesse.fr/nesse/activities/reports/activities/reports/early-school-leaving-report>
- Dekkers, H. & Claassen, A. (2001). Dropouts – disadvantaged by definition? A study of the perspective of very early school leavers. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 27, 341–354. DOI: 10.1016/S0191-491X(01)00034-7.
- Dekkers, H. & Driessen, G. (1997). An evaluation of the educational priority policy in relation to early school leaving. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 23(3), 209–230.
- Depaepe, M. & Smeyers, P. (2008). Educationalization as an ongoing modernization process. *Educational Theory*, 58(4), 379–389. DOI: 10.1111/j.1741-5446.2008.00295.x.
- De Witte, K., Nicaise, I., Lavrijsen, J., Van Landeghem, G., Lamote, C., & Van Damme, J. (2013). The impact of institutional context, education and labour market policies on early school leaving: a comparative analysis of EU countries. *European Journal of Education*, 48(3), 331–345. DOI: 10.1111/ejed.12034
- Dolata, R., Hawrot, A., Humenny, G., Jasińska, A., Koniewski, M., Majkut, P., & Żółtak, T. (2013). *Trafność metody edukacyjnej wartości dodanej dla gimnazjów*. Warszawa: IBE. <https://depot.ceon.pl/handle/123456789/9537>
- Dołęga, Z. (2003). *Samotność młodzieży – analiza teoretyczna i studia empiryczne*. Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego.
- Downes, P. (2011). *Multi/Interdisciplinary teams for early school leaving prevention: Developing a European Strategy informed by international evidence and research. Research Paper for European Commission Network of Experts on Social Aspects of Education and Training (NESET)*. <http://nesetweb.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/2011-Multi-Interdisciplinary-teams-for-early-school-leaving-prevention.pdf>
- Downes, P., Nairz-Wirth, E., & Rusinaitė, V. (2017). *Structural Indicators for Inclusive Systems in and around Schools, NESET II report*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. DOI: 10.2766/200506. http://nesetweb.eu/NESETII_Structural_Indicators.pdf
- Dwyer, P. (1996). *Opting out. Early school leavers and the degeneration of youth policy*. Youth Research Centre, Melbourne.
- Eccles, J. S., Wigfield, A., Midgley, C., Reuman, D., Maclver, D., & Feldlaufer, H. (1993). Negative effects of traditional middle schools on students' motivation. *Elementary School Journal*, 93, 553–574.
- Etzion, D. & Romi, S. (2015). Typology of youth at risk. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 59, 184–195. DOI: 10.1016/j.childyouth.2015.10.017.
- European Commission (2013). *Reducing early school leaving: Key messages and policy support Final Report of the Thematic Working Group on Early School Leaving*. European Commission, Brussels.
- European Commission (2015). *Schools policy. A whole school approach to tackling early school leaving. Policy messages*. European Commission, Brussels. http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/policy/strategic-framework/expert-groups/documents/early-leaving-policy_en.pdf
- European Commission (2016). *Education and Training Monitor 2016*. European Commission, Brussels. https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/monitor2016_en.pdf

