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# Structural Indicators for Inclusive Systems in and around Schools

Analytical Report



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## ABOUT THE NESET II

**NESET II** is an advisory network of experts working on the social dimension of education and training. The European Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture initiated the establishment of the network as the successor to NESSE (2007-2010) and NESET (2011-2014). The Public Policy and Management Institute ([PPMI](#)) is responsible for the administration of the NESET II network.

# CONTENTS

<b>List of Tables</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>List of Annexes</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Aims .....	11
Methodology.....	11
Scope - Inclusive Systems in and around Schools.....	12
<b>CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK</b> .....	<b>15</b>
Ten Key Principles for Inclusive Systems in and around Schools.....	15
A System Framework of Structural Indicators .....	19
<b>CHAPTER 1. Promoting System Integration of Policy and Practice for Inclusive Systems in and around Schools</b> .....	<b>22</b>
1.1. Establishing National Coordination Structures for Inclusive Systems in and around Schools and Local Cross-School Cooperation Structures.....	22
1.2. Overcoming Socio-economic Segregation in Schools: A Cross-School Cooperation Issue to be Developed at National and Regional Levels .....	24
1.3. Developing Early Warning Prevention and Intervention Systems and Data Collection Systems.....	25
<b>CHAPTER 2. Macrostructure Issues for Inclusive Systems in and around Schools</b> .....	<b>27</b>
2.1. Limiting Early Tracking and Postponing Academic Selection.....	27
2.2. Avoiding Grade Repetition.....	28
2.3. Enforcing Illegality Under EU Law of Ethnic Segregation in Schools .....	28
2.4. Developing Alternatives to Suspension and Expulsion .....	30
2.5. Increasing the Flexibility and Permeability of Educational Pathways as Part of Cross-School and VET Cooperation .....	31
2.6. Targeting Priority Zones/Territories with Higher Poverty and Socio-economic Exclusion for Additional Funding.....	32
<b>CHAPTER 3. Whole School Approach to Inclusive Systems</b> .....	<b>32</b>
3.1. Promoting A Relational School and Classroom Climate .....	33
3.2. Developing Structures such as School Coordination Committees for Inclusive Systems as Part of a Whole School Approach.....	34
3.3. Promoting Students’ Voices and Active Participation, Including A Differentiated Approach to Ensure Marginalised Students’ Voices and Participation are Included.....	35
3.4. Prioritising Social and Emotional Education .....	36
3.5. Promoting Arts Education for Inclusive Systems – Benefits for Marginalized Students .....	37
3.6. Supporting Extracurricular Activities .....	38
3.7. Developing Alternative Education – Personalised Approaches...39	
<b>CHAPTER 4. Teacher and School Leadership Quality for Inclusive Systems in and around Schools</b> .....	<b>41</b>
4.1. Improving ITE and CPD for Teachers for Inclusive Education .....	41

4.2. Establishing Professional Communities to Ensure Quality .....	42
4.3. Developing Teachers' Expectations of Students.....	43
4.4. Developing Teachers' Cultural and Language Diversity Competences for Working with Ethnic Minorities and Migrants .....	44
4.5. Developing Teachers' Competences on Career Guidance for Working with Marginalised Groups .....	45
4.6. Promoting CPD for School Governance and Leadership.....	46
<b>CHAPTER 5. A Multidisciplinary Focus on Health and Welfare issues in Education .....</b>	<b>47</b>
5.1. Establishing Cross-Sectoral Cooperation Regarding Health and Welfare Issues in Education .....	47
5.2. Developing Multidisciplinary Teams in and around Schools .....	48
5.3. Providing Emotional Supports in Relation to the School System for Early School Leaving Prevention .....	49
5.4. Preventing Bullying, Including Discriminatory Bullying in School	50
5.5. Supporting Students with Substance Abuse Issues .....	51
5.6. Promoting Adequate Sleep for Students .....	52
<b>CHAPTER 6. Vulnerable Individuals and Groups.....</b>	<b>53</b>
6.1. Supporting Migrants and Roma .....	53
6.2. Overcoming Poverty-Related Barriers to Education.....	56
6.3. Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs .....	57
<b>CHAPTER 7. Parental Involvement and Family Support.....</b>	<b>58</b>
7.1. Integrating A Holistic Multidisciplinary Approach to Parental Involvement with Family Support for Early School Leaving Prevention.....	58
7.2. Developing Parent Meeting Spaces and Policy Input into Schools .....	60
7.3. Establishing Community Lifelong Learning Centres.....	61
7.4. Developing Family Literacy Interventions.....	62
<b>CHAPTER 8. Implementation Processes for Structural Indicators.....</b>	<b>63</b>
8.1. Structural Indicators Matrix Tool on National Policy for Developing Inclusive Systems in and around Schools .....	65
8.2. Structural Indicators Matrix Tool for Schools for Developing Inclusive Systems in and around Schools.....	70
<b>GLOSSARY .....</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>79</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table 1.</b> Ten Key Principles for Inclusive Systems in and around Schools .....	15
<b>Table 2.</b> Macro-Exo-Meso-Microsystem levels Examples .....	22
<b>Table 3.</b> Promoting System Integration of Policy and Practice for Inclusive Systems in and around Schools.....	96
<b>Table 4.</b> Macrostructure Issues for Inclusive Systems in and around Schools.....	96
<b>Table 5.</b> Whole School Approach to Inclusive Systems.....	96
<b>Table 6.</b> A Multidisciplinary Focus on Health and Welfare issues in Education.....	97
<b>Table 7.</b> Vulnerable Individuals and Groups .....	98
<b>Table 8.</b> Parental Involvement and Family Support.....	98
<b>Table 9.</b> Percentage of Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Students who Agree/Disagree with the Following Statements: School Belonging and Feeling Like an Outsider (PISA 2012) .....	99

## LIST OF ANNEXES

<b>ANNEX A.</b> Structural Indicators as Enabling Conditions for Change in a System.....	95
<b>ANNEX B.</b> Thematic Structure with regard to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Systems Framework of Macro-Exo-Meso-Micro Systems for the Issues Examined in this Report .....	96
<b>ANNEX C.</b> School and Classroom Climate as Perceived by Marginalised Students in Europe .....	99
<b>ANNEX D.</b> Social and Emotional Education and Students' Voices .....	99
<b>ANNEX E.</b> The Arts and Social Inclusion in Education .....	101
<b>ANNEX F.</b> ITE and CPD for Early School Leaving Prevention and Inclusion in Education.....	101
<b>ANNEX G.</b> Multidisciplinary Teams .....	103
<b>ANNEX H.</b> Discriminatory Bullying in School and Stigmatisation as Symbolic Violence .....	104
<b>ANNEX I.</b> Substance Abuse.....	105
<b>ANNEX J.</b> Sleep .....	106



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

International evidence indicates that school systems need to change in order to tackle early school leaving and improve social inclusion in education and society. Policy-makers and school actors require practical tools to assist them in this process, made all the more urgent by the EU2020 headline target to reduce early school leaving. This report develops such practical tools; it is designed to inform strategic policy and practice by offering an innovative framework of structural indicators for early school leaving prevention and inclusion in school. It draws upon key European Council and Commission policy documents on early school leaving prevention, and also on the Paris Declaration 2015 on promoting common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education, which includes a focus on social marginalization. This report expands on these key policy documents with recent international research and with the input of a number of key policy stakeholders.

Inclusion in education, viewed more comprehensively as inclusive systems in and around schools, concentrates on supportive, quality learning environments, on welcoming and caring schools and classrooms, and on preventing discrimination. It addresses the needs of students in a holistic way (their emotional, physical, cognitive and social needs), and recognises their individual talents and voices. It is open to the voices and active participation of parents, and also wider multidisciplinary teams and agencies. Inclusive systems in and around schools particularly focus on the differentiated needs of marginalised and vulnerable groups, including those at risk of early school leaving and alienation from society.

This proposed framework of structural indicators for inclusive system development applies to both national policy level and school level. The key overall areas examined in this report include a whole school approach to developing inclusive systems, and teacher and school leadership quality for inclusive systems in and around schools. Macrostructure issues and promotion of system integration of policy and practice are also addressed. Other key thematic areas of the report include a multidisciplinary focus on health and welfare issues in education, on promoting parental involvement and family support, and on meeting the needs of particularly vulnerable individuals and groups. These thematic chapters support the structural indicators with international evidence, combined with the EU policy documents.

The structural indicators are underpinned by ten key principles for inclusive systems in and around schools, and are based on EU policy documents, legal principles and international research. These ten principles include: a *System wide focus* on addressing system blockages as barriers and on system supports; a *Holistic approach* that recognises the social, emotional and physical needs of students and not simply their academic, cognitive ones; and the principle of *Equality and non-discrimination*, which acknowledges that different groups may need additional supports in a respectful environment free of prejudice. The principle of *Children's voices* requires a commitment to concerns directly affecting children's own welfare, with due regard to their ages and maturity. The principle of *Building on strengths* challenges negative deficit labels of vulnerable groups by going beyond mere prevention and instead seeking to promote growth. The principle of *Active participation of parents in school* requires a strategic focus on marginalised parents. The principle of *Differentiation* acknowledges that different levels of need require different prevention strategies, including for students and families experiencing moderate risk and chronic need. The *Multidisciplinary* principle recognises the need for a multifaceted response for marginalised students with complex needs; marginalised groups include those experiencing poverty and social exclusion, those at risk of early school leaving, those experiencing bullying, mental health difficulties and/or special educational needs, as well as some groups of migrants and ethnic minorities. The principle of *Representation and participation of marginalised groups* involves a distinct focus on processes and structures for their representation and

participation. The *Lifelong learning* principle brings educational focus on active learning methodologies for issues of active citizenship, personal and social fulfilment, intercultural dialogue across communities, as well as on poverty and social inclusion, and employment.

The framework of structural indicators for inclusive systems in and around schools is developed into two tools, one for use by national policy makers and one for use by schools. These tools can be used as verifiable self-assessment approaches, and potentially also for comparative external assessment purposes to support development of inclusive education systems across Europe.

This framework of enabling conditions for school system development is a reference point for strategic decision-making. It is not a framework meant to be static and frozen in time; rather, it should be viewed as dynamic, as an enduring reference point that is subject to additions and revisions over time, both locally and nationally.

## INTRODUCTION

Reducing early school leaving (ESL) has been a major issue for policy cooperation at European level within the framework of ET2020, mindful of the EU2020 *headline* target to reduce early school leaving in 18-24 year olds to 10 % across the EU. The European Commission's Thematic Working Group on early school leaving (2011-2013)<sup>1</sup> and the ET2020 Working Group on Schools Policy (2014-2015)<sup>2</sup> have identified key conditions for effective policies and measures to reduce ESL at national and school levels. Many of these measures are aimed at addressing inequalities, barriers and challenges in education systems and will have an impact not only on ESL prevention but also on raising overall quality and inclusiveness of education.

The Schools Policy Working Group document (2015, p. 17) recognises the need for indicators for self-assessment of progress: 'Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be established, allowing for continuous feedback, adaptation and change of involvement as appropriate. Guidance/indicators should be developed to facilitate self-evaluation where appropriate'. Building on this work, as well as on relevant international research findings, this report seeks to develop structural indicators for inclusive systems in and around schools:

- at national level, to be implemented by governments through strategic and cross-sector initiatives; and
- at school levels, to be implemented by schools and/or local authorities, in line with the national strategic initiatives.

Applying structural indicators at system level for education means paying close attention to relatively enduring yet potentially malleable features of a system, such as its structures, mechanisms and guiding principles (Downes, 2013, 2014). Structural indicators can guide action and be policy and practice relevant. The indicators can distinguish state, municipality and/or school effort. Because they focus on systems and not simply on individuals, structural indicators offer a simple and flexible approach to understanding policy, strategy and implementation. Their function can be likened to an x-ray – the right lens of questions can reveal how well a system is promoting progressive change (Downes, 2014, 2014a).

Structural indicators address whether or not key structures, mechanisms or principles are in place in a system. Structural indicators go beyond the quantitative/qualitative distinction as they are factual, being generally framed as potentially verifiable yes/no answers; they can work at a national strategic framework level and at an institutional project level, both for external evaluation and self-evaluation. They offer strategic direction as to *what* issues are addressed at system level, while also offering flexibility at local or national level as to *how* to address these issues.

Although building on the Final report of the TWG on early school leaving (2013) and its Checklist on comprehensive policies (in Annex 1), the structural indicators go beyond its scope and purpose. Their

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1 The Commission's Thematic Working Group (TWG) consisted of policy makers, practitioners and experts from 27 EU Member States. Representatives from Norway, Iceland, Turkey, and from key European stakeholder organisations were also members of the group.

2 The Education and Training 2020 Working Group on Schools Policy (2014-15) also examined the theme of early school leaving. Its 2015 policy messages reflect the results of the joint work of representatives of national governments from 30 EU countries and associated European countries, and European social partner organisations.

scope is to promote inclusive systems in and around schools, not simply prevent early school leaving. Their purpose is to develop transparent system indicators that are factual and potentially verifiable as part of a reporting process (whether self-report or comparative).

## Aims

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The framework developed in this report seeks to synthesise international research and EU policy<sup>3</sup> into a user friendly document for policy makers and practitioners, to inform their attempts to promote inclusive systems in and around schools. The framework does not pretend to offer an exhaustive list of strategic issues to be addressed for inclusive education systems; rather it aims to serve as a reference point for strategic decision-making. Nor is it static and frozen in time; it is meant to be dynamic and subject to additions and revisions over time.

In seeking to develop a review framework of structural indicators - basically yes/no questions about strategic policy and practice in education systems – it is envisaged that possible users would include national policy-makers, inspection/evaluation experts, regional and local authorities, school leaders and teachers.

## Methodology

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The main policy documents relied upon for developing the framework of these structural indicators are:

- the European Council Recommendation on policies to reduce early school leaving (2011),
- European Council Conclusions on reducing early school leaving and promoting success in school (2015),
- the Paris Declaration by the European Council of Education Ministers on Promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education (2015),
- the Final report of the Thematic Working Group on early school leaving (2013),
- the Policy messages of the ET2020 Working Group on Schools Policy (2015),
- the Commission Recommendation, *Investing in Children: Breaking the cycle of disadvantage* (2013) and
- the Commission Staff Working Paper on Early School Leaving (2011).

They are supplemented by a range of other European research reports and international research published since 2011. These EU policy documents, along with key legal principles, were drawn on to develop ten key guiding principles (see chapter 1.1), which in turn were used to develop the structural indicators.

One such key legal principle is the Commission Recommendation (2013, p. 4), which highlights the need to ‘Address child poverty and social exclusion from a children’s rights approach, in particular by referring to the relevant provisions of the Treaty on the European Union, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, making sure that these rights are respected, protected and fulfilled’. Our proposed framework of structural indicators is informed by such an approach to children’s rights.

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<sup>3</sup> Including comments from key national stakeholders in the schools policy working groups, as well as from the European Parent’s Association, OBESSU and Cedefop.

Regarding the thematic structure, each issue will include an account of the EU policy background for it, together with recent international research when it adds value to the analysis. It is important to note that these EU Council or Commission policy documents and reports are evidence-informed. Given that the thematic accounts focus on both national strategic level and school level, they include a mix of issues and policies, concrete measures and broad strategies.

A number of issues that are not directly addressed in the EU policy documents will be flagged and identified as emerging issues for consideration in the proposed framework, based on other research<sup>4</sup>. Moreover, this being an independent report for the Commission, it will, when necessary, offer critiques of EU Policy documents, whether from a policy or practice implementation standpoint.

## Scope - Inclusive Systems in and around Schools

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In this report, the terms inclusive education, inclusion in education, and inclusive systems in and around schools,<sup>5</sup> are used interchangeably. The report focuses on system supports, rather than on individual risk or resilience. Inclusion in education, understood as inclusive systems in and around schools, places a strong emphasis on supportive, quality learning environments, and welcoming and caring schools and classrooms. It addresses the needs of students in a holistic way (their emotional, physical, cognitive and social needs), and recognises their individual talents and voices. It seeks to prevent discrimination, and is open to the voices and active participation of parents and wider multidisciplinary teams and agencies. Inclusive systems in and around schools especially prioritise the differentiated needs of marginalised and vulnerable groups, including those at risk of early school leaving and alienation from society. Recognising the centrality of a relational school climate, the ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015) treats learner-centred, welcoming and caring environments as part of inclusive education<sup>6</sup>.

The scope of this report is on inclusive systems for education, with an emphasis on on early school leaving prevention, and is placed in the context of the EU2020 headline target to reduce early school leaving in 18-24 year olds to 10 % across the EU. This target ultimately led to an EU Council Recommendation (2011) on early school leaving, which was signed by all EU Member States with the sole exception of the UK. The Council Recommendation, together with the Council Conclusions (2015) and a number of related EU Commission documents on early school leaving, child poverty and social

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<sup>4</sup> Key sources for this research include the Horizon2020 RESL (Reducing Early School Leaving) project's recent findings, and previous reports for the Commission from the NESET I and II and NESSE networks, on cross-sectoral approaches to inclusion, school bullying and violence prevention, supports for migrants and early school leaving prevention, as well as the European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice/Cedefop, Tackling Early Leaving from Education and Training in Europe: Strategies, Policies and Measures (2014).

