



# Reduction of Early School Leaving of Young People

## Work Package 2

Country Analysis & Reports

## *Deliverable 7.x*

Report on Measures and Programmes

## Germany

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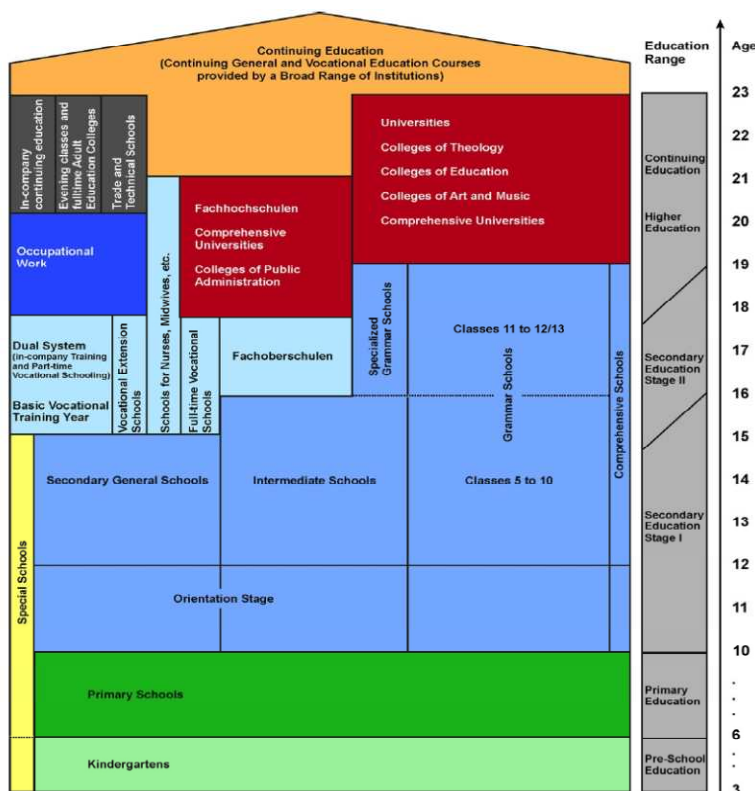
## Country Overview

This report is a part of the transnational research activities of RESLEA exploring, analysing and comparing existing approaches related to Early School Leaving (ESL) of young people at-risk in Germany describing key dimension and related success elements and good practices.

### Introduction to the National Situation in Education

In contrast to that of other countries, the German school system is not organised centrally i.e. only the fundamental structures of the German educational system are defined by the federal government while the main educational targets and the curriculum are developed de-centrally in each of the 16 federal states (Bundesländer). Another particularity of the German educational system is the 'cost-free' principle implying that, except for pre-school education in general, the individual learner can attend school without paying any fee for his/her education. The subsequent particularity is that of the Dual System (Duales System) with regard to Vocational Education and Training (VET). This system combines part-time vocational education with practical work experience. The trainee is employed in a company or institution and attends vocational school in parallel.

The general structure of the German Education & Training (E&T) is displayed in the following figure.



**Figure:** Basic Structure of the German Educational System

In 2011 the formerly three layered German system of lower and upper secondary education is either reduced to two layers or new diversified forms of schooling are introduced. Overall the General Secondary School (Hauptschule) is getting abolished almost throughout all German federal states.

The General Secondary School is either often merged with the Intermediate Secondary Schools (Realschule) to – now entitled – Secondary (or Middle) Schools forming nowadays the second pillar besides the Grammar School/Comprehensive Secondary School (Gymnasium). Alternatively new, seemingly more integrative school types are introduced, which may differ from federal state to federal state.

The operational definition of Early School Leaving (ESL) applied in Germany for many statistics is as follows: all students leaving school without Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE) from a General Secondary School (Hauptschule) i.e. equivalent to ISCED levels 0 or 1.

German statistics for 2011 show a general drop-out rate of 6,2% at secondary school level (ISCED levels 0 or 1), while Eurostat estimates a relatively stable rate of 11,5% for the same year (ISCED 0, 1, 2 or 3c short and not having received any education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey).

The distribution of the drop-out rates shows profound regional disparities e.g. is with 5.95% rather low in the South of Germany (e.g. in Bavaria) and with above 16% substantially higher in some federal states of former Eastern Germany. In conclusion there is strong evidence that Germany today reaches almost the common European target of a maximum of 10% of Early School Leavers.

The main reasons and causes for leaving the E&T systems without a certificate are associated with 'risk' factors such as i) gender; ii) migration status; iii) geographical provenance; iv) educational/cultural background; v) enrolment in a General Secondary School (Hauptschulen); vi) perception of parents on their children's future and last but not least vi) socio-economic as well as employment status of the student's parents therefore being stable predictors for Early School Leaving (ESL).

### **Latest Trends in Education**

National policies (top-down) to combat Early School Leaving (ESL) entail Education Alliances (Bündnisse für Bildung) aiming at reducing educational deprivation and at providing new education opportunities - in particular - for disadvantaged children and young people, Transfer / Transitional Support Systems for learners on their way from school to work (Übergangssystem), Education Strings (Bildungsketten) and Job Entry Supervision – Education Strings (Berufseinstiegsbegleitung Bildungsketten), both aiming to prevent school drop-outs and to support transfer from school education to vocational training as well as Job Orientation Programme such as BOP or JOBSTARTER.

Concerning bottom-up initiatives the cases Securing School Success (Schulerfolg sichern) supporting children and young adults who are at risk of dropping out or having to repeat classes and PraelAB, a multilateral European project developing and testing data collection tools and counselling concepts for dropout prevention in vocational training should be highlighted. Other grass root and/or local initiatives and projects include Senior Partner in School, the Second Chance Program, Tabula Citizens' Initiative for Education, MoDiBus, Preventing School Dropouts (PRESOUT), Mannheim Street School, Future Academy Gropiusstadt, House of Life Chance and InnoSchool.

In 2011 it can be additionally stated that the formerly three layered German educational system is either reduced to two layers or new diversified forms of schooling are introduced. Overall the General Secondary School (Hauptschule) is getting abolished almost throughout all German federal states (Bundesländer), which are responsible for the school system. In contrast to the above

described reforms of the German school system, the lowest level of qualification, the Certificate of Secondary Education (Hauptschulabschluss) still exists. Critics label the reforms therefore as 'window dressing' with the danger that the needed intensive and individualised educational support of those pupils is getting out of focus.

On the other hand recent data clearly shows that drop-out rates in the Dual System of Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Germany remain high, especially in the 'second chance' preparatory measures of the related Transfer /Transition System. The Transfer /Transition System, serving in 2011 nearly as many young people as the dual system, suffers furthermore "from undue fragmentation and an absence of transparency" as OECD states. "Despite the very substantial resources devoted to the system, too few program participants make a successful transition into the regular VET system."

Finally no comprehensive national reporting system about Early School Leaving (ESL) is available in Germany and data has to be extracted from different sources and (facts and) figures are often not directly comparable due to different definitions and methods.

