

Apprenticeship courses to tackle Early School Leaving in Portugal

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Early School Leaving (1)

Statistical indicator

- Early Leavers from Education and Training – “the percentage of the population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education and who were not in further education or training during the last four weeks preceding the survey” (Eurostat, 2016).

Early leavers from education and training by sex (%)

GEO	SEX/TIME	2005	2010	2015
European Union (28 countries)	T	15,7	13,9	11,0
	M	17,7	15,8	12,4
	F	13,7	11,9	9,5
European Union (27 countries)	T	15,8	14,0	11,0
	M	17,8	15,9	12,4
	F	13,8	12,0	9,6
Portugal	T	38,3	28,3	13,7
	M	46,2	32,4	16,4
	F	30,2	24,0	11,0

Last update: 26.04.16

Extracted on: 01.05.16

Source of data: Eurostat

Early School Leaving (2)

Concept:

leaving “school without attaining a degree or certificate of upper secondary education or similar to an ISCED level 3 (2011 ISCED scale)” (Araújo, Rocha, Macedo, Magalhães, & Oliveira, 2013: 15)

Implications:

ESL impairs people from participating in society directly and indirectly. Directly by deficit skills of interpretation, expression, speech organization and critique, among others, and indirectly “through the effects of the self-image of precarity and low wages in a society where work and consumption are key identity elements” (Estêvão & Álvares, 2013: 3)

ESLers are identified with some common profile:

Have often school pathways marked by underachievement and detachment & most are from working class and have parents with low school achievement (Guerreiro & Abrantes, 2004)

Push Factors

related directly to school and school environment.
Eg.: evaluation performance

(Dekkers & Claassen, 2001;
Doll, Eslami, & Walters, 2013)

Pull Factors

factors outside school
Eg.: financial difficulties

Apprenticeship courses (AC) in Portugal (1)

Aims to tackle ESL along with diminishing youth unemployment (IEFP_DFP, 2015; METSS, 1984; MQE, 1996; MTSSE, 2008)

Introduced in Portugal in 1984

Initial Vocational Education and Training (IVET) integrated in the employment market

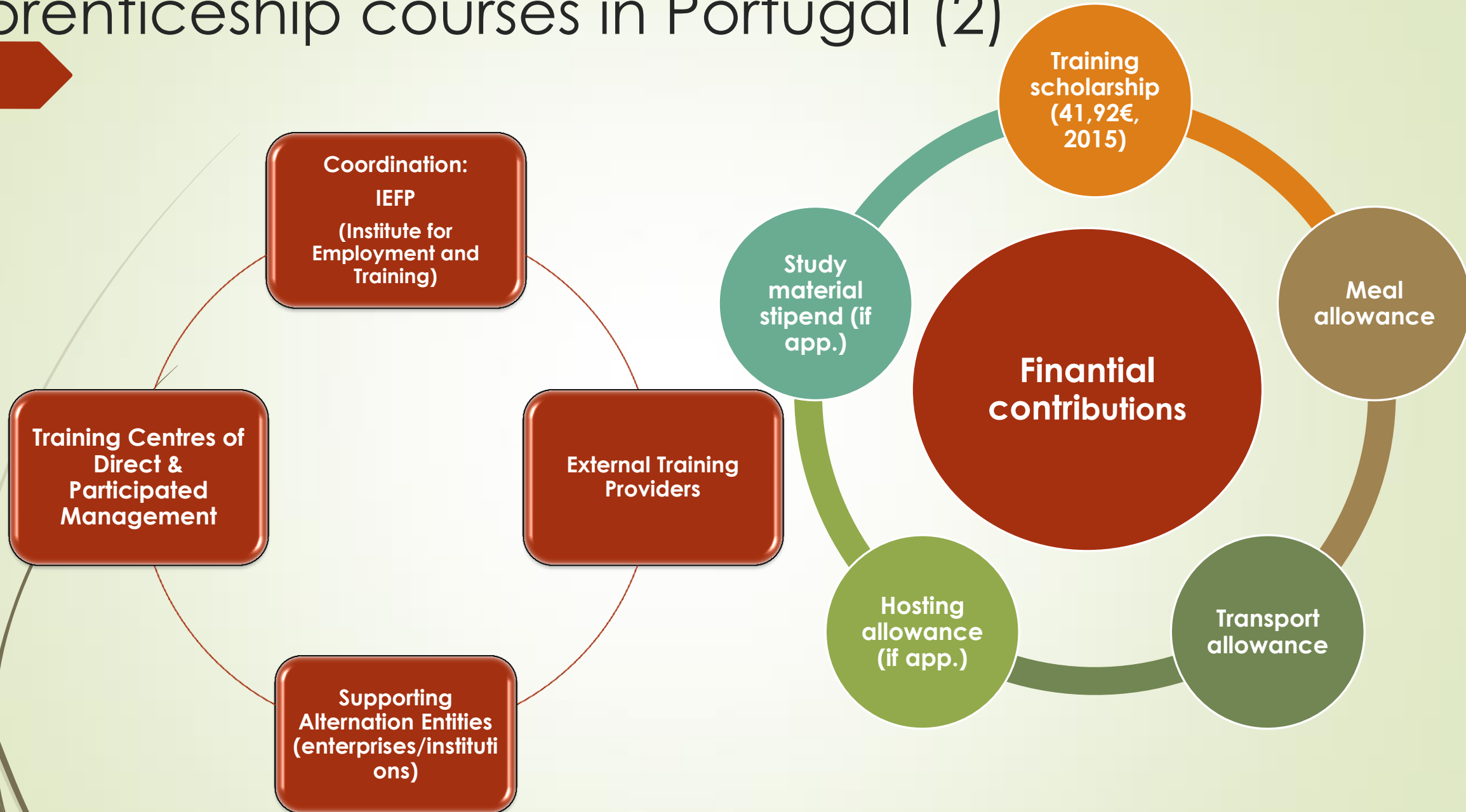
'Dual system' (alternation between on-the-job and off-the-job training)

