
Early School leaving : Risk Identification

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Lucy



Introduction

- ❖ *Who is most likely to leave school early?
(What age? Family situation? Area?)*
- ❖ *Which groups are in danger of Early school leaving?*
- ❖ *How we can target certain group(s)?*
- ❖ *How we can get 'gifted children' involved in this area?*

Early school leaving as a process

- ❖ Leaving school before completing upper secondary education is often the outcome of a progressive and cumulative process of disengagement.
- ❖ It is triggered by problems that can be related to the course of study, the school, or to certain health, personal, or emotional difficulties young people face.

Early school leaving as a process

- ❖ Early school leaving can be associated with the socio- economic or family background of pupils. Limited access to quality education or to an individual's preferred choice of study may be especially problematic in rural or disadvantaged areas.

Early school leaving as a process

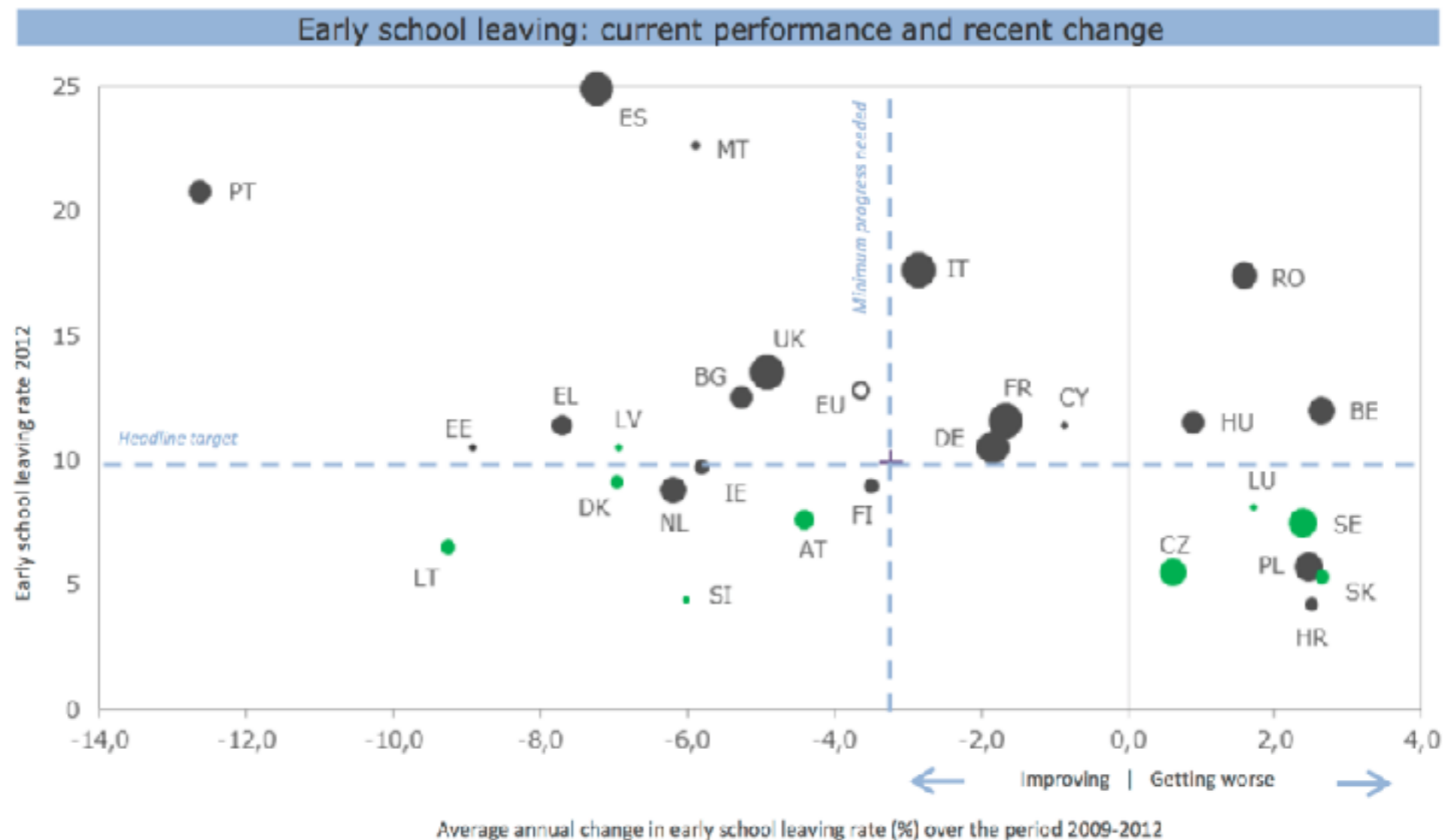
- ❖ European report refers to Early school leaving as a process, not an event.
- ❖ That process involves both the individual early school leavers and their personal histories, and what happens to them when those personal histories meet the public world and life of the school.

‘To have options’



- ❖ Limited access to quality education
- ❖ Limited access to quality education individual's preferred choice of study
- ❖ These aspects may be especially problematic in rural or disadvantaged areas

Early school leaving - recent change



Source: JRC-CRELL and DG EAC calculations based on Eurostat (LFS) data. Member States having already achieved their national targets are marked in green. Countries are shown according to their 18-24 cohort size, with five categories. Further notes: the average annual change rate is artificial for countries with a break in series, i.e. NL (2010) and LV (2011).