## Statistical Data

	DATA SET	VALUE	YEAR	SOURCE	COMMENTS
<b>Basic Reference Data</b>	Size of Population <i>(in millions)</i>	81,946,000	2012	Federal Statistical Office <a href="http://www.destatis.de">www.destatis.de</a>	
	Gross-Domestic-Product (GDP) <i>(in billion €)</i>	2,645,000,000	2012	Federal Statistical Office <a href="http://www.destatis.de">www.destatis.de</a>	Using data from German Central Bank
	Gross-Domestic-Product (GDP) <i>(per capita – in €)</i>	32,289	2012	Federal Statistical Office <a href="http://www.destatis.de">www.destatis.de</a>	Using data from German Central Bank
	Total Unemployment Rate <i>(total; in %)</i>	3,138,229 7.4%	2013	Federal Employment Agency <a href="http://www.arbeitsagentur.de">www.arbeitsagentur.de</a>	Seasonally adjusted data
	Unemployment Rate – Regional Distribution <i>(in %)</i>	6.4% Former Western Germany 11.5% Former Easter Germany  4.3% Baden – Wuerttemberg 4.4% Bavaria (Free State) 7.6% Hamburg (Free City) 8.4% North Rhine Westphalia 12.4% Berlin 12.6% Saxony-Anhalt 13.6% Mecklenburg-West Pomerania	2013	Federal Employment Agency <a href="http://www.arbeitsagentur.de">www.arbeitsagentur.de</a>	
	Youth Unemployment Rate <i>(in %)</i>	283,551 6.1%		Federal Employment Agency <a href="http://www.arbeitsagentur.de">www.arbeitsagentur.de</a>	15 – 15 years old

	DATA SET	VALUE	YEAR	SOURCE	COMMENTS
	Youth Unemployment Rate – Regional Distribution (in %)	5.3% Former Western Germany 9.9% Former Easter Germany 3.1% Baden – Wuerttemberg 3.6% Bavaria (Free State) 5.6% Hamburg (Free City) 7.2% North Rhine Westphalia 10.3% Saxony-Anhalt 11.9% Mecklenburg-West Pomerania 12.2% Berlin		Federal Employment Agency <a href="http://www.arbeitsagentur.de">www.arbeitsagentur.de</a>	
	Persons receiving public financial support (total)	6,920,000	2012	Federal Statistical Office <a href="http://www.destatis.de">www.destatis.de</a>	Incl. unemployment (ALG I & II) and social welfare benefits
	Early School Leavers – General Education without Lower Secondary Education i.e. ISCED 1 or 2 (in %)	6.2%	2011	Federal Statistical Office <a href="http://www.destatis.de">www.destatis.de</a>	
	Early Leavers from Education and Training - 18 to 24; highest level of education or training attained is ISCED 0, 1, 2 or 3c short; not received any E&T in the four weeks preceding the survey (in %)	11.5%	2011	Eurostat <a href="http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu">http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu</a>	

	DATA SET	VALUE	YEAR	SOURCE	COMMENTS
	Population that has attained at least upper secondary education <i>(in %; per age group)</i>	86% (25-64)	2010	Education at a Glance, OECD <a href="http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2012_eag-2012-en">http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2012_eag-2012-en</a>	
	Upper secondary graduation rates <i>(in %; total; per gender)</i>	87% (total) 87% (Men) 87% (Women)	2010	Education at a Glance, OECD <a href="http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2012_eag-2012-en">http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2012_eag-2012-en</a>	
	Unemployment rates, by educational attainment and gender <i>(Number of 25-64 year-olds in unemployment as a percentage of the labour force aged 25-64)</i>	23.1% (Men) – 19.1% (Women) Pre-primary and primary education 16.9% (Men) – 12.1% (Women) Lower secondary education 7.8% (Men) – 6.6% (Women) ISCED 3C Long/3B 8.6% (Men) – 7.9% (Women) ISCED 3A 5.2% (Men) – 4.0% (Women) Postsecondary non-tertiary education 2.8% (Men) – 2.9% (Women) Tertiary education – Type B 3.1% (Men) – 3.5% (Women) Tertiary education – Type A and advanced research programmes	2010	Education at a Glance, OECD <a href="http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2012_eag-2012-en">http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2012_eag-2012-en</a>	
	Annual expenditure per student by educational institutions on core services, ancillary services and R&D <i>(In equivalent USD converted using PPPs for GDP, by level of education and type of service, based on full-time equivalents)</i>	8,534 (Primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education) 15,711 (Tertiary education) 9,779 (Primary to tertiary education)	2009	Education at a Glance, OECD <a href="http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2012_eag-2012-en">http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2012_eag-2012-en</a>	



# Country Report

## Introduction

This report is a part of the transnational research activities exploring, analysing and comparing existing approaches related to Early School Leaving (ESL) of young people in risk across partners' countries to identify key dimension and related success elements and good practices.

The report presents the results of the desk research activities carried out in WP2, outlining trends and change factors affecting the reduction of early school leaving and encompassing the micro (learning processes, with a focus on the role of ICT), meso (role of new actors, teachers ,families and firms in the learning practices) and - as a background - the macro level (current policy provision in the field of education and training system).

## The German School System

In contrast to that of other countries, the German school system is not organised centrally, i.e. only the fundamental structures of the German educational system are defined by the federal government while the main educational targets and the curriculum are developed de-centrally in each of the 16 federal states (Bundesländer). As a consequence, the educational scene in Germany is multifaceted. <sup>(1.; 14.)</sup>

According to German Basic Law (Grundgesetz) Article 30, which refers particularly to the German system of school education, the practice of state rights and the fulfilment of state duties are a matter of the individual federal states as long as this basic law does not permit or allow any other rule. In principle, the individual states have legal and administrative competence in all questions of cultural politics, i.e. they hold 'cultural sovereignty' for education and financing measures supervised by the federal state.

Questions which regard to the cooperation between the the federal government and the federal states , the cross-border cooperation between different federal states or refer to the educational policies of individual federal states must be agreed by the 'Standing Conference of German Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs' (Kultusministerkonferenz [KMK]) and the 'Standing Commission of the German Government and the German Federal States for Educational Planning and Research Promotion' (Bund-Länder-Kommission für Bildungsplanung und Forschungs-förderung [BLK]).

Apart from the above described interplay between the federal government and the federal states of Germany, many other special interest groups of different stakeholders of the educational field are existing on non-state level, e.g. universities, special interest groups of economy and trade (e.g. the Cologne Institute for Economic Research [Institut der Deutschen Wirtschaft Köln]), associations and unions of teachers (e.g. the German Education Union [Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft], the German Teachers Association [Deutscher Lehrerverband]) and further organisations of private schools and other educational institutions.

Those 'private' stakeholders and boards have no direct influence on the educational system but they act as advisors. They design concepts and draft recommendations for future educational practices and policies; they are acting in the field of educational research and carry out surveys and studies.

Another particularity of the German educational system is the 'cost-free' principle. That means that, except for pre-school education in general, the individual learner can attend school without paying any fee for his/her education. Some federal states even provide access to schoolbooks free of charge.

The subsequent particularity is that of the Dual System (Duales System) with regard to vocational education. This system combines part-time vocational education with practical work experience. The trainee is employed in a company or institution and attends vocational school in parallel (in average 2 days per week).

The following paragraphs describe the fundamental structures of the German educational system that are common to all 16 federal states. A general overview of the educational system in Germany is given in Figure 1 at the end of this chapter.

Education becomes mandatory for children after their 6th birthday and lasts for between 9 and 10 full-time school years (depending on the different 'Bundesländer'). Compulsory education is extended by 2-3 part-time school years in vocational schools. The general education qualifications that may be obtained after grades 9 and 10 carry particular designations in some federal states. These certificates can also be obtained in evening classes and at vocational schools. <sup>(1; 14.)</sup>

The German Education & Training (E&T) system is structured as follows:

- Pre-school education (Elementarbereich):  
German pre-schooling seeks to complement the acquisition of knowledge and social and emotional development imparted by the family. Its main objective is to stimulate children's social learning, responsibility, and creativity through various activities. Pre-school education is mostly operated privately.
- Primary education (Primärbereich):  
From the age of 6, all pupils have to attend a Primary or elementary school (Grundschule) for their first 4 school years (handicapped children attend special schools).
- Secondary education stage I/lower secondary education (Sekundarstufe I):  
The schools for general education at secondary education stage I follow directly after primary school and are compulsory for another 5 or 6 years. Basically, four types of lower secondary education can be distinguished:
  - General secondary school (Hauptschule; grades 5–9 in most German federal states) setting the focus on practical education; teaches in principle the same subjects as the Realschule and Gymnasium, but at a slower pace and with reduced depth; includes vocational oriented courses; leads to part-time enrolment in a vocational school combined with apprenticeship training (dual system) until the age of 18.
  - Intermediate secondary school (Realschule; grades 5–10 in most federal states) combining practical and liberal (non-academic) education while giving more emphasis on liberal education; leads to full time vocational schools and vocational extension schools; students with high academic achievement at Realschule can switch to a Gymnasium on graduation;
  - Grammar school/comprehensive secondary school (Gymnasium) focussing on liberal, theory-orientated education; leads to Higher Education Entrance Qualification (Abitur); prepares students for university study or for a dual academic and vocational credential; most common education tracks offered by the standard Gymnasium are

classical languages, modern languages and mathematics combined with natural sciences.

