



S2CENE

Framework for Second Chance Schools in Europe

Collective research

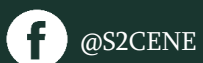


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STRENGTHENING SECOND CHANCE NETWORKS IN EUROPE



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INTRODUCTION

Background

The first principle enshrined in the European Pillar of Social Rights (European Commission, 2017) is the right of all citizens to access quality and inclusive education, training and lifelong learning. This is because education nowadays increasingly depends not only on access to and competitiveness on the labour market, but also on the personal fulfilment and well-being of every citizen. The vision that the EU has and the Member States share for European societies and economies presents them as cohesive and solidary, inclusive, digital, sustainable, green and resilient, with a population actively engaged with society and prepared to adapt to the changing labour market. Each member of this society must possess knowledge and skills enabling them to find their creative and fulfilling place, regardless of (and thanks to) the challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. This is only possible if European citizens are prepared to create and live in such conditions. The main factor for such preparation is quality education that is adequate to the changes. Increasingly, it is not about the "triangle of knowledge" but about the "square of knowledge" - education, research, innovation and benefits for society.

The current research is a key deliverable of the pan-European project S2CENE, supported by Erasmus+. The project S2CENE - Strengthening Second Chance Networks in Europe – is a Erasmus funded KA3 project, It aims to contribute to overcoming four core European problems:

- The high rates of early leavers from education and training (aged 18-24)
- The low level of educational attainment of adults in formal, non-formal and informal learning paths (aged 25-64)
- The high rates of young people neither in employment nor in education and training (aged 20-34)

The project aims at the establishment of national/regional networks of Second Chance Schools (SCS) for young adults' education, mostly by contributing to 1) the Institutional positioning of the European Network of SCS, 2) the creation of new national/regional networks of SCS and 3) the reinforcement of the capacity of existent SCS and the genesis of new SCS in European countries.

S2CENE partnership is composed of five organizations – AE2O (Portugal), E2C (France), NBU (Bulgaria), DANTE SCHOOL (Croatia), Inova+ (Portugal). The project aims at contributing to the establishment of national/regional networks of Second Chance Schools for young adults' education. The specific objectives are related to creation of Second Chance Schools in 2 countries of the partnership (BG and HR); establishment of formal national networks of Second Chance Schools for adult education in 3 countries of the partnership (PT, BG and HR) and institutional and positioning reinforcement of the European network of Second Chance Schools (E2C Europe – FR).

The current research will offer outline of historical and current developments in the field of Second Chance Education on European level; highlight key perspectives of stakeholders in the field; good practices and methods and a framework with policy recommendations for future development of the Second Chance Education Field.

The Research Paper will offer a concise overview of the main characteristics of a second chance school and recommendations how to set-up a quality second chance school in European context. It also will add to the ongoing and active EU policy focus regarding addressing early school leaving across Europe. The baseline data based on EU Statistics (European Commission, 2019; Eurostat, 2019), which informs the direction of S2CENE project and current research development can be summarised through the following table:

Table 1 – Baseline data (Early leaving, NEETs, Adults learning, Unemployment, Poverty)

Indicators	Eu-28	PT	BG	HR
Early leavers from education and training ¹ (age 18-24) – 2018	10,6%	11,8%	12,7%	3,3%
Young NEETs (aged 20-34) - 2018	16,5%	11,9%	20,9%	18,5%
Adult participation in learning (age 25-64) – 2018	11,1%	10,3%	2,5%	2,9%
Tertiary educational attainment (age 30-34) - 2018	40,7%	33,5%	33,7%	34,7%
Youth unemployment (age 15 – 29) – 2018	11.5%	14.1%	8.3%	17.9%
Youth at risk of poverty or social exclusion (age 16 – 29) – 2018	24.8%	23.2%	32.8%	20.5%

As observed, despite the overall effort on European and national level, the drop-out rate from education and training is around 10%. The higher percentage of persons, who are in the category of NEETs suggest a worrying tendency that leaving formal education in most cases is not a temporary life situation, but can transform into a long-term pattern, which negatively affects the whole educational and employment pathway of the given individual.

¹ The indicator Early School Leavers (ESL) was changed after 2016 to Early leavers from education and training (ELET). It was done to highlight the fact that there are significant numbers of persons leaving wide range of education and training opportunities beyond the school education domain. This challenge requires wide range of measures, among which Second Chance Education.

Stepping from this premise, with current research we would like to highlight the importance of second chance education as a bridge, enabling young person to return to education and/or labour market, achieving higher quality of life. The data will be updated where possible.

Methodology

Methodology combines desk research with field work, comprising the following activities:

- Good practices sharing across experts in the current project partnership;
- Literature review: a focussed review of policy and research literature; mapping a list of EU strategic documents and constitution of a database of 15 strategic documents, to be identified by the consortium;
- Quantitative data analysis: to establish key trends for NEETs, drawing upon Eurostat, OECD, Eurydice data;
- European level interviews: Online questionnaire and implementation of interviews involving 30 managers and practitioners in the field of Second Chance Education from different European countries in Europe;
- Qualitative interviews: Implementation of interviews involving key stakeholders in the field of Second Chance Education in Europe;
- Identification and collection of good practices, models and approaches of the SCS – 9 good practices and 9 learning methods/technics.

The research tools will contribute to understanding of the nature of Second Chance Schools and their characteristics, which learning methods, techniques and activities are commonly, what competencies and characteristics adult professionals need to have to be successful and which are the minimum requirements to establish and maintain a Second Chance School.

The evidence gathered will allow to develop a Framework of Second Chance Schools, fostering further the process of co-design of strategies and plans of accreditation models of such schools across Europe and capacity building activities (trainings and workshops).

Overview of chapters

The research is structured in 4 main chapters, which can be synthesised as follows:

- Chapter 1 – maps current state-of-the-art of the field addressed through analysis of European and national strategic documents, identified by the partnership.
- Chapter 2 – further expands the state-of-the-art analysis by consolidating opinions collected from practitioners and key stakeholders in the field.
- Chapter 3 – focusses on outline of good practices and methods in second chance education.
- Chapter 4 – presents key conclusions with focus on establishing common definition and elements of a second chance schools, synthesised in a framework and also provision of policy-recommendations for further development.

CHAPTER 1 – OVERVIEW OF EU AND NATIONAL POLICY PRIORITIES ON SECOND CHANCE SCHOOLS

1.1 Scope

A good education is not an end in itself. Its benefits find expression in all other spheres of public life and related policies - in the social sphere, civil society, employment, economy, culture, security, etc. Which requires carrying out educational reforms in a broad context - joint cross-sectoral discussions on the relationship of different policies with education policy, using good practices from other policies and their adaptation in education. Final decisions on the development of educational systems are within the competence of EU member states alone, as the principle of subsidiarity is observed. The European Commission sees the role of EU-level action as helping institutions and decision-makers from member states to make informed choices.

The rapidly changing labor market in recent years under the influence of the Fourth Industrial Revolution outlines a leap in required knowledge, skills and competencies. This gives rise to smaller or larger gaps between the acquired education and the new requirements. In the future, talent will be a much more critical factor in production than capital. This will lead to an increasing division of the market into a "low-educated and therefore low-paid" share and a "highly educated, therefore - high-paid" share (Schwab, 2015). Studies by the European Commission (European Commission 2017a) show that by 2025 half of occupations will require a high level of qualification, 90% will require digital skills and 65% of children starting school today will be employed in occupations that do not exist yet. Regarding the scope, it can be definitely concluded that the changes will develop in a horizontal and a vertical direction. The digital revolution is the foundation, but the Fourth Industrial Revolution combines technologies and presents horizons that will challenge our basic notions of "doing things" - covering all economic sectors, all processes related to business and society. And the most important thing – again, each individual will have to determine what he wants to be, how he can and wants to live. To be able to choose the best for themselves, people will need to

constantly update their knowledge and skills through formal, non-formal and informal learning.

But while the EU and countries are trying to provide increasingly high-quality and adequate education for young people, at the same time around one in ten young adults leave school or training early, without qualification or diploma. Today young people are changing jobs more frequently and it takes a longer time to get established on the labour market.

Therefore, it is important to make sure that the transition from education to work is smooth and also highlight the risks for those with insufficient education and competences - who leave education earlier or are neither in employment nor in education or training. There are risks, both for the individual and in the long run for society, if young adults find themselves disengaged from both education and the labour market.

A Council resolution states seven objectives at EU level (Council of the EU, 2021) aimed at improving knowledge, skills and competences to achieve the full realization of the European Education Area and which reflect the concern for this part of Europe's population , which remains below the minimum levels of education. The EU-level target for 2030 is less than 9%.

In 2021, 9.7 % of 18–24-year-olds in the EU had completed at most a lower secondary education, considered to be early school leavers (ESL). Across EU Member States, the highest shares were found in Romania (15.3 %), followed by Spain and Italy with around 13 % (Figure 1). "Educational poverty", according to the EU's expression, threatens them in their later life and can lead to lack of fulfilment and exclusion. Children and youth with lower socio-economic status are especially at risk. (Eurostat 2022).

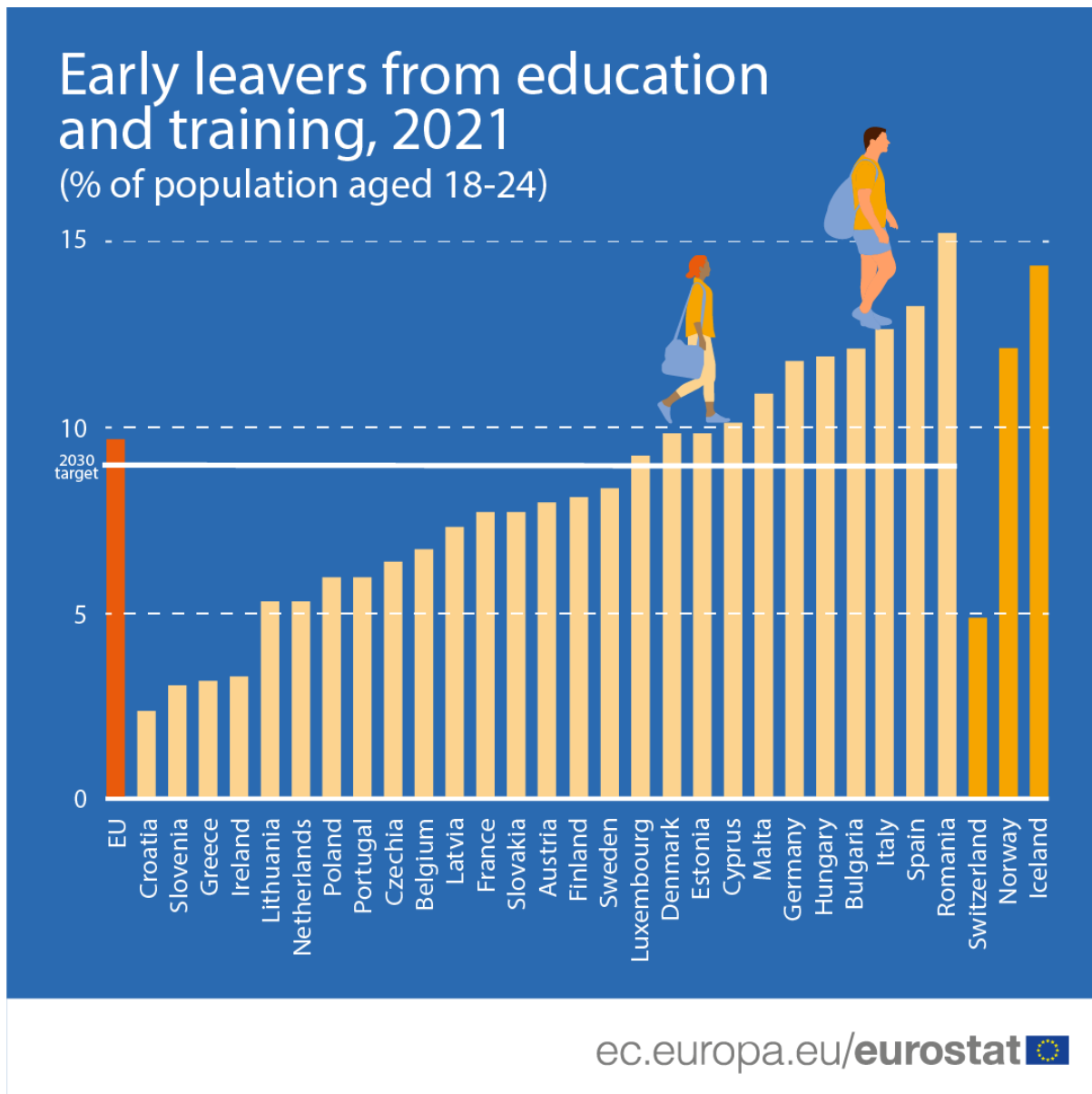


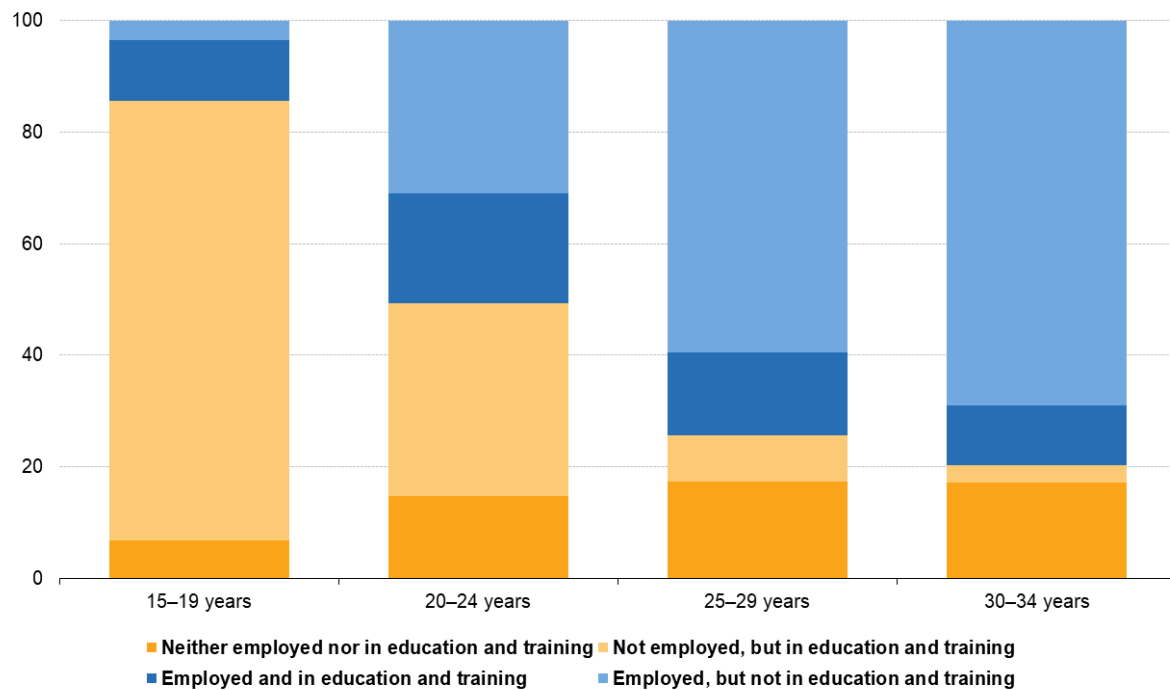
Figure 1: Early leavers from education and training, 2021

Another term which is used in reference to ‘early school leavers’ is that of ‘school dropout’. It is not correct either since it only registers dropout when the person who drops out enters the statistics at the age of 18. There is no statistical definition or instrument to register the ‘act’ of prematurely abandoning school as and when it occurs, which is often well before the age of 18. This may partly be because schooling during some of these earlier years is

compulsory which means that de jure, though not de facto, dropout is non-existent. So, there is not enough statistics referring to young people of any age who have prematurely abandoned school without obtaining basic skills and qualifications. It leads to another term referring to people neither in employment nor in education or training, abbreviated as NEET, which corresponds to the percentage of the population of a given age group and sex who is not employed and not involved in further education or training. The situation here is even worse - in 2021, an average of 13.1 % was identified as NEET within EU. The proportion ranged from 5.5 % in the Netherlands to 23.1 % in Italy (Eurostat 2022a).