- European Commission (2011). *Tackling early school leaving: A key contribution to the Europe 2020 Agenda*, Communication from the Commission to the European parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions, Brussels, 31.1.2011, COM(2011) 18 final, 10 p. http://ec.europa.eu/education/school-education/leaving_en.htm
- European Commission, *European Toolkit for Schools*, <https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/en/pub/resources/toolkitsforschools.htm>
- European Council (2011). *Conclusions on the role of education and training in the implementation of the 'Europe 2020' strategy* [Official Journal C 70/1 of 4.3.2011].
- Finn, J. (1989). Withdrawing from school. *Review of Educational Research*, 59(2), 117–142.
- Finn, J. (1993). *School engagement and students at risk*. National Center for Education Statistics Research and Development Reports.
- Fortin, L., Marcotte, D., Potvin, P., Royer, E., & Joly, J. (2006). Typology of student at risk of dropping out of school: Description by personal, family and school factors. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, 21(4), 363–383. DOI: 10.1007/BF03173508.
- Fredricks, J. A., Blumenfeld, F. C., & Paris, A. H. (2004). School engagement: Potential of the concept, state of the evidence. *Review of Educational Research*, 74(1), 59–109. DOI: 10.3102/00346543074001059.
- GHK (2005). *Study on Access to Education and Training, Basic Skills and Early School Leavers: Final Report*, DG EAC 38/04, Brussels: DG EAC; available at: <http://www.voced.edu.au/content/ngv%3A33316>
- GHK (2011). *Reducing Early School Leaving in the EU*, GHK Consulting Ltd.
- Gibson M.A., Carrasco S., *The Education of Immigrant Youth: Some Lessons From the U.S. and Spain. Theory Into Practice*, 48:249–257, 2009. DOI: 10.1080/00405840903188118.
- Hancock, K. J. & Zubrick, S. R. (2015) *Children and young people at risk of disengagement from school*, Commissioner for Children and Young People, Western Australia.
- Hickman, G. P., & Wright, D. (2011). Academic and School Behavioral Variables as Predictors of High School Graduation among At-Risk Adolescents Enrolled in a Youth-Based Mentoring Program. *Journal of At-Risk Issues*, 16(1), 25–33.
- Hochschild, A. R. (2003). *The managed heart: commercialization of human feeling*. Berkeley – Los Angeles – London: University of California Press.
- Hugon, M.-A. (2010). Lutter contre le décrochage scolaire: Quelques pistes pédagogiques. *Informations sociales*, 5, 36–45.
- Janosz, M., LeBlanc, M., Boulerice, B., & Tremblay, R. E. (1997). Disentangling the weight of school dropout predictors: A test on two longitudinal samples. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 26(6), 733–762.
- Janosz, M., Archambault, I., Morizot, J. & Pagani, L. S. (2008). School engagement trajectories and their differential predictive relations to dropout. *Journal of Social Issues*, 64(1), 21–40. DOI: 10.1111/j.1540-4560.2008.00546.x.
- Janosz, M., Le Blanc, M., Boulerice, B. & Tremblay, R. E. (2000). Predicting different types of school dropouts: a typological approach with two longitudinal samples. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 92, 171–190. DOI: 10.1037/0022-0663.92.1.171.
- Jasińska-Maciąg, A. & Tomaszewska-Pękała, H. (2017). *Reducing early school leaving. Toolkit for schools*. Warsaw: University of Warsaw.