Double certification:

Level IV National Qualification Framework

Equivalence to 12th grade (ISCED 2011: 353, ISCED 1997: 3C)

Apprenticeship courses in Portugal (2)



Target group of Apprenticeship Courses

Young adults < 25 years old

Having concluded 9th grade or equivalent

Without complete Upper Secondary Education or equivalent

Pathways of school failure or dropout

Economically disadvantaged

	Total	Gender		Age group		
		Male	Female	< 20	20-24	≥ 25
Attending	31917	19783	12134	13050	16065	2802
		62,0%	38,0%	40,9%	50,3%	8,8%

	Employed	Unemployed			Missing
		Total	1st Employment	New Employment	
Employment situation at entrance	480	31305	11115	20190	132
	1,5%	98,1%	35,5%	64,5%	0,4%

	Total	Without Evaluation	Aproved	Reproved	Dropouts
Exits	13261	209	7523	937	4592
		1,6%	56,7%	7,1%	34,6%


Source: IEFP_DPGC, 2016

Methodology



Exploratory study

- One External Training Provider (ETP)
- 1 FGD, 10 young adults, 18-23 y.o., 6 F, 4 M
- 5 individual semi-structured interviews, 5 young adults, 3 F, 2 M
- 5 individual semi-structured interviews with the director of the ETP (2), and 2 trainers (3)



With the aim of collecting information to construct instruments (questionnaire and interview scripts) for the PhD research project

Framework of exploratory study

► «RESL.eu – Reducing Early School Leaving in Europe» - FP7 funded project

- 9 partner countries [Belgium (coord.); United Kingdom; Sweden; Portugal; Netherlands; Spain; Hungary; Austria]



2 type of measures regarding ESL

Intra-muros measures to prevent and/or tackle ESL
(Mainstream Schools)

Extra-muros measures – compensatory measures to
diminish ESL (Alternative Learning Arenas)