Early school leaving - gender aspect

- ❖ In most countries, boys are more likely to leave school prematurely than girls.
- ❖ In the EU, 16.9% of boys and 12.7% of girls are early school leavers.
- ❖ Mothers' level of education had greater effects on girls education than on boys.



Early school leaving - gender aspect

- ❖ In all countries with the exception of Bulgaria and Romania, boys are significantly more likely to be early school leavers than girls.
- ❖ At the same time, reductions in rates of ESL have been faster for girls than for boys
- ❖ *Can you think about any reasons why boys are more likely to leave school early?*



The face of Early school leaving

- ❖ Come from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, such as workless households or households which would be described as the working poor, with insecure conditions of employment
- ❖ Come from vulnerable groups, such as the "Looked After", the disabled, those with Special Educational Needs (SEN), teenage mothers and those with physical and mental health problems

The face of Early school leaving

- ❖ Had a history of disengagement from school, for instance of absence, truancy, expulsion
- ❖ Have achieved poorly in school
- ❖ Come from minority or migrant backgrounds. Minority ethnic and / or migrant groups are seen as over-represented within early school leavers in the Netherlands, Austria, Norway, Spain and England4

The face of Early school leaving

- ❖ Have experienced high rates of mobility
— both residential mobility and school mobility
- ❖ Young people from a migrant background often display a higher than average rate of ESL.
- ❖ The risk of ESL is especially high for disadvantaged minorities, including Roma



The face of Early school leaving



- ❖ Are concentrated in particular areas
- ❖ The clustering together of young people from poor families, in communities with particular patterns of occupation, employment and unemployment, of migrant and minority populations, with low community levels of educational achievement, produces a form of class and ethnic "ghettoisation" with increased risks of and consequences for ESL (EGREES, 2005).

Classification

Classification based on the 'actual working and schooling careers after leaving school' (Dekkers and Driesen, 1997)

- successful unschooled manual worker
- school returner
- money earner
- voluntary unemployed
- enforced unemployed

Classification based on the basis of individual characteristics (Janosz, 1994)

- maladjusted, who have poor grades and who behave poorly at school
- underachievers, who just have poor grades
- disengaged, who perform better than the maladjusted and the underachievers, but simply do not like school
- quiets, who, other than having slightly lower grades, resemble graduates more than dropouts.

Classification based on young people's reasons for leaving school early (Dwyer & PRC, 1996)

- positive leaver, making a positive career choice with employment or further training
- opportune leaver, there is no definite career path, taking the opportunity to change life patterns
- would-be leaver, does not leave but reluctant to stay
- circumstantial leaver, forced to leave for non-educational reasons
- discouraged leaver, interest and performance in education is low
- alienated leaver, discouraged and non-compatible with school life.

Family role in Early school leaving

- ❖ For young people who are at risk of ESL, their family constitutes both
 - > a risk
 - < a potential protective factor(as shown in study by Ferguson et al, 2005).
- ❖ Where young people are growing up in circumstances of family conflict, weak family ties and separation, the risk of early school leaving is increased (GHK, 2005).

Family role in Early school leaving

- ❖ There is nothing predetermined in this!, but young people with disrupted upbringing, moves between homes and schools, are more likely to be disengaged from schooling and lack support from strong parental engagement with their children, with schools and with teachers.

Quebec study factors:

- ❖ On the basis of a finding that the difference between students who unexpectedly failed to complete high school in Quebec, and those who expectedly either completed or failed to complete, was almost entirely accounted for by three factors:
- ❖ 1) Having a mother that did not finish high school
- ❖ 2) Being from a single-parent family in early childhood
- ❖ 3) Repeating a grade in primary school.



Quebec study finding

- ❖ The authors concluded that "having experienced all three factors practically guaranteed not finishing high school, thus defining a crystal clear target group for policy". They suggest that:
- ❖ Without screening (for attention-related difficulties), intervention (such as helping parents better understand supervision during adolescence), and follow-up, individuals facing such cumulative risk are most unlikely to graduate (Pagani et al 2008, 175-6).

Key characteristics of ESL by Fredricks et al. (2004)

- ❖ do less homework
- ❖ exert less effort in school
- ❖ participate less in school activities
- ❖ have more discipline problems at school
- ❖ show low behavioural engagement
- ❖ have social difficulties and negative attitudes towards school
- ❖ are more likely to truant, and to be suspended





Protective factors



- ❖ Attributes of the children themselves. Resilient children perform better in the school tests, show fewer persistent behaviour problems, and have more hobbies and social contacts than their more vulnerable peers. They enjoy school, show a strong belief in their own ability and have aspirations to continue in education
- ❖ Characteristics of their families. A stable and supportive family environment, where parents showed interest in their child's education and wanted an extended school career for them; parents who read to their child, who had visited the school and talked to the teacher, and who took the children out for joint activities; a supportive father who helped the mother
- ❖ Aspects of the wider social context, such as availability of external support, supportive teachers

References

- ❖ <https://www.spd.dcu.ie/site/edc/documents/nesse2010early-school-leaving-report.pdf> * very useful
- ❖ http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/doc/esl-group-report_en.pdf
- ❖ http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/school/early-school-leavers_en.htm