- Comprehensive School (Gesamtschule) offering all three streams of secondary education mentioned above in one single school; these form an educational and organisational whole at the integrated Gesamtschule; provision varies in accordance with the respective educational laws of the Länder.
- Secondary education stage II/upper secondary education (Sekundarstufe II):  
Secondary education stage II follows lower secondary education and is provided through different forms of grammar schools and vocational schools (berufsbildende Schulen):
  - Grammar schools/comprehensive secondary schools: grades 11 to 12/13 (Oberstufe, Kollegstufe; see before on lower secondary education as well)
  - Technical grammar schools (Fachgymnasien)
  - Technical high schools (Fachoberschulen)
  - Full-time vocational schools (Berufsfachschulen)
  - Vocational extension schools (Berufsaufbauschulen)
  - Vocational schools (Berufsschulen) in the dual system (in-company training and part-time vocational schooling).
- Tertiary education/higher education (Tertiärbereich):  
This sector includes the following institutions:
  - Polytechnics (Fachhochschulen)
  - Colleges (Hochschulen)
  - Universities (Universitäten)
  - Vocational Academies (Berufsakademien), publicly or privately maintained
- Special schools (Sonderschulen):  
Children and youths with physical, mental, and/or emotional handicaps are taught by experts, depending on which handicap, in special schools including pre-school education, primary education and lower secondary education.

In 2011 the formerly three layered German system of lower and upper secondary education is either reduced to two layers or new diversified forms of schooling are introduced. Overall the General Secondary School (Hauptschule) is getting abolished almost throughout all German federal states.

The General Secondary School is either often merged with the Intermediate Secondary Schools (Realschule) to – now entitled – Secondary (or Middle) Schools forming nowadays the second pillar besides the Grammar School/Comprehensive Secondary School (Gymnasium). Alternatively new, seemingly more integrative school types are introduced, which may differ from federal state to federal state. <sup>(1.; 14.)</sup>

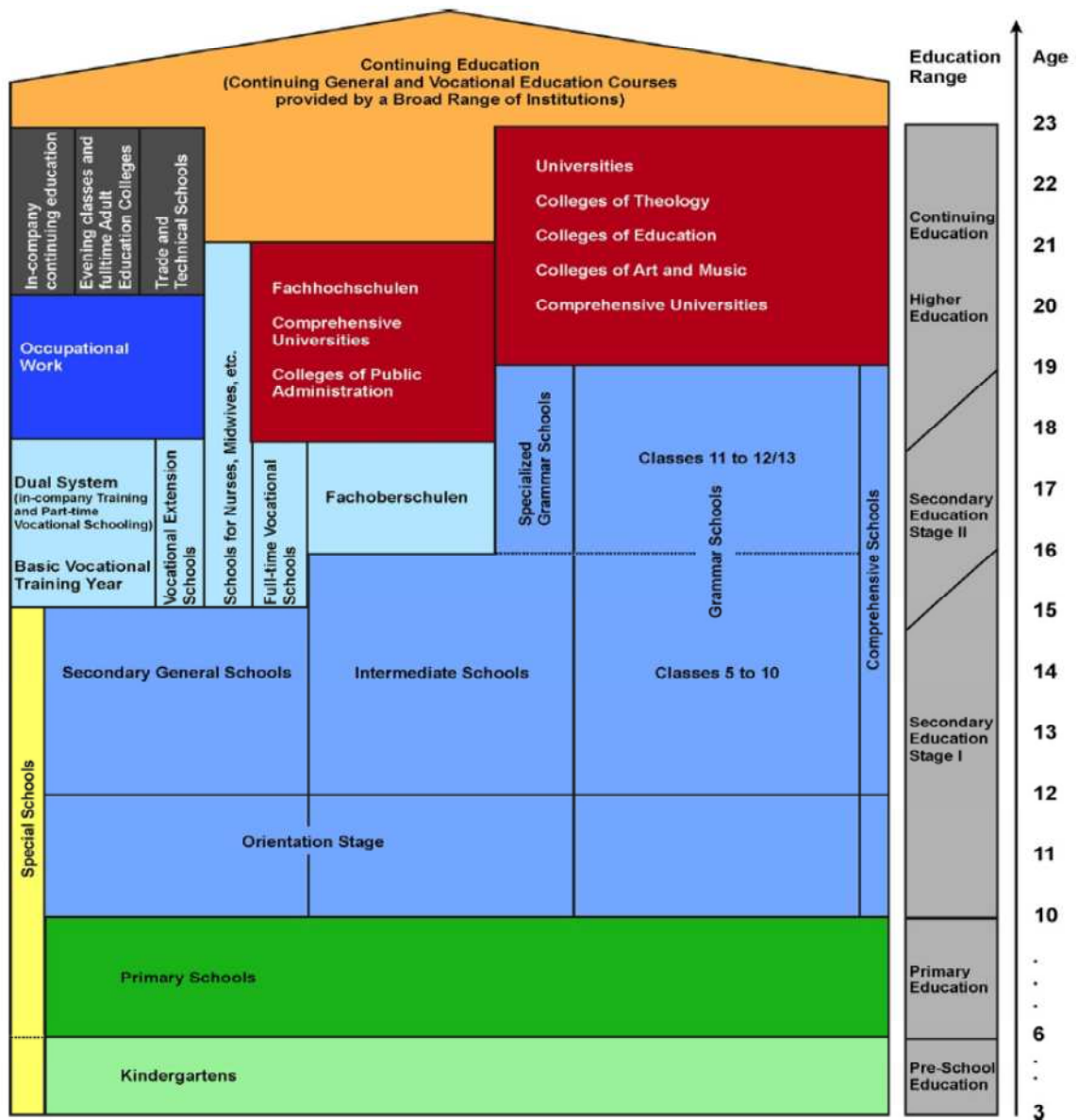


Figure: Basic Structure of the German Educational System <sup>(4)</sup>

## Definition of Early School Leaving (ESL)

The European Union defines early school leavers as people aged 18-24 who have only lower secondary education or less and are no longer in education or training. Early school leavers are therefore those who have only achieved pre-primary, primary, lower secondary or a short upper secondary education of less than 2 years.

Early school leaving can take several forms. It includes young people who have dropped out of school before the end of compulsory education, those who have completed compulsory schooling, but have not gained an upper secondary qualification, and those who have followed pre-vocational or vocational courses which did not lead to a qualification equivalent to upper secondary level.

The notion “early school leavers” is used to determine the share of school population which leaves the educational system before it manages to acquire suitable education. These individuals are normally underprivileged on the labour market. The volume of early school leavers also affects the burden of countries budget. In consequence the more unfavourable educational weakens competitiveness of while society. Besides that, the early school leavers are more prone to delinquency, early pregnancy, criminal, drug abuse and suicide.

As manifold as the forms and the extents of the withdrawal from school are, as manifold are the used terms. School skipping, school fear, school avoidance, school absence, school failure, school refusal etc. are used and in some cases are used with the same meaning, in others with different meanings. As a consequence, some researchers are talking about a “term confusion” which is impeding clear research results.<sup>(2)</sup>

Thimm, who introduced the term “school refusal” (Schulverweigerung) into the German discussion<sup>(3)</sup>, tries to differentiate among several forms of school absenteeism in order to define the character and course of school drop-out. The criteria of the differentiation are frequency and duration of the school absence.