In Figure 2 the transition from education to work is illustrated by showing both the employment and the education or training status for young people in different age groups. Although it is not complete, the figure shows that being employed (but not in education and training) increases with age, while the opposite is true for education (not employed but in education and training) where the share decreases considerably with age. It makes evident that necessary education should be provided at early age, as the share of NEETs rises with age.

Employment, education and training status of young people, by age, EU, 2021 (%)



Note: the shares do not quite add up to 100 % due to the category of young people for which the education and training status is not known.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: edat_ifse_18)

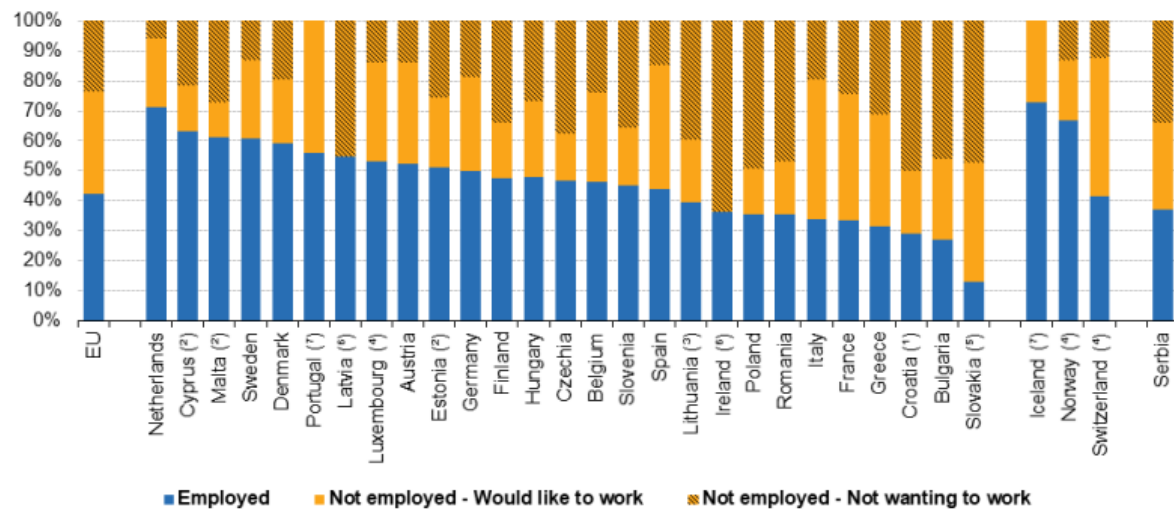
eurostat 

Figure 2: Employment, education and training status of young people by age groups – EU, 2021

As Figure 3 shows, there is a correlation between lack of adequate competences from education and the labour market status later in years. In 2021 the distribution between different labour market outcomes was as follows: 42.3 % of all early leavers were in employment, while 34.0 % were not employed but wanted to work, and the remaining 23.7 % were not employed and did not want to work.

Distribution of early leavers from education and training by labour status, 2021

(% of early leavers aged 18-24)



Note: ranked on share of employed early leavers.

(*) Low reliability.

(*) Not wanting to work and would like to work: low reliability.

(*) Would like to work: low reliability.

(*) Not wanting to work: low reliability.

(*) Employed: low reliability.

(*) Would like to work: not available due to a very low reliability. Included with 'not wanting to work'.

(*) Not wanting to work: not available due to a very low reliability. Included with 'wanting to work'.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: edat_lfse_14)

eurostat

Figure 3: Distribution of early leavers from education and training by labour status, 2021

All this data is requiring a continuous and fast adaptation and shift of societal and market paradigms. More than ever, the investment on the continuous capacity building and training of adults, is seen as strategic to assure social inclusion, equal opportunities and justice among European citizens at different levels. Considering this, Member-States need to keep investing in establishing, maintaining and reinforcing networks specifically dedicated to adult education, essential for the structure of a systematic, relevant and consistent offer of services and supports for personal development and social, cultural and professional inclusion of adults. Early school leaving is a complex issue influenced by interconnected factors related to background, personal experiences, family problems, social and economic context, etc. Moreover, general education systems are often not able to deal with the complex situations affecting specific groups of young people. The approach we are studying is so called “Second

Chance Education (SCE)” as we believe that, despite the different forms through which it manifests itself, it is an innovative approach that takes into account the specific characteristics of the target group and uses a holistic methods to address the negative consequences. As it is stated by the European Commission (2014), measures to prevent or compensate for ESL must tackle the loss of intrinsic motivation, stemming from feelings of inadequacy, failure and low self-esteem. Successful measures must be personally valued by the potential participants, and give learners a sense of empowerment and control over their learning. The challenge lies in realising these objectives within mainstream initial education, which is widely focused on the cognitive development of learners and on the acquisition of knowledge. The mainstreamed education However, the 21st century society and learners demand a broader approach that considers the individual. This means that is important to define and provide learning approaches that consider the cognitive development, physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing of the learner. This will only be possible if the learning system assumes and integrate the concept of “whole community approach”. The motivations of young adults aged 18-24 can differ from those of school age learners in that their motivation to re-engage is influenced by the personal development that has taken place since leaving school, and the impact of having experienced the negative consequences of leaving early, for example through reduced employment prospects. The concept of “whole community approach” is also one of the most relevant features of the Second Chance Schools, characterized for being embedded in the local community, making possible to reach and engage young adults from the local area. Another characteristic is the prominent role for multi-professional working, which can’t be found within most mainstream schools thus providing support to students beyond the regular school day. The SCS approach bring together expertise from different sectors such as health, employment, housing, legal aid and social support, with the school serving as a point for the delivery of this support to participants – many of whom have complex needs and experience problems outside of a school setting.

The significance of the Second Chance Education is recognised in Europe as it is considered to be strategic for:

- Fighting against social exclusion of general population, in particular teenagers and young adults;
- Reconnecting learners with educational and training systems, essential to overcome the challenges and problems mentioned above;
- Promoting a positive attitude of teenagers and young adults towards learning, contributing to the reinforcement of the lifelong learning goals defined by the European Union;
- Promoting the development of the “whole person” with impact on the acquisition of basic and key-competences, on strengthening the personality and on accessing the labour market.

The main aim of the research is to study experiences, expertise and perspective will thus to learn more about the difficulties that the institutions dealing with NEETs have faced and to find out whether the measures taken so far by the European Commission and member states have been sufficient in order to ensure appropriate support and adequate measures to decrease the number of NEETs. The research explores the Second Chance Schools approach, involving schools from the partnership and other schools integrating the European network of SCS to deepen their knowledge related to existent policies, models, practices, learning methods related to Second Chance Schools in Europe. The results from this initial research will be capitalised for the construction of strategies, plans and tools, permitting the promotion of the adequate setting and context for the genesis of new national/regional networks of SCS, specifically in the countries of the partnership.

The expert teams within S2CENE project have identified a list of strategic documents on EU and national level, which were thoroughly analysed and used as a basis of current overview. The list of documents can be presented in a table format as follows:

Table 2 – List of Strategic Documents 2005-2020

Title	Date of publication	Geographic scope	Publisher:	Source:
White paper on education and training. Teaching and learning. Towards the learning society	29/11/1995	European	Commission of the European communities	https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/d0a8aa7a-5311-4eee-904c-98fa541108d8/language-en
Second chance schools - The results of a European pilot project : report	01/11/2001	European	European Commission	https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/923ea599-0b97-4ee1-88fc-3f26553f82a7
Europe 2020 - A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth	03/03/2010	European	European Commission	https://ec.europa.eu/eu2020/pdf/COMPLET%20EN%20BARROSO%20%202007%20-%20Europe%202020%20-%20EN%20version.pdf
COMMISSION STAFF WORKING PAPER Reducing early school leaving	31/01/2011	European	European Commission	https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/1727c557-8ffa-4d80-8bc9-dc0feff6d836/language-en
COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 28	2011	European	European Council	https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-

June 2011 on policies to reduce early school leaving				content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32011H0701(01)
Reducing early school leaving: Key messages and policy support Final Report of the Thematic Working Group on Early School Leaving	01/11/2013	European	European Commission	https://ec.europa.eu/education/content/reducing-early-school-leaving-key-messages-and-policy-support_en
Preventing Early School Leaving in Europe – Lessons Learned from Second Chance Education, ECORYS for the European Commission	23/04/2014	European	European Commission	https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/575dc3dc-a6fb-4701-94a2-b53d62704567
Tackling Early Leaving from Education and Training in Europe: Strategies, Policies and Measures	2014	European	Eurydice and CEDEFOP	https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/tackling-early-leaving-education-and-training-europe-strategies-policies-and-measures_en
Leaving education early: putting vocational education and training centre stage Volume II	25/10/2016	European	CEDEFOP	https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications/5558
Leaving education early: putting vocational education and training centre stage. Volume I: investigating causes and extent	06/12/2016	European	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training CEDEFOP	https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications/5557#group-downloads
Comparative Perspectives on Early School Leaving in the European Union	2018	European	Routledge	https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315170404
Assessment of the Implementation of the 2011 Council Recommendation on	04/09/2019	European	European Commission	https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-

Policies to Reduce Early School Leaving				/publication/72f0303e-cf8e-11e9-b4bf-01aa75ed71a1/language-en
French Education Code	13/12/2007	National	French Government	https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000017649609/
Bulgarian Strategy for reducing the Early School Leavers (ESL) 2013-2020	30/10/2013	National	Ministry of Education and Science	https://www.mon.bg/bg/143
CASE STUDY: Guidance and counseling to fight early school leaving in Croatia; A success story?	2019	National	CEDEFOP, case study prepared by ETF	https://cisok.hr/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/ETF-2009-Case-study-in-Croatia-by-Gerard-Mayen.pdf
Legislation - Second Chance Program in Portugal	06/08/2019	National	Secretary of state for education, João Miguel Marques da Costa	https://dre.pt/home/-/dre/123725456/details/maximized

1.2 EU Policy 2010-2020

The value of second chance schools has been brought to the attention of European societies in 1995, when the Commission adopted a White Paper on education and training entitled 'Teaching and Learning: Towards the Learning Society'. Five main objectives were identified in that paper, the third of which was 'combating exclusion'. The experimental scheme for 'Second Chance Schools' was proposed under the third objective and given concrete form by the Commission. The projects concerned were defined as providing youngsters excluded from the education system, or about to be, with the best training and best support arrangements to develop skills and qualifications to enter further training or the job market as well as to give them self-confidence. (White paper, 1995). It has been a slow and delicate process as education policy is governed by the principle of subsidiarity and imposed

‘institutionalisation’ would not be well received by the Member States. There are different constitutional, social, cultural, historical and educational circumstances, local or regional specifics within each Member State, which should be taken into consideration. Establishment of SCSs should be pluralistic in terms of its links to the formal education system, regulations, management, etc. according to the possibilities in each country - inter alia school capacity, teacher recruitment formalities, specific aspects of the curriculum and institutional links/partnerships. Nevertheless, after consultations with the Member states some ‘general’ characteristics were considered important:

- A committed partnership with local authorities, social services, associations and the private sector, the latter in particular with a view to offering possible training places and jobs to pupils;
- A teaching and counselling approach focused on the needs, wishes and abilities of individual pupils; stimulation of active learning on their part;
- Flexible teaching modules allowing combinations of basic skills development (numeracy, literacy, social skills, etc.) with practical training in and by enterprises;
- A central role for the acquisition of skills in and through ICT and new technologies.

The Commission was given a mandate to launch pilot projects for Second Chance Schools and to identify, exploit and network similar projects already existing in the Member States. Another aim of this Second Chance School initiative was to place the issue of school failure and its consequences firmly on the political agenda of education authorities in the Member States. Although the schools established under this initiative encountered many difficulties of any kind (many of them have not even completed a single school cycle), the final results suggested that Second Chance Schools do indeed offer a second chance to young people who risk being left behind, helping them back towards learning and, with it, social and vocational integration (European Commission, 2001).

Fighting school drop-out has been integrated in the 'Luxembourg' employment process; it has received renewed impetus at the Lisbon summit of 23-24 March 2000 and school failure has been adopted as one of the Structural Indicators for the Implementation of the Lisbon strategy. The European Report on Quality of School Education was also significant. It was adopted by education ministers of 28 European countries in Bucharest in June 2000, recognising school drop-out rates as a quality indicator of school education. The Second Chance Schools are also included as one of the Action points of the Action Framework for Sustainable Urban Development in the European Union. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has called on all its Member States to launch second chance school pilot projects.

Throughout historical evolution of national and European policy approaches towards different emerging challenges for education and training systems, the role of second chance education schemes has gained further evidence. One such challenge is related to early school leaving (ESL), which became pivotal target to be addressed by Europe 2020 Strategy.

The ultimate goal set by 2020 is "Reducing the average European rate of early school leavers to less than 10%". The 2020 Strategy further states that action needs to be taken in education because: „A quarter of all pupils have poor reading competences, one in seven young people leave education and training too early. Around 50% reach medium qualifications level but this often fails to match labour market needs“ (European Commission, 2010).

Large percentage of early school leavers are with lower secondary education. There are some countries like Bulgaria and Portugal where the percentage of early leavers with primary education is considerable. Overall, there are discrepancies in Europe with regard to countries' achievements in addressing early school leaving (European Commission, 2011 and Council Recommendation, 2011). The 2011 Commission Staff Working Paper on early school leaving emphasizes on the direct link between early school leaving status and challenges to be employed.

The reasons for early leaving differ from one country or region to another, and it is impossible to establish a single 'profile' of early leavers or a comprehensive list of causes leading to ESL. Still, there are some **common characteristics of early school leavers** like coming from: poor, socially disadvantaged and or low education backgrounds; minorities (such as Roma or other minority ethnic groups) or migrant backgrounds; belonging to vulnerable groups, such as youth from a public care background, teenage mothers and persons with physical and mental disabilities or other special educational needs (SEN).

On the level of the education system, among the main aspects having a negative influence on ESL the lack of second chance education opportunities has been identified. The economic consequences of ESL are likely to get worse. Majority of jobs will require high or medium qualifications. High rates of ESL, in combination with demographic change, risk increasing the shortage of skilled labour and restricting 'smart growth' in the EU.

In terms of how to address ESL, the European Commission (2011) provides an overview of a wide range of measures and approaches, linked to three main categories: **Prevention**; **Intervention** and **Compensation**. Second chance opportunities are described within the Compensation category.

Compensatory strategies create opportunities for those who left education and training prematurely but want to gain the qualifications they missed at a later stage in their life. The aim is also to reintegrate young adults in danger of social exclusion by offering a range of tailor-made education and training opportunities. Whether young adults can benefit from a second chance in education depends on why they dropped out of the 'first chance system'. It depends on their previous learning experiences, on their social or learning difficulties, on their living conditions and on the set-up of the programme. Targeted measures often follow a 360-degree approach and look at academic performance, wellbeing and psychological recovery of the young adults concerned.

Second chance schools need to provide a different learning environment which responds to the specific needs of their learners, such as smaller learning groups, more teachers per student, more personalised and innovative teaching, flexible and multiple pathways and more elements of vocational training.

Second chance programmes have to be relevant to their students, have to be able to provide sufficient incentives to maintain learning and need to be flexible to students' varied needs. And they need to pass the crucial test of providing successful students with accreditation which is recognised on the labour market and allows them to continue education and training within mainstream education and training system.

According to the 2013 Thematic Working Group Report on Early School Leaving Early (European Commission, 2013): “school leaving (ESL) is a multi-faceted and complex problem caused by a cumulative process of disengagement. It is a result of personal, social, economic, education or family-related reasons. Schools play an important role in addressing ESL but they cannot and should not work in isolation. Comprehensive approaches that focus on the root causes of ESL are required to reduce ESL.

Reducing ESL can help towards the integration of young people into the labour market and contribute to breaking the cycle of deprivation that leads to the social exclusion of too many young people. Investment in the educational achievement of young people is essential for the employment prospects of every young person. It is important for the growth of our economy and for social cohesion, especially at a time when the current financial and economic crisis is having a serious impact on young people and their families. Investing in education helps to break the cycle of deprivation and poverty leading to the social exclusion of too many young people across Europe.”