- Jimerson, S. R., & Ferguson, P. (2007). A longitudinal study of grade retention: Academic and behavioral outcomes of retained students through adolescence. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 22(3), 314–339. DOI: 10.1037/1045-3830.22.3.314.
- Jugović, I. & Doolan, K. (2013). Is there anything specific about early school leaving in southeast Europe? A review of research and policy. *European Journal of Education*, 48(3), 363–377. DOI: 10.1111/ejed.12041.
- Kaye, N., D'Angelo, A., Ryan, L. & Lőrinc, M. (2017). *Early School Leaving: Risk and Protective Factors. Findings from the RESL.eu international survey*. London: Middlesex University, Social Policy Research Centre.
- Kaye, N., D'Angelo, A., Ryan, L. & Lőrinc, M. (2016). *Attitudes of school personnel to Attitudes of school personnel to Early School Leaving*. London: Middlesex University, Social Policy Research Centre.
- Kaye, N., D'Angelo, A., Ryan, L. & Lőrinc, M. (2015). *Project Paper 5. Students' Survey (A1): Preliminary analysis*. London: Middlesex University, Social Policy Research Centre.
- Lamb, S., Markussen, E., Teese, R., Sandberg, N., & Polesel, J. (Eds.). (2011). *School Dropout and Completion: international comparative studies in theory and policy*. Dordrecht-Heidelberg-London-New York: Springer.
- Lamote, C, Pinxten, M., van den Noortgate, W., & van Damme, J. (2014). Is the cure worse than the disease? A longitudinal study on the effect of grade retention in secondary education on achievement and academic self-concept. *Educational Studies*, 40(5), 496–514. DOI: 10.1080/03055698.2014.936828.
- Lareau, A. (2003). *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race and Family Life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Lessard, A., Butler-Kisber, L., Fortin, L., Marcotte, D., Potvin, P. & Royer, E. (2008). Shades of disengagement: High school dropouts speak out. *Social Psychology of Education*, 11(1), 25–42. DOI: 10.1007/s11218-007-9033-z.
- Lessard, A., Butler-Kisber, L., Fortin, L., & Marcotte, D. (2014). Analyzing the Discourse of Dropouts and Resilient Students. *Journal of Educational Research*, 107(2), 103–110. DOI: 10.1080/00220671.2012.753857.
- Luthar, S. S., Cicchetti, D., & Becker, B. (2000). The construct of resilience: A critical evaluation and guidelines for future work. *Child Development*, 71(3), 543–562.
- Mártonfi, G. (2015). *Dropouts and ghosts: Legislative changes affecting the education of disadvantaged pupils: Roma children and youth in Hungary*. Budapest: Roma Education Fund, Manuscript.
- Masten A. S. (2007). Resilience in developing system: Progress and promise as the fourth wave rises. *Development and Psychopathology*, 19, 921–930.
- Masten, A. & Garmezy, N. (1985). Risk, vulnerability, and protective factors in developmental psychopathology. In B. Lahey & A. Kazdin (Eds.), *Advances in clinical child psychology*, pp. 1–52. New York: Plenum Press.
- McWhirter, J. J., McWhirter, B. T., McWhirter, A. M., & McWhirter, E. H. (1994). Gateways to experience: Who is at-risk? A continuum and a metaphor. *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, 30(3), 116–120. DOI: 10.1080/00228958.1994.10518642.
- Melnik, E., Möbus, M., Olympio, N., Steedman, H., Tréhin-Lalanne, R., & Verdier, E. (2010). Les élèves sans qualification: La France et les pays de l'OCDE. Available at: http://www.hce.education.fr/gallery_files/site/21/106.pdf

- Mertens, D. M. & Hesse-Biber, S. (2012). Triangulation and mixed methods research: Provocative positions. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 6(2), 75–79.
- Murray, A. (2006). *Early school leavers: Understanding the lived reality of student disengagement from secondary school. Summary of final report.*
https://www.bwdsb.on.ca/About_us/Reports/downloads/ES_Leavers_Summary.pdf
- Nairz-Wirth, E., Feldmann, K., & Diexer, B. (2012). Recommendations for teachers, headmasters and parents for the successful prevention of school absenteeism and school drop-out for the formation of a new school culture. Available online at:
https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/files/esl/downloads/84_Checklist_and_Recommendations_EN.pdf
- Nairz-Wirth, E., Gitschthaler, M., & Feldmann, K. (2014). *Quo vadis education? A qualitative longitudinal study on early school leaving. Final Report.* Vienna: Chamber of Labour & City of Vienna (MA 23 – EU-Strategy and Economic Development, Labour and Economics Department).
<https://www.wien.gv.at/wirtschaft/standort/pdf/quovadis-bildung-2014.pdf>
- Newmann, F. (ed.). (1992). *Student engagement and achievement in American secondary schools.* New York: Teachers College Press.
- Nouwen W. (2015). *School engagement and early school leaving in Flemish urban schools. Working paper – doctoral seminar.* Unpublished manuscript.
- OECD (2003). *Student engagement at school: A sense of belonging and participation: Results from PISA 2000.* PISA, OECD Publishing. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264018938-en>
- Orfield, G., Losen, D., Wald, J., & Swanson, C. (2004). *How minority youth are being left behind by the graduation rate crisis.* Cambridge, MA: The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University. Contributors: Advocates for Children of New York, The Civil Society Institute.
<https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/57876/410936-losing-our-future.pdf>
- Pallas, A. M. (2003). Educational transitions, trajectories, and pathways. In J. T. Mortimer & M. J. Shanahan (Eds.), *Handbook of the life course*, pp. 165–184. New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.
- Pellegrini, A. D. (1991). A critique of the concept of at risk as applied to emergent literacy. *Language Arts*, Vol. 68, No. 5, 380–385.
- Placier, M. L. (1993). The semantics of state policy making: The case of “at risk”. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, Vol. 15, No. 4, 380–395. DOI: 10.3102/01623737015004380.
- Reay, D. (2006). The zombie stalking English schools: Social class and educational inequality. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 54(3), 288–307. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-8527.2006.00351.x.
- Reay, D., Davies, J., David, M., & Ball, S. J. (2001). Choices of degree or degrees of choice? Class, ‘race’ and the higher education choice process. *Sociology*, 35(4), 855–874. DOI: 10.1017/S0038038501008550.
- Reschly, A. L., & Christenson, S. L. (2012). Jingle, jangle, and conceptual haziness: Evolution and future directions of the engagement construct. In S. L. Christenson, A. L. Reschly, & C. Wylie (Eds.), *Handbook of research on student engagement*, pp. 3–19. Springer.
- Rhodes, C. (2000). Ghostwriting research: Positioning the researcher in the interview text. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 6, 511–525. DOI: 10.1177/10778004000600406
- Ross, A. & Leathwood, C. (2013). Conceptualising Early School Leaving. *European Journal of Education*, 48(3), 327–330. DOI: 10.1111/ejed.12033