Three stages of school withdrawal have been defined:

- Occasional truancy;
- Regular truancy;
- Persistent truancy (comparable with “school refusal”).

Another differentiation proposed by Thimm is:

- Reversible school refusal: the actors avoid to attend school for weeks or months, but they stay in touch with school actors, peers etc;
- Irreversible school refusal: the actors broke up the contact to school and other students;
- Final drop out: The “official” end of the school career<sup>(1)</sup>

The operational definition of Early School Leaving (ESL) applied in Germany for many statistics is as follows: all students leaving school without Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE) from a General Secondary School (Hauptschule) i.e. equivalent to ISCED levels 0 or 1.

## Main Reasons & Causes for Leaving Education

There is no systematic official reporting about early school leaving in Germany. Data has to be extracted from publications of the Federal Statistical Office in Germany and from Eurostat, the statistical agency of the European Commission services.

In Germany schooling is compulsory for minimum of nine years. Detailed data about very Early School Leaving (ESL) in elementary school is not available in the official statistics.

The Federal Statistical Office offers data about school leavers without secondary school degree. One problematic issue is that leavers from special schools cannot clearly be counted as drop-outs, because special schools usually do not offer a regular secondary school degree. Graduates from special schools might have never experienced a “drop-out event” although they might have never or only partly been involved in the “normal” school system. <sup>(5.)</sup>

Another statistical problem are participants of evening classes and external participants in school leaving examinations. Those students before have either been dropped out from school system or are aiming at a higher degree. To count these as graduates creates a small error in the dropout statistic. <sup>(5.)</sup>

Once someone has left school without basic secondary degree, this person can nevertheless transfer to the German vocational education system. There is a special Transition / Transfer System within the German VET system with different kind of basic and preparatory vocational training opportunities like the Basic Vocational Education Year (Berufsgrundbildungsjahr [BGJ]) and Vocational Preparation Year (Berufsvorbereitungsjahr [BVJ]) as well as other preparatory measures of the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit). Trainees in this transfer system have the opportunity to obtain further qualification and to catch up completing a secondary school degree to increase chances on the general vocational training and employment market. This transfer system is thus a second chance for school drop-outs, and removes them at least temporarily from the official drop-out statistics. <sup>(5.)</sup>

## ESL Facts & Figures

Secondary Education (Federal Statistical Office of Germany)

The following table shows all School Leavers 2011 without secondary school degree (equivalent to ISCED 0 or 1) according to age groups and school types.

School Leavers 2011 without Secondary School Degree (age groups by school types) <sup>(6.)</sup>									
Germany	Age	Total	ES	MS	IS	GS	CS	WS	SS
Total	13 y.	<b>88</b>	37		5	7	21		18
	14 y.	<b>415</b>	184	24	25	17	78		87
	15 y.	<b>4,363</b>	1,240	592	156	126	286	8	1,955
	16	<b>16,367</b>	4,154	1,479	750	350	940	40	8,654
	17	<b>15,917</b>	4,678	976	1,104	220	1,031	45	7,863
	18	<b>6,155</b>	1,097	275	211	39	261	35	4,237
	19	<b>4,023</b>	120	49	38	12	31	29	3,744
	20	<b>1,328</b>	17	5	5	1		21	1,279
	21	<b>537</b>	3	1	4		3	5	521
	22	<b>215</b>	1			1		2	211
	23	<b>86</b>	1						85
	24	<b>37</b>	1						36
	25	<b>27</b>							27
	26-30 y.	<b>2</b>							2
		<b>Total</b>	<b>49,560</b>	<b>11,533</b>	<b>3,401</b>	<b>2 298</b>	<b>773</b>	<b>2,651</b>	<b>185</b>
	<b>Male</b>	29,874	6,988	2,092	1,363	453	1,481	95	17,402
	<b>female</b>	19,686	4,545	1,309	935	320	1,170	90	11,317

**Table:** School Leavers 2011 without Secondary School Degree (age groups by school types)

*ES = Elementary Secondary Schools (Hauptschulen)*

*MS = Schools with more than one educational programmes*

*IS = Intermediate Secondary Schools (Realschulen)*

*GS = Grammar Schools (Gymnasien)*

*CS = Comprehensive Schools (Gesamtschulen)*

*WS = Waldorf School (Waldorfschulen)*

*SS = Special School (Förderschulen)*

The following table shows all School Leavers 2011 without secondary school degree (equivalent to ISCED 0 or 1) comparing the different German Federal States (Länder) and the percentage within same-age population:

<b>School Leavers 2011 without Secondary School Degree (per Federal States; total and in %) <sup>(6.)</sup></b>		
<b>Federal States (Länder)</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Baden-Württemberg	5,922	5,1
Bavaria	6,983	5,2
Berlin	2,487	9,7
Brandenburg	1,411	8,6
Bremen	482	8,0
Hamburg	1,020	6,9
Hesse	3,370	5,5
Mecklenburg –West Pomerania	1,345	13,3
Lower Saxony	5,085	5,8
North Rhine-Westphalia	11,202	5,7
Rhineland-Palatinate	2,469	5,8
Saarland	487	4,8
Saxony	2, 259	9,3
Saxony-Anhalt	1,738	12,1
Schleswig-Holstein	2,143	7,0
Thuringia	1,157	7,8
<b>Total</b>	<b>49,560</b>	<b>6,2</b>

**Table:** School Leavers 2011 without Secondary School Degree (per Federal States; total and in %)

These statistics show a general drop-out rate of 6,2% at secondary school level. A higher percentage of male students are affected compared to female students of the same age groups. Additionally, still a clear difference between the federal states of former West Germany and the Eastern federal states exists with highest drop-out rates in the federal states of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and Sachsen-Anhalt while economically better situated federal states like Bayern, Baden-Württemberg and Saarland have the lowest drop-out rates in the statistic.



Vocational Schools (VET) (Federal Statistical Office of Germany)

The following table summarizes Graduates, leavers and total participants in Vocational Educational Training 2011 in Germany:

<b>Graduates &amp; Leavers from Vocational Educational and Training (VET) 2011 in Germany <sup>(7.)</sup></b>			
	<b>Graduates</b>	<b>Leavers</b>	<b>Total*</b>
Part-time Vocational Schools (Teilzeit-Berufsschulen)	469,466	108,598	602,233*
Vocational Preparation Year (Berufsvorbereitungsjahr)	24,132	19,366	45,140*
Basic Vocational Education Year (Berufsgrundbildungsjahr)	14,842	14,127	29,677*
Vocational Preparatory Schools (Berufsaufbauschulen)	376	158	534*
Full-time Vocational Schools (Berufsfachschulen)	206,015	51,774	261,493*
Technical Colleges (Fachoberschulen)	57,974	13,783	71,757*
Technical Upper Secondary Schools (Fachgymnasien)	42,135	8,067	50,202*
Upper Vocational Schools (Berufsoberschulen)	12,510	2,887	15,397*
Professional Schools (Fachschulen)	56,462	6,747	64, 372*
Private Academies (Fachakademien)	3, 089	66	3,834*
<b>Total</b>	<b>887,001</b>	<b>225,573</b>	<b>1,144,639*</b>

**Table:** Graduates & Leavers from Vocational Educational and Training (VET) 2011 in Germany

*\*Total numbers additionally include graduates/leavers whose graduate types were not registered*

Figures show that the rates of leavers vs. total participants ratio are highest in the preparatory measures of the transfer / transition system: Vocational preparatory year (42,9%), Basic vocational training year (47,6%) and Vocational preparatory schools (29,59%). Part-time (18,03%) and full time vocational schools (19,8%) as the most common vocational school types are close to the total value for all vocational school types (19,71%). School types with higher specialization or school types offering higher types of qualification have average or below average values: Technical colleges (19,21%), Technical upper secondary schools (16,07%), Upper vocational schools (18,75%), Professional schools (10,48%), Private academies (1,72%).