There are **several different definitions of ‘early school leaving’** used at EU. In the Thematic Report (European Commission, 2013), the term ‘early school leaving’ describes all forms of leaving education and training before completing upper secondary. It includes those who

have never enrolled and those who have dropped-out of education and training. It also includes those who do not continue education and training after finishing lower secondary education or those who failed final exams at the end of upper secondary education.

Along the main recommendations highlighted in the report for reducing early school leaving are:

- through developing comprehensive strategies, working on all levels and balancing between preventative, intervention and compensation measures;
- through strong involvement and commitment in policy-making of parents, students, local communities, youth, social and employment services and businesses;
- through effective policies that take a holistic view and to look at all aspects within the education system that may trigger early school leaving.

With the launch of the Europe 2020 goal for addressing early school leaving the interest towards different effective interventions, including second chance education to support this goal increased sufficiently. In 2014, a Preventing Early School Leaving in Europe report commissioned by European Commission emphasised on the good practices in second chance education, their success factors, and their potential transferability into initial education and training settings. The report highlighted the need for transnational dialogue and exchange on the theme of “learning from second chance education to prevent Early School Leaving” This exchange might take the form of a structured consultation exercise; both within the second chance ‘sector’, and between the second chance sector and initial education schools across Europe (European Commission, 2014).

The 2014 findings reconfirmed evidence collected through an evaluation of second chance education and synthesised in a European Commission 2002 Report “Second chance schools - The results of a European pilot project”. This 2002 report studied the second chance schools created in Europe by the EU pilot project inspired by the White paper from 1995 mentioned in the beginning of current review. The White paper was an initiative Edith Cresson,

Commissioner responsible for research, education and training and a key document in the 90's, representing the incorporation in the EU policies of the dominant perspective of education as a way to developing the competencies of human capital in the labour market (White paper, 1995). The 2002 EU report strongly state that Second Chance Schools do indeed offer – as their name suggests they should – a second chance to young people who risk being left behind, helping them back towards learning and, with it, social and vocational integration (European Commission, 2002). The almost 4000 young people enrolled in the 13 pilot schools evaluated had formerly turned their backs on education and tended to regard schools as places of discontent, frustration, adversity and, ultimately, failure and self-depreciation. Over half of them were still following courses in the Second Chance Schools, and more than a quarter of them had successfully finished their second chance school. The report offered sufficient evidence to suggest that the Second Chance Schools play a significant role in the reintegration of young people lacking basic skills and competencies and the positive role that education and training have in combating social exclusion.

In the 2014 Eurydice published a study “Tackling Early Leaving from Education and Training in Europe: Strategies, Policies and Measures Study”, which confirmed that second chance schemes form key element of the national strategies of several EU countries in addressing early leaving (Eurydice, 2014).

In two Cedefop studies (Volume I and II, 2016) second chance education was described as a key measure to address early leaving in the context of vocational education and training (VET).

The report further emphasised on taking into consideration the “individual variations” and seeing the “young person who leaves school early” as a complex and heterogeneous group and not as a homogeneous “profile. There are multiple reasons why young people drop out of VET courses. For example: there may be obstacles related to the youth's background; VET can be seen by families as “the last” option, lacking prestige; young people may have a difficult relationship with learning and education or low confidence in their own abilities resulting from school failure; VET programs may be too theoretical or, on the contrary, too work-based;

there might be a mismatch between what they thought the profession would be and what it really is or problems happened in the context of the internship (immaturity in the face of work, conflicts, etc.). It is often a combination of these factors. However, there are young people who, even with various difficulties and obstacles, do not give up on the VET paths, taking them to the end and the reason why this happens is also important to understand (Cedefop, Volume I, 2016).

Since there is no single reason for early leaving, there are no easy answers. Policies to reduce early leaving must address a range of triggers and combine education and social policy, youth work and health-related aspects such as drug use or mental and emotional problems (Cedefop, Volume II, 2016).

CEDEFOP 2016 studies, recognizing the significant numbers of early leaving also from VET programs, emphasizes the need for comprehensive national strategies, integrating prevention, intervention and compensation measures like second chance schools. 11 groups of existing measures were identified according to the timing of the intervention during the journey of a typical dropout:

- 5 preventive measures - (1) Reforms of VET initiatives to improve availability, quality, attractiveness and relevance, (2) VET bridging and preparatory programmes, (3) Financial incentives to reduce early leaving, (4) ELVET resources or expertise for VET, (5) Training of teachers and in-company trainers to deal with ELVET);
- 3 intervention measures - (6) Early warning systems, (7) Professional support: counselling, guidance, mentoring and case management, (8) Short-term time-out measures;
- 3 compensation measures - (9) Opening up VET for new groups of learners, (10) **Second chance VET programmes²**, (11) Second chance comprehensive reengagement programmes.

² One of the successful second chance comprehensive reengagement programmes that the studies identify is the second chance school of Matosinhos, <http://www.segundaoportunidade.com/>

In 2018 a comparative report from longitudinal research on early school leaving in 9 EU countries was published, confirming that policy approaches to addressing this challenge differ considerably, but still several categories of common systemic approaches can be distinguished.

The first category focuses on **cooperation between the different social actors** and seeks to consolidate it in the form of action plans or national programmes directly addressing the ESL phenomenon.

The second type aims to establish **effective monitoring systems** to track early school leaving, school attendance or absenteeism.

The third category of measures involves broader **reforms of education systems**.

Finally, the fourth type of measures targets **the most vulnerable groups and socio-economic inequalities**, with the aim of reducing gaps in educational attainment and achievement (RESL.eu project, 2018).

The report confirmed further that the return of at-risk young people to education, particularly after a long break, is usually through alternative learning pathways, where students meet caring staff, are seen as mature and allowed to have their own voice heard, and where their basic or special needs are more appropriately addressed.

However, the concentration of young people with different difficulties and special needs in alternative educational institutions leads to stigmatisation of students and graduates, which further accelerates the vicious circle of social reproduction. The research results showed that the traditional linear approach, *in which early school leaving is seen as an endpoint following the process of leaving school, often fails to capture the complex and processual nature of the phenomenon*. Many students who have experienced early school leaving and dropout can be re-engaged in education and training through micro, meso- and macro-level resilience factors and mechanisms.

In 2019 the European Commission published a report presenting findings of an evaluation exercise covering 37 countries with the aim to map the development of policies and practice on reducing Early School Leaving, as a result of the 2011 Council Recommendation on Policies to Reduce Early School Leaving and associated EU policy instruments to the development of policy, practice and research on ESL across Europe.

The study has shown that there is largely positive overall picture regarding the impact and influence of the 2011 ESL Recommendation and associated EU policy instruments. The Recommendation and associated tools clearly shone a spotlight on the need to tackle early school leaving across Europe, as well as providing a policy framework for doing so, which countries and key stakeholders have globally responded to, albeit to different degrees and in differing manners. The analysis of the evidence further shows that much more needs to be done to continue tackling the multi-faceted and evolving range of challenges contributing to the early school leaving phenomenon (European Commission, 2019).

1.3 National Policies

Portugal

In Portugal, up to 2006, the rate of ESL (early school leaving) was considerable high, nearly 40%. Now a days there are various modes of adult education and training with specific aims and target groups, encompassing a system of recognition, validation and certification of skills acquired throughout life. Provision in this area is mainly included in the National Qualifications System/Catalogue and organised by a national network of "Qualifica" Centres, which cover the whole country, providing a guidance system for adults, while coordinating a vast network of training bodies. Qualifica Program is a program aimed at adults with incomplete education and training courses and aims to improve the qualification levels of adults, contributing to the progression of the population's qualification and the improvement of the employability of individuals. As such, they are focussed on obtaining both academic and vocational certification at the same time, although in some cases they may award only one of these. General adult education is designed for adults who have not completed their

basic or upper secondary education at the usual age. It follows a study plan based on the official curriculum and leads to the attainment of a qualification and the award of a diploma or certificate, equivalent to those conferred by daytime education.

Decree Law No 54/2018, 6 July, establishes the principles that guarantees inclusion, development and participation in the learning processes for all students. This legislation identifies the support measures for learning and inclusion, the specific curricular areas, as well as the specific resources mobilised to meet all children and young people's educational needs throughout their time at school, with the different education and training provision. One of the resources is a "multidisciplinary team to support inclusive education", which should include a psychologist who, among other types of support, provides vocational guidance (Eurydice, 2022).

In the last 20 years, there has been a sustainable improvement in the country's educational results, with the rate of early leavers currently reaching historic lows, below the 2020 EU target of 10%. The situation, however, is still worrying: almost 20% of Portuguese young people do not attend secondary education at normal age and more than 10% do not complete it, and 25% of young people, up to the age of 29, do not complete secondary education. 23% of young people are unemployed and 30% are poor, values well above European averages.

Reducing early leaving, ensuring the quality of educational responses and the social and professional integration of young people, continues to be a priority objective of educational policies in Portugal.

Matosinhos Second Chance School was the pioneering experience in this field in Portugal, having worked, since the beginning, to pilot a new public policy in the country that would guarantee its sustainability and also open up opportunities for others to make similar experiences. This commitment resulted in a new law, Despacho 6954/2019, which institutionalized second chance education measure in the Portuguese education system.

Nowadays, there are seven second chance schools in Portugal and several other initiatives with the same objective are being developed throughout the country. E2O Portugal, the National Network of Initiatives and Second Chance Schools, created in 2018 to support the launch of new projects and ensure their follow-up and monitoring, was formalized as an association last year.

Second Chance Schools are now part of the public policy of education, integrating a wider framework of measures to reduce early leaving and to support young people in risk of social exclusion that still need to be expanded and consolidated.

Croatia

In Croatia, adult education is embedded in the concept of lifelong learning. It is defined like that in the valid 2007 Adult Education Act and in the description of activities of the Ministry of Science and Education. Adult education is conducted as formal, non-formal, informal and self-directed learning, although the last three are just mentioned but not regulated by the Act. Adult education is mostly financed by the learners themselves. The programmes are also financed by employers and the state and local self-government. State funding is carried out on the basis of applications for grants or public procurement and they do not represent a stable source of financing. Significant support is provided by grants under the European Social Fund calls for institutional strengthening, development of new programmes and inclusion of marginalised groups. Adult education institutions can be financed by local and regional self-government units that are their founders. Payment of adult education and programme fees is the biggest obstacle to participation in education. In Croatia, the participation of adults in education is low. According to Eurostat data from 2/2021, only 3.5% of adults participate in one of the education programmes, mostly highly educated people. People with no primary education participate the least, although they need education the most - only 0.5%. The Ministry of Science, Education and Sports implements the project for completion of primary education for adult persons where efforts are made to include as many members as possible of the Roma community, in cooperation with Roma associations and adult education institutions. Moreover, the Ministry implements the programme of learning Croatian language for the asylees. Different programmes for adult education of vulnerable groups (long-term unemployed, women, persons with special needs, etc.) are financed through measures implemented by the Croatian Employment Service. In the context of education system inclusiveness, special care is given to the children belonging to national minorities, especially Roma children. In accordance with the values promoting a multi-ethnic and multicultural society, and the stipulations of the Constitutional law on the rights of national

minorities, as well as other relevant international legal acts, contents important for the identities of national minorities in Croatia are included in primary and secondary education programmes. Within the education and culture policies basis is being established for inclusion and integration of the contents which affirm the historical contributions of national minorities and their representatives (Eurydice, 2022).

Croatia is among the leading countries in tackling early school leaving. CEDEFOP initiated research, conducted by ETF of the organization of the guidance and counselling system in Croatia to understand how it has contributed to the low rate of early school leaving from the educational system. Extra curricula resources allocated to primary and secondary schools through presence of psychologists, social pedagogue, etc together with the coordination process guided by Croatian Employment Service (CES) may be considered among the key factors of success (CEDEFOP, 2019).

Further development efforts in Croatia are linked with alignment of educational outcomes with demand of the labour market. More is needed to involve young people as resource individuals in the design of policies and approaches together with more options being offered by the education system to familiarize students with the world of work. Among possible fields of improvement at CES one can mention the need for a better monitoring and evaluation system of school leavers' population regardless of their educational origin, its Quality Assurance system, qualitative and quantitative indicators to measure achievements of the entire population which has gone through its remediation process. This would allow reinforcing and confirming if the shaping of the activities is the most relevant and contribute to the sustainability of results.

Second Chance Education is carried out in Croatia through non-formal and informal learning and quality youth work, providing opportunities for young people leaving education with low qualifications or without any qualifications.

The concept of Second Chance Education is more widespread, and the retraining process is managed by vocational middle schools that have a separate sector for adult education and therefore organize professional retraining programs within their special curriculum tailored on the specific needs of the population. Second Chance Education, precisely the aims of Second Chance Education, are included in the Adult Education program that the Republic of Croatia has been systematically and actively planning since the end of the 1990s. Adult education is financed more with the investments of individual citizens, association and stakeholders.

Bulgaria

The basic normative documents for adult education and training are Pre-School and School Education Act, Vocational Education and Training Act, Higher Education Act, Crafts Act, Community Culture Centres Act and many bylaws. At the national level specific measures have been implemented to build system for education and training of adults, which to be adaptive to the needs of economy and society. It covers all degrees of general, vocational, higher education and adult learning in all its aspects - formal, informal and non-formal learning. There are changes in the forms of education to meet the different needs of prospective learners, especially those who haven't completed their secondary education at a normal age. The Pre-school and School Education Act provides the following forms: day, evening, correspondent, individual, self-study, distance, combined, training through work (dual system of training). Certain conditions and basic principles were regulated to provide a supportive environment for children and pupils of disadvantaged position (with high percentage of early leavers) which can allow their equal and full participation in the educational process. In Bulgaria the profession of an adult educator does not belong to the list of officially elaborated and recognized professions. This means that there is no specific difference between teachers and trainers for children, working in the formal system, and adult educators/trainers and facilitators. In most of the cases adult trainers come from the formal system: teachers and university lecturers. There are also cases when other specialist works in the field, especially in the non-formal system, because no official regulation has been established yet. In multi-national companies human resources managers are responsible for the in-service training. They work with teachers and trainers from the formal or non-formal sector and the quality of provision is tested "by doing" (Eurydice, 2022).

The topic of Second Chance education in Bulgaria has been embedded in the broader topic of reducing early school leaving. The Bulgarian Strategy for reducing the share of early school

leavers 2013-2020 recognized the need for comprehensive policies and measures to ensure the successful transition of students between different levels of education, provide flexible and effective opportunities for people who have left education to acquire key competences or participate in various forms of training, and enable the outcomes of formal education and informal learning to be recognized and validated (Ministry of Education and Science – Bulgaria, 2013). The strategy included targeted measures aimed at preventing the underlying causes of early school leaving; intervening when students experience difficulties; and providing compensation measures for people who have left school early to help them re-engage in education or acquire skills. The Strategy was oriented towards implementation of policies and measures aimed to meeting the target of a share of early school leavers less than 11%.

The Strategy expands and provides for more details in strategic and legislative context in 3 main courses of action: 1. Prevention of ESL; 2. Intervention of ESL; 3. Compensation of ESL. The Strategy required establishment of a national horizontal coordination mechanism for implementation, reporting, monitoring and control of implemented policies, with participation of all bodies in charge and all the stakeholders. The strategic objective is provision of equal access and support for development and inclusiveness within the pre-school and school education system of children and youth as a pre-requisite for equal social inclusion and complete personal realization, and participation in the development of the local community and the country.

France

Since 1971, adult training has been a right recognised by French law (Act n°71-575/16.07.1971). Its objective is to develop the professional integration or reintegration of adults, to maintain them in employment, to encourage the development of their skills, to enable workers to adapt to changing techniques and working conditions, to promote their social advancement through access to the various levels of culture and professional qualification and their contribution to cultural, economic and social development. Since 2002, a system has existed to accredit and validate non-formal and informal learning: the Validation of Acquired Experience. The specific Professional Titles exist, which aim at any individual that left the school system, already in its working life, whether or not in employment but wishing to acquire a qualification in a specific field. There is also a one year program IRILL - Integration, Reintegration and fight against illiteracy. Other possibilities for people with low education are the so called Vocational Contracts - a work-linked training contract that allows the student to acquire theoretical knowledge and a craftsmanship in a company, targeted to young people between 16 and 25 years old; Pre-recruitment Training Plan - a training that will fill the gap between individual skills and the ones that the job requires, etc. A lot of non-profit associations also exist to train populations that are distant from education, and especially adults. Aiming at prevention of early leaving from school, France has developed a unique policy since 1980 - The priority education policy targeted at students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, students recently arrived in France and children from non-sedentary families. There are schools under this policy, which benefit from an increased staffing (additional teachers and teaching assistants) offering greater flexibility in the organization of class hours and any kind of support (Eurydice, 2022).