- Rumberger, R. W. (2004). What can be done to prevent and assist school dropouts? In P. Allen-Meares & M. W. Fraser (Eds.), *Intervention with children and adolescents: An interdisciplinary perspective*, pp. 311–334. Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Rumberger, R. & Lim, S. A. (2008). *Why students drop out of school: A review of 25 years of research*. Santa Barbara: University of California Santa Barbara.
- RustECKA-Krawczyk, A. (2012). W poszukiwaniu czynników chroniących młodzież z grupy ryzyka. *Dziecko Krzywdzone*, 3(40), 46–61.
- Skinner, E. A., Kindermann, T. A., Connell, J. P., & Wellborn, J. G. (2009). Engagement and disaffection as organizational constructs in the dynamics of motivational development. In K. R. Wentzel, & D. B. Miele, (Eds.), *Handbook of motivation at school*, pp. 223–245. Routledge.
- Smale, W. & Gounko, T. (2012). *The alarming relation between early school leaving and crime: A case study of twelve male school drop-outs who ended up behind bars*. Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press.
- Swadener, B. B. (1995). Children and Families 'at Promise': Deconstructing the Discourse of Risk. In B. B. Swadener & S. Lubeck (Eds.), *Children and Families "At Promise": Deconstructing the Discourse of Risk*, pp. 17–49. New York: State University of New York Press.
- TeRiele, K. (2006). Youth 'at risk': further marginalizing the marginalized?. *Journal of Education Policy*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 129–145. DOI: 10.1080/02680930500499968.
- Thibert, R. (2013). Early school leaving: Different ways to deal with it. *Current Literature Review in Education*, n°84. May. http://ife.ens-lyon.fr/vst/DA-Veille/84-may-2013_EN.pdf
- Tomaszewska-Pękała H., Wrona A., & Marchlik P. (forthcoming). *El abandono escolar prematuro en Polonia – la reconstrucción del concepto y las prácticas relacionadas con los jóvenes en riesgo de AEP en las escuelas y espacios de aprendizaje alternativos*.
- Tomaszewska-Pękała, H., Marchlik, .P, & Wrona. A. (2015). Between school and work. Vocational education and the policy against early school leaving in Poland. *Educação, Sociedade & Culturas*, 45, 75–98.
- Turner, J. H. & Stets, J. E. (2005). *The sociology of emotions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Vallée, D. & Shore, B. M. (2013). *Creative Co-Stories of School Disengagement: An Exploratory Qualitative Study*. available online at: http://digitool.library.mcgill.ca/webclient/StreamGate?folder_id=0&dvs=1494165868008~745
- Vallejo, C. & Dooly, M. (2013). Early School Leavers and Social Disadvantage in Spain: from books to bricks and vice-versa. *European Journal of Education*, 3(48), 390–404. DOI: 10.1111/ejed.12037.
- Van Alphen, S. (2012), The Benefit of Educational Inclusiveness for Early School Leavers in the European Labour Market. *European Journal of Education*, 4(47), s. 596–612. DOI: 10.1111/ejed.12004.
- Van Caudenberg, R., Van Praag, L., Nouwen, W., Clycq, N., & Timmerman, Ch. (2017). *A Longitudinal Study of Educational Trajectories of Youth at Risk of Early School Leaving*. Antwerp: Centre for Migration and Intercultural Studies University of Antwerp.
- Van Houtte, M. (2004). Tracking effects on school achievement: A quantitative explanation in terms of the academic culture of school staff. *American Journal of Education*, 110(4), 354–388.
- Vero, J. (2012). From the Lisbon Strategy to Europe 2020: the statistical landscape of the education and training objectives through the lens of the capability approach. *Social Work & Society*, 10(1).
- Vincent, C., & Ball, S. J. (2007). Making up the middle-class child: families, activities and class dispositions. *Sociology*, 41(6), 1061–1077. DOI: 10.1177/0038038507082315.