Early leavers from Education and Training (E&T) in Europe according to Eurostat are persons aged 18 to 24 fulfilling the following two conditions: first, the highest level of education or training attained is ISCED 0, 1, 2 or 3c short, second, respondents declared not having received any education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey. <sup>(9.)</sup>

EU/Country/Region - Time	2000	2005	2009	2010	2011
<b>EU (27 countries)</b>	<b>17,6 ( e )</b>	<b>15,8</b>	<b>14,4</b>	<b>14,1</b>	<b>13,5</b>
<b>EU (25 countries)</b>	<b>17,2 ( e )</b>	<b>15,5</b>	<b>14,3</b>	<b>13,9</b>	<b>13,3</b>
<b>EU (15 countries)</b>	<b>19,3 ( b )</b>	<b>17,5</b>	<b>15,9</b>	<b>15,5</b>	<b>14,7</b>
<b>Germany</b>	<b>14,60</b>	<b>13,50</b>	<b>11,10</b>	<b>11,90</b>	<b>11,50</b>
Baden-Württemberg	15,1	12,5 ( b )	9,5	9,9	9,9
Bavaria	12,8	11,2 ( b )	8,8	9,4	9,1
Berlin	19,7	16,9 ( b )	14,1	14,6	13
Brandenburg	10,4	10,7 ( b )	: ( u )	: ( u )	: ( u )
Bremen	21,3	: ( u )	: ( u )	: ( u )	: ( u )
Hamburg	19,5	20,1 ( b )	: ( u )	: ( u )	: ( u )
Hesse	17,6	14,3 ( b )	11,3	11,7	10,6
Mecklenburg –West Pomerania	10,8	12,6 ( b )	: ( u )	: ( u )	: ( u )
Lower Saxony	14,8	15,0 ( b )	12,6	13,9	14,1
North Rhine-Westphalia	17,9	15,7 ( b )	13,8	14,6	13,5
Rhineland-Palatinate	16,5	16,5 ( b )	13,7	15,5	13,4
Saarland	: ( u )	: ( u )	: ( u )	: ( u )	: ( u )
Saxony	7,5	7,9 ( b )	6,7	7,6	7,7
Saxony-Anhalt	9,5	11,1 ( b )	10,7	11,7	12,9
Schleswig-Holstein	16,2	14,9 ( b )	12,1	12,7	12,9
Thuringia	7,4	: ( u )	: ( u )	: ( u )	: ( u )

**Table:** Early Leavers from Education and Training (E&T) in Europe

: = not available; e = estimated; b = break in series; u = unreliable

The Eurostat statistics uses a different method to assess early leavers from education. It counts persons aged 18 to 24 with the highest level of education or training attained is ISCED 0, 1, 2 or 3c short and having declared not having received any education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey. While the total number declined from 2000 to 2009, in the last years it remained relatively stable and was 11,5% in 2011. Thereby it is below EU countries average. The differences between federal states – especially the difference between western and eastern states – cannot be shown in this statistic.

The working paper of the European Commission entitled ‘Progress towards the Common European Objectives in Education and Training’ reports on the current status of the agreed indicator and benchmarks for the years 2010/2011. One of the five set benchmarks of 2009 is directly addressing Early School Leaving (ESL): “by 2010/2020 the share of early leavers from education and training should be less than 10%”. In EU 27 the share of ESL for the population aged 18 to 24 declined from 17.6% in 2000 to 14.1%, for Germany the rates of Early School Leaving dropped from 14.6% in 2000 to 11.9% in 2010. With an ESL rate of 11.9% Germany is almost reaching the set target of 10%, the

ESL rate is however still considerably higher than of the best performing countries as Slovakia, Czech Republic and Poland with an average early school leaving rate of approx. 5%. <sup>(12.)</sup>

### **Reasons & Causes for Leaving Education**

According to the new 'Report on Educational Chances Locally' (Bericht über Bildungschancen vor Ort) of the Institute for Economic Research of North-Rhine-Westphalia (Rheinisch-Westfälisches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung [RWI]) on behalf of the German Caritas Association (Deutscher Caritasverband) seven percent of all teenagers in Germany fail to acquire a Certificate of Lower Secondary Education (Hauptschulabschluss). The results are based on the analysis of socio-economic data coming from 400 cities and regions (Landkreise) in 2009; the structural data was compared with the prevailing rates of school failure.

The distribution of failure is furthermore highly disparate throughout Germany, amongst the federal states of Germany and even within one federal state. While in the comparably rich South of Germany e.g. in the Free State of Bavaria or Baden-Württemberg only 5.95% of teenagers fail to acquire the Lower Secondary Education diploma, 16.2% of all teenagers in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern in the North of Germany leave Lower Secondary School without certificate, a federal state with a comparably low Gross Domestic product. In total more pupils in the so-called 'East' of Germany fail to finish Lower Secondary School compared to their counterparts in the West of Germany.

The authors of the study assume that school failure of children is closely related to the employment status or better unemployment of their parents. The study suggests that amongst employed persons without vocational training certificate the number of school drop outs is also higher. One reason is the fact that educational achievements in Germany are strongly inherited between the generations and that the status of the parents, both socio-economic and educational is influencing, if not determining the educational career and success of their children. These findings are in line with the recent bulk of recent literature on educational achievements and their underlying factors.

Additionally the number of pupils of foreign origin appears to influence early school leaving. Missing language skills might additionally hamper the acquisition of a Certificate of Lower Secondary Education. Nevertheless a far important factor is the number of pupils, who are attending Special Schools in a city, region or federal state. When looking at the 'laggard' federal state Mecklenburg-Vorpommern the number of pupils attending special schools is with 8% comparably high. In average across all German federal states only 4.4% of pupils visit special schools. The study therefore states that special schooling could be a dead end in educational policy and practice.

On the other hand the financial status of a town is not affecting school dropout rates. The assumption that cities or regions with high debts are not able to provide the appropriate means to help pupils to successfully acquire a Lower Secondary Education certificate appears to be wrong.

In order to increase the educational chances and opportunities of primary school children the study recommends to overcome sectoral silos e.g. through a closer collaboration of schools, social and youth offices as well as independent local associations. The study advocates a multi-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder approach with a strong local embedding to decrease early school leaving. <sup>(11.)</sup>

The study ‚School Drop-outs in Germany‘ (Schulabbrecher in Deutschland) provides a comprehensive report on the group of young people without a secondary school certificate in Germany. The results based on the re- and meta-analyses of officially available federal statistics give an overview over the development of the dropout rate and its regional and school-type specific differences.

In line with the findings of RWI dropout rates are highest in Eastern Germany, for citizens of non-German origin, male students and students in General Secondary Schools (Hauptschulen) and Social Schools (Förderschulen).

Using data from the German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP) the study also provides evidence that the dropout risk increases for the migrant population, students with low-educated parents (especially for students with father without completed Vocational Education), students from low income households and students who had been enrolled in a General Secondary Schools (Hauptschulen) before leaving school. <sup>(18.)</sup>

In summary today the educational achievement of individual pupils in Germany still remains strongly related to: i) gender; ii) migration status; iii) geographical provenance; iv) educational/cultural background; iv) perception of parents on their children’s future and last but not least v) socio-economic as well as employment of the student’s parents.

The Key Issues Report ‚Transitions in focus‘ of the European project G8WAY (Web 2.0 Enhanced Gateway to Educational Transition) highlights the following aspects. <sup>(19.)</sup> The results of the National Report on Education (Deutscher Bildungsbericht) shows that it is especially the group of pupils from General Secondary Schools (Hauptschulen) who find it extremely difficult to manage the entrance to vocational training and job life and who show a significant lack of success in doing so.