<sup>5</sup> Whereas much US research in community psychology refers to such inclusive systems as systems of care (Cook & Kilmer 2012), the terminology used for current purposes is of system supports in and around schools, to reflect the growing recognition of the need for cross-sectoral and multidisciplinary team supports that may be based in, linked with, actively collaborating with through shared goals, or simply consulting with, schools (Edwards and Downes, 2013; TWG 2013). Inclusive systems for education have been described in structural terms as ones of concentric spatial systems of relation bringing assumed connection, inclusion and relative openness, in contrast to diametric spatial systems of assumed separation, splitting, exclusion, opposition, hierarchy and relative closure (Downes, 2012, 2013, 2015) (see also UNESCO 2016 on inclusive education systems).

<sup>6</sup> The ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015, p. 8) states: 'Policies to reduce early school leaving should be embedded in an overall inclusive learner-centred vision of education, in which high quality education is accessible to all. In such a vision, schools have a crucial role to play to ensure that all learners reach their full potential for growth irrespective of individual and family-related factors, socio-economic status and life experiences. Schools should be safe, welcoming and caring learning environments, striving for learners' engagement, in which children and young people can grow and develop as individuals and members of the community, feel respected and valued and recognised in their specific talents and needs'.

inclusion (2011, 2011a, 2013, 2013a, 2015), form the basic overarching framework for early school leaving prevention in general, and also led to particular attention on inclusive systems in and around education.

Integral to this overarching framework is also the Paris Declaration on Promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education (2015). The Paris Declaration (2015) commits to 'Fostering the education of disadvantaged children and young people, by ensuring that our education and training systems address their needs... encouraging outreach and cooperation with civil society and social partners' (p.4). It emphasises the importance of 'Ensuring inclusive education for all children and young people which combats racism and discrimination on any ground, promotes citizenship...Combating geographical, social and educational inequalities, as well as other factors which can lead to despair and create a fertile ground for extremism' (Paris Declaration 2015, p.3). Accordingly, promoting inclusive education systems and early school leaving prevention are also very much entwined with other issues such as prevention of extremism and also school bullying and violence. As observed in a recent NESET II report for the European Commission, these aspects, though distinct, can invite a commonality of system level responses (Downes and Cefai, 2016).

The scope of this report encompasses both primary and secondary schools. Given the range and complexity of issues, this report does not extend to Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC), even though some, though by no means all, of the same structural issues<sup>7</sup> would apply to ECEC given the distinctive developmental needs of the early years.

Research shows that the well-being of schoolchildren plays a decisive role in their scholastic success. Accordingly, a school has to provide an environment that nurtures the well-being of its students. Yet nowhere near all schools make sufficient resources available or offer enough activities to promote and foster the emotional well-being (e.g. personal well-being, sense of belonging) of their students and teachers (Biglan et al., 2012; Clycq et al., 2015; Nouwen et al., 2015; Ferguson et al. 2015). The ET2020 Schools Policy Working Group messages' (2015, p. 12) holistic focus places a central emphasis on learners' wellbeing for inclusive education:

In addition to creating a safe and welcoming environment, schools can also play an important role in detecting situations of bullying, victimisation, violence or abuse happening within and outside school. Developing strategies to deal with bullying prevention are essential in this respect. A wide range of activities, support and counselling, including emotional and psychological support to address mental health issues (including distress, depression, post-traumatic disorders), should be available to learners in the school and where applicable, in connection with local agencies and services.

Against the backdrop of the Paris Declaration 2015, the Council Conclusions (2015, p. 6) recognise a common purpose between promoting inclusive dimensions to education, and overcoming both socio-economic marginalisation and extremism, 'Ensuring that every young person has equal access to quality and inclusive education and the opportunity to develop his/her full potential, irrespective of individual, family-related or gender-related factors, socio-economic status and life experiences, is key

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<sup>7</sup> Early childhood education and care is explicitly related to early school leaving in the annex to the Council Recommendation (2011, p.3). However, this is outside the scope of the current framework of system level structural indicators and merits its own distinct focus in terms of such structural indicators.

to preventing and ...the term *inclusive education* refers to the right of all to a quality education that meets basic learning needs and enriches the lives of learners<sup>8</sup>.

Some key areas directly affecting early school leaving are largely outside the scope of the current framework of structural indicators for system change. These areas include poverty prevention<sup>9</sup>, local area based community development initiatives involving a range of community agencies, collective impact initiatives (Lawson and van Veen, 2016), children in care and intervention for homelessness (see also Commission Recommendation 2013, p.5), and new school designs<sup>10</sup>. Their omission from detailed analysis in this report should not suggest they are unimportant, but rather the opposite, and these vital areas require their own distinctive strategic focus; structural indicators may offer a dimension for strategic initiatives to address these major social problems and solutions. Indeed, they could potentially contribute to the EU2020 Strategy, which sets a common European target to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty and social exclusion by at least 20 million by 2020<sup>11</sup>, although examining such a role is outside the scope of this framework.

It should also be noted that frameworks of structural indicators for bullying and violence prevention in schools and the distinctive needs of VET schools have already been developed (Downes and Cefai, 2016; Cedefop, forthcoming 2016). These are key areas for inclusive systems in and around education that are also central to early school leaving prevention, and some of these key structural indicators will be incorporated into the current framework, although a more detailed focus on these thematic areas is provided in Downes and Cefai (2016) and Cedefop (forthcoming 2016).

Students with special educational needs are referred to in the Council Recommendation (2011, p.6) as a distinct group at higher risk of early school leaving. Special educational needs will be addressed with regard to transitions issues and bullying prevention issues, given that this group is overrepresented in experiences of bullying in school (Cornell et al., 2013; Downes and Cefai, 2016). Developing detailed structural indicators for the full range of distinctive needs that students with special educational needs may have is an enormous task, and while the current framework takes a very preliminary step towards it, this report does not purport to be a comprehensive systemic response. For example, key issues of adapted curricula, accessibility in schools, and of universal design for schools in constructing school buildings and for learning are outside the scope of this report. Issues pertaining to literacy education are also outside the scope of this report, as it tends to be in the Council and Commission policy documents on early school leaving, though brief reference is made in this report to family literacy.

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<sup>8</sup> The Council Conclusions (2015, p. 5) state, 'In our increasingly diverse societies, there is an urgent need for inclusive and coordinated responses from both educational and non-educational stakeholders which are aimed at promoting common values such as tolerance, mutual respect, equal opportunities and non-discrimination, as well as fostering social integration, intercultural understanding and a sense of belonging'.

<sup>9</sup> The largest proportion of children under the age of 18 who are at risk of poverty and social exclusion, and whose parents' level of education is low, live in central and eastern European countries (except Estonia, Latvia, Poland and Slovenia) (Eurydice, 2014, p.37). Almost every fourth person in the EU was still at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2014. Of all groups examined, the unemployed faced the greatest risk of poverty or social exclusion, at 66.7 % in 2014 (Eurostat, 2016).

<sup>10</sup> According to Lawson and van Veen (2016), the significant institutional changes that are underway globally involve re-thinking existing school-models and introducing new school designs. Such new models for schooling are considered 'an adaptive, social experiment' or 'a work in progress' and require changes on the macro-, meso- and micro-level. Even though there are international commonalities in the rationales for new school models, such a design should not be considered a one-size-fits-all approach. In order to meet desirable results, especially for sub-populations challenged by multitude risk-factors, new school designs need to be adapted to the school's sociogeographic context.

<sup>11</sup> The Commission Recommendation on Investing in Children: Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage explicitly links this EU2020 target with the early school leaving prevention EU2020 target as part of a 'new impetus to efforts to address poverty and social exclusion in the EU' (p.3).

Digital literacy is also outside the scope of the current report. A distinct focus on gender and sexual identity inclusion are major concerns that are also largely outside the scope of the current framework.

It is to be emphasised that this framework of structural indicators is not being proposed as a direct expression of a rights conferring approach with a corresponding legal obligation to implement them. Rather, it is intended as a contribution to the promotion of a quality based framework for education in respect to inclusive systems, against the backdrop of the EU2020 headline target for early school leaving prevention and the Paris Declaration (2015). It serves as a system review framework to inform current and future strategies at national and local levels in Member States.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### Ten Key Principles for Inclusive Systems in and around Schools

Ten key principles are developed in this report from relevant EU policy documents, and additionally from legal principles and basic aspects of a conceptual framework for understanding inclusive systems. These cross-cutting, fundamental principles inform the development of the structural indicators throughout the report.

**Table 1.** Ten Key Principles for Inclusive Systems in and around Schools

<b>1. System wide focus</b>	Schools, agencies and families are distinct but connected systems, each having a set of relationships and mutual influences that impact the individual – both system blockages as barriers and system supports.
<b>2. Equality and non-discrimination</b>	Substantive equality requires a commitment to educational success for everyone irrespective of social background; to achieve this, different groups may need additional supports. Non-discrimination includes a right to equality of concern and respect in a supportive environment free of prejudice.
<b>3.Children’s rights to expression of voices and participation, and other educational rights</b>	Children have a right to be heard on issues directly affecting their own welfare, with due regard to their ages and maturity.
<b>4. Holistic approach</b>	A holistic approach recognises the social, emotional and physical needs, not simply the academic and cognitive needs, of both children/young people and their parents.
<b>5. Active participation of parents in school, including marginalised parents</b>	Parental input into school policy and practices, as well as their children’s education, requires both a general strategic commitment and a distinctive focus on marginalised parents’ involvement.
<b>6. Differentiation in prevention approaches</b>	Different levels of need require different strategies to meet them, including those students and families that are experiencing moderate risk and chronic need.
<b>7. Building on strengths</b>	Promoting strengths in effect challenges the negative deficit labelling of vulnerable groups, and seeks to promote growth rather than simply prevent.
<b>8.Multidisciplinarity as a multifaceted response for students with complex needs</b>	A range of actively collaborating professionals is needed to address the complex, multifaceted needs of marginalised groups.
<b>9.Representation and participation of marginalised groups</b>	Marginalised groups include those experiencing poverty and social exclusion, those at risk of early school leaving, those experiencing bullying, mental health difficulties and/or special educational needs, and in addition, some groups of migrants and ethnic minorities.



	There must be a distinct focus on the processes and structures that ensure these groups' representation and participation.
<b>10. Lifelong learning</b>	Lifelong learning, from the cradle onwards, requires a distinct educational focus on active citizenship, personal and social fulfilment, intercultural dialogue across communities, and additionally on poverty, social inclusion, and employment. It embraces informal learning, as well as nonformal and formal education classes relying on active learning methodologies.

**1. System wide focus:** The ET2020 Schools Policy Working Group messages' (2015) central recommendation is for 'a 'whole school approach' to reduce early school leaving. In this approach the entire school community (school leaders, teaching and non-teaching staff, learners, parents and families) engages in a cohesive, collective and collaborative action, with strong cooperation with external stakeholders and the community at large' (p.5). In this whole school approach, the school is seen as 'a multidimensional and interactive system that can learn and change; an open learning hub which provides support to its neighbourhood and receives support from the community' (p.8). It moves away from simply treating early school leaving as a problem of the individual. This systemic focus also recognises the shift in understandings of resilience, from a predominantly individualistic focus on resilience to one that examines system level dimensions (Ungar et al., 2005). Resilience in the face of adversity highlighted by Rutter (1985, 1987) is extended not simply to a conception of resilient systems but rather to inclusive systems of supports for resilience (Downes, forthcoming 2017) for those experiencing socio-economic exclusion and family related difficulties.

**2. Equality and non-discrimination:** Article 20 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights establishes equality of persons before the law, Article 23 establishes the equality of men and women in all areas, and Article 21 prohibits discrimination on the basis of 'sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation'. The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights is a part of binding primary EU law, which always has priority. Member States must comply with it while applying the EU law, and the Charter may also be relied on by individuals in national courts.

**3. Children's rights to expression of voices and participation and other educational rights:** Child participation is a human right recognised by Article 24 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (OJ C 364, 18.12.2000). The overarching principle of Article 12 (1) of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) offers a key basis for educational development across European school systems. It declares: 'States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child'.

The UN CRC includes a number of articles that entrench children's right to education. The Convention requires state parties to provide children with appropriate and accessible education to the highest level (Article 28), and to ensure that school curricula promote respect for human rights of all peoples and for the child's cultural and national identity (Article 29).

**4. Holistic approach:** Inclusive systems involve a commitment to holistic approaches. The Commission's Working Group on Early Childhood Education and Care (2014, p. 69) describe the key principle of a holistic approach as 'child-centred and means paying attention simultaneously to all aspects of a child's development, well-being and learning needs including those which relate to social, emotional, physical, linguistic and cognitive development'. A holistic approach recognises the social, emotional and physical needs, not simply the academic and cognitive needs, of both children/young people and their parents.

A holistic focus recognises the need to include family support within a parental involvement in education framework, bridging health and education domains (Downes, 2014a), as part of a multidisciplinary focus on complex needs.

**5. Active Participation of Parents in School, including Marginalised Parents:** The TWG report (2013, p. 18) recognises that ‘Parents, as the primary educators of their children, should also be represented in the decision making process of the school’. The ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015, p. 16) expands on this point:

A proactive focus on supporting all parents’ participation in school activities and governance is needed. Marginalised parents in particular, need to be helped to take part in school decision-making processes. The role of parents in the school organisation should be clearly laid out. Parental involvement should be fully embedded in school evaluation and monitoring processes.

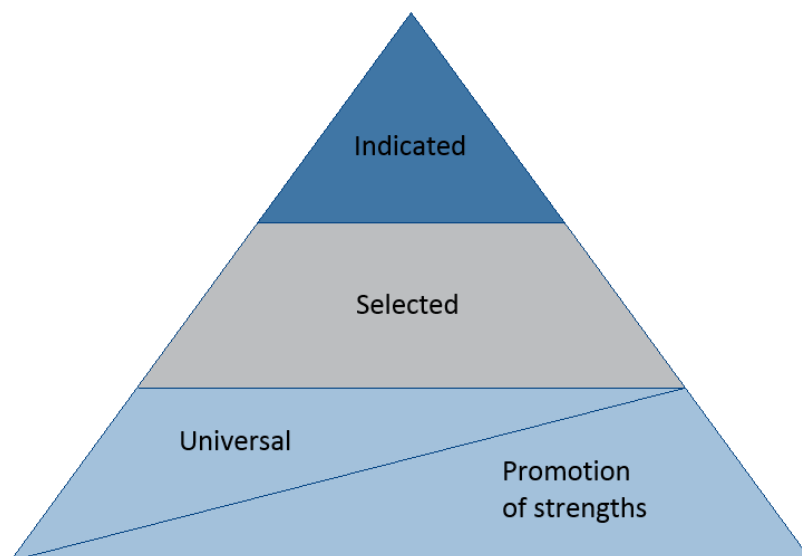
The need to engage marginalised voices of parents is further amplified in the UNESCO (2016, p. 81) report on supporting inclusive education:

... representation tends to be dominated by the most outspoken and articulate groups. This can result in consultation exercises, which, although intended to be inclusive, actually reinforce a sense of exclusion and disaffection among some of the school community.

**6. Differentiation in prevention approaches:** The ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015, p. 8) commits to a further principle of differentiated approaches as part of their vision of inclusive systems, ‘Differentiation’ refers to the process of tailoring teaching approaches to the specific needs of an individual or group of learners, and/or to specific circumstances. It requires that educators are able to select from a wide variety of teaching techniques and lesson adaptations in order to work with a diverse group of students, with diverse learning needs, in the same course, classroom, or learning environment’.

Differentiated prevention strategies can be universal (school wide for all), selected (for some, for groups, or for those at moderate risk) and indicated prevention (for few, for individuals, for those in chronic need at highest risk). These three levels are already well-recognised in drug prevention approaches at a European level (Burkhart, 2004), as well as in parental involvement levels in education for early school leaving prevention across 10 European city municipalities (Downes, 2014a) and in some mental health approaches in the US (Suldo et al., 2010).

Figure 1. Differentiated Levels of Need for Prevention



This prevention and promotion framework to promote inclusive systems in and around schools is an amplification of the distinction between universal, targeted and multiple disadvantages, a distinction acknowledged in the Commission's 2013 Recommendation<sup>12</sup>, while seeking to move away from the deficit labels of language such as disadvantage (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Spring, 2007).

**7. Building on strengths:** The Council Conclusions 2015 take not only a preventive approach but also a promotion focus building on strengths in its title regarding 'promoting success in school'. Another important contribution of Bronfenbrenner's systemic model is its concentration on the promotion of growth, rather than simply using terminology such as 'disadvantage' that emphasises deficits. Bronfenbrenner (1979, p. 290) rejects the deficit model of human function and growth, in favour of research, policy and practice that is committed to transforming experiments. This key principle of building on strengths is central to Bronfenbrenner's systemic account.