- Wang, M. T., & Fredricks, J. A. (2014). The reciprocal links between school engagement, youth problem behaviors, and school dropout during adolescence. *Child Development, 85*(2), 722–737. DOI: 10.1111/cdev.12138.
- Weininger, E. B., & Lareau, A. (2003). Translating Bourdieu into the American context: the question of social class and family-school relations. *Poetics, 31*(5–6), 375–402. DOI: 10.1016/S0304-422X(03)00034-2.
- Werner, E. E. (2000). Protective factors and individual resilience. In J. P. Shonkoff & S. J. Meisels, (Eds.), *Handbook of early childhood intervention*. 2nd edition, pp. 115–132. Cambridge University Press.
- Zyngier, D. (2017). Left numb and unengaged. (Re)Conceptualising risk: What (seems to) work for at-risk students. *Social Sciences, 6*(1), 32. DOI: 10.3390/socsci6010032.

Publications and final reports – RESL.eu Project

Publications

- Publication 1:** Araújo, H.C., Magalhães, A., Rocha, C., Macedo, E., Ryan, L., Lórinç, M., D’Angelo, A., & Kaye, N. (2013). *Policies on Early School Leaving in nine European countries: a comparative analysis*. Middlesex University,
<https://www.uantwerpen.be/images/uantwerpen/container23160/files/RESL%20Publication%201.pdf>
- Publication 2:** Kaye, N., D’Angelo, A., Ryan, L., & Lórinç, M. (2016). *Attitudes of school personnel to Early School Leaving*. Middlesex University,
https://www.uantwerpen.be/images/uantwerpen/container23160/files/Publication%202_revisedfinal.pdf
- Publication 3:** Nouwen, W., Van Praag, L., Van Caudenberg, R., Clycq, N., & Timmerman, C. (2016). *School-based Prevention and Intervention Measures and Alternative Learning Approaches to Reduce Early School Leaving*. CeMIS, University of Antwerp,
https://www.uantwerpen.be/images/uantwerpen/container23160/files/RESL_Publicatie_A4_v5.pdf
- Publication 4:** Kaye, N., D’Angelo, A., Ryan, L., & Lórinç, M. (2017) *Risk and Protective Factors. Findings from the RESL.eu international survey*. Middlesex University, University of Sheffield,
<https://www.uantwerpen.be/images/uantwerpen/container23160/files/Publication%204%20final%20version.pdf>
- Publication 5:** Van Caudenberg, R., Van Praag, L., Nouwen W., Clycq, N., & Timmerman, C. (2017). *A Longitudinal Study of Educational Trajectories of Youth at Risk of Early School Leaving*. CeMIS, University of Antwerp,
<https://www.uantwerpen.be/images/uantwerpen/container23160/files/RESL%20eu%20Publication%205%20FINAL%202.pdf>