➔ **Apprenticeship
courses in Portugal
(PhD research project)**

Young participants summary

Nr	Code	Age	Gender	Apprenticeship course	Previous retention s	Mother academic level	Parents' conditions			Data collection	
							Father academic level	Mother work situation	Father work situation	Type	Type
1	J01MTG	19	M	Gas Technician	3	ISCED 2	ISCED 2	Unemployed	Deceased	FGD	Interview
2	J02FTG	23	F	Gas Technician	3	ISCED 3	ISCED 3	Administrative	Businessman (family)	FGD	Interview
3	J03MTG	22	M	Gas Technician	2	ISCED 1	ISCED 1	Unemployed	Cleaner	FGD	Interview
4	J04FAFC	21	F	Family and Community Support	1	ISCED 1	ISCED 1	Unemployed	Unemployed	FGD	Interview
5	J05FAFC	21	F	Family and Community Support	2	ISCED 1	ISCED 1	Early retirement	Housepainter	FGD	Interview
6	J06MTG	22	M	Gas Technician		nd	nd	nd	nd	FGD	No
7	J07MTG	20	M	Gas Technician		nd	nd	nd	nd	FGD	No
8	J08FAFC	23	F	Family and Community Support		nd	nd	nd	nd	FGD	No
9	J09FAFC	20	F	Family and Community Support		nd	nd	nd	nd	FGD	No
10	J10FAFC	18	F	Family and Community Support		nd	nd	nd	nd	FGD	No

Social vulnerability

■ Socioeconomic vulnerability

- *“We have students that pay the light [energy] to the parents, that is, there is this misery. (...) Socioeconomic issues are here fundamental, because in fact they live in a very high financial shortfall”* (F01MEFE-01, trainer, male)

Lack of family support

- *“Even the parents give up on them”* (F02FEFE-01)
- *“Are kids with family problems, most of them have family problems, that is, dysfunctional families; there is none... some do not have the father, others have neither father nor mother, that's a bit ... it is difficult situations”* (F02FEFE-01, trainer, female)

Experience of ESL

➔ Experience on ESL

- *"Almost all the people who go on these courses have dropped out of school for at least a month or two, I think. I think there is no one who has just finished school and went straight away to a course of these" (J07MTG, 20 years old)*

Reasons for not continuing in education

- *"I had the teachers talking to me, my father talking to me, but as my father had the establishment and..., I did not feel obliged, but I felt I also had to help him, and earn my own, but I was wrong, sometimes to take a step forward you need to take two steps back" (J06MTG, 22 years old)*

Reasons for returning to education

- *"a person gets out of school, sees how the world truly is and sees that can't get away with it and has to go back to school to finish, to make ourselves to life again" (J06MTG, male, 22 years old)*

The apprenticeship course

Reasons to enroll in an apprenticeship course

- *"I came because I was working, in the meantime my boss deceased, I couldn't get a job and the course seemed the best source"* (J09FAFC, 20 years old)

Choosing of the apprenticeship course

- *"As I was already 21, couldn't get to any course, and the teacher L. [pedagogical director of the training centre] let me in and I stayed because it is not a course that I like, but I had to submit myself, because it was the only course that accepted me"* (J02FTG, 23 years old)

Apprenticeship courses as a last option

- *"When they get to us they get because the normal curriculum system gave up on them (...) have been excluded from so many courses that reach a time that do not even want them here nor there"* (F01MEFE-01, trainer, male)

Imminent dropout

- *"If it were a safe job of course I'd leave it [the course] without looking back (...) if the work was safe, with contract, course I would rather prefer thousand times the work, which is a living"* (J09FAFC, 20 years old)
- *"If I'd get a job, I'd quit the course"* (J05FAFC, 21 years old)

The future...

- *"Work to help at home, get the first job that shows up. We don't have many options"* (J01MTG, 19 years old)

Final remarks (1)

► Young apprentices' profiles in line with the scarce studies on AC in Portugal (Almeida, 2005; Neves & Figueiredo, 2007) and in conformity with studies about the profiles of young people that attend vocational education in general (Cieslik & Simpson, 2013; Guerreiro & Abrantes, 2004)

AC in Portugal are seen as 'second-line' options (Torres & Araújo, 2010), influencing the social status of this training modality. This may interfere with the expectations of the participants about their future in what relates to getting a job in the area.

AC to this participants signify a way, for the most the last option, of completing upper secondary education, needed to get a job in an expected near future

The limbo that this time of training signifies for this participants means a delay in the transition to work that is the crucial desire that participants express.

Final remarks (2)

► AC have also a lot of dropout suggesting that this is not the ultimate solution for the young people that leave school without attaining upper secondary education.

Apprentices are often seduced by temporary jobs.

It seems to be a gap between the aim and the achievements of the AC in tackling ESL as it suggests the 34.6% of dropouts (data from November 2015)

It seems that pull factors (Dekkers & Claassen, 2001; Doll et al., 2013) were the most important in the participants decisions either for leaving school, either for enrolling in an AC.

Pull factors are also the referred ones for young apprentices to dropout of AC.

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