**8. Multidisciplinary as a multifaceted response for students with complex needs:** Multifaceted problems require multifaceted, multidisciplinary solutions. As well as encouraging the participation of key stakeholders, children and parents, the ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015, p.17) emphasises the principle of stakeholder involvement across multidisciplinary sectors:

... all relevant local key stakeholders are identified and involved in the process from the start. A wide range of stakeholders and professionals should be considered: social workers, youth services and organisations, outreach care workers, psychologists, nurses and other therapists (speech and language), child protection services, guidance specialists, police, unions, business, intercultural mediators, migrants associations, NGOs and other community based organisations from sport,

<sup>12</sup> The Commission Recommendation (2013) highlights the importance of a sustained focus on those with multiple complex needs: 'Ensure a focus on children who face an increased risk due to multiple disadvantage such as Roma children, some migrant or ethnic minority children, children with special needs or disabilities, children in alternative care and street children, children of imprisoned parents, as well as children within households at particular risk of poverty, such as single parent or large families (pp. 4-5)'.

cultural environment and active citizenship sectors, etc. The choice of stakeholders has to be appropriate and relevant to local circumstances and context.

The focus on inclusive systems *in and around* schools incorporates this recognition of the need to embrace multidisciplinary working.

**9. Representation and participation of marginalised groups:** A key dimension of stakeholder involvement for inclusive systems is democratic in nature, ensuring representation and participation of marginalised groups in the decision-making and implementation approaches across the education system. Marginalised groups include those experiencing poverty and social exclusion, those at risk of early school leaving, those experiencing bullying, mental health difficulties and/or special educational needs, along with some groups of migrants and ethnic minorities. As the UNESCO (2016) report on supporting inclusive education explicitly recognises, inclusion attends to those groups of learners who may be at risk of marginalization, exclusion or underachievement. The United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal 4 aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education, and promote lifelong learning opportunities, for all by 2030. Moreover, the Commission's Working Group on Early Childhood Education and Care (2014), and a recent report by Donlevy et al. (2016) for the EU Commission on teacher diversity, both highlight the importance of recruiting teachers from minority ethnic groups and/or with migrant background to further cement a principle of representation and meaningful participation.

**10. Lifelong learning:** A further dimension of this framework is the lens of lifelong learning from the cradle to old age. The EU Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020') (2009 /C 119/02) state: 'In the period up to 2020, the primary goal of European cooperation should be to support the further development of education and training systems in the Member States which are aimed at ensuring:

- The personal, social and professional fulfilment of all citizens.
- Sustainable economic prosperity and employability, whilst promoting democratic values, social cohesion, active citizenship, and intercultural dialogue.'

Lifelong learning offers a background framework for promoting educational systems in ways that create positive goals for learning and communication that are antithetical to exclusion through bullying and violence. A central tenet of lifelong learning, as well as of learner-centred approaches, is commitment to *active learning* through constructivist approaches building from students' previous life experiences and interests, in contrast to the didactic 'jug and mug' method of pouring information into passive students. The words of the Commission's Working Group on Early Childhood Education and Care (2014, p. 10) are apt here: 'all children are active and capable learners whose diverse competences are supported by the curriculum'.

## A System Framework of Structural Indicators

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Identifying structural indicators for a systemic strategic response will be done by analogy with the UN framework on the right to health, which has done much to develop systemic examination through structural indicators. In the words of the UN Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health (2006):

54. *Structural indicators* address whether or not key structures and mechanisms... are in place. They are often (but not always) framed as a question generating a yes/no answer. For example, they may

address: the ratification of international treaties... the adoption of national laws and policies...or the existence of basic institutional mechanisms....

This approach to structural indicators, building on the UN framework, differs from an earlier approach of the Commission to structural indicators outlined in its 2003 Communication, which treats structural features of society as quantitative statistical indicators, comparable to what the UN framework would describe as outcome indicators. The current approach is much more resonant with the adoption of *Structural Indicators for Monitoring Education and Training Systems in Europe* in the Eurydice Background Reports to the Education and Training Monitor 2015 and 2016.

As the recent UNESCO (2016) report on supporting inclusive education recognises, inclusion is concerned with the identification and removal of barriers<sup>13</sup>. While structural indicators identify problems as system blockages to inclusive systems, they are also solution focused, identifying problems and solutions, rather than simply tracing the vast range of causal factors associated with early school leaving viewed in isolation. They provide a systemic-level focus on enabling background structural conditions for change rather than reducing change to one simplistic magic bullet cause (see also annex A). As well as system blockage focus on preventing difficulties, the structural indicators can also play an important role in promoting positive change for inclusive systems.

Structural indicators pertain to the structural features of a system that can be changed; they can operate flexibly at different levels of a system and at different levels of concreteness and abstraction (laws, physical spaces, designated roles and responsibilities in an organisation, enduring key principles that underpin an intervention/action/strategy, and potentially malleable dimensions to a school and/or community system). Examples of structural indicators that can operate on diverse levels could also include curriculum aspects, institutional admission criteria for entry, roles in institutions, guiding principles, existence of physical spaces, etc. Another example is legislation, such as offering a statutory right to secondary education. As structural features of a system affect processes, structural indicators are relevant to development of many process issues in a system.

There should be a strong degree of thematic alignment between the structural indicators for the national level and for the school level, so that schools can be supported in implementing this agenda for development of an inclusive systems framework, and also to avoid a shifting of responsibility from national level onto schools (Downes, 2015b). Consideration may need to be given to incentives for schools to engage with implementing this framework of structural indicators; it is vital that they are not required to furnish large amounts of evidence to prove the existence or otherwise of a structural indicator, and to ensure this is an action-oriented, organic living process of review, rather than merely a bureaucratic tick-box exercise for schools. It is important to keep this structural indicators tool user-friendly and to recognise that the yes/no responses are potentially verifiable, so that, if necessary, evidence on a particular indicator can be produced by a school for external review, but not to the extent that such evidence is required at all times for every indicator. The structural indicators matrix tool for schools proposed in this report can feed into whole school planning and to external evaluation processes. It is recognised that some data collection systems may need to be developed to provide

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<sup>13</sup> While analysing systems at Bronfenbrenner's different levels, this focus also acknowledges a key feature of systems he gave less attention to, namely, system change, blockage and inertia (Downes, 2014). There is a need to introduce dynamic features of inclusive systems—in contrast to inert or blocked systems—that require a focus on change and time.

evidence on these structural indicators nationally and to improve feedback processes between schools and central levels.

Structural indicators are potentially beneficial in that they provide system transparency of strategy, as well as an opportunity to guide future strategy as a process of system development. In order to assert the presence of any given structural indicator, generally framed as a yes/no question, evidence may need to be provided to validate it. The detail of such evidence may depend on the kind of specific structural indicator, and may require different levels of detail for different structural indicators. The level of detail may also depend on the form of the reporting process. Structural indicators can operate at different system levels such as the individual institution, local, regional, national, and EU level. A key feature of the questioning for structural indicators is that it leads to at least potentially verifiable factual statements (as yes/no responses). When there is suspicion that a state or educational institution is giving an inaccurate positive response to a key structural indicator, authorities must be able to investigate and request proof.

Significantly, structural indicators offer a way to provide an overarching national framework of issues to address, while allowing flexibility for local actors, including schools, on how exactly to address them. In other words, they indicate *what* to address, not *how* to address it (Downes, 2015a). Structural indicators can identify learning from research about key enabling conditions for successful interventions, while at the same time allowing for local flexibility about the contextual detail of how to implement approaches to give flesh to these enabling conditions. This reflects the concerns of the Commission's TWG report (2013) for local and regional adaptation.

Structural indicators respect the professional judgments of educators, health and care professionals, and are not an attempt to dictate rigid top-down prescriptive activities in programmatic manuals. However, although their intention is to free up the dynamism of local people attuned to the needs of their local communities, they should not be misinterpreted as a step towards total decentralisation (Downes, 2015a)<sup>14</sup>.

Structural indicators not only go beyond a traditional qualitative/quantitative distinction in assessing system level progress in an area. It goes beyond an approach of sharing models of good practice to seek to identify key enabling structural conditions for good practice rather than seeking to naively transfer a good practice from one complex context to another. The key structural conditions<sup>15</sup> of good practice are the dimensions for transferability.

When developing structural indicators for inclusive systems in and around schools, there needs to be an acknowledgement of the range of different system level interactions defined by Bronfenbrenner

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<sup>14</sup> The UNESCO (2016, p. 33) report on inclusive education makes explicit some risks associated with decentralisation, as part of the need for a balancing process that recognises also its opportunities: 'Schools and local authorities can be resisters of change as well as leaders of change. Devolving power to schools and local administrations invites them to pursue their own self-interest rather than implementation of national policy. This is a particular problem if national policy itself is ambiguous or has multiple, conflicting aims'.

<sup>15</sup> Structural indicators as enabling conditions for system change involve a cluster of indicators rather than a decontextualized focus on only one or two indicators on an issue. The clusters of structural indicators need to be of sufficient range and diversity to reflect the needs of diverse systems across Europe and to create an agenda for system development for inclusive systems in and around schools in Europe. They provide an overarching framework to assist strategic decision making in developing inclusive systems in and around schools rather than prescribing a narrower range of models for all to follow. The variety of structural indicators contrasts with the relative sparseness of quantitative outcome indicators, as they reflect different kinds of indicators to inform system strategies at different levels.

(1979, p. 8). These range from microsystem relations in the immediate setting, to meso-, exo- and macrosystem levels of ‘generalised patterns’ in the wider society. A mesosystem involves interrelations among two or more settings in which the developing person actively participates: for a child, it is their home, school neighbourhood and peer group; for an adult, it is their family, work and social life (Bronfenbrenner 1979, p. 25). An exosystem involves one or more settings that do not involve the developing person as an active participant, but in which events occur that affect or are affected by what happens in the setting of the developing person (Bronfenbrenner 1979, p. 25). These levels of systems are one way by which to anticipate opportunities to bridge the gap between ideas and reality, policy and implementation. Focusing on the meso- and exosystemic levels emphasises that the relations between educational institutions and other groups need to be examined. Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) systems level framework offers a multilevelled focus for action to bring constructive system level change. These well-known macro-exo-meso-microsystem levels inform the basic thematic structure of the issues examined in this report.

**Table 2.** Macro-Exo-Meso-Microsystem levels Examples

<b>Macrosystem</b> – Wider societal processes affecting the child but in which the child is not a direct participant.	Education Ministry Decision-Making.
<b>Exosystem</b> – Relations between two settings, both of which affect the child but in which the child is not a direct participant.	Communication strategies, structures or processes between education and health ministries making policies affecting the child.
<b>Mesosystem</b> – Relations between two settings where the child is located directly.	Communication strategies, structures or processes between the child’s home and school.
<b>Microsystem</b> – Where the child is located directly.	The child’s home or school.

There are two sets of structural indicators – one for national and one for school level – which follow the same basic structure as these different system levels. See also Annex B for Tables that make explicit the links between the themes explored in this report and their interpretation in terms of Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) macro-exo-meso-microsystem ecological framework.

## CHAPTER 1. PROMOTING SYSTEM INTEGRATION OF POLICY AND PRACTICE<sup>16</sup> FOR INCLUSIVE SYSTEMS IN AND AROUND SCHOOLS

Every thematic section of this report relates to national macrosystemic policy issues. This section adopts an exosystemic focus on relations between systems that the student is not directly involved in, but which nevertheless strongly influence the student, for example, national coordination structures and cross-school cooperation.

### 1.1. Establishing National Coordination Structures for Inclusive Systems in and around Schools and Local Cross-School Cooperation Structures

<sup>16</sup> At macrosystem and exosystem levels.

National strategic commitment to inclusive systems in and around schools requires a corresponding structure at national level as a driving force to ensure these policy and practice issues for inclusive systems in education are kept as a priority for schools and at national policy level. A range of EU documents emphasise the need for such a coordinating body in the related area of early school leaving prevention. The TWG report (2013, p. 11) recommends,

A coordinating body such as a dedicated unit within the Ministry of Education with cross-department links or a separate agency can support cooperation at national level and collaborate with ministries/institutions in related policy fields (e.g. education, economy, employment, youth, health, welfare and social policy). It can facilitate collaboration with stakeholders, but also help to raise awareness and ensure long-term political commitment for ESL. It could be responsible for policy development, monitoring and assessment of ESL measures at national level and the dissemination of good practice’.

The Eurydice (2014, p. 12) report echoes this, observing that although only four countries/regions have established a formal coordinating body as part of their comprehensive strategy for tackling early leaving (Belgium’s Flemish Community, Spain, Malta and the Netherlands), ‘the reported initial positive outcomes of their work could serve as an example for other countries’.

The composition of such committees needs to be representative to ensure that marginalised groups’ voices and interests are heard at national policy and implementation level. These committees are to be based on the principles of inclusive systems, such as the ten key principles outlined in this report’s section 1.1.

Cross-school cooperation at local levels offers not only opportunities for sharing good practice, but also for mutual dialogue to ensure a consistency of expectations across school institutional cultures and to promote a positive school climate. Such local cross-school cooperation needs to be embedded at national strategic level. Cross-school cooperation is a key feature of positive transitions across schools, especially for marginalised students. According to West et al. (2010), an illustrative study of over 200 Scottish pupils, students with lower ability and lower self-esteem had more negative school transition experiences, which led to lower levels of attainment and higher levels of depression, and anxious students were found to experience more bullying. In addition, recent research indicates that school climate is a key factor in successful transition to secondary school (Madjar and Cohen-Malayev, 2016) and is central to preschool-primary transition (Cadimaa et al., 2015). It is quite clear, then, that cross-school cooperation on transitions needs to address school climate issues. Another similar issue is the extent to which there is clarity about whether the sending or receiving school is responsible for the transition plans of individual students with higher need (Downes, 2016).

The ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015 p. 11) highlights the ability of cross-school cooperation in local areas to facilitate exchanges of practices that involve families, local authorities, and early childhood settings. This is echoed in the Council Conclusions (2015, p. 10), which envisages cooperation at all system levels, inclusive of ‘regional, national and international levels, in order to promote the exchange of good practices’.



## 1.2. Overcoming Socio-economic Segregation in Schools: A Cross-School Cooperation Issue to be Developed at National and Regional Levels

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Several studies describe how persistent social segregation is, especially in cities, producing neighbourhoods with high unemployment, and with precarious living and home environments, all of which have a detrimental effect on the local schools. De facto segregated schools usually do not have sufficient financial resources, and have higher concentrations of socio-economically marginalised students (Razer et al., 2013; OECD, 2012a; Abrantes, 2013)<sup>17</sup>. Research also suggests that teacher quality is distributed unevenly among schools, to the detriment of students with a low socioeconomic status (SES); teachers with stronger qualifications are more likely to quit or transfer to schools with better academic performance, especially if they teach in low-achieving schools (OECD, 2013; Simon and Moore Johnson, 2013; Boyd et al., 2008). These factors all lead to increased early school leaving rates<sup>18</sup>.

There is evidence that a significant number of young people with the lowest educational outcomes live in the economically poorest neighbourhoods within the EU. This leads to further disadvantages like “neighbourhood effects” for the youngsters concerned. Additionally, these young people often attend schools with even higher concentrations of poverty than their home neighbourhoods (Raffo, Dyson and Kerr, 2014). Families with more information about the education system tend to choose “better” schools for their children, and so the number of young people with low socio-economic backgrounds increase in high poverty neighbourhood schools that simultaneously have higher levels of low aggregate educational achievements (Raffo, Dyson and Kerr, 2014).

Riddell’s (2012) European review observes that people with special educational needs (SEN) are still at high risk to experience institutional segregation or restricted opportunities in education. In such SEN settings, Roma children and children with ethnic minority and/or low socio-economic backgrounds are overrepresented across all Member States. Despite cross-national agreements prohibiting discrimination against young people with SEN, their implementation in national systems differs between countries. Furthermore, there is a European trend of delegating decisions to the local level. This bears a risk: schools in socially advantaged areas can select their students and leave children from socio-economically excluded areas behind, thus creating segregated schools instead of schools with a diverse student population. School enrolment and admission policies must guarantee equal access to good quality education irrespective of the gender, socio-economic, religious, or ethnic background of students. This requires the establishment of monitoring mechanisms and appropriate school management (van Driel, Darmody and Kerzil, 2016).

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<sup>17</sup> The homogenisation of lower-skilled students in low-performing schools further reinforces their disadvantage because they often experience less academic encouragement, lower academic expectations, and lower quality of teaching (‘incentives to disengagement’) (Razer et al., 2013; Lavy et al., 2009). Further negative factors are bullying, stigmatisation and a lower developed self-efficacy (OECD, 2012a; Hanushek and Woessmann, 2005; NEWB, 2008; Downes, 2011a). The neighbourhood continues to decline, and its image deteriorates even further.

<sup>18</sup> Garcia-Reid (2008) describes how such educational environments are experienced both by the students and the teachers as disempowering, thus hampering the development of ‘positive teacher and student aspirations and identities’. Most people do not recognise such structural mechanisms as discrimination through symbolic violence, because concealment is a characteristic trait of this form of discrimination and inequality. This is also the reason why most school early school leavers blame themselves for their ‘failure’ and teachers likewise assign the responsibility to the early school leaver and his/her family circumstances. Unveiling this symbolic violence and the opportunities that come with doing so, which lie in the design and format of the education system as a whole, requires reflexive professionalism on the part of the main stakeholders. Even the term early school leaver, which is still in common use, usually has connotations that responsibility for dropping out of school lies with the young people themselves (Araújo et al., 2013; De Witte et al., 2013a).

The Commission Recommendation 2013 emphasizes that spatial disparities in the availability, quality and outcomes of education need to be recognised and addressed, and desegregation policies need to foster comprehensive schooling. However, as the Eurydice (2014) report notes, ‘few countries/regions have recent or on-going policies in place to... restrict socio-economic segregation in schools’ (p. 10). Such policies could be directed at managing school choice (OECD, 2007), at mitigating the concentration of low SES and low ability students in certain regions or schools (Dale, 2010), and at school cooperation at local and municipal levels to organise admission processes informed by equity considerations.