France is the strongest and most consolidated system of second chance schools in Europe. It was in France that the 1998 EU pilot project, that followed the 1995 White Paper policy

measure proposal of the pilot scheme of second chance schools, had the most prominent impact. Today in France there are 135 second chance schools attended by 15.000 young people. The fact that the 1995 White Paper was an initiative of French EU Commissioner Edith Cresson, who continues to be a very active supporter to these schools in France, as President of the French Foundation for Second Chance Schools (Fondation Édith Cresson pour les Écoles de la 2e Chance), helps to understand this impact of this concept in the country.

The place of Second Chance Schools was recognised in 2007 in the French Education Code. According to this legislation act: "Second chance schools are training establishments or organizations managed by any natural or legal person to which, on request, the "second chance school" label has been awarded.

A training organisation can become a Second Chance School by acquiring a 4-years certification by the association "Réseau des E2C en France"³ complying with a set of criteria, developed by this association in alignment with instructions from ministers responsible for education and vocational training.

A personalised training course in the sense of the reviewed law presupposes that the duration of such course may not exceed forty-eight months and is defined on the basis of an individual assessment of the initial level of knowledge and skills of the learners and an interview carried out when they entered their training course, focusing on their professional and personal projects. Second Chance Schools issue training certificates specifying the level of knowledge and skills attained by the people who have followed the training, in particular with regard to the common base of knowledge and skills defined.

As a result of this legislation reform, E2C has been enabled to work actively towards developing a network of second chance schools in France.

³ E2C is one of the partners in S2CENE project

CHAPTER 2 - SECOND CHANCE EDUCATION THROUGH THE PERSPECTIVE OF PRACTITIONERS AND KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The current chapter presents a synthesis of findings from a two-level information collection exercise carried out by researchers from S2CENE partnership, which involved online survey and individual interviews with experts and special stakeholders in the field of second chance education and policy across Europe. Research questions we were looking answers for were:

- What are the concepts, structures and main goals of a SCE and its impact in adult education in different countries?
- How can a SCS be characterized?
- What type of practices, strategies and models of the SCE/SCS exist?
- What experiences, knowledge and expertise exist for the SCE/SCS approach?
- Which learning methods, techniques and activities are commonly used in SCE/SCS?
- What competencies and characteristics adult professionals need to have to be successful in a SCS?
- Which are the minimum requirements to establish and maintain a SCS?

The findings are consolidated under three main topics, which are key to recognising current state-of-the art in the field of second chance education.

2.1 Mission and Objectives

There is a general agreement across second chance education professionals that the mission of second chance education is *to address social problems and social needs with individualised support, professionalism and confidence*. In most countries reviewed (e.g., Austria, Greece, UK, Spain), the emphasis is on the need for a holistic approach to young adults in order to create new perspectives for them and achieve maximum social effect. The common characteristics of second chance education's mission are related to reconnection, engagement, professional development, and social integration of learners through a holistic approach. Within this shared definition, there are specific national highlights, which add further understanding of the richness of practice in Europe. For example, in **Greece**, the

mission definition for second chance education establishments includes elements such as: reconnecting adult students with educational and vocational training systems; nurturing positive attitudes toward learning; acquiring basic knowledge and skills; strengthening adult students' personality and providing access to or improvement of students' position in the labour market.

In **Austria**, the mission of second chance schools is oriented towards pragmatic goals such as job security, apprenticeships and educational opportunities. In the **UK**, the mission is linked to engaging adult learners.

The system of second chance education in **Portugal** is focussing on helping young people to have an autonomous life, developing professional skills that facilitate their professional integration.

In **Bulgaria**, second chance education providers can be grouped into two groups, depending on the age of the learners, each with a specific mission: 1. Schools for *pre-school and school-age children and students /in primary and lower secondary stage/* , who are from socially disadvantaged families and do not have support from their families for education. The mission of these schools is to offer an alternative education to compensate for early childhood deficits and the lack of a complete family. The aim is to compensate for these deficits as quickly as possible the earlier the children enter the educational institution. 2. Evening schools for *learners in the upper secondary stage /the age of learners is over 16, but older learners up to 50 years of age predominate/*. The mission of these schools is to increase the educational background of learners and acquire a secondary education diploma.

In **Poland**, the mission of second chance schools is to combine general education and vocational training with the development of social skills in students, who have dropped out of the education system with antisocial behaviour /drug addiction, alcoholism/.

In **Hungary**, the mission of second chance schools is to support the education of students who have dropped out of the education system due to mental, physical, social or learning difficulties and to provide vocational training.

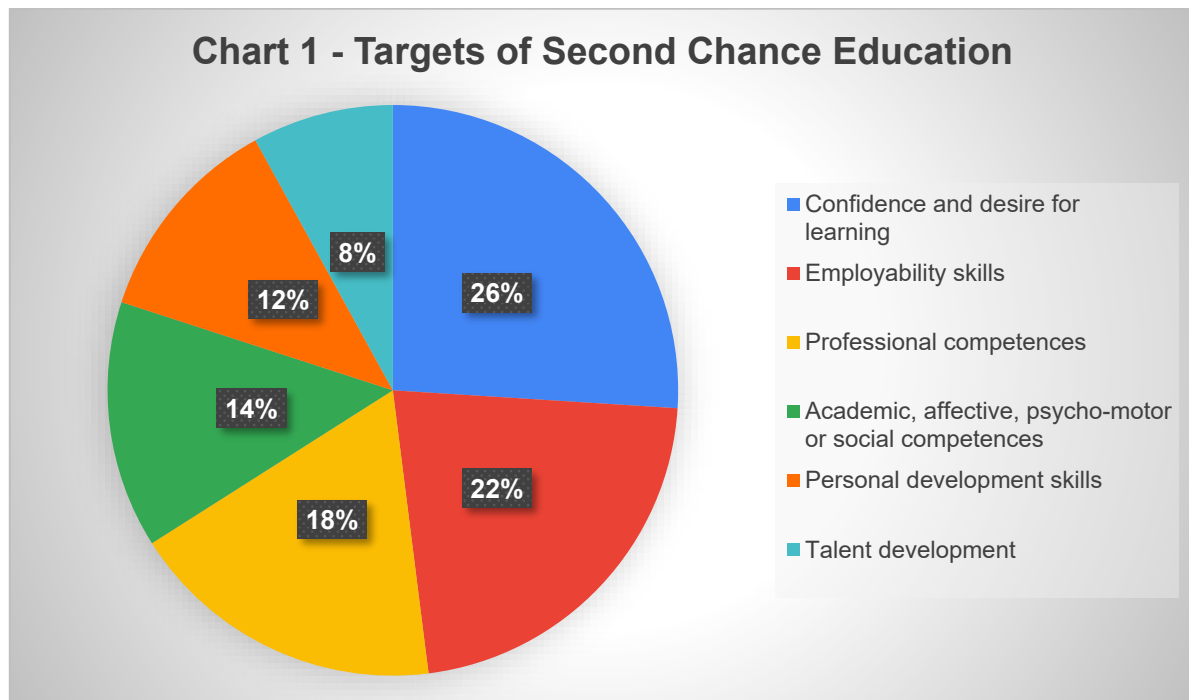
In **France**, the mission of second chance schools is vocational training and the integration of young people into the labour market.

The **major objectives** of second chance education are to facilitate young people's access to the labour market by developing their professional skills and social competences and connect people who dropped out from school with the educational system and process so that they can be successful in their personal and professional lives.

The selected objectives can be decomposed into micro targets (outcomes) of second chance education, which can be further specified according to the national contexts represented. In some countries, along with the direction of above objectives, second chance education is considered as a:

- Model for overcoming the stigmatization and underestimation of young people who have failed to get an education on time (Portugal, UK, Greece, Bulgaria).
- Opportunity to personalize the curriculum by developing individual programs according to the individual needs of the learners, coaching, inclusion in various classes, workshops, practical exercises, professional testing, sports and arts, etc. (Portugal, Spain, Greece, Austria, UK, Bulgaria, Poland and Hungary).
- Tool for professional and social integration of vulnerable young people. (Portugal, Spain, Greece, Austria, UK, Bulgaria, Poland and Hungary).

Second Chance Education leads to wide range of positive effects for engaged learners, which can be illustrated in the below chart.



In terms of learning outcomes pursued by second chance education schools across Europe, these reflect the richness of national contexts represented.

In **Spain** second chance schools try to link certification of learning outcomes to the requirements of the VET system and whenever possible provide equivalent certificates. Still, the focus is on skills and finding jobs, and not so much on diplomas. For those learners who want, the schools support them to prepare for diploma exams. In Spain there is a network of second chance schools working, E2O Espana, based on a skills reference framework.

In **Greece**, emphasis is placed on the attainment of educational results/advancement in the cognitive domain (knowledge), the psychomotor domain (skills), and the affective domain (attitudes). Successful completion of the compulsory 18-month curriculum (spread over 2 standard school years) leads to the acquisition of lower secondary education certificate (ISCED Level 2 educational certificate). Learners, who have dropped out of the nine-year general compulsory education system, receive a chance to continue their studies and attain

a certificate equivalent to the one provided by middle schools (Gymnasiums) of formal lower secondary education.

In **Portugal**, learners have access to the desired diplomas, but more importantly access to personal development as individuals, leading to untapping their full potential. They are supported to overcome trauma and become more conscious of the challenges they are facing in their lives. In Portugal there is a network of second chance schools. In Portugal there is a network of second chance schools working, E2O Portugal, recently established, working in similar basis as France and Spain networks.

In **Austria**, the focus is on learner's ideas of acquiring new skills, not so much knowledge in the traditional sense and academic idea. If learner want to continue their study at University, for example, they follow the national regulations for passing an exam to enrol at the desired institution. In **UK**, policy has focused on keeping disadvantaged young people in education, training or employment as a preventive approach.

In **France**, the result of second chance schools is integration. Priority is given to solving social problems (homelessness, ill health, justice problems) before educational integration begins. Furthermore, it is recognised that second-chance schools have an impact not only on the student's personality but also on the development of society as a whole. Students graduate from second chance schools with a certificate of competence in the following areas: Communication (written and oral); Mathematics; Techniques in digital information & communication; Teamwork; Career plan; Lifelong learning; Acting in their environment and at work; Opening to social, civic and cultural life; Communication (written & oral) in a foreign language. In France there is a network of second chance schools, E2C France.

In **Hungary**, learners gain confidence and desire for social integration, skills for further education, professional employment, entrepreneurship, dealing with various personal and social problems. Second chance schools take into account the differences between students

and their educational needs. By providing individual learning support and personalised mentoring, they enrich and improve traditional education process.

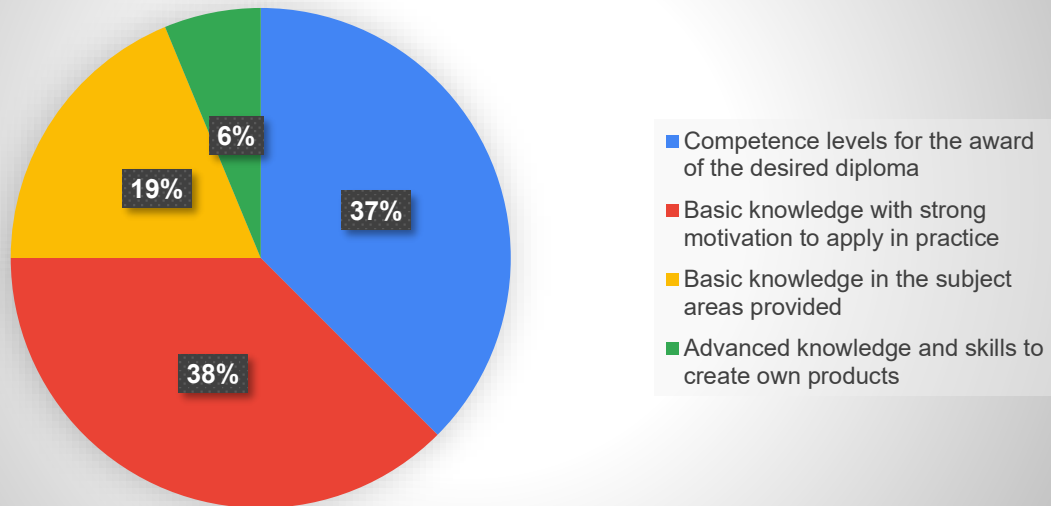
In **Poland**, second chance schools result in stimulating all areas of learners' development (e.g., professional, social, family, health). The results of second chance schools are associated with the acquisition of key competences, social and professional skills that ensure integration into society.

In **Bulgaria**, pre-school children who have been to second chance school receive a certificate of completion of pre-school education when they achieve the results specified in the state educational standard. Pupils in primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education receive the relevant diplomas of completion when the results of the relevant state education standard are met.

There are several other countries in Europe with second chance schools and systems. In the European network of second chance schools, E2C Europe, one of the partners of S2CENE project, besides the countries already mentioned, there are school members from Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Ireland, Czech Republic, Nederland, Romania and Italy.

The main dimensions of learning outcomes achieved can be synthesised in the following chart.

Chart 2 - Main Learning Outcomes Achieved by Students from a Second Chance School



2.2 Curriculum and Quality Assurance

Overall, the curriculum at second chance education schools is more open and flexible in comparison with traditional curriculum. For example, in **Portugal**, the second chance schools follow a holistic pedagogical approach through a “dynamic connection and combination between subjects”. The students develop their own Individual Training Plans, combining the development of vocational, artistic, personal and social skills and attending pathways of academic and vocational certification. The training is organized in flexible workshops, throughout the day, in a similar schedule as a working place. The intervention of the schools is developed in four core areas: vocational training, art training, personal and social development, and 6 and 9 grade school certification. The methodologies used support experiencing knowledge and, unlike mainstream schools where it has to be left outside the classroom, in the second chance schools, life is considered to be the main material of the training.

The curriculum at second chance school in **Greece** can be adjusted to accommodate the needs and interests of learners. Educators are expected to create and continuously update and

adjust the content of courses, according to adult learners' characteristics. Applied group collaborative teaching methods and practices are premised on the students' individual characteristics and adults' differentiated learning styles, allowing an experiential and interdisciplinary approach to learning. Teaching principles include self-activity, student participation in the formation of learning objectives, individualized learning, and critical reflection. Emphasis is placed on the application of project-based learning whereby students explore real-world problems and acquire knowledge and understanding through interdisciplinary inquiry and study, and social interaction. Student assessment is descriptive. Student's educational progress is being judged against the student's own starting point. The student's progress is analyzed on two dimensions: 1) educational achievement (degree of improvement), and 2) engagement (level of active participation).

In terms of quality assurance there are diverse approaches across Europe, which can be reviewed through the level of quality assurance externalisation. For example, in **Spain** second chance schools undergo an accreditation process, which includes external audit and one year period for implementing improvements. In addition, many school follow ISO quality standard in their activities. In **Portugal**, the first step in quality assurance starts with self-assessment, followed by teacher training, external feedback, interprofessional exchange and peer review. The focus in **Austria** for ensuring quality service is on teachers/mentors recruitment. Along with professional education in the relevant field, applicants for work positions at second chance schools are assessed also for their high motivation for further qualification (e.g., further training in first aid courses and safe working and hygiene conditions, innovative methods of work, upgrading training, pedagogical qualifications, etc.).

In **Poland**, second chance schools receive assistance in quality assurance from members of the board of the association (NGO) that runs the school. These association members are well educated in the fields of educational and psychological sciences, re-socialisation and therapy.

In **Bulgaria**, the quality of educational services in municipal second chance schools are monitored and methodically assisted by the District Education Department through subject

experts. The school's pedagogical professionals are constantly participating in various qualification programmes to methodologically support and update their professional competences. In private schools, second-chance methodological support is obtained in teamwork of the principal and the pedagogical specialists.

In **Hungary**, quality assurance has been and is carried out by all schools according to their internal needs and high-quality aspirations.

