The European Commission and policy on early school leaving (ESL)

EIPPEE conference
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Europe 2020 - smart, sustainable, inclusive growth

Reducing ESL to 10% by 2020 (from 14.1% in 2010)
• ESL creates massive long-term problems for young people, increases poverty risk and risk of social exclusion
• ESL generates huge social and financial costs
• ESL is a complex problem
Early school leaving ...

refers to 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 (EU LFS).
ESL rates in 2010
Limited progress

Clear progress despite already low rate of ESL
Council Recommendation on policies to reduce early school leaving (28 June 2011)

• Invites Member States to identify the main reasons for ESL and to ensure that comprehensive strategies are in place by 2012

• Invites the Commission to monitor developments, to support policy development and to facilitate exchange of experience and good practice
Framework for comprehensive policies

Identification & analysis
Monitoring of situation
Coordination of policies

Prevention
- Early childhood education and care
- Measures at level of education/training system

Intervention
- Measures at school level
- Student focused measures

Compensation
- Second chance opportunities
- Re-entering mainstream education
- Comprehensive support
Current situation in Europe: Analysis and monitoring of ESL in Europe

- Different systems to collect data on ESL
- Methods often do not provide sufficient evidence
- Gaps in monitoring developments and evaluating measures to reduce ESL
Current situation in Europe: Measures to reduce ESL

- Imbalances in frequency of measures
- Risk to over-rely on some measures (2nd chance education and VET)
- Seldom: involving parents and local community, improving teacher education, early warning systems or extra-curricula activities
- Cross-sectoral cooperation underdeveloped
Early childhood education and care
Targeted individual support
Recognition and validation of prior learning
Prolongation of compulsory education
Anti-segregation measures and support for disadvantaged schools
Involvement of parents
Support for children with different mother tongue
Flexibility and permeability of pathways
Improving VET
Link education and business
School development
Early warning systems
Networking with parents and local community
Mentoring, tutoring, individual educational support
Financial support for pupils
Extra-curricular activities
Teacher education
Guidance and counselling
Individualised learning approaches
2nd chance education
Reintegration into mainstream education
Recognition and validation of prior learning
Some conclusions

• Analysis of the ESL problem crucial to define targeted policies and measures
• Many measures and projects show success, but are less efficient and effective than possible
• Over-reliance on 2\textsuperscript{nd} chance linked to weaknesses in analysing what triggers ESL
• Project-based vs comprehensive policies
Current initiatives at EU level

- Europe 2020 Strategy
- Peer learning
  - Conference on policies to reduce ESL, March 2012
  - Thematic Working Group on ESL (start in Dec 2011 – mandate until 2014)
- Policy debate : Education Council, DG Schools
- Funding: Structural Funds and European education and research programmes