A relevant issue here for cross-school cooperation is a willingness not to segregate students based on socio-economic background in particular local schools over others. This is related to Dale’s (2010, p. 37) recognition of the strategy of structural change, through ‘attempting to change the composition of low SES schools through more ‘structural’ reforms aimed at decreasing socioeconomic segregation between schools. The aim would be to provide better access for children from low SES backgrounds to schools with higher SES composition, where their achievements might be ‘lifted’ rather than ‘depressed’ by the composition effect.’ Dale (2010) continues, ‘The other approach is to introduce reforms aimed at bolstering the achievement levels of low SES schools. Here, though, the solution runs up against the fact that this has been shown to be difficult to achieve when low SES or low ability students are concentrated in particular schools’.

Dale’s (2010, p. 46) review concludes that,

One of the clearest lessons from research for policy is that the concentration of migrant young people in schools which already have high levels of socio-economic and multiple-disadvantage, produces heightened risks of early school leaving. This clustering, concentration or ‘ghettoisation’ of migrant young people needs therefore to be a major focus for policy approaches and it requires brave decisions to address the school admissions arrangements which produce the ghettoisation.

Heckmann (2008) acknowledges that school segregation is usually a consequence of housing segregation where marginalised groups live in areas of higher poverty. There is an information gap regarding the scale of socio-economic segregation of migrants, as is highlighted in the Eurydice (2014, p. 9) report: ‘Data on foreign-born early leavers supplied to Eurostat by the national statistical authorities have low reliability... Finally, there are no comparable data available for second generation migrants at EU level’.

### 1.3. Developing Early Warning Prevention and Intervention Systems and Data Collection Systems

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Data collection needs to be such that it can be used actively in early warning systems; this is preferable to an unresponsive collection of data, disconnected from an intervention focus<sup>19</sup>. The Council Conclusions (2015, p. 8) recognise the need for ‘enhancing national data collection systems which regularly gather a wide range of information on learners’. A wide range of information, ‘means in particular learning more about:

- the age at which discontinuation of education and training occurs;
- the relationship between early school leaving and truancy;

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<sup>19</sup> This requires an exosystem focus on relations between systems.

- differences with regard to early school leaving according to gender, academic performance or achieved education levels;
- the socio-economic background or a proxy, such as neighbourhood information;
- the background and/or mother tongue of the learner’.

According to Eurydice (2014, p. 8), ‘all countries/regions, except for Belgium (German-speaking Community), Czech Republic, Croatia, Cyprus, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and the United Kingdom (Northern Ireland), have national data collections on early leaving, in addition to the data gathered for the EU Labour Force Survey’. Eurydice (2014, p. 8) observes that ‘in only around half of them based on data aggregated at local and school level, making it difficult to obtain a picture of the specific situation in local communities and schools’<sup>20</sup> which could be used by early warning systems. There is a long way to go before reaching the ideal: a consistent systemic response that involves subpopulation identification, targeting and intervention specification-tailoring in a usable way for schools and multidisciplinary local services as part of early warning intervention systems.

Council Conclusions (2015, p. 8) observe the need to ‘help to understand the reasons for early school leaving, including by collecting the views of learners’. This implies that dialogue needs to be established with those at risk of early school leaving needs, to systematically hear and collect their views about their growing alienation from the education system and, perhaps, wider society (Eurydice, 2014, p.8). According to Eurydice (2014, p. 8), ‘France, Malta and the United Kingdom (Scotland) are amongst those few countries that routinely conduct surveys of students after they have left education and training prematurely’. This is also the case in Iceland. To be able to address their concerns, it is important to hear the voices of these students while they are still in education. To hear their needs only after they have left is too late (Downes, 2013).

The neglect of the topic of student voices in data collection, which has only recently begun to be discussed with more force in political and academic circles, can also be seen both in schools and in research (Day et al., 2015; EU Council, 2015; European Commission, 2013)<sup>21</sup>. Quiet and inconspicuous students who may be silenced or dismissed within their peer group cultures, often lack the courage to confide in their teachers. Strengthening and developing the direct honest voices of school students is therefore an important aspect in making student voices heard (Rudduck and Fielding, 2006; Nairz-Wirth, 2015).

One of the obstacles for early warning systems to function well is the notable European data gap on national and regional levels concerning the numbers of students suspended, given stand downs, sent home early as a sanction, and expelled. Munn and Lloyd’s (2005) qualitative study in the UK points out that the voices of students excluded from school for disciplinary reasons are often not heard, but it is precisely their perceptions which could be helpful in discovering potential shortcomings both in schools and in society. In addition, many students described feeling under pressure to accept the

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<sup>20</sup> This key issue of linking local school nonattendance with national early school leaving data has been observed to be a problem, for example, in a decentralised regionally focused system such as Munich (Downes 2015).

<sup>21</sup> In this context, it is not just the political and bureaucratic mechanisms that play an important role, but also the (education) theories and research methods. Quantitative methods require the selection of variables and indicators, which concentrate on so-called objective structures. Qualitative student-oriented research combined with action research and the involvement of the students is particularly suitable for identifying the experiences and perspectives of school students. It is also the only way to gain an insight into their subjective experiences, which otherwise remain hidden behind the dominant structures in school and society (Gase et al., 2016; Nairz-Wirth et al., 2014).

preferred choice of their parents or caregivers when it came to choosing their subjects and school/educational establishment (Day et al., 2015).

The TWG (2013, p. 19) report highlights the importance of early warning prevention and intervention systems,

School staff play a key role in recognising early signs of disengagement. They are important actors in providing a first response to these signs, where necessary, in conjunction with youth and social workers and/or other professionals working with young people. Responses to early warning signals should be fast and include parents and pupils. Individual action plans could be created to help and guide at-risk pupils.

The Council Conclusions (2015, p. 11) recognise the importance of early warning prevention and intervention systems, which are ‘mechanisms to detect early signs of disengagement, such as regular absences or behavioural issues’. These issues are key for transitions, and can inform the work of multidisciplinary teams in and around schools for children and families with complex needs.

## CHAPTER 2. MACROSTRUCTURE ISSUES FOR INCLUSIVE SYSTEMS IN AND AROUND SCHOOLS

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The focus of this section is on particular macrosystemic structures in education systems. These are as follows: student tracking/selection processes, overcoming socio-economic segregation in schools, grade repetition, illegality under EU law of ethnic segregation in schools, alternatives to suspension/expulsion, targeting priority zones/territories and schools with higher poverty and socio-economic exclusion for additional funding, and flexible pathways for VET.

### 2.1. Limiting Early Tracking and Postponing Academic Selection

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Studies such as the comparative analysis of policies in Austria, Belgium, Hungary, Netherlands, Poland, UK, Sweden, Portugal, Spain (RESL.eu, 2014) frequently confirm the observation that learners who are tracked into vocational education have a higher probability of coming from a lower socioeconomic background, perform lower academically, and are being restricted in their choice of further education paths. Dunning-Lozano (2014) studied the stratifying role of public alternative schools created for ‘at-risk’ learners, which develop a pattern of ‘self-condemnation’ amongst students<sup>22</sup>.

Although it has been met with resistance by many countries, there is a strong consensus in the international research and EU Policy documents on the negative effects of early student tracking that

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<sup>22</sup> Through acts of symbolic violence students internalized and incorporated categories and narratives of meritocratic promotion in schools that obscure the structural power of domination, which reproduces systems of inequality.

The discriminatory force of symbolic violence can be rooted in the structures of education systems, i.e., is established through legislation and other normative, organisational rules. These can include, for instance, tracking (or a curriculum) that favours certain cultural groups. The basic hypothesis for the use of Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic violence (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 2003; Bourdieu, 2003) is as follows: social inequality in a society is permanently accompanied and sustained by two forms of power – the power of the state, which is legitimised through the state monopoly (the judiciary system and executive authorities), and symbolic power. The latter is ‘invisible’ to most people and is usually not grasped as violence. Yet symbolic violence is already exercised through the structure of the education system (e.g. in higher and lower ranking schools). Since the education system captures all children and young people and is, thus, the basic institution of learning, students become accustomed to symbolic violence from an early age. They ultimately come to regard it as a matter of course and as a natural occurrence which, incidentally, is a key characteristic that guarantees its stability.

is based on academic performance, which in effect discriminates against socio-economically marginalised students and minority groups. Early testing and grouping of students according to their academic abilities contributes to inequality of educational opportunities for marginalised children (OECD Reviews of Migrant Education, 2010). Heckmann's (2008) European review recognises that educational attainment of migrant students is better in comprehensive systems with late selection of students to different ability tracks, and worse in systems of high selectivity. Early tracking occurs through the separation of students based on performance; examples of this are found in Austria, Netherlands and Germany. Tracking can take place not only through the separation into different types of schools but also within an individual school (e.g. into academic and applied track students). Segedin's (2012) Canadian mixed-methods study provides evidence that most schoolchildren in applied tracks see themselves as at a considerable disadvantage in comparison to students in academic tracks. One of the OECD's (2007) ten steps to equity in education is to 'Limit early tracking and streaming and postpone academic selection'. Tracking needs to be delayed for as long as possible.

More dialogue with key stakeholders—such as with parents and NGO's that represent ethnic minorities and migrants—is needed at national and municipal levels, about ways to delay potentially damaging and premature selections processes.

## 2.2. Avoiding Grade Repetition

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It is clear from the widespread use of grade repetition that there is a resistance to system change on this issue. As highlighted in Eurydice (2014, p. 44), according to the OECD's 2012 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) data, the country with the largest proportion of students reporting that they had repeated a grade in primary, lower secondary or upper secondary school is Belgium (36.1%), followed closely by Spain, Luxembourg and Portugal (each exceeding 30%). Two of these countries (Spain and Portugal) also have some of the highest levels of early leaving in Europe. In France and the Netherlands, the rates of students who repeated a grade are close to 30%. Germany and Switzerland have rates around 20%. In contrast, there is no grade retention in Norway. In France, Germany and the Netherlands, migrants as well as native students commonly repeat a grade, while in other countries, this practice is very rare (Borodankova and de Almeida Coutinho, 2011).

Repeating the concerns of the OECD (2007, 2010) on the need to 'Identify and provide systematic help to those who fall behind at school and reduce year repetition', the EU Commission's TWG report (2013) observes that grade repetition does not effectively address underperformance in school and, moreover, it is likely to undermine pupils' confidence and trigger early school leaving. Accordingly, a number of countries started to invest in individualised and targeted learning support.

The demotivating effects of removing children from their own age cohort by placing them with younger students is further highlighted in the TWG report (2013, p. 17), which recommends that migrant children be placed within the same age group as their native peers to ensure their successful inclusion. Municipalities can play a key role in documenting the scale of grade retention activities taking place in their local schools, paying particular notice to migrants and ethnic minorities (Downes, 2015).

One of the OECD's (2007) ten steps to equity in education is to 'Set concrete targets for more equity, particularly related to low school attainment and dropouts'. Targets could certainly be set to reduce grade retention, with a view to eliminate the retention processes.

## 2.3. Enforcing Illegality under EU Law of Ethnic Segregation in Schools

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Despite the fact that most EU countries have legislative regulations that aim to avoid discrimination, ethnic minorities are still disproportionately affected by it. Anti-discrimination policies are most established in Ireland, Sweden and the Netherlands, where independent bodies that have been set up to monitor and remedy unlawful discrimination have proved to be very effective (Schraad-Tischler and Kroll, 2014). In Croatia, Hungary, Malta, Romania, Slovakia and Greece, minority students occasionally face systematic discrimination. Discrimination against Roma is still clearly evident in Croatia, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia (Schraad-Tischler and Kroll, 2014)<sup>23</sup>.

The Roma population constitutes the largest ethnic minority in Europe, in total being close to 12 million citizens (Rostas and Kostka 2014). According to Rostas and Kostka (2014, p. 272), 'school segregation is conceptualised as a physical separation, whether intentionally or not, of Roma pupils from their non-Roma peers that limits their full realisation of the right to education. School segregation is a special form of discrimination which, in Roma case, overlaps with lower quality education'. New (2011-12, p. 48) points out that 'Roma Schools: So-called 'ghetto schools' come in several forms, but all are related to residential segregation. One example is the 'neighbourhood school' in urban and rural areas where only Roma live'.

The Commission continues to investigate cases of suspected discrimination in housing and education in several Member States (European Commission, 2016). European Parliament resolutions have emphasized that all regulations or measures that lead to segregation of students must be rejected, and initiatives that aim to prevent segregation must be supported (INCLUD-ED, 2012). The Czech Republic has been found to be in violation of EU law regarding the discriminatory practice of disproportionate streaming of Roma children into remedial special schools, so ruled in the case of *DH and others v Czech Republic* 2007 (see also O'Higgins and Bruggemann, 2014). The illegality of educational segregation of Romani children has been demonstrated in the European Court of Human Rights by judgments in *DH and others v Czech Republic* (2007), *Sampanis v. Greece* (2008), *Orsus v. Croatia* (2010), *Sampani v. Greece* (2012) and *Horvath and Kis v. Hungary* (2013), all of which rejected ethnic segregation in mainstream schools and/or the placing of Romani students in special schools for children with mental disabilities (Rostas and Kostka, 2014). Roma face the most negative perceptions and stereotypes from the majority population in Spain (Curcic et al., 2014). The need for legislative responses at national level is clearly evident, including legal responses such as closing schools where necessary, supervisory roles for the school inspectorate in dialogue with civil society organisations to monitor and prevent segregation, and the use of culturally and linguistically appropriate assessment tools.

Key EU Anti-Discrimination laws and policies that also provide an important backdrop include: the EU Council Directive of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin; Proposal for a directive of 2 July 2008 against discrimination based on age, disability, sexual orientation and religion or belief beyond the workplace; Framework decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law; Council recommendation of 9 December 2013 on effective Roma integration measures in the Member States; Communication of 17 June 2015 on the implementation of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies; Joint Report on the application of the Racial Equality Directive (2000/43/EC) and the Employment Equality Directive (2000/78/EC).

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<sup>23</sup> Across many European countries, but particularly in South East Europe, Roma children are at greater risk of being placed in special schools or classes, or in ethnically segregated schools, where they receive limited education leading to restricted future work opportunities (Riddell, 2012).

Council Recommendation 2011 refers to 'Promoting active anti-segregation policies' (annex p. 4), while the Council Conclusions 2015 express this imperative even more firmly, 'Pursue - as appropriate - the reform of education systems, looking at the whole spectrum of education and training, including... addressing segregation and inequalities in education systems' (p. 9). This issue is again at the forefront of an anti-poverty push at EU level to 'foster desegregation policies that strengthen comprehensive schooling' (Commission Recommendation 2013, p. 7).

## 2.4. Developing Alternatives to Suspension and Expulsion

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Suspension rates themselves are predictive of dropout rates (Lee et al., 2011). While in some countries such as Sweden it is illegal to suspend or expel a student from school, other countries operate different approaches<sup>24</sup>. A Lithuanian national report provided accounts of 10% of students being expelled or suspended in some areas, with the reasons given as usually being behaviour problems, bullying, harassment, and aggression, i.e., non-academic reasons (Taljunaite et al., 2010). The Irish secondary figure of 5% for suspension, applied to the total population of 332,407 students, equates to well over 16,000 students suspended from postprimary schools in 2005/6 (Millar, 2010) with figures in June 2012 (NEWB) tallying 1,051 suspensions in primary schools 2009/10 and 14,162 in postprimary. Many of these students, including those manifesting violent and aggressive behaviour, require mental health/emotional supports through more structured engagements with multidisciplinary teams in and around schools. Some pupils and students that display consistently high levels of aggression and bullying are reacting to deep trauma in their lives that requires therapeutic supports. Gregory et al.'s (2010) review concludes that the overrepresentation of racial and ethnic minorities in discipline sanctions has not received the attention it deserves.

The American Academy of Pediatrics Policy Statement (2013) on this issue recognises that 'the adverse effects of out-of-school suspension and expulsion can be profound' (p. e1001); such students are as much as 10 times more likely to leave school early, are more likely to be involved in the juvenile justice system, and 'there may be no one at home during the day to supervise the student's activity' (p. e1002) if the parents are working. The policy statement continues, 'They can also be very superficial if, in using them, school districts avoid dealing with underlying issues affecting the child or the district, such as drug abuse, racial and ethnic tensions, and cultural anomalies associated with violence and bullying' (American Academy of Pediatrics, p. e1002). Suspensions and expulsions are antithetical to inclusive systems.