2.3 Teaching Qualities and Competences

The teaching staff engaged in the work of second chance schools needs to possess wide range of key competences and characteristics to be able to provide quality service to learners. These teachers face specific challenges. On the one hand, these are challenges related to the insufficient public recognition of the role of these schools. On the other hand, there are the challenges related to the specifics of their learners – age, social and cultural differences. These challenges require a high level of teacher *confidence and belief* in the opportunity to overcome anti-learning stereotypes of learners. Another important characteristic of good teachers in second chance education is the related to *high professional expertise and experience, combined with open mind mentality and motivation for continuous renewal and upgrading of professional competencies*.

In **Greece**, the schools' educational staff includes civil service educators on secondment from primary or secondary schools and contract educators. All educators and counsellors employed by the school are highly competent professionals who possess (at a minimum) a university degree in a scientific field relevant to the curriculum courses. In addition, most educational personnel possess second degrees in separate science fields, postgraduate degrees, doctorate degrees, or postgraduate training certificates on extended fields of study.

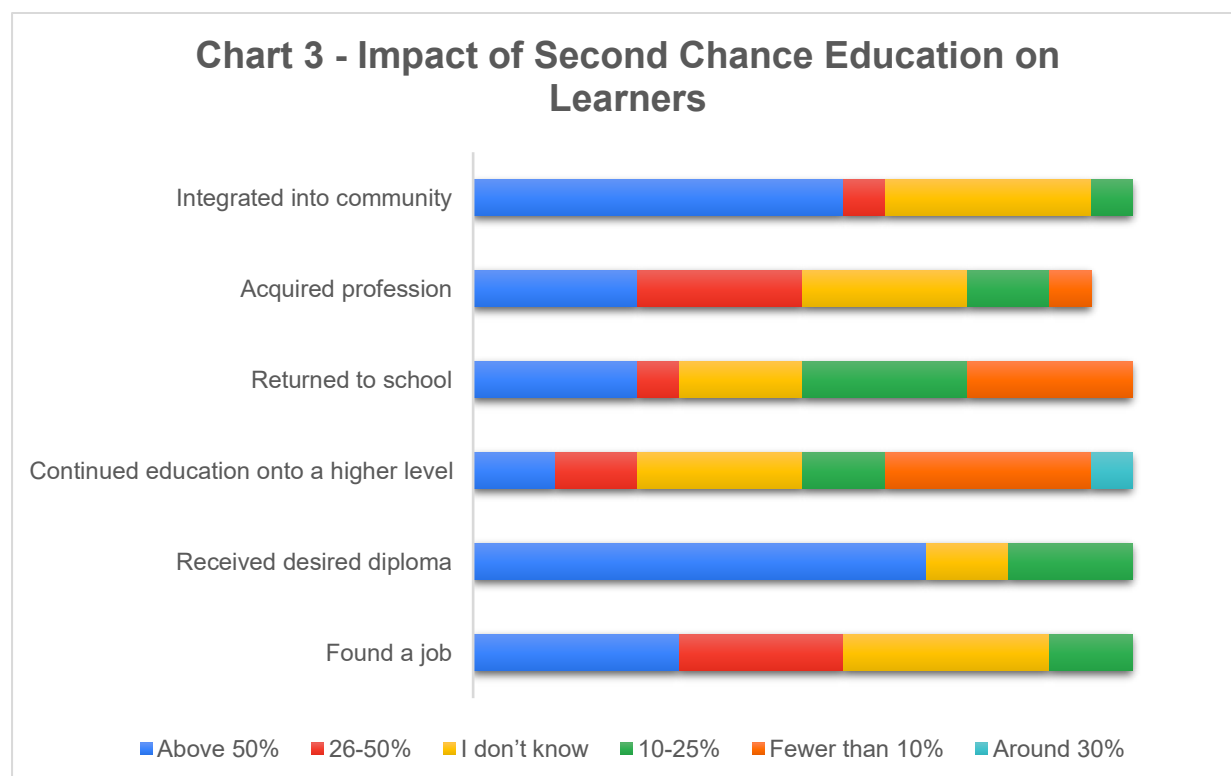
In the **UK**, there is a discussion about the qualification of teachers in the second chance education, linked to the mixed scope of their work ranging from general education to vocational training.

In **France** is expected from teachers to be able to deliver quality soft skills training and psychological support, contribute to basic skills training, career orientation, job experience, job tasting.

Teaching staff in **Austria** are often subject experts from a specific branch who, as a rule, receive basic pedagogical/didactic training from the second chance institutions themselves or can be certified by the Austrian Academy of Continuing Education.

2.4 Impact

The impact of second chance education on learners can be illustrated with the following chart.



As visualised above, second chance education has very strong effect for the interaction of learners into their communities and society in general. It provides feasible opportunity to graduate with the desired education diploma. It is also beneficial for acquiring competences for practicing a profession and finding a job.

The positive impact of the second chance schools can be further identified in different national contexts at three levels – academic, social and universal. In **Portugal** the academic contribution is that learning takes place in a two-way process - from practice to theory. The social contribution is that the learners receive feedback and an assessment of their efforts. The universal dimension is in the recognition of different cultures. Through them, young people get the opportunity and space to express their opinions and understandings.

Similar impact is observed in **Austria**. The second chance school aim to show adult learners that they have their place in society and can work and study. Efforts are being made to show adult learners that through training they can find a suitable job and earn their own income.

The social and cultural contributions of the second chance schools in **Greece** are embedded in the definitions of their mission and vision, focused on reconnecting adult students with educational and vocational training systems; formation of a positive attitude toward learning; acquisition of basic knowledge and skills; strengthening adult students' personality and access to / or improvement of their position in the labour market.

The Ministry of Education in **Spain** regularly addresses the network of second chance schools on various academic, statistical and educational studies and surveys. The Ministry is also seeking the expert opinion of second chance teachers and networks to achieve better results in the field of education. A bottom-up approach has been established because there is trust in the community of second chance education and in the results it achieves.

Second chance schools can contribute with their unique approaches to general education. They are a source of many successful educational innovations that can be transferred to mainstream education. For example, the second chance institutions in **France** have a very good follow-up system. They follow what is happening with their learners. Second chance gives confidence, labour market orientation. It also allows having different job experiences from an early age.

Many other methods and approaches used in second chance schools could be useful in mainstream education, including alternative forms of student assessment, alternative forms of school organisation or timetabling, social pedagogical teams, tutoring and key worker models and new models of social and emotional support (European Commission, 2014).

Second chance education contributes to development of policy measures targeting young people dropping out of school in the **UK**. For example, establishment of a system that has the capacity/capability to identify young people who become NEETs and support them to achieve positive outcomes in terms of re-engagement; establishment of active labour market policies (job-search assistance; training programmes; subsidised employment; direct job creation, public employment programmes); establishment of transition systems that reflect regional, cultural disparities (nation-states are not homogeneous); support for youth transitions.

2.5 Public Recognition and Standards

Despite outlined positive role of second chance education, it does not receive the necessary degree of public and institutional recognition. This applies both to the recognition of the challenges and difficulties of the teachers, working in these schools, and to the limited financial resources and working conditions.

For example, in **Spain** the system is lacking regular funding, in comparison to **France**, where when the second chance school is accredited, the state provides funding. More funding is needed to raise the status and conditions of work for teachers in this sector in **Portugal**. Following Brexit and the loss of European funds in the **UK**, there is a need to introduce a national funding system for young people in the NEETs group.

In **Bulgaria**, while the efforts of the founders of the first second chance school are recognised through different awards and media attention, the school depends mainly on private donors to sustain its activities.

In **Hungary** official recognition is given primarily to teachers whose students achieve outstanding results in academic competitions. Work with disadvantaged young people is not

valued at the same level. In **Poland**, teachers in second chance schools received awards for innovators, but this is a fragmented type of support, which cannot ensure long-term existence of quality service.

There are various practices regarding the standards for establishment and functioning of SCS in different countries.

In **France** there is an officially approved standard by which the network of second chance schools operates.

In **Greece** the establishment of second chance schools is regulated through several national laws and regulations. In **Spain**, the standard takes the form of an accreditation model. It is done by an external audit but is not yet recognized by the State. **Portugal** is in the process of building a new policy. A legal framework for second chance schools was published in 2019.

In **UK** there is no nation-wide, government-led programme or standard to address this policy area. Although there is a raft of interventions across the UK, it has never constituted a stand-alone strategy.

There is no officially approved standard in **Austria**. The same is observed in **Bulgaria**. Some of the schools function as private and others as municipal. There is no standard for the establishment and functioning of an educational institution for children from socially disadvantaged families offering boarding. In **Hungary** there are also no explicit standards. Several schools under the auspices of a foundation have been gradually established since 1990 to provide education for school drop-outs. These schools have set themselves different objectives and continue to operate according to their own standards. The aim is either to obtain a secondary school leaving certificate or a vocational qualification at different levels. In **Poland** there is no standard for the establishment and functioning of second chance schools. There are only standards for vocational schools, and they apply established curricula. Second chance schools differ from the traditional education system by applying appropriate

psychological and pedagogical approaches tailored to the specific educational needs of learners.

CHAPTER 3 - GOOD PRACTICES AND METHODS IN SECOND CHANCE EDUCATION

3.1 Introduction

For the purpose of the present study, the terms "good practice" and "good method" were defined as follows:

- By "practice" here is meant some elaborated structure/form (institution) that works for a certain purpose, achieves certain results, using different methods in different activities.
- The "method" in this case means the use of 1 specific technique in teaching/school activity, etc. Each institution uses different methods in its activities, according to its specifics - art therapy, focus group, Forum Theatre, content analysis, different interactive methods, etc.

Many practices and methods applied in European countries were considered. To be analyzed in depth 9 practices and 9 methods were derived from all, which were characterized by the highest degree of creativity and innovation. These are presented in the current study as good examples⁴.

The research on good practices and methods reveals that definitely, the experiences are very different from one country to another. The models are also different. But even if different, they feel connected as their goals are similar if not exactly the same. The diversity is positive as it shows that there are many ways to work on second chance education, to learn from other practices and upgrade the existing ones.

⁴ More details about the selected good practices and methods could be found in the "Toolkit of Good Practices", available at <https://s2cene.eu/toolkit/>

3.2 Good practices

Good Practice N. 1

Country	PORTUGAL
Name of the institution and contact	AE2O - Association for 2nd Chance Education - Second Chance School Matosinhos (E2OM) Contact: Luis Mesquita, Phone: +351 22 906 45 38 Email: geral@segundaoportunidade.com
Type of institution	Second Chance School
Place (town, village, region)	Matosinhos, North Portugal
ISCED Level of education (if applicable)	ISCED 1 and 2
Target groups	Young early leavers from education and training, with low qualifications, unemployed and at risk of social exclusion, from 15 to 25 years old

Good practice description

AE2O (Association for Second Chance Education) is a non-profit, non-governmental organization, whose aim is to promote second chance education, working especially with vulnerable young people. It runs Escola de Segunda Oportunidade de Matosinhos, a pilot project that started in 2008, a partnership with the Municipality of Matosinhos and the Ministry of Education, for many years the only second chance school in the country, member of the European network of second chance schools (E2C-Europe).

Second Chance School Matosinhos (E2OM) is a socio–educational provision, addressing full-time, young early leavers, with low qualifications, low-skilled, unemployed and at risk of social exclusion, creating conditions for the development of their processes of individual

structuring, intervening in several relevant areas of the life of these young people - family integration, health, economic support, housing, drug abuse, justice, employment. The training is organized in flexible workshops, throughout the day, in a similar schedule as a working place. All young people attending the school are integrated in pathways of academic and vocational certification. The intervention of E2OM is developed in four core areas: vocational training, art training, personal and social development, and 6 and 9 grade school certification.

The informal and non-formal education delivered by the school meet the abilities and interests of young people and allows them to carry out rewarding and successful experiences. Especially for the socially disadvantaged, these meaningful life experiences transform into impulses for new learning processes and the realization of dreams and expectations.

They develop basic life skills: the ability to listen, express, communicate, and work cooperatively, self-knowledge, relationship with others and with the world. They find in the school opportunities to share life, dreams and difficulties, in a welcoming relational climate of closeness that accepts them unconditionally, allowing them to reconcile with themselves, others and the world.

Negotiation with the Government on June 27, 2017, the Portuguese government announces the intention to integrate the Second Chance Schools into the public education system, recognizing the success and validity of the experience of the Second Chance School in Matosinhos.

Factors and conditions for the successful implementation of the good practice

1. The school is a friendly, open-door organisation, characterised by weak hierarchy and unconditional acceptance. The schools welcome the young people as they are and help them to move towards their interests and motivations. Each learner agrees on his/her learning programme and the objectives to be attained. Second chance school is inclusive in particular with young people that would be isolated or excluded in mainstream schools.

2. The school is a secure place and a communication space: contrary to mainstream schools, second chance school aims at developing a trusty relationship with the students, which also implies treating with discretion information shared by learners (e.g. not reporting everything to families).
3. Practical, flexible and holistic pedagogical approach, through a dynamic combination between subjects organized by Individual Training Plans and integrative activities. Teaching methods are different to traditional classroom-based methods. The methodologies used support experienced knowledge instead of more 'classroom knowledge'. The school aims at delivering a motivational response that meets the interests of learners, and is based on their lives, lives that are In fact the material for the training (e.g., the curricula is art based and the artistic activities are used for re-socialising youth and re-establishing human relationships).
4. Intercultural and international dimension: International exchanges are very motivating for the learners and they often keep in contact with participants from other countries.
5. Motivated team of professionals, with understanding and empathy for the learners in the school: Teachers and trainers receive support and training to manage their expectations about the outcomes of the educational intervention, and to work with at-risk youth.
6. Vocational training and internships for work-based learning: vocational training has an immediate practical application in learner's lives and internships often open the possibility of getting employed, at least for a certain period of time.
7. The school is allied to regular education and training systems, not an alternative, in dialogue and mutual learning.
8. Advocacy - Campaign in favour of a Public Policy RAP (reducing early leaving) - The "RAP Strategy", a public policy proposal for the reduction of early leaving, proposed an articulated and consistent set of prevention, intervention and compensation measures, valuing what already exists and adding other measures demanded by the local actors, namely Second Chance Schools.

Good Practice N. 2

Country	Croatia
Name of the institution and contact	Ustanova za Obrazovanje Odraslih – DANTE - Educational Program in the frame of the Project - BOOKIRAJ (SE)! Contact: http://bookirajse.dante-ri.hr/
Type of institution	Adult education provider
Place (town, village, region)	Rijeka, Croatia
ISCED Level of education (if appl.)	ISCED 1 and 2
Target groups	Vulnerable groups from the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County who have difficult access to the labour market

Good practice description

The overall goal of the Educational Program in the frame of the Project - BOOKIRAJ (SE)! is to increase the employability of vulnerable groups and focus their activities on improving the skills and knowledge of unemployed people and ones with disabilities in order to integrate more easily in the tourism sector labour market.

The specific aim is to increase the employability of vulnerable groups from the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County who have difficult access to the labour market in the tourism and hospitality sector through training for e-booking managers and sales managers, establishing permanent cooperation with the employers/labour market. At the same time, teachers and mentors are strengthening their andragogic and didactic abilities.

The provided services including activities, approaches to achieve anticipated results are

- Preliminary market research, assessment of the needs and problems of the vulnerable group
- Motivation workshops for 500 people
- Development of training programs and manuals for the E-booking and sales manager according to guidelines established by market research and assessment of needs and problems of the target group, which in addition to the expert part in the field of: Foreign languages (Italian, German, English), ICT, Sales and marketing, Tourist geography, History, Soft skills
- Study visits are designed in a way that the program participants are directly involved in communication in the learned language and skills acquired
- Creation and programming of virtual e-booking reception - The necessary didactic material for the Training Program for the e-booking and sales manager (it has the function of virtual reception and sales of tourist arrangements so that the program participants can perform the e-booking program on the web platform)
- Practical part in the travel agency (cooperation with the local agency)

The success of the initiative was twofold. Participants acquire better language and digital skills, their communication marketing and sales skills were gained or improved, their self-confidence increased together with an Interest in further education. Mentors and Educators gained professional knowledge and skills in the field of methodical-didactic approach necessary for adult education, especially in work with vulnerable groups. Practical section together with the e-studying materials guarantee better results in the learning process.