Project papers

- Project paper 1:** Araújo, H.C., Rocha, C. & Macedo, E., Magalhães, A., & Oliveira, A. (2013). *Formulation of a Common Working Definition of ESL: International Contributions*. University of Porto, Centro de Investigação e Intervenção Educativas (CIIE),
<https://www.uantwerpen.be/images/uantwerpen/container23160/files/Project%20Papers/Project%20Paper%201%20-%20Final.pdf>
- Project Paper 2:** Clycq, N., Nouwen, W., & Timmerman, C. (2014). *Theoretical and methodological framework on Early School Leaving*. CeMIS – University of Antwerp,
<https://www.uantwerpen.be/images/uantwerpen/container23160/files/Project%20Paper%202%20-%20final%20version%20-%2009%2005%202014.pdf>
- Project Paper 3:** Kaye, N., D’Angelo, A., Ryan, L., & Lórinç, M. (2014). *Early School Leaving in the European Union: Data Availability and Reporting*. Middlesex University, Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC),
<https://www.uantwerpen.be/images/uantwerpen/container23160/files/Project%20Paper%203%20-%20final%20version%20online.pdf>
- Project Paper 4:** Clycq, N., Nouwen, W., Braspenningx, M., Timmerman, C., D’Angelo, A., & Kaye, N. (2014). *Methodological approach of the qualitative fieldwork*. CeMIS – University of Antwerp,
<https://www.uantwerpen.be/images/uantwerpen/container23160/files/WP4/RESL%20eu%20Project%20Paper%204%20-%20CeMIS%20%20UA%20-24%2011%202014%20-%20Final%20version.pdf>

Project Paper 5: Kaye, N., D'Angelo, A., Ryan, L., & Lórin, M. (2015). *Students' Survey (A1): Preliminary analysis*. Social Policy Research Centre, Middlesex University, https://www.uantwerpen.be/images/uantwerpen/container23160/files/Project%20Paper%205_FinalVersion_revised.pdf

Project Paper 6: Nouwen, W., Clycq, N., Braspenningx, M., & Timmerman, C. (2015). *Cross-case Analyses of School-based Prevention and Intervention Measures*. CeMIS, University of Antwerp, <https://www.uantwerpen.be/images/uantwerpen/container23160/files/RESL%20eu%20Project%20Paper%206%20-%20Final%20version.pdf>

Project Paper 7: Van Praag, L., Nouwen, W., Van Caudenberg, R., Clycq, N., & Timmerman, C. (2016). *Cross-case Analysis of Measures in Alternative Learning Pathways*. CeMIS, University of Antwerp, <https://www.uantwerpen.be/images/uantwerpen/container23160/files/RESL%20eu%20Project%20Paper%207%20FINAL%2026-09-2016.pdf>

WP2 Final Reports – RESL.eu Project

Araújo, H. C., Rocha, C., Magalhães, A., & Macedo, E. (2013). *Final Report. Policy Analysis ESL & Field Description – Portugal*. University of Porto/ Centro de Investigação e Intervenção em Educação/FPCEUP.

Carrasco, S., Narciso, L., Pàmies, J., & Pérez, M.J. (2013). *ESL in Spain: towards a policy analysis*. Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.

Crul, M., Grundel, M., Keskiner, E., & Stam, T. (2013). *Dutch country report of WP 2.2, phase II*. Erasmus University Rotterdam.

Marchlik, P. & Tomaszewska-Pękała, H. (2013). *Policy Analysis ESL & Field Description. Final Report. Work Package 2 – Part 2, phase 2*. Faculty of Education, University of Warsaw.

Nairz-Wirth, E., Gitschthaler, M., & Brkic, E. (2013). *Country Report – Austria. Work Package II, Part 2, Phase II*. Vienna University of Economics and Business, Educational Sciences Group.

Nouwen, W., Clycq, N., & Timmerman, C. (2013). *WP2 – Policy analysis & field description*. University of Antwerp. Centre for Migration and Intercultural Studies, Flanders – Belgium.

Rudberg, K. (2013). Project Paper WP2 Part 2. *Policy Analysis ESL & Field Description*. Stockholm University.

Ryan, L. & Lórin, M. w/ D'Angelo, A. & Kaye, N. (2013). *WP2.3. ESL Policy Analysis*. Middlesex University, Social Policy Research Centre.

Szalai, J. & Kende, A. (2013). *RESL.eu – Work Package 2 – Part 2. Policy Analysis ESL*. Hungary.