A system strategy of suspension, stand-downs and expulsion/exclusion from school for children and young people is in direct tension with the EU2020 headline target of reducing early school leaving to 10% across the EU, and contrary to a framework of developing inclusive systems in and around schools. From a public policy perspective, it is highly counterproductive to have a range of state/local authority actors striving to keep children and young people in the school system, while those efforts are simultaneously being undermined by school or local network policies of suspension/expulsion that directly exclude students from school. There are a wide range of different strategies for addressing this

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<sup>24</sup> In Polish national research (CBOS, 2006), being put outside the classroom was a sanction experienced by 15 % of students, with 53 % observing this as occurring for others. However, the issue is less one regarding removal of a student from the class to engage them in a set of alternative activities but more regarding his or her removal from the school. An English study by Rennison et al., (2005) found that young people in the NEET [Not in Education, Employment or Training] group were over three times more likely previously to have been excluded from school than young people overall. According to 2013 data, there were 0.06 % permanent exclusions (expulsions) in England, and 3.5 % experienced fixed term exclusions (suspension).

issue in EU Member States, but it has not been systematically analysed in a wider European context. Current key EU Commission and Council documents on early school leaving touch upon issues related to suspension and expulsion/exclusion but do not address them directly or overtly. For example, the Commission Staff Working Paper (2011, p. 10) only indirectly raises the issue of suspensions and expulsions when observing that early school leaving is associated with situations 'in which the school environment is characterised by violence, disruptive behaviour of pupils, and high levels of absenteeism'.

A notable study on supports for students at risk of suspension/expulsion to prevent early school leaving is Markussen et al.'s (2011) longitudinal study, which follows a sample of 9,749 Norwegian students over a five-year period from out of compulsory education (which ends at age 16) and through to upper secondary education (age 16 to 19). The study reports that students with high scores on an index measuring seriously deviant behaviour were in fact less likely to leave early than were students with relatively lower scores on this index. This last finding is explained by the extra resources, support and attention these students were provided with, making it less likely that they would leave. In other words, system level supports for inclusion can minimise early school leaving for those at highest risk.

There is a need for alternatives to suspension; this emerges from research on the key role of multidisciplinary teams for early school leaving prevention (Downes, 2011a), where multifaceted problems require a multifaceted (Edwards and Downes, 2013) and coordinated response (American Academy of Pediatrics 2013, p. e1005). Alternatives to suspension and expulsion need to be developed on the school site, as part of a structured individual education and health plan for the individual that in some cases will involve a multidisciplinary team. In other cases, a mentor or mediator may be needed to engage with the system problems in the school; problems may include the presence of authoritarian teaching styles that alienate students and lead to conflictual responses that bring sanctions such as suspension and expulsion.

## 2.5. Increasing the Flexibility and Permeability of Educational Pathways as Part of Cross-School and VET Cooperation

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A recent Cedefop (2016a) report reviewing VET across Europe recommends improving the flexibility of the system, making it easier for learners to change pathways. It emphasises that when changing programme, learners should not have to repeat any learning they have already completed. The Council Conclusions (2015, p. 12) likewise seek to 'Ensure that... more flexible pathways and high-quality vocational education and training of equal value to general education are available to all learners'. This echoes the Council Recommendations 2011, 'Increasing the flexibility and permeability of educational pathways, for example by modularising courses or alternating school and work, supports in particular pupils with lower academic performance... It also helps to address gender-specific reasons for early school leaving, such as joining the labour market early or teenage pregnancy' (annex p.5). This permeability between systems is also needed for alternative education, as the TWG report (2013, p. 21) recognises: 'Flexibility should also include measures to allow students to return to mainstream education'. Such flexibility between pathways requires national strategic leadership combined with area based dialogue.

Work placements also require stronger local links. The Council Recommendations 2011 endorse 'Strengthening the link between education and training systems and the employment sector, in order to emphasise the benefits of completing education for future employability. This could be in the form



of work experience placements or greater employer engagement in schools and colleges’ (annex p.5). The Eurydice (2014, p. 14) report emphasises the importance of a case management approach, targeted to VET students at risk of early leaving: ‘Targeted case management is particularly successful when it comes to students who are at risk of dropping out of a VET school/college or at risk of leaving an apprenticeship prematurely’.

## 2.6. Targeting Priority Zones/Territories with Higher Poverty and Socio-economic Exclusion for Additional Funding

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One of the OECD’s (2007) ten steps to equity in education is to ‘Direct resources to the students with the greatest needs’. This targeting of resources is an enabling condition, though obviously it also depends on the quality of the strategy in spending such resources. The Council Conclusions (2015, p. 9) suggest targeting resources to the areas most in need: ‘Identify those schools or local environments which present a high risk of early school leaving and high levels of educational disadvantage and which might benefit from additional support or resources’. The additional funding could be for additional staff, professional support, resource materials and activities.

The need to address *regional* disparities in poverty and educational outcomes is strongly emphasised in a number of the NESET country specific reports (2013-2014). Moreover, the Paris Declaration explicitly recognises the need for ‘Combating geographical, social and educational inequalities, as well as other factors which can lead to despair and create a fertile ground for extremism’ (Paris Declaration 2015, p.3). The importance of focusing on regional disparities is acknowledged in the Commission’s Recommendations (2013, p. 7) which highlight the need to ‘recognise and address spatial disparities in the availability and quality of education provision and in education outcomes’.

The Council Recommendations (2011, annex p. 4) refers to ‘providing additional support for schools in disadvantaged areas or with high numbers of pupils from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds help them to diversify their social composition and enhance their educational offer’ (annex p.4). One cautionary note here is not to penalise schools or areas for their success in making improvements over a period of time. There, schools need to be engaged through a legitimate expectations principle, namely, that they have legitimate expectations of keeping additional resources if they are successful in addressing needs of students at risk of social marginalization, early school leaving and/or extremism.

## CHAPTER 3. WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH TO INCLUSIVE SYSTEMS

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Understanding schools as systems, the ET2020 School Policy Working Group document’s (2015) central recommendation is for a ‘whole school approach’ to address early school leaving. Under this approach, the entire school community (school leaders, teaching and non-teaching staff, learners, parents and families) engages in a cohesive, collective and collaborative action, along with strong cooperation with external stakeholders and the community at large. This builds on the Council Recommendations (2011, annex p. 6), that strategies against early school leaving need to be embedded in the overall school development policy. These strategies should ‘aim at creating a positive learning environment, reinforcing pedagogical quality and innovation, enhancing teaching staff competences to deal with social and cultural diversity, and developing anti-violence and anti-bullying approaches’. The

Commission Communication (2011) on early school leaving incorporates a whole school focus on this issue: ‘Whole school measures aim at improving the school climate and the creation of supportive learning environments’.

This section discusses microsystem<sup>25</sup>-school features relevant to inclusive systems. It focuses holistically on relational school and classroom climates, as well as on the benefits of social and emotional education for marginalized students, extracurricular activities and alternative education. All of these issues are directly relevant to promoting a positive school climate through a whole school approach, and in addition, so too is attention to students’ voices. A mesosystem focus on relations between settings in which the student is directly present invites development of a school coordination committee for inclusive systems as part of a whole school approach.

### 3.1. Promoting a Relational School and Classroom Climate

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Recent research confirms that both the attitudes and behaviour of teachers, and the quality of teacher-student relationships, have a significant impact on school achievement (Fredriksen und Rhodes, 2004; van Uden et al., 2014; European Commission, 2015), on school disengagement, and on ESL (Day et al., 2013; Stamm, 2013; De Witte et al., 2013). Moreover, the PISA 2012 results (see Annex C)—on the experience of students from socioeconomically marginalised backgrounds and the affect it has on their sense of belonging and social integration (feeling like an outsider) in (secondary) school—reveals that there is much work to be done on these issues across Europe for inclusive systems—issues relevant to both bullying and early school leaving. Many EU Member States reveal scores that are below the OECD average on one or both of these dimensions, which raises concerns. While it reveals the need for school climate interventions at systemic levels<sup>26</sup>, especially in specific countries and for marginalised groups, the scores across other countries still leave room for improvement.

However, many teachers complain that they do not have enough time to commit to this relationship culture and work, and they do not feel properly qualified in such matters ( Nairz-Wirth et al., 2012; Nairz-Wirth and Feldmann, 2015; Nouwen et al., 2015). A professional relationship-centred education needs a long-term, preventive and intervening focus. Unfortunately, however, it is only designed and enacted in this way in a very limited number of schools. Teachers need to be held to a basic professional standard, cognisant of the basic principle *primum non nocere*, first do no harm (Downes, 2014b). Authoritarian teaching, ruling by fear and public humiliation (WHO, 2012), is harmful for students and increases their risk of alienation, exclusion, and ultimately, early school leaving.

The RESL.eu study observed that students who are most at risk are sometimes hard to reach through regular student-teacher-meetings, and therefore to reach these students, targeted support by additional staff is highly relevant (Nouwen et al., 2015). Many schools with high numbers of marginalised students also have high levels of fluctuation among their teaching and support staff (Stéger, 2014; European Commission, 2015a; OECD, 2016), which hinders the development of long-term relationships of support, and the establishment of a sustainable supportive relational culture. The long-term development of a culture of supportive relationships also repeatedly fails due to a lack of stable financial support (European Commission, 2012; Nouwen et al., 2015; De Witte et al., 2015).

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<sup>25</sup> I.e., in environments where the student is directly present.

<sup>26</sup> See section on initial teacher education and continuing professional development.

The Council Conclusions (2015, p. 5) place relational aspects centrally: ‘factors such as an unfavourable school climate, violence and bullying, a learning environment in which learners do not feel respected or valued, teaching methods and curricula which may not always be the most appropriate, insufficient learner support, lack of career education and guidance or poor teacher-pupil relationships may lead learners to leave education prematurely’<sup>27</sup>. It is notable that none of the EU Early School Leaving documents make a significant distinction on the point of school climate with regard to primary and secondary educational approaches; they assume that these issues relate to both levels (Downes, 2014b). This is largely correct, although there is some research that suggests that school and classroom climate issues require particular reform at secondary level (Downes et al., 2007).

### 3.2. Developing Structures such as School Coordination Committees for Inclusive Systems as Part of a Whole School Approach

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A structure such as a school level coordinating committee for inclusive systems is needed as a key implementation mechanism to drive a systemic whole school approach. Such a committee needs a strong focus on developing a positive school climate. As a committee, it signals a systemic focus that does not rely simply on an individual to drive system change, and is resonant with distributed leadership principles. Structures based on distributed leadership principles seek to disperse leadership roles and responsibilities throughout a school organisation, treated as a complex system of relations and situations (Spillane, 2006).

It has long been recognised that school bullying prevention is strongly aided by the presence of a coordinating group at the school level (Olweus, 1999). This was reinforced by the outcomes of the Finnish KiVa bullying prevention programme (Salmivalli et al., 2011), and had positive findings in both the Netherlands (Veenstra, 2014) and Italy (KiVa website, 2015). Again taking a focus on driving systemic change, Macnab’s (2012) international account of health promoting schools describes what are viewed as ‘essential first steps’ for a health promoting schools approach that draw on a ground up approach – meaningful involvement of the school community as a whole to develop a common vision, with effective communication and empowerment for community ownership of the approach. This treats teachers and learners as a central, essential part of the process. The process needs a structure for it to be led, planned, monitored and reviewed at school level, such as through a school coordinating body with a wide range of key stakeholders. Such a coordinating committee for inclusive systems can encompass the strongly interrelated issues of school climate, early school leaving and bullying prevention, mental health promotion, student voices, etc. (Downes and Cefai, 2016). Building on the principles of representation of marginalised groups, listening to children’s and parent’s voices, and committing to multidisciplinary working, it is important that such school coordinating committee’s involve a wide range of key stakeholders.

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<sup>27</sup> The Commission’s TWG report (2013) again focuses on the centrality of a relational supportive school climate: ‘Schools should be a place where pupils feel comfortable and supported, feel ownership of their own learning and can engage in the life of their school community. This is important both for the emotional, social and educational development of the pupil and for the overall governance of the institution’. The EU Commission Staff Working Paper on early school leaving (2011, p. 23) echoes this theme of the need for development of teachers’ relational and diversity approaches: ‘School-wide strategies focus on improving the overall school climate and making schools places where young people feel comfortable, respected and responsible...While these schools usually rely on a handful of dedicated and committed teachers who choose to stay despite the difficulties, it is essential that teacher education prepares future teachers to deal with diversity in the classroom, with pupils from disadvantaged social backgrounds and with difficult teaching situations. It is also essential to improve school climate and working conditions - especially in disadvantaged areas - in order to have a more stable teaching force’.

A five-year longitudinal study in Austria (2009-2014) extracted a number of motivations underlying different kinds of early school leavers (Nairz-Wirth et al., 2014). One notable finding is that stigmatization is a common feature in all seven motivational categories of early school leavers (Nairz-Wirth, 2015). Therefore, it is important that distributed leadership processes, such as school coordination committees, address stigmatization issues while they are developing a whole-school approach for positive school climate. A distributed leadership process is an enabling condition for systemic change for the range of interconnected issues pertaining to school and classroom climate. The exact composition of a committee needs to be left to locals in order to ensure local ownership over the process; that ownership will better ensure that a committee will play a meaningful role in the school system change processes.

### 3.3. Promoting Students' Voices and Active Participation, Including A Differentiated Approach to Ensure Marginalised Students' Voices and Participation are Included

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Including student voices in school improvement, the implementation of a 'critical pedagogy of engagement' (Smyth et al., 2013), and the communication of respect and understanding for all students, can raise self-esteem, self-efficacy and school connectedness for all students (Griebler and Nowak, 2012). The inclusion of student voices cannot be achieved through a one-off survey of the students in a school regarding their ideas, wishes and experiences. Instead, it requires continual school development in which all parties change their roles. Day et al.'s (2015) European review reveals:

In practice, however, there is an immense variation in the quality and extent of [children's] participatory practices within educational settings'; 'In many schools across Europe, however, children's participation is focused principally on formal school structures and committees, and levels of participation in wider decisions relating to teaching and learning, school policies (including for behaviour, bullying and exclusion) remain low across the EU.

Although silencing the voices of marginalised students is a common occurrence in school, official education documents so far contain few concrete measures or frameworks intended to make – or that describe how to make – student voices better heard and integrate them into school development processes (Downes, 2013). While there are at least systematic procedures for students' voices to be heard in the education system across many Member States, such as through student councils, there is a need for a much stronger focus on student participation in the design of anti-bullying approaches, especially for older students (Downes and Cefai, 2016). Surveys of teachers also indicate that students' voices and participation are not seen as a high priority, but instead trigger fears of a loss of control. Teachers are afraid that if the voices of the students were to be made audible, classroom management could become difficult.

To ensure that the voices of students and parents from marginalised and minority backgrounds are heard in schools, the Commission Recommendation (2013, p. 9) endorses differentiated targeting, combined with universal approaches for children's voices: 'Support the involvement of all children in existing participation structures; reach out to and support the participation of children from disadvantaged backgrounds'. Day et al. (2015, p. 235) also seeks a more differentiated approach to children's voices and participation that is relevant for education, one that distinguishes between individual children, groups of children, and children as a group. Practical guidelines for child participation include 'development of targeted measures to support the participation of vulnerable,

marginalised and/or disadvantaged groups such as Roma, children with disabilities, asylum seeking and refugee children, who may have more limited opportunities to participate than other children’.

The Commission Staff Working Paper (2011, p. 24) acknowledges that ‘Practicing school democracy in daily decisions of school life may help overcome problems of disaffection’. Significantly, the Commission TWG report (2013, p. 3) on early school leaving makes a further recommendation to ‘Ensure children and young people are at the centre of all policies aimed at reducing ESL. Ensure their voices are taken into account when developing and implementing such policies’. The TWG (2013, p. 17) report add that ‘There should be space for pupils to influence their schools and take ownership of their educational path. They should have the opportunity to voice their opinions and be involved in decisions affecting the school and its functioning’.

### 3.4. Prioritising Social and Emotional Education

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Social and emotional education<sup>28</sup> is a key aspect of personal development, and it increases the relevance of the school curriculum to a child or young person’s life world. A curricular focus on social and emotional education includes a range of holistic approaches that raise awareness of emotions, caring, empathy and concern for others, positive relationships, making responsible decisions, impulse control, resolving conflict constructively and valuing the thoughts, feelings and voices of students (see also Weissberg et al., 2015; Brackett et al., 2015). The EU Key Competences Framework includes social and civic competences, and cultural awareness and expression. However, social and emotional education and its emotional awareness dimensions are not reducible to citizenship education or simply social competences or cultural expression (Downes and Cefai, 2016).

Though somewhat underemphasised in key EU policy documents on early school leaving, there is a growing body of international research that provides substantial evidence of the benefit of social and emotional education to a range of outcomes relatable to inclusive systems in education. This includes aspects that are at least indirectly associated with school engagement and early school leaving prevention. For instance, a study of more than 213 programmes found that if a school implements a quality SEL curriculum, they can expect better student behaviour and an 11-point increase in test scores (Durlak et al., 2011). The gains that schools see in achievement come from a variety of factors — students feel safer and more connected to school and academic learning, SEL programmes build work habits in addition to social skills, and children and teachers build strong relationships. Durlak et al. (2011) highlight SEL benefits for outcomes on several SEL skills including attitudes, positive social behaviour, conduct problems, emotional distress and academic performance. The Durlak et al. (2011) review found that the most successful SEL approaches incorporated four key combined SAFE features: sequenced step-by-step training, active forms of learning, sufficient time spent on skill development, and explicit learning goals. Another key finding, echoed by another meta-analysis by Sklad et al. (2012), was that classroom teachers and other school staff were able to conduct effective SEL programmes that were incorporated into routine educational activities, and so did not require the assistance of outside personnel. A limitation acknowledged in Durlak et al. (2011) was that nearly one third of the studies contained no information on student ethnicity or socioeconomic status. Sklad et al. (2012) found that SEL programmes showed statistically significant effects on social skills, anti-social

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<sup>28</sup> While some studies focusing on programs tend to use the term social and emotional learning (SEL) or emotional literacy, the broader term of social and emotional education (Cooper and Cefai, 2009) encompassing the other terms, will be used for current purposes, unless the other is specifically adopted in a given study.

behaviour, substance abuse, positive self-image, academic achievement and prosocial behaviour (see also annex ).