Factors and conditions for the successful implementation of the good practice

This practice can be multiplied by other regions and institutions, having in mind that its advantages are not only the innovative and relevant approach to learning for the target group, but it also develops continuous cooperation with authorities, different education institution in Croatia and beyond and the labour market. It helps for the recognition on the

local level, especially in countries where the task to overcome the gap between the existing educational structure and the requirements on the labour market is not effectively address and the problem persists.

Good Practice N. 3

Country	Bulgaria
Name of the institution and contact	Private primary school "Dimitar Ekimov", Contact: Janeta Ivanova-Atanasova, +359 889295030, art_rusalya@abv.bg
Type of institution	Second Chance School
Place (town, village, region)	Village of Rusalya, Veliko Tarnovo District
ISCED Level of education (if applicable)	ISCED 0, 1, 2
Target groups	Children from preschool age (4-5 years old) until the completion of primary and low secondary education (that never have been at school).

Good practice description

It is a school with innovative approach for providing literacy and primary education to children from risk groups (socially disadvantaged families who have difficulty raising their children for various reasons: low parental capacity, illness, lack of support, poverty) and application of art methods - Live and Learn Together.

The school has a boarding house/dormitory. This includes education, home, food, clothing, medical care, textbooks and supplies, toys, where the children live during the school year. The maintenance of the school and the boarding house are completely free for the children and their families. The maintenance is provided by the school. Since 2014, the school has been

entered in the Register of Institutions in the system of preschool and school education and ensures the completion of primary education including a legal Diploma.

The overall idea envisages the training to be carried out until the completion of secondary education, ie. to have training in the high school stage. This idea has not been realized so far due to lack of funding and support from the state.

For the moment pupils after 7th grade study in other schools but continue to be supported by the school and live in the dormitory.

The methods and technologies are diverse, but are aimed at the formation of competencies, i.e. experience, formation of soft (behavioural) skills, emotional intelligence. Priority is given to arts and crafts as a form of learning and doing, expression, as proactive methods, as a means of developing fine motor skills and talents of children and last but not least to form a self-esteem adequate to the achievements.

Factors and conditions for the successful implementation of the good practice

The understanding of the team of Rusalya is that students should be treated preventively to avoid dropping out. The early periods of human development (preschool and primary school age) should be used, when children are susceptible to the formation of curiosity, volitional qualities, motivation, value-moral motivation. Therefore, the team is adamant that working with children at risk of dropping out should comprise specific methods, new forms, approaches and pedagogical techniques. Each case here is unique in terms of the child's personal history and emotional experiences. Most of these children should return/enroll in Second Chance Schools, because here the team will be prepared to work differently. In addition, the age period will be used, in which learning is the dominant activity and the chances of success are many times higher than in adulthood.

Good Practice N. 4

Country	Hungary
Name of the institution and contacts	Gyulai Szakképzési Centrum – Vocational Training Centre, Gyula; contact: editlabos@gmail.com
Type of institution	Second chance school
Place (town, village, region)	Town of Gyula
ISCED Level of education (if applicable)	ISCED 3
Target groups	Young people aged 16 and over who have left the education and training system without a basic education or vocational qualification.

Good practice description

The school has been a second chance school since 2008. In 2017-2020, **Flexible Learning Pathways** (as a regular practice) have been developed to better cope with the life situation of each student.

It is a specific training regime for each individual, which was partly attendance-based and partly distance learning; each pupil was able to take part in the in-service training, considering his/her other commitments. Thus, students could progress at their own pace towards the vocational examination. The practice includes:

a) Mentoring system: each student has a permanent adult mentor who provides complex support (social, mental, cognitive) to his/her mentored student. The mentor may be a teacher of academic or vocational subjects or a trainer. The mentor helps to solve possible life problems, to set up a study plan and to successfully implement an individual development plan. The mentor and the mentee talk at least once a week. This can also take place in an informal setting.

b) Individual development plan: each student, with the help of his/her mentor, sets aims that he/she wants to achieve in the school year. The development aims include both academic and personal development goals. The path to achieving the aim is broken down into shorter stages of 1-2 months with achievable goals. For each of these stages, specific activities are planned to bring the student closer and closer to achieving the aims. At the end of each stage, the mentor and the mentee jointly assess the successes also discuss the reasons for failure and use these as a basis for defining the tasks for the next period.

c) Team work: the people working with the students (teachers, mentors) hold team meetings on a weekly basis. In team meetings, they share their experiences with the students and help each other to deal with and solve any problematic situations. In each team meeting they talk about each student.

The practical training was the one that is done in the form of face-to-face teaching, all other areas were done in a combination of face-to-face and distance learning. The development of transversal competences was achieved through a complex programme - Reaching the Lost Generation. It was developed in the framework of an international project and could be considered also as a good practice in its own right. See: <https://rlg.edunet.hu/project/summary> and <https://rlg.edunet.hu/project/results>

Factors and conditions for the successful implementation of the good practice

- Dedicated, flexible leadership, prioritise compensation for disadvantage for this section of society
- Flexibility on the part of management and teachers
- Teachers' attitude + pedagogical, psychological knowledge and a rich pedagogical methodological toolkit
- Autonomy - dare and want to act as an autonomous person, but also have the opportunity to do so!
- Teamwork

Good Practice N. 5

Country	Bulgaria
Name of the institution and contacts	Fifth Evening Secondary School "Penyo Penev" Contacts: Phone: +359 2 983 50 69 Email: peta_vg@abv.bg
Type of institution	Evening School
Place (town, village, region)	Sofia
ISCED Level of education (if applicable)	ISCED – 2, 3
Target groups	Individuals above 16 years, and in some cases - for persons over 14 years of age.

Good practice description

The regulations for the evening form of SCE in Bulgaria is provided by the Preschool and School Education Act (PSE Act is in force since 2016).

Evening schools organize education in evening form for acquisition of primary and secondary education and/or professional qualification of individuals that have not completed their education in the mainstream system. The forms of learning could be independent, individual or combined. Evening schools in Bulgaria generally have social functions as their target groups are people over 16 years, who have not completed their primary and/or secondary education; people with various disabilities or problems with social inclusion, and foreigners/refugees residing in the Republic of Bulgaria

The name of the good practice of the 5th Evening School is **Project-Based Learning Process in STEM Environment** - "Being educated is modern."

The main idea of the practice is achieving the school objectives in terms of subject education through collaboration between students and teachers, using the potential of information and communication technologies. The specific objectives are:

- Establishing a Model of Project-based learning (PBL) on STEM through pre-planned interdisciplinary links;
- Partnerships in the learning process ;
- Improving the educational technologies applied, emphasis on the practical applicability of knowledge, building skills and competencies;
- Development of various skills in teachers to work on PBL on STEM ;
- Acquisition and improvement of students' skills to work on PBL on STEM
- Building a STEM laboratory.

Factors and conditions for the successful implementation of the good practice

The 5th Evening school uses this model for the education of students from the junior high school and high school stage of education. As the learning process combines work with play - learning becomes interesting and enjoyable. Students develop self-confidence and a sense of success. Since the practice becomes regular at the school, it increases the achievement of students and their motivation to be more active during the learning process. They acquire competencies in all major areas recommended in the competency-based educational approach. It is useful for teachers as well as they work in different teams and enrich their pedagogical competences.

Good Practice N. 6

Country	France
Name of the institution and contacts	E2C Marseille, General Headmaster - Sonia Ciccione
Type of institution	Second Chance School
Place (town, village, region)	Marseille

ISCED Level of education (if applicable)	n/a
Target groups	NEETs

Good practice description

To support young people in defining their professional project, E2C Marseille offers several work-placements in different companies. 35% of a learner's path takes place in companies. The school works in the "hotel-catering" sector, and have developed several courses in the construction trades, fiberoptic installation, hygiene and cleanliness, transport & logistics. **“Skills Framework - Specific Work-study programs”** are specific work-study programs, which goal is to help trainees to develop their employability and to promote their professional integration. The courses can last from a few weeks to several months. They are built with the partner-company: the E2C provides refresher training on fundamental knowledge and interpersonal skills and provides training in the prerequisites requested by the partner. Usually, the partner intervenes from the sourcing and recruitment phase, then throughout the course (interventions, immersions, etc.). Immersion in a company allows to work with the trainees on professional codes, interpersonal skills, "soft skills". They are part of the Competence-Based Approach logic developed by the E2Cs. These work-placements are one of the main tools for building a professional project: they allow trainees to discover a profession, then to confirm a professional project. They give an opportunity to work on the acquisition of the first technical skills as well as to get known by the companies, thus to achieve apprenticeship contract or a job.

This skills framework is a descriptive and normative document that defines the expected skills of an individual in a given environment. It sets the conditions and the criteria of the assessments. In the E2Cs, this document is called the “Competency framework of E2C”. It constitutes the common reference for E2Cs and shared to recognize and promote recognition of the skills acquired by the trainees.

In the context of E2Cs, it should be noted that the reference framework, developed within the framework of action research, is a benchmark of skills aimed at being mobilized by all the E2Cs in order to reflect the specificity of the E2C routes which take into account both the professional and social skills of the trainee.

Factors and conditions for the successful implementation of the good practice

To be successful, this good practice requires several conditions:

- 1- A good analysis of the professional sectors that are recruiting
- 2- A strong relationship with training centers (co-working on pedagogical sequences)
- 3- A large portfolio of partner companies
- 4- A relevant sourcing of young people

Good Practice N.7

Country	Training for Success (TfS)
Name of the institution and contacts	Economy Department Contact: https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/training-success
Type of institution	Government Body
Place (town, village, region)	North Ireland
ISCED Level of education (if applicable)	1-3
Target groups	Unemployed young people (16-17 years old) who have left compulsory education and do not wish to attend full time education; post-16, either at school or in further education (with extended eligibility for persons under 22

	years with a disability, and under 24 years for persons from an in care background).
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Good practice description

The practice “Measure to Success” aims at enrolling students in further training, to gain qualifications and employability skills required to progress into employment, apprenticeship training, or further learning. The current target set by the Department for the Economy from the country is that 65% of all TfS students will, by the end of the program, achieve a nationally recognized qualification at level 1 (basic skills), level 2 (lower secondary education) or, in some cases level 3 (upper secondary education).

The programme requires 104 weeks (156 weeks for disabled students) and it is delivered across 4 strands:

- Skills for your life – addressing personal and development needs of young people who have disengaged from learning and/or have significant gaps, including essential skills.
- Skills for work- level 1 - helping young people gain skills and a vocational related professional and technical qualification at level 1 from the Register the Regulated Qualifications (RRQ).
- Skills for work - level 2 - ensuring that participants who have been assessed as capable of achieving at level 2 from the RRQ, are prepared for future progression to an apprenticeship.
- Skills for work - level 3 - ensuring that participants who have successfully completed the ‘Skills for work’ level 2 strand and still retain training entitlement but have not yet progressed to paid employment, can develop level 3 knowledge and skills, again drawn from the level 3 ApprenticeshipsNI framework.

Training contractors are selected through a public procurement exercise. Training is delivered by both contracted training contractors and the Department’s six Further Education Colleges.

The funding is performance related, based on targets related to the number of students entering and staying on programme and their success rates and progression rates. The Department also provides an allowance of £40 per week to TfS participants. This allowance is non-means-tested and does not affect other income support/social benefits that the students or their parents may be receiving. In addition, students can receive additional 'participant bonuses' of £40 at various stages of the training, paid by the Department through the training supplier, to motivate their retention and completion of the programme. Students may also receive travel, lodging and childcare financial assistance if required.

Factors and conditions for the successful implementation of the good practice

The diversity of strands makes it possible to reach potential learners with different preferences and opportunities. The students with special educational needs should have a yearly plan prepared for them in school and additional funding support is needed to training contractors to help deliver the support needed. Mentoring is key to get students to develop behavioural skills as well as self-confidence.

Good Practice N. 8

Country	Sweden
Name of the institution and contacts	Second Chance School, Norrköping Contact: Ann-Sofie/ Fia Björde - Headmaster + 46 72 517 45 05 Phone + 46 705 72 41 41 annsofie.bjorde@norrkoping.se
Type of institution	Public local school
Place (town, village, region)	Norrköping
ISCED Level of education (if applicable)	1-3
Target groups	Long-term unemployed young people, 20 to 24 years old, who have not completed

	secondary education and have difficulty entering the labor market on their own.
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Good practice description

In Sweden, Norrköping, the second chance school delivers a curriculum for Life Skills, aiming to strengthen the students self-confidence, self-understanding, awareness about their health and to develop their social competences so that they get well prepared for working and for the demands of adult life.

Aims and activities

Students strengthen their self-confidence and self-understanding by being aware of their abilities, formulating both short- and long-term dreams and plans for their lives, developing skills in building personal networks and being aware that they are always making choices and that no one else is responsible for their lives.

They also understand better about the importance of health by knowing about the importance of regular daily rhythm, regular meals and exercise, in what way alcohol and drugs affect health and social life, different ways to handle stress, ergonomics and how to prevent occupational injuries.

The development of their social competences is achieved by taking part in exercises to train the ability of cooperation and flexibility, being aware about what kind of signals you send out to others through your clothing, behavior and linguistic style, discussing written and unwritten rules in different situations and reflecting on the reasons for racism and xenophobia.

Young people prepare for the demands and expectations of adult life by discussing questions concerning relationship, conflicts and gender issues, acquiring knowledge about sexual

minorities, venereal diseases, contraceptives, pregnancy and abortion and reflecting about equality.

Preparing for working life, they learn the rights and obligations for employers and employees, rehearse for an employment interview, write their CV, and also about the taxation system, banks and insurances, the system of democracy, welfare state and the European Union.

Factors and conditions for the successful implementation of the good practice

The educational program is tailored to the needs of the individual. During the introductory period, youth are prepared to perform adequately in the workplace through mentoring, team building and the development of social competences. Each student receives individually reinforced support, based on their needs and desires, as well as vocational training in order to achieve the established goals.

The training takes place two days/week at the school premises and three days/week at the workplace. Based on the student's own professional choice, an internship is offered in a company, where a supervisor is appointed and a training plan is drawn up. Continuous monitoring of young people's progress in the workplace ensures the quality of education. The duration of the training is not the same for everyone, depending on the young person's career choice, the own contribution and the availability of vacancies in the industry.

Good Practice N. 9

Country	Norway
Name of the institution and contacts	Hyssingen Produksjonsskole (Hyssingen Production School) Contact: Rudi Bakken - rudi.bakken@vlfk.no Baste Bruarøy - baste.bruaroy@vlfk.no

Type of institution	Public local school, owned and 100% funded by Vestland County Council,
Place (town, village, region)	Bergen
ISCED Level of education (if applicable)	1-3
Target groups	Young early leavers from education and training, with low qualifications, unemployed and at risk of social exclusion, from 16 to 21 years old

Good practice description

Hyssingen Production School opened in January 2015, and is the first production school in Norway, accommodating students between the ages of 16 to 21 who have drop out of their education for whatever reason. Some find it difficult to cope within the regular schooling system due to the focus on theory and need a more practical approach. Some do not know yet what direction to pursue within their education, others may not fit in at a larger school due to social issues, psychological challenges or drug related problems.

The production school is based on labor market-oriented work-based learning, development of social and basic skills, self-directed learning approaches and guidance and counselling measures. Work based training while producing real products for the local and regional market is a powerful means of engaging and motivating young people.

Students are learning through practical work and production and individually tailored training courses. The students may stay in the school for one year, aiming to motivate and qualify them to continue their education in a regular high school or to find a job.

The school promotes young people's self-confidence and self-esteem, through active listening of the voice of students, allowing their voices to guide their learning processes.

Factors and conditions for the successful implementation of the good practice

When a student drops out of school in County Vestland, a county counsellor contacts him and arranges a meeting to introduce him to the programs available for his re-entry into education or to find an alternative path.

Among the tools and programs presented to the student is Hyssingen Production School.

If the student wishes so, the county counsellor will schedule a visit to the school, followed by an enrolment in one of the workshops.

Hyssingen accepts students throughout the year, who can stay for a maximum of 12 months.

The city counsellor will continue to accompany the student throughout the school year as part of the follow-up service and, more importantly, to make plans for what comes after Hyssingen.

In Hyssingen, teachers share their creativity, professionalism and personal stories, acting as role models and partners in the educational and production processes.

The school gives students possibilities for a variety of participatory practices, where the degree of responsibility for the learning process itself is balanced with skills and maturity.