In order to gain an impression on typical trajectories from school to work in Germany, it helps to look at the findings of a survey where the transitions of young people from all regular school types of a single town have been traced. <sup>(20.)</sup> The following quantification can be made regarding certain trajectories after 30 months:

- 48% of the school-leavers succeeded with a direct transition towards an apprenticeship,
- Every 8th youngster was “locked in circles of support measures”,
- 7% of the same cohort ended up in casual jobbing,
- a share of almost 1/5 of pursued trajectories leads to several forms of youth unemployment and
- 13% of young people pass through more or less erratic trajectories which cannot be categorized among the ones mentioned above.

But also regarding the question which strategies are needed for successfully entering the German employment market, scientific findings providing helpful information. The following examples just give a first impression:

- The later the choice of a profession, the better. The transition panel proofs that young people who have taken on their vocational training at a later date, tend to be more satisfied with their professional situation since they have undergone a prolonged period of vocational orientation and, thus, have a more elaborated knowledge on their choices. Disillusions in job experiences are less likely. Moreover, they can use the time inbetween to invest in educational improvements.

- From a point of view of game theory, vocational choices are decision problems (Sorgner 2000). In such a situation it is helpful for young people to invest in widening vocational options e.g. by achieving higher school certificates, especially if there has been little vocational orientation (Bäumer 2005).
- The orientation on adults (parents, others) to get ideas is a common and important part of vocational orientation strategies. However, certain mental models such as the one of a 'lifetime job' have lost their relevance in today's employment markets.

## National Policies, National Bodies & Strategies developed and implemented to combat Early School Leaving

The Council of the European Union in 2011 recommended that member states:

1. Identify the main factors leading to early school leaving and monitor the characteristics of the phenomenon at national, regional and local level as the foundation for targeted and effective evidence-based policies.
2. Ensure that comprehensive strategies on early school leaving are in place by the end of 2012, and that they are implemented in line with national priorities and the Europe 2020 objectives. Comprehensive strategies are taken to include prevention measures, intervention measures and compensation measures, the latter being aimed at re-engaging people who have dropped out of education.
3. Ensure that those strategies include appropriate measures for groups at increased risk of early school leaving in the Member State, such as children with a socio-economically disadvantaged, migrant or Roma background, or with special educational needs.
4. Ensure that those strategies address in a coherent manner both general education and vocational education and training, and the challenges specific to each.
5. Integrate measures, which support the reduction of early school leaving rates in relevant policies targeted at children and young people, and coordinate activities among different policy sectors.
6. Whilst acknowledging the key role played by teachers, school leaders and other educational staff, ensure the involvement in those measures and activities of all relevant stakeholders to help people who are at risk of early school leaving, including those who have dropped out already. <sup>(10.)</sup>

Following measures and initiatives related to those EU recommendations can be identified in Germany.

### Transfer / Transitional Support Systems

The Support System for Learners in Transfer / Transition from School to Work (Übergangssystem) including the so-called Basic Vocational Education Year (Berufsgrundbildungsjahr [BGJ]) and Vocational Preparation Year (Berufsvorbereitungsjahr [BVJ]) was developed for young people who did not succeed in entering the vocational training market directly after school. The main aim is to enhance their competencies needed for such training and, thus, their employability. Support is offered to young people in different stages of their transition process.

- *Early support and prevention in schools.* Key aims of support of pupils in schools is to prevent early dropouts (e.g. by individual case support and remediation) and to provide vocational orientation possibilities (e.g. by traineeships or in practical oriented classes).
- *Preparation for work* (in the stadium between school and vocational training). During this period, activities are directed to enhance and broaden competencies and, above all, to support the successful integration in vocational training and employment (e.g. by vocational preparatory classes, basic qualification).
- *Vocational training for disadvantaged youth.* Special offers are provided for disadvantaged youth who for different reasons do not meet the demands of a standard vocational training. Instruments are for example vocational trainings at external educational organizations or assisting support during vocational training.

Providers of these measures are mainly non-profit organizations (e.g. charities, associations, foundations), whereas their activities are embedded in the (financial) support structures of the Federal Employment Agency, the Youth Welfare Service and other public services, depending on the focus of the activities (education oriented, labour market oriented). The Länder are in charge of

school integrated schemes while out-of-school vocational training and continuing education is in the responsibility of the Federal Government. Additionally, there are various model programs set up by the Federal Ministry of Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, by the Länder Governments and the European Union in order to support integration into the vocational and labour market.

On the one hand, the schemes of the Transitional Support Systems are supposed to cushion challenges and problems in transition and to provide useful preparatory qualification. On the other hand, they are controversially discussed according to their effects and their recognition, esp. by employers. One problematic issue is the lack of coordination and synchronization of the different measures, partly due to intersecting or non-distinctive responsibilities.

Therefore, growing attention is given to 'transition management' on a local basis (directed to structure and making accessible the wide variety of support instruments to the young people in need) and on an individual basis (e.g. by personal, one-to-one assistance like mentoring). The aim of local and individual "transition management" is to provide custom-fit, needs-based support in order to develop "transition competencies", enhancing the accessibility and to help young people selecting those offers who lead on a fast track to successful transitions.

In the school year 2006/07 only 37% of all students who entered the Basic Vocational Education Year (Berufsgrundbildungsjahr [BGJ]) without qualifications acquire a Certificate of Secondary Education (Hauptschulabschluss), while 91.5% in the Vocational Preparation Year (Berufsvorbereitungsjahr [BVJ]) do so. Concerning the Basic Vocational Education Year regional differences are substantial: in the federal states of Lower Saxony, North Rhine Westphalia and Hamburg only 15% reach ISCED level 2, about 75% of all participants in Bavaria and 85% in Hesse acquire the Certificate of Secondary Education. Slightly more women and more participants from the former Western Germany reach ISCED level 2 through BGJ or BVJ.

## **Education Alliances**

Access to quality education is one of the key factors for Germany's position in global competition, for the prosperity of our citizens, and social cohesion. Reducing educational deprivation is therefore one of the major challenges of our time. In Germany, almost four million children under the age of 18 - more than 25 per cent of this age group - are growing up with at least one social, financial, or cultural risk factor, which diminishes their opportunities to receive a good education. To ensure that disadvantaged children and young people are well equipped for their educational careers, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) will support out-of-school 'Education Alliances' (Bündnisse für Bildung; <http://www.bmbf.de/en/15775.php>) across Germany starting in 2013.

These Education Alliances include, for example summer camps and summer academies related to cultural topics, music and theatre performances, or mentoring programmes which introduce young people to art, music, literature, or new media.

Funding will be provided from 2013 for a period of up to five years. The BMBF will provide 30 million euros in 2013 for this programme. An increase to up to 50 million euros is planned for the following years.

By funding Education Alliances in the field of culture, the BMBF pursues three objectives:

- The central objective is to provide new education opportunities - in particular for disadvantaged children and young people, who will meet new challenges and come in contact with role models through the Alliances.

- At the same time Education Alliances are to trigger a broad civil movement for quality education and raise awareness of society's responsibility for the future of the young generation.
- And finally, the BMBF wants to support sound networks of different local stakeholders in education, similar to its 'Local Learning' funding programme. A local Education Alliance should therefore consist of at least three cooperation partners which reach out to young people from different perspectives. Examples include adult education centres, libraries, choirs, music or theatre groups, or other organizations.

## **Education Strings**

The initiative Education Strings (Bildungsketten; <http://www.bildungsketten.de>) of the Federal Ministry for Education and Science (BMBF) aims to prevent school drop-outs and to support transfer from school education to vocational training. Prevention, facilitation and job orientation during secondary school education are central focus points. Disadvantaged young people are supported on their way to a vocational training degree.