### 3.5. Promoting Arts Education for Inclusive Systems – Benefits for Marginalized Students

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An important benefit of arts education is that it employs different modes of thinking that summon and develop creativity, associative thinking and skill. Its versatility lies in its ability to address the aspects of life that other school subjects cannot. It can make certain student abilities (Shin, 2011) and multiple intelligences (European Parents' Association, 2015) more apparent, it can reengage the disengaged (Regev et al., 2015, Tam, 2016), and it can reduce antisocial behaviour and improve social climate (Bamford and Wimmer, 2012; DICE, 2010). As a French Education and Employment Ministry document (2014) acknowledges, for several hundreds of thousands of students, school is a source of ill-being linked to the lack of appreciation of their talents. Simple measures, such as the display and performance of artworks, and the subsequent appreciation of their family members, teachers, peers and others adults, can improve students' confidence in their own skills (Cockram, 2013; Winner et al., 2013, Shin, 2011; Tweedie, 2007; Tsevreni, 2014). The goal of improving children's relationships with their peers and with adults can be furthered by community and out of school programmes which build on the arts. (Charmaraman and Hall, 2011). Some successful arts-based initiatives target parents as a part of their approach, and successfully included them into the education process (Tweedie, 2007).

A number of studies reported that arts programs, based both in school and out of school, improved students' self-worth, self-confidence, communication skills, and feelings of pride and achievement (DICE, 2010; Bamford and Wimmer, 2012; Lorenzi and White, 2013; Tsevreni, 2014; Tweedie, 2007; Winner et al., 2013). Arts education is reported to decrease delinquent and antisocial behaviours (DICE, 2010; Bamford and Wimmer, 2012). Some studies show that theatre education leads to more empathy, it increases one's ability to take other perspectives, and it helps regulate one's emotions more effectively (DICE, 2010; Winner et al., 2013).

The effect of arts education on school attendance requires further research in order to distinguish the needs of those at the selected prevention level (moderate risk), and those at the indicated prevention level (chronic need). A meta-analysis by Winner et al. showed that there were cases when students enrolled in art subjects showed higher attendance (2013). In a UK study with 102 385 participants, attendance increased, but the increase was inconsistent during the intervention (Cooper et al., 2011). This suggests that the arts are a supporting condition for attendance, but they may need to be embedded in a wider system of supports if the intention is to improve attendance. In a US study with 109 participants, attendance was found to be somewhat better than before the study (O'Donnell and Kirkner, 2014).

Though the role of the arts for engaging marginalised students is largely confined to extracurricular activities in the Council Recommendation 2011 and Conclusions 2015 on early school leaving, the Commission Staff Working Paper (2011, pp. 23-24) acknowledges the potential of the dramatic arts to engage marginalised students: 'schools that meet the different learning styles by proving activities such as team work or drama... can effectively help pupils who prefer 'learning by doing' and get motivated by active forms of learning'. Arts education is a part of a standard school curricula across Europe on all levels of education (Euridyce, 2009), and along with it there exist numerous art based interventions both in and out of school. However, a Commission staff working document (2009, p. 101) concludes—

referring to the Cultural Awareness and Expression dimension of the eight key competences for lifelong learning across Member States of the EU—that:

Although part of the traditional subject curriculum in schools (art, music), this competence does not appear to be a significant strategic priority for most countries. The potential of culture to provide a methodology of work in other areas of the curriculum, and in personal and social development, could be better exploited.<sup>29</sup>

It is to be acknowledged that this issue of access to cultural and artistic expression is a dimension of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, Art. 31.

- I. States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.
- II. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.

The UN CRC is ratified by all EU Member States. This implies a broader conception of access to the arts than simply optional extracurricular activities.

### 3.6. Supporting Extracurricular Activities

Out of school services can provide opportunities for active citizenship and opportunities to celebrate and recognise the strengths of students. The concept of extracurricular activities as meaningful instrumental activities is well established (Maton, 1990), and can be applied not only to arts and sports activities but also wider community projects regarding green spaces in the local environment and schools. Arts-based out of school projects, where students worked on projects with mentors, also reported an increased ability of students to see projects through to their completion, thereby demonstrating perseverance and resilience (Lorenzi and White, 2013; Tweedie, 2007). The issue of shadow education, where wealthier students received the benefits of additional tuition, has been recognised as a considerable issue across Europe (Bray, 2011). One way to offer additional tuition to those students who cannot afford extra classes after school is to develop extracurricular homework support schemes with university student volunteers (Share and Carroll, 2013; McNally and Downes, 2016).

The Council Recommendations (2011, annex p. 7) recognise that, 'Extra-curricular activities after and outside school and artistic, cultural and sport activities, which can raise the self-esteem of pupils at risk and increase their resilience against difficulties in their learning'. The rationale for these is expanded upon in the Council Conclusions (2015, p. 11): 'a wide range of accessible extracurricular and out-of-school activities - for instance, in sport, the arts, volunteering or youth work - that can complement the learning experience, as well as increase learners' participation, motivation and sense of belonging'.

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<sup>29</sup> A twelve country study encompassing lifelong learning reports a widespread engagement of non-formal education with the arts, responding to a range of needs across different communities and countries (Downes, 2014). Yet it observes that this broad participation in the arts in non-formal education appears to largely take place in a policy vacuum at EU and some national levels. It concludes that more strategic approach is needed not only for the arts and non-formal education but also for a systemic connection and engagement with socio-economically excluded individuals and communities through the arts in non-formal education.

The Commission Recommendation (2013, p. 9) mentions cost barriers: 'Address barriers such as cost, access and cultural differences to ensure that all children can participate in play, recreation, sport and cultural activities outside school;

- Provide safe spaces in children's environment and support disadvantaged communities by means of specific incentives;
- Encourage schools, community actors and local authorities to create better afterschool activities and facilities for all children, regardless of their parents' work situation and background'.

With a focus on inclusive systems through a sense of school belongingness, the ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015) emphasises strategic connections between extracurricular activities and schools<sup>30</sup>, and encourages the fostering of links with wider community services<sup>31</sup>, adding that extracurricular activities provide opportunities for young people to develop a sense of belonging, identity or connection with their school.

### 3.7. Developing Alternative Education – Personalised Approaches

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While recognising the need for alternative education to provide a genuine alternative to a perhaps more rigid mainstream education system, there is a need to bring alternative education and mainstream education systems and learning environments closer together (through common system frameworks of structural indicators for inclusive systems in and around schools). This is an implication of the TWG report's (2013, p. 21) recognition that alternative education may draw students from mainstream education, 'Links between second chance education and mainstream education: Easy access to compensation measures risks making leaving education prematurely more attractive to some young people and schools with high numbers of young people at risk of dropping out'. Commitment to developing inclusive systems across all school levels requires a more differentiated approach, and hence a more individually tailored and flexible approach, in mainstream education. As the TWG report (2013, p. 22) highlights, 'The successful elements of second chance schemes have the potential to inform change and practice in mainstream schools to prevent ESL'. Since the publication of the Council Recommendations 2011, a new emphasis has been placed on those aspects from second chance education that could be, as features of good practice, transferred to the mainstream education system (Ecorys, 2013).

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<sup>30</sup> This is a mesosystemic level focus

<sup>31</sup> The ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015, p. 13) states that, 'Extra-curricular and out-of school educational opportunities, including sports, arts, culture and other activities, compatible with educational aims, may provide additional opportunities for young people to 'shine' and can increase their motivation and a sense of belonging with the school. These activities should be coherently designed to complement curriculum delivery and to maximize pupil participation and social inclusion; they could be considered in the learners' overall assessment. Such activities could be developed in cooperation with parents, cultural institutions, sports and youth organisations, local services and NGOs, and with the involvement of volunteers from the community'.



It should be emphasised that *all* of the postprimary school structural indicators are also relevant for alternative education pathways<sup>32</sup>. The TWG report (2013, pp. 20-21) raises issues that are apt for all education systems, stating that 'A personalised and holistic approach implies:

- targeted second chance provision focused on personal development with opportunities to develop life skills and employability skills;
- access to specialised support (such as psychological or emotional support), counselling, career guidance and practical support (such as financial support or help with securing accommodation);
- new pedagogic approaches such as cooperative learning, peer learning, project work and more formative assessment.'

Similarly, the TWG report (2013) states that 'Teachers should use pedagogic approaches that respond to the needs of individual students in second chance schemes'; this implies that active learning and individualised approaches, as well formative assessment, are needed across all education systems. At this stage, they are to be treated as quality pedagogical approaches rather than 'new' ones. That is, they should be considered as features of good practice which engage children and young people in learning. Nevertheless, some distinctive structural indicators for alternative education will also be developed.

Additionally, the TWG report (2013, p. 21), while referring to second chance education, states that 'Young people should have an active role in shaping their physical learning environment'. In other words, alternative education physical environments need to look less physically like mainstream schools the students have previously had negative experiences of. However, a corollary should be added: there is a need to transform mainstream schools' physical environments to better reflect the identities, needs and voices of young people for their greater ownership of their school experience.

While universal features of education systems are also important for alternative education, the focus of this report is on the differentiated needs of learners. In this respect, the selected prevention and indicated prevention levels are also particularly relevant for alternative education<sup>33</sup>. Referring to second chance education, the Council Recommendations (2011, annex p.9) mention the need for 'small learning groups, by personalised, age-appropriate and innovative teaching and by flexible pathways. As far as possible, they should be easily accessible and free of charge'. Focusing on relational aspects, the TWG report (2013, p. 21) recommends 'Providing common areas where teachers and students share facilities and space helps to build relationships based on mutual respect and trust'.

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<sup>32</sup> Alternative education is often termed second-chance education, though this term is not used here; a lifelong learning framework better captures the notion that we are engaging in education throughout our lives rather than through first or second chances. It is also to be recognised that alternative education is similarly a less than ideal term, viewed through a lifelong learning lens.

<sup>33</sup> For second chance education, the Council Recommendations (2011, annex p. 10) emphasize 'Recognising and validating prior learning, including competences achieved in nonformal and informal learning, which improves the confidence and self-esteem of young people and facilitates their re-entry into education'. A number of barriers to recognition of prior learning have been identified in a range of European contexts: these include institutional attitudinal resistance, lack of communication to students of opportunities for recognition of prior learning, costs of processing recognition of prior learning and delays in doing so and lack of both criteria and institutional pathways for recognition of prior learning (Downes, 2014).

## CHAPTER 4. TEACHER AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP QUALITY FOR INCLUSIVE SYSTEMS IN AND AROUND SCHOOLS

The focus of this section is on the key role that teacher quality plays in inclusive systems in and around schools. Specifically, it examines the impact of initial teacher education (ITE) and continuing professional development (CPD) on key holistic issues such as relationship building, conflict resolution skills, cultural competence, bullying prevention approaches, and encouraging high expectations of marginalised students. The extent to which two aspects of CPD, namely career guidance and school leaders, can be promoted to contribute to inclusive systems in and around schools will also be discussed. As Lawson and van Veen (2016a) note,

Change schools without changing preservice education and professional development programs, and one result is that every new school professional needs additional training. Conversely, change professional education programs without changing schools, and one result is that school experience probably will ‘wash out’ the effects of preservice education and innovative professional development programs.

### 4.1. Improving ITE and CPD for Teachers for Inclusive Education

The professional competence of teachers, just like their expectations, attitudes and relationships, plays a key role in the prevention of ESL. Yet research into ESL indicates that many teachers still do not have sufficient professional competence in this area, and that ITE and CPD neither provides them with the necessary knowledge nor covers practices and appropriate models of sustained school development (European Commission, 2013; Nairz-Wirth et al., 2012a; Nouwen et al., 2015; Nouwen et al., 2016). The ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015) recommends that student teachers be offered practical exposure to the everyday reality of early school leaving, for example through participation in work placements in schools with high ESL rates or high levels of socio-economic exclusion, or in supervised activities with vulnerable families. This would provide student teachers with the opportunity to consider their role as teachers and how to address the educational needs of children in need. Teachers also often lack awareness of their own and their school’s enormous influence on the ESL process, which they themselves generate (Nairz-Wirth and Feldmann, 2016).

To improve the quality of education, teacher competence requirements are needed within a teacher competence framework<sup>34</sup>. Such a reference framework needs to take into account the national context and the whole teacher education continuum, to allow for attracting and selecting highly skilled teacher applicants (Caena, 2014; European Commission, 2013a). There is a broad consensus in research that a functioning, trust-based collaboration with teachers is the basis for inclusive systems of education that counteract school disengagement and ESL.

As illustrated by a qualitative study in Denmark, lack of students’ trust in their teachers and/or in their school can lead to early leaving (Nielsen and Tanggaard, 2015). Accordingly, a lasting relationship of

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<sup>34</sup> Research into school culture, school climate and classroom management provides good insights for the description of an inclusive classroom environment which considers the diverse needs of students and establishes a forward-looking culture of communication. The diverse competences required here of teachers extend from communication skills, conflict resolution skills and the use of appropriate techniques to prevent bullying to mastery of a range of different teaching methods (Downes, 2014b; European Commission, 2013, 2013a; see also Isac et al.’s 2015 EC policy report based on TIMSS, PIRLS, TALIS and PISA).

trust between teachers and students is central to the prevention of ESL (Nouwen et al., 2015; Little et al., 2015). In inclusive education, teachers may serve as confidants for their students in both school-related and personal issues. Yet there is a strong need for greater professionalism among teachers (Carneiro et al., 2015; Downes, 2014b; Nouwen et al., 2015), to be agency boosters rather than agency dampeners, in the terms of Ferguson et al. (2015). In addition to teacher collaboration, the relational trust approach calls for a trust-based relationship with parents. Accordingly, teachers need to be able to establish trust-based positive relationships with parents or guardians and integrate them into everyday life at the school, in order to reduce the risk of ESL (Downes, 2014a; European Commission, 2015).

The Council Recommendations 2011 situate ITE and CPD for teachers and school leaders as central to early school leaving prevention, in order to ‘help them to deal with diversity in the classroom, to support pupils from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds and to solve difficult teaching situations’ (annex p.7). Resonant with the concerns already highlighted for school climate, the ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015, p. 14) sets out a clear agenda for ITE and CPD to address the need to ‘reinforce relational and communication expertise (including techniques/methods to engage with parents and external partners), and provide teachers with classroom management strategies, diversity management strategies, relationship building, conflict resolution and bullying prevention techniques’<sup>35</sup>. These are basic ‘psychology of education’ issues for inclusive systems in education, and for early school leaving prevention aspects for ITE and CPD. It is alarming that Eurydice (2014) observes that ‘less than a third of all countries/regions mention that the subject of early leaving is part of recent or on-going policies on initial teacher education or continuing professional development’ (p.10). These teaching approaches are intrinsic to inclusive systems in education, both within and beyond an early school leaving prevention agenda.

As far as CPD is concerned, the European Commission (2015b) states that there is a gender imbalance in certain aspects of CPD, that teacher mobility for their professional development is low, and that there is a mismatch between teachers’ needs and the content of professional development programmes. Current research shows that alongside traditional approaches like courses, workshops and conferences both inside and outside the school, an increasing number of other options are now available for the professional development of teachers (European Commission, 2015b). These include, for instance, innovative programmes implemented in schools in which teachers are involved, and diverse forms of replacing the culture and/or improving the atmosphere of a school. The following measures can also be integrated into many of the following strategies: awareness-raising activities, financial support, peer tutoring, programmes for minority teachers, additional academic assistance, new support roles for teachers, assistants, students and parents, and the promotion of diversity, tolerance and cultural competency (Donlevy et al., 2016).

## 4.2. Establishing Professional Communities to Ensure Quality

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<sup>35</sup> The Commission’s TWG report (2013) recommends the need to ‘Promote a better understanding of ESL in initial education and continuous professional development for all school staff, especially teachers’, while the Commission Recommendation (2013, p. 7) seeks structural reform on this issue, ‘Revise and strengthen the professional profile of all teaching professions and prepare teachers for social diversity’. The Council Conclusions (2015, p. 12) cements this further: ‘Such skills, competences and knowledge could cover issues such as classroom and diversity management strategies, relationship building, conflict resolution, bullying prevention techniques and career education and guidance’.

Teachers who have completed an ITE programme are better prepared in terms of content, theory and practice to teach those who have not completed such a programme. Yet studies (both quantitative and qualitative in Germany) have observed, some decades ago, that changes in professional attitudes in ITE do not prove to be permanent (Dann et al., 1981; Dicke et al., 2015; Haggarty and Postlethwaite, 2012; Hermann and Hertramph, 2000). Qualitative research in Austria by Nairz-Wirth and Feldmann (2015) reveals that the approaches of teachers are primarily formed in school environments, and that reform through ITE programmes does not guarantee transfer into professional practice. In many schools, practices are formed through traditional routines, i.e., where teachers are solo practitioners, and only marginally involve parents and colleagues in their teaching. Despite efforts at reform, traditional teaching approaches persist amongst many teachers in Europe (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015; Nairz-Wirth and Feldmann, 2015). Even with reform, however, the implementation of innovative programmes in schools are not always entirely successful: some of the teachers accept innovative programmes and attempt to implement them through professional communities, while others maintain the traditional structure.