Hyssingen is a student democracy. Each workshop has two representatives on the student council which has regular meetings. The student council submits proposals to the school board on matters of importance to them. The students are invited to take responsibility for their own learning, and they are encouraged to motivate other students in their learning. In collaboration, they set plans for learning, and this gives an important input in making the learning goals achievable, motivating, and rewarding.

More information: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwZI8j0SLx5F0OJ0TpT3gQA>

3.3 Good methods

Good Method N. 1

Name of the method/technique	Performing Arts for Inclusive Learning
Applicability (form of training and target group)	Young dropouts
Delivering institution and country	Second Chance School Matosinhos – Portugal
Contact	Contact: Poliksensa Hardalova, Phone: +351 22 906 45 38 Email: geral@segundaoportunidade.com

Aims, objectives, outcomes

Performing Arts are used in Second Chance School Matosinhos as a tool to motivate young dropouts, to facilitate their way back to education, to develop many personal and social competences and also as a way to integrate different kind of learnings in an interdisciplinary approach. It is used in all kinds of situations, with small and big groups, always challenging young people to show the results of their work in public, many times in theatre halls in the community. Could be short activities or longer processes. In general, young people start with small productions and involvement and then everything is put together in bigger performances mixing different contributes and different arts. Arts and artistic presentations play an important role in:

- organizing and integrating different kinds of learnings by promoting interdisciplinary dialogue.
- transform into impulses for new learning processes;
- motivating young dropouts to go back and reengaging in education;

- develop basic personal and social life skills;
- promote self-confidence and raise self-esteem;
- promote the inclusion of young people in the community.

The environment is connected with the different activities that are developed, music, dance, theatre, painting, recording, reading, singing. So, it is necessary to provide the adequate technical conditions and the proper materials but also the adequate conditions for the young people to feel safe and confident to express themselves and to be creative. Art spaces and theatre halls, but also outside spaces and yards. This is a kind of activity that challenge the traditional school space, the traditional classroom, and calls for the invention of new creative learning environments.

The use of performing arts at E2OM (second chance school Matosinhos) is an organic process of exploration and creation, of collecting themes, ideas and achievements, of various activities carried out throughout the school year in all areas of training, crystallize the concept of a performance which takes shape as it goes along the young people integration process, while trainings and projects are developed, feeding the two processes mutually. Through the medium of arts in the course of one school year students, teachers, trainers and staff are involved in various multi and trans disciplinary projects.

Implementation of the method/technique

A big variety of types of theatre and diverse performative techniques are explored at E2OM. In the real beginning of the school year a sensory orientated theatre walking performance transforms the classrooms, corridors and school yards into stages, inhabited by actors (teachers, staff, trainers, social educators) in order to (re)start the learning process. The interactive journey surprises and makes students and teachers fully engaged in the 'here and now', in the role play, creating a sense of a well-intentioned and welcoming environment. It is an opportunity for the two groups to meet each other as equal humans, outside the usual hierarchical school structure, which make them rediscover a positive student-teacher

relationship for themselves, an essential process for developing new attitudes and expectations that can support change.

Forum Theatre and Image theatre are also widely used in civic education activities at E2OM, engaging the participants and assisting them in developing self-esteem and co-operative skills. It's a real field for investigation, the connection between thoughts, feelings, actions and consequences, once the story or the topic is relevant to the young people. By illustrating a typical problem, having the possibility to rehearse, process and test different behaviors, the school theatre stage becomes a place - laboratory for researching, sharing and experiencing ideas, life strategies and changes in a safe space, stimulating the self-expression, empathy and autonomy, giving the opportunity to practice the freedom of the choices. Real Rehearsal for Reality, as Augusto Boal named it (Boal, A, 1970).

Good Method N. 2

Name of the method/technique	Quality assurance model - Dobbantó Project
Applicability (form of training and target group)	Teachers, heads and managers of the institutions.
Delivering institution and country	Public Foundation for the Equal Opportunities of Persons with Disabilities (FSZK)
Contact	Contact: Mari Bogнар, Phone: +36 1) 450 32 30 E-mail: titkarsag@fszk.hu

Aims, objectives, outcomes

Internal and external formative and summative evaluation of a school, as well as professional support.

Implementation of the method/technique

Formative forms of evaluation

- The 15 schools participating in the project set themselves an improvement target along eight criteria that were mandatory for all participating schools and reported on every six months. There was no problem if a target was not achieved and they had the possibility to modify the targets.
- The project as a whole was monitored by an external evaluation body, which provided feedback to the national project management on whether the professional expectations and support provided to schools were adequate or needed to be adjusted.

Summative evaluation

- Another independent evaluation organisation provided a six-monthly report to the project funder on whether the project was progressing towards its agreed objectives during the implementation process. A third independent evaluator followed individual students who had left the programme for one academic year to see how they were settling in their new school or job.

Complex support system

- Training for teachers, heads of institutions, managers of the institutions.
- Ongoing forms of support: monthly on-site mentoring for school teams of teachers , leadership coaching for heads of institutions, bi-annual knowledge-sharing workshops between teachers, leaders and maintainers of schools participating in the project, help-desk service for managers.
- Printed (written) support materials: modules (communication, social and learning competences, career building and basic competences for employment). These were mainly suggestions, examples from which teachers could highlight sections according to the needs of their individual students; 10 methodological booklets for working with students according to their individual needs.

Good Method N. 3

Name of the method/technique	Project “Young People's Voices Matter!”
Applicability (form of training and target group)	Early leavers and NEETs
Delivering institution and country	E2C Artois (Liévin, France) – coordinator
Contact	Contact: Coquel Thomas Email: Thomas.Coquel@e2c-artois.fr

Aims, objectives, outcomes

The project is developed and implemented by four organizations working in the field of SCS - E2C Artois (Liévin, France) – coordinator, E2C Europe, AE2O (Matosinhos, Portugal), Fundacio Gentis (Barcelona, Spain). The project was funded by the program “Initiatives for International Solidarity” of the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs. The goal was to produce a documentary film about young peoples’ lives (16-27 year-old), who study in a SCS or would like to enter or are NEET. The overall aim is to provide a forum for these young people to express themselves in the time of lockdown and their perception of the world to come.

Implementation of the method/technique

The chosen format gives an opportunity for expression of attitudes in a form chosen by the young people (reading of text, dance, drawing, theatre, etc.). Participants were organized in three teams from France, Spain and Portugal. The first two week were devoted to Zoom and face-to-face pedagogical sessions for preparation of the scenarios construction, forming teams of young people and exchange between schools. The films have been shot in each country during the third week. The last three weeks the team works on editing the film - 32 minutes video with subtitles in English, Spanish, Portuguese and French.

During the work in the project the young participants worked together to design their scenarios in a way to reflect their way of life, professional realization goals, health, self-confidence, motivation to learn, etc. Surveys and individual meetings were conducted in parallel to raise students' awareness about the situation helping them to talk about the lockdown, to decrease the health issues and fears, to strengthen the willingness to travel throughout Europe. As a final impact of the overall project activities, their self-confidence that they can cope with difficulties and achieve their goals and dreams increased.

This method proved to be successful as it was easy to implement, low-cost but effective solution, attractive for the young people. It allows teams to work on different fields - communication, IT and multimedia, social fields – thus developing skills and attitudes in different areas useful for their future choices and lives.

This method could be easily multiplied, but it should be borne in mind that there are several factors that would ensure successful implementation:

- To set up a framework but let students be creative within the framework.
- Constant communication about the project – everybody to know what is going on in each moment.
- Raise students' awareness at the end of the project.

Good Method N. 4

Name of the method/technique	Project "Vast India" based on STEM
Applicability (form of training and target group)	Teachers, heads and managers of the institutions.
Delivering institution and country	5 th Evening School, Sofia, Bulgaria
Contact	Contact: Irina Dimitrova Email: i.dimitrova@navet.government.bg

Aims, objectives, outcomes

STEM is an Interdisciplinary model, very focused on science, technology, engineering and mathematics. There's also a model that adds Arts to it (STEAM). Arts can provide a very strong linkage between sciences. The Model of Project-based learning (PBL) on STEM to be understood and successfully implemented.

The method is applied by 5th Evening School: research (study of information sources), analysis, description, presentation.

Implementation of the method/technique

Collaboration in advance between teachers in Geography, Economics and IT

Students are divided into three teams with specific tasks. When the tasks are completed, teams prepare presentation in the STEM Lab. In other projects the information technologies subject was added to other groups of subjects thus forming different inter-subject connection - history-geography; biology-chemistry; literature-history; physics and astronomy; entrepreneurship-geography.

Teachers are trained and successfully apply STEM as well as work in a PBL team on STEM.

What is necessary to ensure the successful implementation of the method is

an appropriate material base - technical means and software; well-equipped library;

attitude, motivation and skills of teachers to work on projects; supportive educational environment; attracting the appropriate partners of the school to achieve the project goals and the tasks of the individual teams.

Good Method N. 5

Name of the method/technique	Support to inclusion
Applicability (form of training and target group)	Children from 4 to 16 years old

Delivering institution and country	Private primary school "Dimitar Ekimov" – Village of Rusalya, Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria
Contact	Contact: Janeta Ivanova-Atanasova, Phone: +359 889295030 Email: art_rusalya@abv.bg

Aims, objectives, outcomes

The School of Rusalya is trying to develop a new social model for supporting children up to 14 (later 19) years old that does not exist in Bulgaria at the moment. It has three directions:

- Living in a *sustainable physical environment* with provided amenities - a home with separate spaces (for sleeping, studying, eating, playing), food, hot and cold water, indoor bathroom and toilet, clothes and shoes according to the season;
- *Supportive environment* - an environment that gives love and sets boundaries, that supports and stimulates one's own choice, living in a community of adults and peers who are equal and different;
- *Education* - to overcome the basic learning deficits and gaps in education, to stimulate curiosity and personal progress.

Implementation of the method/technique

The children live in a dormitory next to the school. This closes the full cycle of life and education, ensuring prosperity and inclusion in an independent and sustainable lifestyle. The educational process is organized in classes, the children being divided according to age. No matter how small the groups are, we prefer "clean classes". Mixing of two classes (for example I and II grades) is undertaken only when the children are one of the age. The small number of classes presupposes the application of different forms of organization - circular, informal, as a focus group, mixing and combining groups of different classes, etc.

In the dormitory the children live as a community with established rules. We emphasize the formation of trusting relationships with educators - trustees. Here the children are organized in interest groups, groups for everyday activities, informal groups for games and communication.

Both teachers and educators play different roles: expert, partner, organizer, mediator, facilitator, mentor, trustee. The roles change depending on the situation and the priorities in the different activities (education, everyday activities, practical activities, art activities). It is important to build trust through all roles and adults to be the bearers of the model of behaviour that we affirm as acceptable for children.

The method is applied daily and constantly while the children are in school and dormitory, and the acceptable behaviour is regulated by generally accepted group rules and value norms. Thus we begin to set boundaries, ensuring successful independent activity and skills to connect and maintain sustainable relationships with other people (adults and peers). For the children and students from our target group, this is a key moment, because until the moment of entering school they do not have such experience. Their experience is usually associated with traumas due to lack of affection, emotional connection, communication. In the School children break away from the threatening environment in which they are doomed to neglect, poverty, mental and physical abuse and lack of education. They see and try another way of life in which respect, support and comfort are dominant.

Within our method, an essential condition is the individual approach in view of the child's personal history, parental capacity and the ability to include parents as a factor, as well as the close environment and the prevailing behavioural pattern in the community, which the children come from. Through the new activities in which they participate and through the experienced success, the children build self-confidence, motivation for purposeful efforts and pursuit of goals and learn to choose responsibly and to comply with their strengths - so they engage with their own future and learn to plan for it.

Good Method N. 6

Name of the method/technique	Communication basics - mentoring students
Applicability (form of training and target group)	Teachers, heads and managers of the institutions.
Delivering institution and country	Second Chance Schools, Hungary
Contact	Contact: Mari Bogнар, Email: bognarmari@gmail.com

Aims, objectives, outcomes

Effective and professional communication between teachers and students means more than just talking with each other. It involves: constantly developing trusting relationships, special conversation and listening skills, giving appropriate constructive feedback, being aware of our own nonverbal language and it is based on well-established and expressed role and relationship boundaries. (Author: Katalin Borbáth) The aim is to provide training for enhancing the competences of the teachers/trainers and to make them recognize that each mentoring relationship occurs in a unique, interpersonal context. And adjust their teaching behaviors and communications to meet the needs of individual students. For that, they must possess deep understanding of their own communication styles and a willingness to objectively observe the behavior of the mentee.

Implementation of the method/technique

Training Modules:

Module 1. Basics for developing trusting relationships

1.1. Acceptance: the good teacher/mentor is accepting the student

1.2. Model role: the good mentor/teacher is a model of a continuous learner and is transparent about his/her own search for better answers and more effective solutions to his/her own problems.

1.3. Effective interpersonal contexts skills - The good mentor is dedicated to working in a trusting relationship with a partner to continually improve his or her skills.

1.4. To be committed to the role of mentoring - Committed mentors understand the importance of persistence in mentoring and that this requires significant investments of time and energy.

1.5. Positive attitude toward students - The good mentor communicates hope and optimism.

Module 2. Constructive Feedback includes providing your partner with descriptive, specific information that is focused on changing behaviors

2.1. Focus on describing observable behavior without attaching judgment, accusations, or generalizations to those behaviors.

2.2. Rules: Give timely feedback.

2.3. Paraphrase when possible to clarify. (What I hear you saying is...; Tell me what you mean when you...; Do I understand correctly that you mean...)

Module 3. Listening skills

3.1. What listening means - hearing and understanding what you are being told.

3.2. What listening does NOT mean - giving advice, adding detail, or even sharing your own experiences.

Module 4. Being aware of our non-verbal language: it's good when:

- the body is facing toward the speaker,
- making eye contact,
- interact with the speaker by echoing their words or nodding/shaking our head,

- asking appropriate questions to help clarify or expand on their thoughts and ideas

Module 5. Conversation skills

5.1. Open-Ended Questions- try using questions that begin with “how” or “what” to open up your conversations such as: • How did you feel ...? • What do you think would happen if...? • What might you see happening if...? -

5.2. Possibility of Using Coaching methods

Good Method N. 7

Name of the method/technique	Lifeskills Program – Teacher mentoring student
Applicability (form of training and target group)	Disadvantaged youngsters, 17 to 24 years old
Delivering institution and country	Second Chance Schools, Hungary
Contact	Contact: Mari Bogнар, Email: bognarmari@gmail.com

Aims, objectives, outcomes

Lifeskills program is a training program for increasing the social competences of students needed on the labour market and in society. It aims at:

- Strengthening self-confidence and self-understanding of the participating young people;
- Developing understanding about the importance of health;
- Developing the social competence of participants;
- Preparing them for the demands and expectations of family life;
- Prepare them for working life;

- Raising awareness about the rights and obligations of adult life by providing necessary knowledge.

Implementation of the method/technique

Lifeskills program focuses on coaching in individual and group settings.

The mentoring method seems very strong to improve skills and environment for young students. But the teacher needs to be careful about the approach for the student not to cause misunderstanding and needs to remind the student about the roles and relationship boundaries of the mentoring session with the teacher. Clear aims and outcomes are required for each session. Insufficient attention to these aims and outcomes may be a sign that the teacher is becoming too involved with the student and intervention by the supervisor is required.

The program is developed in details and the aimed competences are:

- To strengthen self-confidence and self-understanding by being aware of their abilities, choices and responsibilities, personal networks, etc.
- To have understanding about the importance of health by knowing the importance of regular daily rhythm, nourishing meals, exercises; the harm from alcohol, drugs, stress, occupational injuries on the health and social life; to know how to cope with that.
- To develop social competence by developing ability of cooperation, flexibility and adapting to different social occasions; understanding rules in different situations; reasons for racism and xenophobia.
- To be prepared for the demands and expectations of family life by discussing questions concerning relationship, conflicts, solving conflicts and gender questions, sexual minorities, venereal diseases, contraceptives, pregnancy and abortion.
Discussing and reflecting about equality.

- To be prepared for working life by knowing about the rights and obligations for employers and employees, unions, labor laws; rules of an employment interviews, CV, etc.
- To be aware of the rights and obligations of adult life by having knowledge about different taxes and the taxation system, budgets, banks, insurances, family laws, the system of democracy and the EU; the social welfare system, etc.