## **Job Entry Supervision – Education Strings**

The special programme Job Entry Supervision - Education Strings (Berufseinstiegsbegleitung Bildungsketten; <http://www.bildungsketten.de/de/252.php>) establishes analyses of potentials at around 1,000 schools from stages 7 or 8. Thereby methodological, personal and social competences are regarded as key factors. Around 1,000 supervisors support school children with special needs from the last years at school until the first year of vocational training.

## **Job Orientation Programme „BOP“**

The BOP programme (<http://www.berufsorientierungsprogramm.de>) aims to offer practice-relevant job orientation for young people interested in starting vocational training. Since April 2008 more than 335,000 young people have taken part. 180,000 young people have done an analysis of potentials and visited at least three different vocational fields under supervision of experienced trainers.

## **JOBSTARTER**

The programme JOBSTARTER (<http://www.jobstarter.de>) supports regional projects, which help companies to create additional training places. Better cooperation among actors is to be strengthening responsibility of regions for vocational education. JOBSTARTER in addition supports the VerA-Initiative (Prevention of vocational training Drop-Outs) of the senior experts service to supervise young people on their way to a vocational training degree.



## Identification of Best Practices and ESL Case Studies

In the frame of the RESLEA project two German best practice cases have been studied in detail, the “Schulerfolg sichern” initiative in Saxony-Anhalt and the praelab.eu project.

### Case Study: Schulerfolg sichern (Securing School Success)

The Securing School Success (Schulerfolg sichern; <http://www.schulerfolg-sichern.de>) initiative supports children and young adults who are at risk of dropping out or having to repeat classes. Through the different aspects of the program’s activities, students learn to discover their abilities, develop self-confidence and motivation and enhance their potential to face the challenges of schools. In order to be able to achieve sustainable results in classrooms, teaching methods and local support networks, the program fosters projects and developments on all levels of educational policies. The activities are structured in three main parts: Regional Network- Centres, Social Work at schools and customised educational Projects.

The initiative assumes that the life histories of people in Germany are decisively determined by their academic development. In private or public ways, the life histories are directly or indirectly shaped by results of academic assessments. The federal state of Saxony-Anhalt committed to increase the number of transitions to higher school forms and consequently, the number of transitions from school into the professional life significantly. The number of students staying down a year is supposed to be halved by 2013 across the country and across school types and the ratio of students without a secondary school completion by then to be reduced to 8.6% according to European requirements.

Central aspects of the initiative’s methodology were

- to prime students on positive expectations for their learning activities
- to provide individual support in learning
- to apply a variety of student-focused teaching-methods
- to coordinate and align support for students at risk
- to encourage reflection and evaluation at the school-level
- to broaden of educational expertise of all actors
- to build up a regionally-effective educational infrastructure to enable customised measurements

The initiative supported actions on different levels:

#### (1) Regional Network-Centres

By taking the regionally specific needs and requirements into account, they are constructing a profound safety-net around schools with partners such as social workers, institutions of early childhood education, NGOs, local authorities, companies and parents.

#### (2) Social Work at Schools

Social workers as an integrated part of school can give individual support to students with particular difficulties in learning. The main part of their daily work is offering open activities in order to generate excitement about learning and prevent difficulties.

### (3) Customized Educational Projects

Students are given the opportunity to enhance their individual capacities in additional tutoring classes or to learn theoretical knowledge through a hands-on approach during Study-Camps in their holidays. Other possibilities made possible through the program are the short-term engagement of experts for clearing and diagnosis processes, the additional qualification of teachers, the introduction of get-togethers for parents and many more.

Up to now 14 Network-Centres for assuring success in school have been installed in all regional districts. Currently 220 schools in the federal state of Saxony-Anhalt are involved in the program (through social workers and/or educational projects). 91 Nongovernmental Organisations from the youth sector are involved. 204 schools are supported by a social worker meaning that out of 49,400 students at secondary schools in Saxony-Anhalt approx. 37,000 attend schools with social workers employed through the program. Since 2009 more than 380 projects have been funded through the program.

The intermediate results show positive trends in many aspects. The aimed numbers of regional networks and social school work projects have been reached. After some problems in the beginning, also the educational projects at schools seem to reach their goals. Concerning the content-related goals of the programme, a reduction of class repetition numbers has been reached. However, the drop-out rate among participants with degrees lower than secondary level has increased. Thus, in further program development, a special focus has to be put on this high-risk group of young people without any secondary school graduation.

#### **Case Study: PraeLAB**

PraeLAB (<http://www.praelab-hdba.eu>) is a multilateral European project developing and testing data collection tools and counselling concepts for dropout prevention in vocational training.

The project considers the different situations in EU countries regarding dropout rates: countries with a dual training system (like Germany) where trainees alternate working in the work-place and learning at school; and countries with a predominantly school-based vocational education system.

The project has focused on systematic improvement of the cooperation between the instructors, teachers, guidance counsellors and case managers involved in vocational training; further development of a diagnostic tool for identification of adolescents with a high dropout risk; implementation of methods for holistic counselling of young people; and development and accreditation of a training strategy for the qualification of vocational training and counselling professionals.

The approach focuses on early recognition and prevention of drop out risks. It targets both trainers and teachers, and young trainees simultaneously. Trainers and teachers are reached by a training program covering background information about drop out factors, training in application of a diagnostic tool an interpretation of its results and training in counselling techniques. The trainees are directly addressed by being stimulated to apply the online tool for self-reflection and recognition of own competences. The online diagnostic tool focuses on general competences independent of specific training contents (potentials) and individual drop out affinity (risks).

The main tools to reach the project goals have been the online tool for (self-) diagnosis of competences and risk factors and a training program for teachers/trainers providing background information about drop out factors, training in application of the diagnostic tool and interpretation of its results and training in counselling techniques.

The tool to identify trainees with a dropout risk has been tested in these pilot trainings. About 2,500 trainees have taken part across five countries in the implementation of the diagnostic and counseling units. The accreditation of the training concept has in part already taken place in Switzerland and in Germany and the other partner countries are also aiming to do so. This will allow its integration into the curricula of vocational education and training institutions.

Project results suggest three key factors for future programmes and initiatives:

- (1) The development of measures targeted at high dropout professions;
- (2) The development of comprehensive diagnostic and counselling tools, which will allow professionals to measure transferable skills and to assess the dropout risk amongst trainees. These tools will be particularly useful given the difficulties that many young people will have in actively seeking help when at risk of dropping out;
- (3) The strengthening of cooperation between professionals in all the different training environments.

All the project results have been evaluated and translated into five European languages (German, English, French, Italian, Polish) and are published on the Internet (<http://www.praelab-hdba.eu>)

### **Additional Practice Examples**

#### *Senior Partner in School*

Senior citizens engage in an association as mediators to support school children in conflict management. This is particularly beneficial for children whose school success is at risk.

<http://www.seniorpartnerinschool.de/>

#### *Program "Zweite Chance" (Second Chance)*

The program "Schulverweigerung – die 2. Chance" (Truancy - The 2nd Chance) of the BMBF (Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Seniors, Women and Youth) aims at young people who are in danger of drop-out by active or passive truancy. The program aims to keep these young people inside of the school system and improve their chances of getting a degree.

<http://www.zweitechance.eu/>

#### *Tabula Citizens' Initiative for Education*

Tabula is an educational initiative encouraging children and young people from districts with a high degree of socially disadvantaged population. Volunteers provide help to pass school (through tutoring and support), and allow them to educational experiences they would not get otherwise (by weekend and holiday activities).

<http://www.tabula-bielefeld.de/>

#### *MoDiBus*

MoDiBus offers a mobile service for counseling and support on emotional and social development. It contributes to developments towards a non-segregated school system with prevention and early intervention.