To ensure the continued professional development of teachers, it is necessary to not only improve ITE and continuing education, but also to develop networks of professional communities in schools to spread a new democratic professionalism. In contrast to traditional professionalism, new professionalism refers to teachers who assume the role of team players and change agents. They involve parents and students as well as academic, political and other organisations and groups to achieve democratic educational goals and stable inclusive education in the long term (Nairz-Wirth and Feldmann, 2015; Sachs, 2003; Whitty, 2008). The concept of new democratic professionalism is compatible with professional learning communities and progressive ITE programmes (Darling-Hammond and Lieberman, 2012), which accord teachers more responsibility; that is, which extend teacher responsibilities beyond teaching and the classroom, and empower them to contribute to the school as an inclusive system (Whitty and Wisby, 2006). For instance, mentoring and integration into learning communities have proved to be particularly beneficial for new teachers (European Commission, 2010; Valenčič Zuljan and Marentič Požarnik, 2014).

Despite this, studies show that many countries still do not systematically offer support to new teachers, and in those countries that do, the corresponding measures tend to be unstructured and not fully integrated into the education system (European Commission, 2010). Induction programmes are, however, necessary to provide new teachers with the support they need on personal, social and professional levels. The Commission's TWG report (2013) states, 'As a condition of successful learning, teachers need to strengthen their role as facilitators of learning. They need autonomy, time, and space for innovation, teamwork, feedback, self-reflection and evaluation. They need access to enhanced opportunities for continued professional development'.

### 4.3. Developing Teachers' Expectations of Students

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Teachers' expectations of students is a key issue for early school leaving prevention and inclusion in education. RESL project papers across Belgium, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Spain and the UK, reveal that schools in which teachers have high expectations of and offer good support to all students, including those with low socio-economic backgrounds, migration backgrounds, learning disabilities etc., also tend to have low ESL rates (De Witte et al., 2013; Nouwen et al., 2015; Segedin, 2012; van Praag et al., 2016). Conversely, teachers with stereotyped attitudes and expectations significantly damage learning development and reinforce social inequalities (De Witte et al., 2013;

Neumann et al., 2014). An inclusive education system is thus driven and supported, above all, by a professional team whose work is based on positive attitudes and expectations, on the parts of both students and individual team members (Day et al., 2015; IBE-UNESCO, 2016; OECD, 2016).

ITE and CPD need to provide teachers with adequate knowledge of the social and emotional development of schoolchildren. This needs to contain inclusive teaching practices, and psychological and counselling skills. ITE and CPD need to be targeted at giving students a voice, which can then be taken into consideration in school development processes (Cefai and Cooper, 2010; Day et al., 2015; IBE-UNESCO, 2016). According to a European policy paper, however, students' voices are still not systematically addressed and implemented into strategy in many schools and school authorities (Nouwen et al., 2015a).

Formative assessment may include challenging follow up questions for the student, as well as critical feedback in order to develop the student's work. All of this presupposes high expectations on the part of the teacher of the student's work and capabilities. The Council Conclusions (2015, p. 12) seek 'different assessment methods such as formative assessment' to accurately identify learners' needs and to provide timely and continuous feedback as part of the learning process.

#### 4.4. Developing Teachers' Cultural and Language Diversity Competences for Working with Ethnic Minorities and Migrants

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A relevant issue to be addressed at teacher preservice and inservice is the quality and extent to which teachers are trained in second language acquisition. A PPMI report (2013, p. 94) for the EU Commission highlights a lack of focus on second language acquisition as a distinct competence, and language support courses are often reported by teachers to be of low quality. PPMI's report notes that some countries, to increase the number of qualified specialist teachers in second language development, have introduced language courses as a subject of pre-service and in-service training.

A recent report for the EU Commission similarly emphasises teacher education in language teaching skills and cultural competences:

Practitioners believe that teachers who provide language support should have specialist training and qualifications in second-language acquisition that is aligned with the approaches implemented in practice. Alongside this, practitioners believe that all teachers require training to teach children without the language of instruction and to be able to value diversity by incorporating cultural diversity within their teaching (ICF, 2015, p. 79).

It is important that not only language teachers receive training for working with immigrant children, but subject teachers as well. It is advisable for subject and specialised language teachers to work together so that teaching of academic subjects and language happen in a coordinated way. This can also help avoid the delay of academic learning due to low language proficiency (PPMI, 2013, p.95). Municipalities may be in a position to play a leadership role in the promotion and development of such inservice courses for teachers, and should engage in dialogue with teacher education institutions, including universities, about these aspects becoming core elements of teacher preservice preparation (Downes, 2015).

According to the Commission's TWG report (2013): 'Better integration of newly arrived migrant children: Children from newly arrived migrant families need targeted support to acquire the language of tuition and to catch up with the curriculum. Inclusive learning environments can support their

integration and increase their educational success'. The Council Recommendation (2011) explicitly refers to ethnic dimensions associated with higher risks of early school leaving, such as students with 'migrant or Roma background'. Teachers should have 'cultural competence', that is, conflict resolution skills as part of a communicative classroom and whole school climate strategy, allied with diversity awareness (Moule, 2012). Moule (2012) adds that most efforts to promote cultural competence in teachers requires development of self-awareness in the teacher. The Commission's TWG (2013) report recognises that preservice teachers' cultural competences would be raised higher by practical placements in schools than they would be by simply instructing teachers on the theory of it. It is unclear whether this is currently required, or even available, at preservice teacher education levels across Europe (Downes, 2014a).

Cultural competence can also be advanced by absorbing more diverse ethnic groups and social classes into the teaching profession. This would certainly positively contribute to the EU2020 headline target for early school leaving, but it remains a somewhat neglected issue in the relevant EU documents and the current practices in many EU Member States, according to a 12 country European study (Downes, 2014). A faculty and department level focus on increasing access to the teaching profession for such marginalised groups needs to be placed on the EU and national agendas (Downes, 2014, 2014a). Access to the teaching profession for ethnic minorities is another dimension to be addressed at system level, as a recent report for the EU Commission regarding diversity within the teaching profession recognises:

Teacher diversity initiatives should provide support to people of migrant/minority origin at every stage of the teaching 'pathway'. Attracting and retaining teaching staff with a migrant and/or minority background in the profession are equally important [...] A range of different approaches and mechanisms (e.g. raising awareness, developing incentives, providing financial support, establishing networks, mentoring, etc.) can and should be used to promote teacher diversity [...] Effectively replicating successful approaches and tools requires tailoring to the local context, for example in terms of the composition of the migrant/minority population and local political will (Donlevy et al. 2016 p. 127).

From a nine city study, it is evident that many municipalities in Europe have no or very few ethnic minority teachers in their schools (Downes, 2015). This requires change.

## 4.5. Developing Teachers' Competences on Career Guidance for Working with Marginalised Groups

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With regard to career guidance, research shows that high-quality career/vocational guidance is highly important for supporting students in making decisions about their future (Eurydice, 2014, see also Cederberg and Hartsmar's (2013) review of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden contexts and Nouwen et al.'s, (2016) RESL.eu publication). It is evident that this sector requires a strategic focus on professional development generally. The Eurydice (2014, p. 11) report cites 'findings from the OECD's TALIS survey showing that around 42% of European teachers need professional development in student career guidance and counselling'. The proportion of teachers that express a moderate or high need for student career guidance and counselling is positively correlated to the percentage of early school leavers (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015; OECD, 2014a). Improving ITE and CPD for career guidance is an implication of the TWG (2013, p. 18) report, which seeks a 'Strong and well-developed guidance system: High quality, up-to-date guidance made available at an early stage is essential for providing young people with the information they need to make informed education and career choices. Helping young people understand their own strengths, talents, different study options

and employment prospects is essential'. Cultural competence issues require more than mere information updates. The following statement of the TWG (2013, p. 18) report also applies to career guidance teachers: 'Teachers should be supported in dealing with diversity in terms of the social and ethnic background of pupils as well as supporting individuals with special learning needs and/or learning disabilities'.

In order to increase student engagement and student retention, as well as to stop reproducing social inequalities, students need to be informed about labour market opportunities and encouraged to decide the right career path, no matter the social background of a student. The importance of vocational guidance for students is highly acknowledged by school staff. (Nouwen et al., 2015). Gikopoulou (2008) states that those providing vocational guidance to students may be very knowledgeable about school workplaces, but tend to lack knowledge about what skills and competencies companies demand, which is of course critical to develop students personally and professionally to meet these demands. Furthermore, students raise concerns that career guidance depends on the willingness, skills and workload of their teachers (Nouwen et al., 2015). This calls for education systems to embed career guidance in ITE. How this is taken into account depends on the structure of the education system, including for example government spending, school autonomy and life-long-learning policies (Hooley et al., 2015; Ryan and Lörinc, 2015).

Concerns about teacher's expectations and labelling are particularly relevant for career guidance ITE and CPD, especially for those teachers who work with marginalized groups; they must not perpetuate stereotypes and low expectations for the careers of these students. Heckmann's (2008) finding that low teachers' expectations towards minority students generally have a negative influence on their performance is also relevant for career guidance teachers. It is not clear how well developed such cultural competences are for career guidance teachers across Europe.

#### 4.6. Promoting CPD for School Governance and Leadership

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As acknowledged by a recent OECD report based on TALIS 2013, successful education systems create an environment in which teachers – and also head teachers – can work in an innovative climate of trust and in which all schoolchildren can learn well and effectively (Schleicher, 2015). A prerequisite for good professional teachers is thus a school culture which promotes (collaborative) leadership (European Commission, 2015; see also RESL's 2014 comparative analysis on policies in Austria, Belgium, Hungary, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and UK), an approach which requires teachers to assume a new role as change agents. To make this possible, relational trust, teacher collaboration, and professional teacher attitudes and expectations must be developed.

These issues are viewed as key for the professional development of school leaders, not only the teachers: 'Such skills, competences and knowledge could cover issues such as classroom and diversity management strategies, relationship building, conflict resolution, bullying prevention techniques and career education and guidance' (The ET2020 School Policy Working Group document 2015, p.12). An implicit recognition here is that these aspects need to be part of a whole school approach engaging all key actors, including school leaders. The Council Conclusions (2015, p. 10) state the importance of 'excellence in school governance and leadership, for instance by improving recruitment procedures and continuous professional development opportunities for school leaders'. The ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015, p. 10) expands on this point:

Schools need dedicated, value-led, competent and highly motivated school heads; they need leaders with a clear vision, sense of organisation, capacity to take on new responsibilities, share authority and power, involve and promote dialogue between all school actors and with other stakeholders around a set of shared goals and responsibilities.

The ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015) recommends that new, established and aspiring school heads develop their awareness of early school leaving mechanisms and of the importance of leadership and of collaboration (including with families and the community at large). It observes that several European countries have implemented or are implementing advanced training for future and/or in-service school heads, and some have started to develop competence frameworks for school heads.

The ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015) also highlights the importance of distributed leadership in developing reflective practice, and sharing tasks and responsibilities across the entire school community, inclusive of learners' and families' participation in school life and policy processes.

## CHAPTER 5. A MULTIDISCIPLINARY FOCUS ON HEALTH AND WELFARE ISSUES IN EDUCATION

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This section of the report gives expression to a growing holistic awareness of the key interconnected role of health and education issues. The focus here is on mesosystemic issues – relations between the system support services in which the student is actively engaged. Such relations between support services bring a focus on differentiated needs through cross-sectoral cooperation between health, welfare, and education multidisciplinary teams in and around schools, and emotional supports. Key health issues affecting early school leaving are also addressed, namely, substance abuse and adequate sleep.

### 5.1. Establishing Cross-Sectoral Cooperation Regarding Health and Welfare Issues in Education

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It is to be recognised that cross-sectoral cooperation can have wider scope than health and welfare dimensions for education. However, given the strong barriers between these domains in many countries, and because of their particular relevance for inclusive systems, these aspects of cross-sectoral cooperation are being given particular emphasis in this report. Moreover, other key aspects for cross-sectoral cooperation, such as the arts, extracurricular activities, participation and representation of community stakeholders such as NGOs, are considered in other sections of this report.

An overview of area-based cross-sectoral initiatives (Dyson and Kerr, 2011, p. 2) outlines the need for a common policy strategy at different levels, while keeping local voices central:

Having some alignment with broader policy approaches is likely to be an important strategy for attracting partners, identifying multiple levers for change, and multiplying impacts. Local people will also need to be involved. Ensuring that decisions are made on the basis of a real understanding of how local people see their lives and the place where they live, and what they feel needs to happen, may be more effective than trying to recruit them to formal decision making bodies.



Territoriality across multiple stakeholders needs to be addressed through processes to establish a common frame of shared goals (Downes, 2011). The ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015), expands on this point, stating that a common strategy/action plan based on clear and shared goals, and a common understanding of the challenges, can help structure cooperation between stakeholders. The strategy/plan needs to be focused on the needs of the learner, and be based on a truly multi-agency approach, while being careful to respect the different perspectives and missions of each stakeholder: 'It is important that roles, responsibilities and structures are clearly defined and agreed from the start, possibly through contractual arrangements, in accordance with local circumstances (The ET2020 School Policy Working Group document, 2015, p. 17)'.

The ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015, p. 9) views cross-sectoral multidisciplinary working within its systemic conception of a whole school approach,

A 'whole school approach' also implies a cross-sectoral approach and stronger cooperation with a wide range of stakeholders (social services, youth services, outreach care workers, psychologists, nurses, speech and language therapists, guidance specialists, local authorities, NGOs, business, unions, volunteers, etc.) and the community at large, to deal with issues, which schools do not (and cannot) have the relevant expertise for'.

This cross-sectoral approach includes the entire system of actors and their inter-relationships in and around schools, acknowledging that each stakeholder has a part to play in supporting the learners' educational journey and nurturing their learning experience'. The Council Conclusions (2015, p. 7)<sup>36</sup> reiterate the central importance of cross-sectoral cooperation, 'ensuring the committed participation of, and long-term cooperation between, stakeholders from all relevant areas (notably education and training, employment, economic affairs, social affairs, health, housing, youth, culture and sport) at and across all levels, based on clearly identified roles and responsibilities and involving close coordination'. It is notable that this imperative is to occur across all levels; in other words, through national coordination bodies and structures, as well as regional and local.

## 5.2. Developing Multidisciplinary Teams in and around Schools

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The need for a focus on multidisciplinary teams in and around education, seen in a number of European examples, has been highlighted in NESET research for the Commission (Downes, 2011a; Edwards and Downes, 2013). Moreover, the Eurydice (2014, p. 12) report observes that 'Experiences from Belgium (German Community), Ireland, Malta and the Netherlands, for example, show that the constitution of multi-disciplinary teams committed to joint case management can be effective for meeting students' full range of needs'. Multidisciplinary teams are needed to provide a multidimensional response to multifaceted problems, in order to coordinate a common strategic response among professionals for addressing the complex needs of children and their families at highest level of need and risk, i.e., the indicated prevention level (Downes, 2011; Edwards and Downes, 2013). While the precise range of professionals on such a team may vary due to local circumstances, key issues that need to be addressed include family support outreach, emotional support services, and school attendance services. The ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015, p. 12) states that 'Targeted intervention for learners at risk should be provided in an inclusive way; it will be more effective if carried out by multi-

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<sup>36</sup> The Council Conclusions (2015, p. 10) also refer to 'effective partnerships and cross-sectoral cooperation between schools and external stakeholders, including a variety of professionals, NGOs, businesses, associations, youth workers, local authorities and services, and other representatives from the community at large in accordance with local contexts'. While the Council Conclusions do not specify the relevant variety of professionals, the School Policy Working Group report is more explicit, as is the ET2020 Monitor report (2014).

disciplinary teams in schools, and/or by bringing external professionals in schools, and with the involvement of all those interacting with the learners, be it family members, siblings, volunteers, etc.’<sup>37</sup>

Similarly, the Commission’s (2013a, p. 13) Thematic Working Group (TWG) report highlighted the need for a holistic, multidisciplinary approach to ESL prevention that engages broadly with parents:

Cooperation should be centred on schools. Their boundaries should be opened up to enable them to include other professionals (as teams) such as social workers, youth workers, outreach care workers, psychologists, nurses, speech and language therapists and occupational guidance specialists in efforts to reduce ESL. Schools should be encouraged to develop strategies to improve communication between parents and locally based community services to help prevent ESL.

As with cross-sectoral work generally, the TWG (2013, p. 12) report recognises that multidisciplinary team building ‘requires clear and shared goals, a common language, a mutual understanding of expected outcomes, good communication and a clear definition of roles and responsibilities of all actors’.

A cornerstone of multidisciplinary teamwork is a commitment to a case management approach, so that roles and responsibilities have clear coordination. The TWG (2013, p. 19) emphasises the importance of what amounts to a case management system of support:

Systemic support frameworks within schools: A support framework should exist within the school to ensure that pupils at risk receive the support they need in a timely manner. It should be based on a strong multi-professional approach and teamwork. Responsibility for pupils at risk could be designated to a co-ordinator or to a ‘school care/student support team’ for example. The co-ordinator or the team could involve a range of professionals inside or outside school; one staff member may also be assigned to an individual or a family in need of targeted support.