3.4 Conclusion

The research on good practices and methods in second chance education field reveals that whatever are the differences in forms, titles and opinions, the concept of Second Chance Schools is strategic for developing and enhancing the efforts on national and European level in several directions:

- Fighting against social exclusion, in particular of teenagers and young adults;
- Reconnecting learners with educational and training systems, essential to overcome the challenges of social inclusion;
- Promoting a positive attitude of teenagers and young adults towards learning, contributing to the reinforcement of the lifelong learning EU goals and targets;
- Promoting the development of the “whole person” with impact on the acquisition of basic and key-competences, on strengthening the personality and on accessing the labour market.

Nevertheless, there are some key questions to pay attention to and to be considered. In many countries in Europe, second chance education and schools are not yet recognized both at the level of the educational practices and of the public policies. Even if there are many institutions that are addressing the problem of early leaving from education and training and low qualifications of vulnerable groups, only in few countries, as France, and more recently Portugal, second chance schools have a legal framework that facilitates the organization of

special educational provisions addressing vulnerable young people that drop out from school at some point of their lives and who need help now to complete their basic education.

Another topic that is worth to be mentioned is the fact that there are different views about the concept (and even designation) of “second chance school”. Actually, it is the designation of the educational policies in EU since the White Book of 1995 and the Pilot project that followed. The concept behind it is internationally recognizable and covers a large group of social and educational practices to address vulnerable young people in all European countries to cope with early leaving from education and training. The evening schools, for instance, in Bulgaria and Greece, are interesting and promising provisions that, with further improvement, could be used as part of the compensation policy measures that need to be developed.

There are also conceptual and empirical differences, based on the experiences and needs of the different countries. Second chance education is a new educational answer that can address a variety of needs. In many countries, the rate of early leavers is still high, so this measure is predominantly used for helping young people to complete secondary education. But in other countries like Croatia, for example, the rate of early leavers is low, so the goal of this policy measure there is to re-qualify young people and help them to integrate the labour market. In France, many second chance schools don't even work on school certification. Their main focus is the professional integration of vulnerable young people. In Portugal and Bulgaria, with still significant levels of early leaving but also high rates of youth unemployment, second chance schools have to work not only for decreasing the number of early leavers but also for re-qualification of young people, that miss both qualifications and skills. Without appropriate qualifications and skills many young people cannot find a job in their home countries and therefore is obliged to leave.

Validation systems are a very important tool for the credibility of these provisions. Different models exist as validation from government structures prevails. It is necessary to diversify validation models based on peers and professional bodies regulation.

Ethnical and migrant specifics are also important. Even if second chance schools are not “education for minorities”, we need to look at minorities, such as Roma communities, and also migrants and refugees in a serious way, as they form large communities in some countries and face multiples challenges on their integration, starting with the learning of the language of the hosting country.

CHAPTER 4 - SECOND CHANCE EDUCATION FRAMEWORK AND THE WAY FORWARD

The current chapter aims to present key conclusions based on the above overview of European and national documents, online survey and individual interviews with practitioners and key stakeholders, mapping elements of common understanding and providing a concise reference framework and policy-recommendations for supporting further development and expansion of second chance schools and schemes across Europe.

Definition of a Second Chance School

Second Chance Schools are a European compensatory policy measure, particularly aimed at accompanying young people who leave early the education and training system, created by the White Paper "Teaching and learning - towards a learning society", an initiative of the European Commissioner Edith Cresson, in 1995. The initiative was followed by a pilot project that gave rise to an E2C network, present in several European countries.

Second Chance Schools in Europe were defined, in the founding document, as a supporting and supplementary measure to *"provide youngsters excluded from the education system, or about to be, with the best training and best support arrangements to give them self-confidence"*, developing skills and qualifications to enter further training or the job market (European Commission, 1995).

Since then, and along the last 25 years, second chance schools became part of educational and training systems across Europe as a *specialized social and educational policy measure, providing a wide spectre of learning and support intervention aiming to contribute for fighting, in particular, teenagers' and young adults' social exclusion; reconnecting drop-out learners with educational and training systems; promoting a positive attitude of teenagers and young adults towards learning; promoting the development of the "whole person" with impact on the acquisition of basic and key-competences, on strengthening the personality and on accessing the labour market.* (CEDEFOP Reports, 2014 and 2016)

The documentary research, the analysis of interviews of the various actors and the online surveys reveal a set of characteristics of second chance schools common to most countries in Europe, in the different observed dimensions:

1. Mission and objectives of a Second Chance School

Despite all efforts at European and national levels, the average rate of early leavers from education and training is still around 10% in Europe (9,9% in 2020). There was a significant decrease in some European countries, but remained stable or even increased in several others, evidencing in this way its structural profile in European educational systems. Also, the high percentage of young adults not in education, employment or training (NEET), suggests a worrying tendency that leaving formal education in most cases is not a temporary life situation, but can transform into a long-term pattern, with a negative effect on the overall situation of employment and training of younger people.

While the EU is trying to offer an increasingly high-quality education for young people, at the same time, around one in ten young people leave school and training early, without the right qualifications. Today, young people are changing jobs more frequently, taking longer to establish themselves in the job market. Ensuring a smooth transition between education and work and reducing the risks of marginalization for early leavers have become central objectives of European cooperation in education.

In this context, second chance schools have been shaping and adjusting their mission and objectives addressing the social and professional needs of young people, in three main directions:

- Reconnecting a wide range of target groups (young early leavers, low qualified young NEET, youngsters in different vulnerable situations) with education and training systems;
- Developing young people's professional and work skills, facilitating their transition to the labour market and to jobs with rights.
- Forming a positive attitude of learners toward learning and social engagement;

2. Methods and Approaches to Learning

The basic principle of second chance schools is that you cannot get different results by continuing to do the same thing. These schools thus work on an experimental basis, testing new solutions and building with young people new ways of learning that are more close to their interests and needs.

Early leaving is often a traumatic experience of progressive disengagement from school, perceived by young people as an unsafe space. Second chance schools research actively for innovative and creative methods and techniques able to enthusiasm young early leavers to reengage in education and training. Second chance schools are therefore socio-educational projects of innovation in education, drawing inspiration from multiple references, models and experiences, around the world. Cooperation with similar initiatives and participation in training and mobility projects help them to find the most appropriate approaches and methodologies for working with their target groups.

These schools adopt a strategy of methodological diversity, searching for the proper tools and processes to mobilize and involve young people marked by heavy experiences of failure. The pedagogical dispositive used by second chance schools promote the participation of young people in their learning processes. Most of the activities in which young people participate do not have the traditional format of classes organized by teachers for a class, but are a wide range of individual and group activities.

The most commonly identified innovation and success factors in the experience of the second chance schools in Europe are:

- Individual and personalized approach to education and training programs;
- Holistic approach, by valuing and developing different skills (vocational, scientific, artistic, social participation, personal and social competences)
- Experiential and interdisciplinary approach to learning;

- Learning by doing approach;
- Rich and interactive communication processes between young people and educators/staff, participating together in common activities.
- Tutoring and mentoring techniques;
- Flexibility of the learning models and adaptable educational content;
- Innovative methods (project-based learning, inclusive education, workshops, practical exercises, professional internships, sports, etc.).
- Schools are safe and affectionate spaces of close and horizontal relationships.
- Educational environments close to young people and their life contexts and experiences.

The second chance schools use a set of pedagogical tools that are alternative to the traditional school model: interdisciplinary artistic projects, performances, writing of narratives and poems, intergenerational community projects, sharing circles, assemblies, practical training in work context, study visits programs, youth exchanges (namely initiatives promoted by other European 2nd Chance schools), virtual learning environments, study itineraries, life stories, games, research and knowledge building processes, workshops, debates, tutorials, simulations and role-playing, group work, projects, and many others.

Second chance schools actively promote the autonomy of young people, organizing the appropriate conditions and providing the necessary resources. The adopted methods are also tools for training of trainers, demanding study, reflection, continuous questioning and cooperative work, search for the most appropriate solutions and monitoring and reformulating the carried out experiences and the strategies used.

3. Role of Teachers and other Educational Professionals

Second Chance Schools are learning organizations and communities of practice, where a shared learning culture for young people and professionals is collectively built. These schools have multidisciplinary teams of professionals, teachers, vocational trainers, artists, psychology and social education professionals, youth and community mediators, operational and administrative assistants, security and maintenance. Only a multidisciplinary team makes

it possible to find integrated answers to complex problems and provide a stimulating educational environment for young people.

At a second chance school, training is a dialogical process of communication and learning between professionals and young people. Trainers assist young people in their learning processes and support their individual training plans, guaranteeing, in any case, compliance with the training standards essential for their certification.

Educators give the center of the stage to young people, facilitating their role, listening more, talking less, learning to be at the service of young people's learning and development processes, in a position that is both discreet and very demanding, approaching young people in a create and flexible way, changing plans whenever necessary and being available to participate in common activities. Second Chance schools are also a “second” chance for professionals, who relearn and reformulate their tasks and reinvent themselves as professionals.

The characteristics of the young people that attend this type of schools demand to professionals a profile of great availability to establish relationships of trust and respect with young people, offering these young people adult references of stability and attention, which they do not find most of the times in their social and family environments of origin.

Professionals also assume the role of tutors, concerned not only with the training of young people but also with their well-being, transforming the training space into a relationship space. Life does not stop at the school door, but it is the very subject of training.

In this sense, second chance schools demand from professionals multiple capacities and skills:

- Encouraging learner's self-activity;
- Promoting student participation in the definition of learning objectives and activities;
- Delivering Individualized learning;
- Promoting critical reflection and thinking;
- Organizing inquiry-based learning;

- Engaging in social interactions, etc.

Second chance schools are very challenging educational environments, demanding a friendly, non-judgmental organizational culture that unconditionally accepts young people, offering a social space of belonging, a “second family”, where young people find the time and opportunities they need to readjust, in a flexible environment with open doors.

These schools are social spaces where young people feel respected and learn to respect, democratic organizations where young people's opinion counts and where they develop significant learning processes, accumulating positive experiences that build a new image of themselves and new possibilities for the future.

Schools where everyone discovers and builds what they want to do with their lives. Where there are no fatal mistakes and where it is always possible to start over again. Schools that are also home, family, where they can always return when they need help or affection.

Policy Recommendations for Second Chance Education in Europe

In most European countries, there is no integrated knowledge about the situation of qualification and social and professional integration of young people. The various indicators on the reality of young people's lives show worrying figures of youth unemployment, youth poverty and early leaving from education and training.

There is also not much social awareness about the large number of young people who are out of school, demanding specific compensation measures. Reducing early leaving while ensuring the quality of education and training responses and the social and professional integration of young people is therefore a central objective of European cooperation and a very important indicator of the quality of our social systems and our democracy.

As stated in European and national documents, in the learning society in which we live, social stratifications are increasingly based on the demarcation lines between those “who have” and those “who don't have” skills and qualifications. Dropping out of school has more lasting

consequences than in previous decades. It can mark an individual for life and radically narrow the scope of his life projects.

The main locus of action to address school failure and social exclusion is the local, schools, neighbourhoods and cities. The national contribution is essential to ensure the financial sustainability of local initiatives, and to recognize the effort invested and the qualifications that students acquire in these schemes. At national level, the debate on the prevention of school leaving and the generalization of good practices in combating school leaving must be intense and continuous. The European level can be of great value in networking these initiatives. In doing so, it helps to mobilize teachers and students and allows for the comparison of results, the identification of good practices and consistent feedback in the policy process at European level. The three levels therefore have an important role to play in combating school dropout and social exclusion.

The findings and conclusions from current research allow for proposing two groups of policy recommendations for further development and promotion of second chance education in Europe. The first group is focussed on recommendations for political support at the national level. The second line of recommendations tries to provide roadmap of actions on EU level.

1. Political support at national level

The national level is essential to provide material, human and expert resources for the functioning of a second chance school. Depending on the level at which decisions are made for school funding, attention should also be paid to the regional/local level. There should be in each country a national strategy to address early leaving, as European policy documents consistently recommend, but there should be also a local (or regional) approach as the needs of young people are not the same everywhere but also because the needs of the labour market are different everywhere. Concrete recommendations for this level can be summarised as follows:

- To increase the visibility of the social problem of low qualifications and social exclusion of young people and of the available policy measures addressing it, such as second chance education and schools.
- To set up and strengthen national policies to reduce ELET, supported by comprehensive strategies that include an articulated framework of prevention, intervention and compensation measures.
- To create and strengthen national networks of practices and cooperation between different relevant actors, including second chance initiatives and schools' networks.
- To support evidence-based policies, promoting research on the situation of young people and the impact of second chance education measures, involving universities and researchers.
- To develop a systematic measurement system based on key quality performance indicators to monitor the quality of second chance educational services at national level.
- To reinforce the access and availability of distinctive and quality training opportunities in second chance education and schools provisions for early leavers.
- To increase the visibility of second chance education, improve communication with national, regional and local authorities and involve them in different events and policy debates.

2. Support at EU level.

The European dimension has indeed emerged as an essential vehicle for launching the idea and encouraging Member States to “joint learning” among themselves. Evidence suggests that many cities and local initiatives rely on EU support not just for funding, but also because it allows them to muster the goodwill, support and publicity needed to successfully take their projects forward from start to finish. The more awareness about them spreads, the more their attractiveness increases for both students and teachers. For Second Chance Schools to succeed, it was vital that they were perceived as different and 'better' than mainstream

schools, and the European dimension certainly played an important role in conveying this image. It has also enabled disadvantaged young people, often confined to the narrow margins of a life of deprivation, to acquire the necessary skills to improve their lives. This “cultural revolution” in their lives will increase their sense of self-esteem, which is also important for the educators who help them succeed.

Networking between individual schools and their organizations at European level is important for improving quality of service through exchange of know-how and expertise. Furthermore, consolidating the “voice” of different players in the field would contribute to increased visibility and improved understanding by European Institutions of the need to ensure sustainable support for second chance education in Europe.

The recommendations at this level are:

- To keep the key target of reducing early leaving from education and training in the European agenda of education.
- To develop a systematic measurement system based on key quality performance indicators to monitor the quality of second chance educational services at EU level.
- To promote European cooperation and networking between second chance schools and practices, creating European Centres for Mobility, Research and Training and strengthening the European Network of Second Chance Schools, E2C Europe.
- To offer capacity building opportunities for organizations and professionals active in second chance education field;
- To promote the transfer of innovation developed in second chance education and schools to mainstream schools that could benefit from new approaches, such as learners’ centred pedagogies, participation in decision-making processes, and inclusive approaches towards assessment and learner support.

The European Commission must support it, but it certainly cannot assume full responsibility in this matter. The main responsibility lies with the education authorities of the Member States, cities, schools and national and European associations and networks (E2C Europe),

who are encouraged to continue to work towards the inclusion of those who most need project support.

Second Chance Schools approach shows one way in which disadvantaged young people without basic skills and qualifications can be helped and reintegrated into society. The methods used can be a source of inspiration, both in preventing school-failure in the first place, and in giving a second chance to those for whom initial prevention has not been possible.

We must not forget that those who have dropped out from school still have very much to offer and that, in appropriate circumstances, education establishments can unlock a wealth of resources which our societies might otherwise cast aside. At a time of ageing populations, tighter labour markets and the acceptance that our knowledge society as a whole calls for higher levels of qualification, this is a message we cannot afford to ignore.

The European "second chance" policy initiated more than 20 years ago has been reaffirmed over the years by a set of subsequent European steering documents and initiatives on the ground that have confirmed the opportunity and need for this measure, as a response to the serious social crisis represented by early leaving and social exclusion of young people in Europe.

In addition to actively participating in the work of socio-professional integration of young people, second chance schools also contribute to the pedagogical and organizational renovation of the education and training systems and the expansion of education to the public sphere, reinforcing the community dimension of education.

Second Chance Schools have been affirming the possibility of organizing effective training responses for more vulnerable audiences who are resistant to traditional training processes. A Second Chance in education stands out today as an inclusive and holistic education proposal, which includes but is not limited to the vocational education dimension, which believes that it is always possible to start over and overcome experiences of failure, so often

traumatic, and is developed not in terms of opposition but in dialogue and mutual learning with regular education and training provisions.

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