<http://www.uni-oldenburg.de/sonderpaedagogik/modibus/>

### *Preventing School Dropouts - PRESOUT*

PRESOUT is a European Project (LLP Leonardo) developing to reduce drop-out rates in school and vocational training. Project partners are schools and educational organisations in Turkey, Portugal, Austria, Romania and Germany.

<http://www.presout.eu>

### *Die Mannheimer Strassenschule (Mannheim Street School)*

The aim of the Mannheim Road School, is to support young people in difficult life situations outside the school and to help them to acquire a secondary school certificate. Mannheim Street School is organized by social workers at a stop/emergency accommodation for young people who live mainly on the streets.

[http://freezone-mannheim.de/page.php?seite=Info\\_Strassenschule.html](http://freezone-mannheim.de/page.php?seite=Info_Strassenschule.html)

### *Zukunftsakademie Gropiusstadt (Future Academy Gropiusstadt)*

Zukunftsakademie Gropiusstadt is an innovative pilot project of three schools and three companies in a socially disadvantaged neighborhood in Berlin. In a cooperative setting measures to improve the social skills and vocational skills of young people are developed and carried out systematically.

<http://www.zukunftsakademie-gropiusstadt.de>

### *Haus der Lebenschance (House of Life Chance)*

The "house of life chance" aims to give young people without school degree between 17 to 24 years new hope: Young people are supported by experienced professionals of youth and volunteer mentors in making up their graduation and in finding a place for vocational training.

<http://www.eva-stuttgart.de/haus-der-lebenschance.html>

### *InnoSchool*

The competition called on 28,000 schools and youth institutions in Germany, Spain, Italy and the Netherlands to send in their projects for promoting integration and preventing early school-leaving. The best projects were awarded with cash prizes and published via the internet to support sharing ideas among teachers, parents and other decision-makers.

[http://innoschool.academy4.com/index.php4?sessionid=87d7800a2b6c200f7556569e895fda71&lang=1&p\\_id=44](http://innoschool.academy4.com/index.php4?sessionid=87d7800a2b6c200f7556569e895fda71&lang=1&p_id=44)

More relevant case studies of practice examples have been collected a.o. by the DROPS project (<http://www.comenius-regio-drops.eu/index/217/>) and the School Inclusion EU projects ([http://schoolinclusion.pixel-online.org/report\\_casestudies.php](http://schoolinclusion.pixel-online.org/report_casestudies.php)).

## Conclusions, Controversial Issues, Strengths & Weaknesses

### **EU Education Report 2010/11: Germany almost reaches target of 10% of Early School Leavers**

The working paper of the European Commission entitled ‘Progress towards the Common European Objectives in Education and Training’ reports on the current status of the agreed indicator and benchmarks for the years 2010/2011. One of the five set benchmarks of 2009 is directly addressing Early School Leaving (ESL): “by 2010/2020 the share of early leavers from education and training should be less than 10%”. In EU 27 the share of ESL for the population aged 18 to 24 declined from 17.6% in 2000 to 14.1%, for Germany the rates of Early School Leaving dropped from 14.6% in 2000 to 11.9% in 2010. With an ESL rate of 11.9% Germany is almost reaching the set target of 10%, the ESL rate is however still considerably higher than of the best performing countries as Slovakia, Czech Republic and Poland with an average early school leaving rate of approx. 5%.<sup>(11.)</sup>

### **Regional Differences in Early School Leaving**

School drop-out rates are higher in federal states with higher unemployment rates. According to a study of an institute for economical studies (Rheinisch-Westfälisches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung, RWI) data suggests that unemployment and drop-out rates are related and unemployment of parents can lead to school related problems of children.<sup>(12.)</sup>

### **Social Disparity, Family Background, Relation to Integration and Social Inclusion Policies**

The RWI study furthermore shows that in regions with a higher amount of employees without vocational degree the drop-out rates of young people are higher. This suggests a relation between social status of parents and educational success of their children. Additionally, the amount of immigrant students in classes seems to be influencing drop-out rates – mainly due to language problems, what could be targeted by integration and social inclusion policies.<sup>(12.)</sup>

### **The German Dual System of Vocational Education and Training (VET) and the Transfer System**

A specific is the German dual system in vocational education. This system combines part-time vocational education with practical work experience. The trainee is employed in a company or institution and attends vocational school in parallel. Whereas this system is potentially a stabilizing factor for re-integration of drop-outs into work and educational life, numbers show, that drop-out is high in this system and especially in the ‘second chance’ preparatory measures of the transfer system. The German vocational training market is at the same time still difficult<sup>(13.)</sup> with a higher demand than supply of training places what does not contribute to improve the drop-out situation.

### **No Comprehensive National Reporting about Early School Leaving**

There is no comprehensive and unified national reporting about school drop-out. Data has to be extracted from publications of the Federal Office for Statistics and Eurostat data. Numbers differ due to different definitions and different methods.<sup>(5.)</sup>

### **Current Reforms of the German School System**

Following the so-called ‘PISA Shock’ in 2000 when the study ‘Programme for International Student Assessment’ published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) revealed serious shortcomings in the German educational system a more than 10 year long controversial debate on the necessary reforms followed.

In 2011 it can be stated that the formerly three layered German educational system is either reduced to two layers or new diversified forms of schooling are introduced. Overall the General Secondary School (Hauptschule) is getting abolished almost throughout all German federal states (Bundesländer), which are responsible for the school system.

The General Secondary School is either often merged with the Intermediate Secondary School (Realschule) to – now entitled – Secondary (or Middle) Schools forming nowadays the second pillar besides the Grammar School/Comprehensive Secondary School (Gymnasium). Alternatively new, seemingly more integrative school types are introduced, which may differ from federal state to federal state.

These reforms are accompanied by the lowest enrolment rates for General Secondary Schools ever recorded in Germany as many parents avoid enrolling their children in a school type, which offers the lowest educational achievement prospects. In the press as well as in the general public General Secondary Schools are often paraphrased as ‘schools for the leftovers’. While in 1992 1.1 million pupils attended General Secondary Schools the rate dropped to 700,000 in 2011, which equals only approx. 15% of all students enrolled in the compulsory school system of Germany.

Current criticism primarily entails the complexity of the German school system, which is confusing for parents when having to make the necessary decisions for the schooling of their children. In North Rhine-Westphalia, the federal state with the highest number of inhabitants in Germany for example exist today the following school types: Elementary School (Grundschule), Special Schools (Förderschule), General Secondary Schools (Hauptschule), Intermediate Secondary Schools (Realschule), Comprehensive Secondary Schools (Gymnasium), Community Schools / ‘Schools for Everyone’ (Gemeinschaftsschule) where children are co-educated until Higher Education entrance qualification and Comprehensive Schools (Gesamtschule) where all children are attending the same school, are getting however separated when growing older and so-called Secondary Schools (Sekundarschule), a Community Schools without upper secondary level.

In contrast to the above described reforms of the German school system, the lowest level of qualification, the Certificate of Secondary Education (Hauptschulabschluss) still exists. Critics label the reforms therefore as ‘window dressing’ with the danger that the needed intensive and individualised educational support of those pupils is getting out of focus.

Especially because still today the educational achievement of individual pupils in Germany remains strongly related to: i) gender; ii) geographical provenance; iii) educational/cultural background; iv) perception of parents on their children’s future and last but not least v) socio-economic status of the student’s parents.

As a consequence many educators call for enabling schools to become ‘true learning environments’ triggering curiosity, imagination and the eagerness to learn new things. Schools should additionally avoid transmissive pedagogical approaches in favour of facilitating the co-creation of knowledge and of integrated individual support for children and teenagers. This is contrasted by the prevailing lack of educators (according to estimates one million schooling hours are cancelled every week throughout Germany) and the existing ban on cooperation between the federal states and the federal government e.g. for building new schools, specific programmes for schools in underprivileged areas or for the co-education of children with and without impairments. <sup>(15; 16; 17.)</sup>

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