### 5.3. Providing Emotional Supports in Relation to the School System for Early School Leaving Prevention

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Another related key issue for early school leaving prevention is emotional support for students, intended as a protective factor in a system that meets their needs (Cefai and Cooper, 2010; Downes, 2013). This issue is one that has tended to be neglected in the OECD’s (2007, 2010) educational policy reports on equity (Downes, 2010, 2011), possibly because it requires bridges between health and education domains. In order to foster a relationship of trust between the student experiencing emotional stresses and/or trauma, it is important that these emotional support services receive sustained funding support rather than being established on a merely short-term basis in a school system. The Irish Parliament and Senate Report on Early School Leaving (2010) explicitly recognises the role of emotional trauma in early school leaving. Again, this reveals the need for emotional support

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<sup>37</sup> The European Network of Education Councils (EUNEC) 2013 statement on early school leaving similarly recognises the centrality of a multidisciplinary set of supports: ‘Tackling early school leaving should be part of a multi-institutional and interinstitutional approach that puts the school in the center of a chain of public and social services. It is about a common approach between the society outside the school and the community within the school. Family and social services, community centres and labor market services are involved’.

services in and around schools. Complex emotional issues need emotional support services, and for students who are experience traumatic events, these services must not rest on a class teacher alone.

The EU Council Recommendation (2011) on early school leaving acknowledges the need for:

Targeted individual support, which integrates social, financial, educational and psychological support for young people in difficulties. It is especially important for young people in situations of serious social or emotional distress which hinders them from continuing education or training.

The Commission Communication (2011) on early school leaving recognises that ‘Education and training systems often do not provide sufficient targeted support for pupils to cope with emotional, social or educational difficulties’. As the Commission Staff Working Paper (2011) explains, ‘Solving problems at school cannot be done effectively without tackling the range of problems that put children in difficulty, which can include drug or alcohol use, sleep deficits, physical abuse and trauma’.

The TWG (2013) stresses the importance of emotional supports against the backdrop of a relational environment: ‘those who face personal, social or emotional challenges often have too little contact with education staff or other adults to support them. They need easy access to teachers and other professionals supporting their educational and personal development’.

Early school leaving prevention strategies to provide emotional support include ‘mentoring, counselling and psychological support’ (Council Conclusions, 2015, p.11).

#### 5.4. Preventing Bullying, Including Discriminatory Bullying in School

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Based on a recent NESET II European review for the Commission (Downes and Cefai, 2016), there is considerable common ground between bullying and violence prevention and policies such as early school-leaving, children's rights, fighting discriminations based on gender, racism, disability, and sexual orientation, and social inclusion for migrants and for children and students from socioeconomically excluded communities. This argument for a commonality of system-level response for both bullying and early school leaving prevention does not suppose that the same individuals are necessarily at risk for both, although they may share a number of common risk factors. Rather, it is meant to emphasise that a common response to develop inclusive systems – including a curricular focus on social and emotional education, a whole school approach to school climate, bullying, mental health, a focus on teachers’ conflict resolution skills, students’ voices, parental involvement, multidisciplinary teams, etc. – are system support requirements that can both directly address the strategic policy of preventing both bullying and early school leaving.

Building on international research and EU policy documents, common systems of holistic supports for both bullying and early school-leaving are argued to include (Downes and Cefai, 2016): a transition focus from primary to secondary; multiprofessional teams for students and their families with complex needs; language supports, including speech and language therapy; family support services and education of parents regarding their approaches to communication and supportive discipline with their children; outreach to families to provide supports; support for students with academic difficulties; social and emotional education curriculum; systems to substantially promote voices of marginalised students. The report concludes with a focus on inclusive systems for both bullying and early school-leaving prevention, which require teacher professional development and pre-service preparation that focus on: developing teachers’ relational competences for a promoting a positive school and classroom climate, including a focus on teachers’ conflict resolution and diversity awareness competences; early

warning/support systems to identify pupils' needs for those at higher risk. Most EU Member States do not have common or linked strategies to establish a combined system of supports to prevent early school leaving and bullying (Downes and Cefai, 2016).

Although discriminatory bullying is not distinguished from school bullying in EU policy documents, the findings of Elamé's (2013) European study about 'the fundamental importance' of teacher influence on discriminatory bullying is of particular interest. Those immigrant and Roma students who think the teacher exhibits similar behaviour towards 'native' and immigrant/Roma children in the class are those who have been bullied the least in the past 3 months. In contrast, 'those who declare that their teacher favours native children over immigrant/Roma students are more vulnerable to suffer some form of bullying. Specifically, less than half (48%) of the 123 [immigrant/Roma] children [across the 10 countries] who sense bias in the teachers' attitudes towards native classmates declare to have never been subjected to violence (Elamé, 2013)'. Those immigrant or Roma children who sense an imbalance in the teacher's attitudes to different ethnic groups in their class are also those who have been bullied with the highest frequency during the previous 3 months (Elamé, 2013) (see also the Greek study of Kapari and Stavrou, 2010). Prevention of discriminatory bullying (against groups such as Roma, ethnic minorities, migrants, LGBT, and those experiencing poverty and socio-economic exclusion) overwhelmingly lacks a strategic focus in EU Member States (Downes and Cefai, 2016). Bullying is recognised to directly affect early school leaving in the Annex to the Council Recommendation on Early School Leaving (2011): 'At the level of the school or training institution strategies against early school leaving are embedded in an overall school development policy. They aim at creating a positive learning environment, reinforcing pedagogical quality and innovation, enhancing teaching staff competences to deal with social and cultural diversity, and developing anti-violence and anti-bullying approaches'. It also underlines the importance of preventing an 'unfavourable school climate, violence and bullying' in 'the design and quality of education systems (p. 5)', and refers to 'the importance of maintaining a focus on inclusive education and reducing early school leaving (p. 14)'. However, it is often unclear whether national inspectorate systems or school self-evaluation processes across Europe embed a strong focus on bullying and violence prevention into their school review processes (Downes and Cefai, 2016).

## 5.5. Supporting Students with Substance Abuse Issues

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In 2003, the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction explicitly recognised the link between poverty, social marginalization and hard drug use (EMCDDA 2003). Teenagers are more likely than any other age groups to experiment with substances (De Looze et al., 2014; Hibell et al., 2012; Giannotta and Özdemir, 2013; Stekete et al., 2013; EMCDDA, 2014), but during this age adolescents are also at risk of moving towards more severe use patterns (Hibell et al., 2012). Repeated and continuous substance abuse is intertwined in complex ways with other outcomes and preconditions such as socioeconomic status (Melotti et al., 2011; Stekete et al., 2013), delinquent behaviours (Wang and Frederics, 2014; Stekete et al., 2013), fragile social relationships with their community, family, peers and school staff (Stekete et al., 2013), low engagement in school and low performance (Giannotta and Özdemir, 2013), and physical and emotional health effects, including addiction.

Some studies suggest that promoting academic development could serve as a protective factor against substance use and delinquency, in which case increasing participation in classroom and school based activities could possibly reduce delinquent behaviour and substance use (Wang and Frederics, 2014). Good relationships with parents, parental monitoring, and strong bonding decrease the likelihood of

drinking problems (Stekete et al., 2013; Walsh et al., 2014), as does the tendency to engage in individual activities at home, like reading books or doing homework (Stekete et al., 2013). Emotional support services, including multidisciplinary teams in and around schools, are needed to address the complex needs of those affected by substance abuse; for example, school-based and school-linked health clinics for adolescents could routinely complete substance abuse assessments and interventions (Lawson and Van Veen, 2016b).

The Commission Staff Working Paper (2011, p. 26) mentions the impact of substance abuse on early school leaving, 'Solving problems at school cannot be done effectively without tackling the range of problems that put children in difficulty, which can include drug or alcohol use, sleep deficits, physical abuse and trauma'. Substance abuse is also briefly mentioned in the Commission Recommendations (2013, p. 8): 'Devote special attention to children with disabilities or mental health problems, undocumented or non-registered children, pregnant teenagers and children from families with a history of substance abuse'. The issue of substance abuse, though somewhat neglected in subsequent Council and Commission documents on early school leaving, merits further attention.

## 5.6. Promoting Adequate Sleep for Students

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It is important to acknowledge that most children need at least 9 hours of restful sleep each night (Taras and Potts-Datema, 2005). Sleep deprivation and sleep restriction, especially over the long term, have negative effects on child and adolescent mental and physical wellbeing. It has an impact on a wide spectrum of cognitive functioning, including attention, reasoning and memory, and during prolonged periods of sleep restriction the negative effects accumulate (de Bruin et al, 2016). Prolonged sleep deficiency in childhood and adolescence can have a detrimental impact on brain development (Beebe, 2011; de Bruin et al., 2016).

Sleepiness, tiredness and other insomnia-related symptoms are correlated with reported or actual school performance (Dewald et al., 2010; Boschloo et al., 2011; Kronholm, 2015). These correlations are stronger in studies with younger children and adolescents, than they are with older adolescents; with age the sensitivity to sleep deficiency decreases (Dewald et al., 2010). A review by Blunden et al (2001) found that reduced attention, memory, intelligence and increased problematic behaviour resulted from sleep-related obstructive breathing.

Inadequate day to day sleep length and poor quality are associated with damaging consequences. The data analysis from the Youth Risk Behaviour Study suggests that adolescents who sleep either too short or too long daily are at risk of being suicidal, even after controlling for sadness, substance abuse, age and gender (Fitzgerald et al., 2011). Regular, quality and adequate sleep is associated with general wellbeing, feeling stable, and resilience to emotional distress. According to an analysis of HSBC data of 304 adolescents in Spain (Segura-Jimenez, 2015), adolescent sleep time was positively associated with life satisfaction; the more appropriate the sleep times were, the less health complaints adolescents had and the more they were satisfied with life. Since sleep deficiency is related to physical tiredness and fatigue, psychological distress and increased vulnerability, eating problems, and it may have an effect on general wellbeing and school attainment. Moreover, sleep deficiency is interwoven in complex ways with substance abuse (Loureiro et al., 2014), aggressive behaviours (Lemola et al., 2012) and eating disorders (Maume, 2013).

Researchers who analysed a data sample of 5402 teenager-students from Finland, France and Denmark concluded that the longer they used computers, the shorter their sleep duration was, and the higher

their psychological (such as feeling low, irritable, bad temper or feeling nervous) and somatic symptoms (such as headache, stomach-ache and dizziness) were. (Nuutinen et al., 2014). Similar conclusions were reached by analysing a survey of 23,941 Italians: this study observed that computer use among 16 year old teenagers was associated with more frequent psychological symptoms, and this association was also related to increased difficulty of getting to sleep (Marino et al., 2016). Similar conclusions were drawn from an HSBC data sample of 3476 15-year old Portuguese students (Paiva, 2015, 2016).

Some students in schools associated with high levels of poverty and social exclusion in Dublin, Ireland reported being unable to sleep due to hunger and stress (Downes and Maunsell, 2007). An brief exploratory curricular intervention for a primary school of high poverty in Dublin observed that a curricular intervention, if it also involved parents, could increase awareness and subsequently the amounts of sleep for pupils on school weekdays (Hardagon, 2014).

Adolescent sleep habits are related to parental sleep behaviour and the overall atmosphere at home. The sleep patterns of adolescents were shown to be related to the parents' sleep patterns. Poor sleep quality was related with depression and poor family climate, both among adolescents and their mothers (Kalak et al., 2012). Moreover, adolescents who sleep less on weekdays and longer on weekends are more vulnerable to the psychological stress triggered by inter-parental conflict (Lemola et al., 2012). Parent break-up stress is associated with reported shorter sleep on weeknights and more sleep disruption.

A longitudinal US study of 974 adolescents age 15 and their parents showed that social ties had more impact on sleep quality than developmental measures. Having friends who have positive relationships with school and strive for academic success, was associated with longer sleep and less disruptions. Stress at school, caused by factors like increased homework, is related to sleep disruptions, and parents were regarded as the most influential source about the importance of adequate sleep. A fair conclusion is that counselling and advising that improves parent, peer and school relationships could also improve sleep patterns (Maume, 2013). In addition, improving sleep duration could also lead to better psychological health and decrease health complaints (Sigura-Jemenez, 2013). The Commission Staff Working Paper (2011, p. 26) recognises the issue of sleep deficits for early school leaving prevention.

## CHAPTER 6. VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS

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Certain vulnerable groups require a strategic focus for supports for inclusive systems in and around schools<sup>38</sup>. The groups examined in this section are: migrants and Roma, students experiencing poverty, victims of bullying, and students with special educational needs.

### 6.1. Supporting Migrants and Roma

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It is vital not to construct ethnic minorities and migrants in deficit terms. Any focus on their distinct needs in a given national and local educational system requires an approach that builds on their strengths and which celebrates diversity. It is also important to note that not all migrants identify with

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<sup>38</sup>The focus of the supports in this section is at the microsystem and mesosystem level.

their original ethnic background (Dogra et al., 2012). Moreover, multiracial individuals may be mistakenly perceived as monoracial members of their minority groups (Ho et al., 2011)<sup>39</sup>.

In accord with the key principles of equality of esteem and building on strengths, a recommendation of Heckmann's (2008) NESSE report for the Commission is to integrate elements and symbols of the cultures of origin into school life, the curriculum, textbooks, and other school material. Heckmann (2008) recommends that this be done in consultation with representatives of the new communities. Yet much work needs to be done to make this a reality. Moreover, it is evident from community based lifelong learning centres and social support centres in Nantes, Munich, Usti and the Hague (Downes, 2015), that the cultural symbols of different ethnic groups and migrants are not expressed or displayed in these centres or community spaces. Concern about the needs of migrants and Roma pervades the Council Recommendation 2011<sup>40</sup>. The Council Conclusions (2015, p. 5), mark 'migrant backgrounds (including newly arrived migrants and foreign-born children)'. The Council Recommendations (2011, annex p. 4) refer to 'supporting children with a different mother tongue to improve their proficiency in the language of instruction and, where appropriate, in the mother tongue, as well as supporting teachers to teach children with different levels of linguistic competence'<sup>41</sup>.

The TWG (2013, p. 17) report seeks 'Better integration of newly arrived migrant children: Children from newly arrived migrant families need targeted support to acquire the language of tuition and to catch up with the curriculum. Inclusive learning environments can support their integration and increase their educational success...'. Such targeted support needs to include,

Specific support for non-native speakers: Learners whose native language is not the language of instruction should receive additional and appropriate support according to their needs, preferably outside school time and avoiding any type of separation or segregation practices. The competences and proficiency in their native language should be appreciated and used as a resource for the whole class (ET2020 School Policy Working Group document 2015, p. 12).

The Commission Staff Working Paper (2011, p. 26) observes that 'A number of countries have successfully introduced school mediators or teaching assistants who often provide the missing link between the school and the parents. This is a successful approach particularly for communities with a distrust of school authorities, or for parents who do not speak the language of instruction'. The Council Recommendations (2011, annex p. 7) endorse 'mediators from the local community who are able to support communication and to reduce distrust'. The Commission Recommendation (2013, p. 7) observes the need to 'deploy special cultural mediators and role models to facilitate the integration of

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<sup>39</sup> See also May et al., 2004 on hybridity of identities. As Dale's NESSE report for the Commission (2010, p. 28) highlights, 'Migrant populations are diverse and they present different challenges in terms of whether they are: racially, ethnically and culturally distinct from the indigenous population and subject to forms of discrimination; high/low skilled and bringing particular kinds of expectations of the host community; rich or poor in the social/cultural capital which is meaningful in the new context; newly arrived with complex language and cultural needs; second and third generation migrants with established patterns of need and aspiration; illegal migrants with complex forms of insecurity and instability; refugees and Asylum seekers, potentially bearing complex health and welfare needs; citizens from former colonies with a history of social and cultural engagement with their new context'.

<sup>40</sup> They are explicitly referred to on p. 4 & 6 of the Council Recommendation 2011. In 2014, 40.1% of adults born in a country outside the EU-28 and 24.8% of those born in a different EU-28 country than the reporting one were at risk of poverty or social exclusion. For native citizens, however, only 22.5% of the population was at this risk (Eurostat 2016).

<sup>41</sup> The Council Conclusions (2015, p. 11) observe the need for 'additional support for learners whose native language(s) is/are not the language(s) of instruction'.

Roma and children with an immigrant background'. Roma mediators in schools who are from the Roma community are an example from Sofia municipality of a commitment to representation and inclusion of the Roma minority<sup>42</sup>. The PREVENT Project Policy Recommendations report raised this principle as being largely lacking across 10 municipalities. This principle of representativeness regarding the need to employ members of those groups being targeted for intervention in order to ensure cultural affinity, credibility and competence of the project is given insufficient recognition generally across municipalities (Downes, 2014a). A notable exception and leading initiative in this area is that of the Roma mediators, in the Sofia Schools of inclusion in Bulgaria<sup>43</sup>.

As an implicit dimension of the representation and participation principle for marginalised groups, the Council Recommendations 2011 annex (p.7) refers to the importance of 'Networking with... other actors outside school, such as local community services, organisations representing migrants or minorities'. However, much work needs to be done in practice at local level to make this a reality. As noted in a report across 9 European cities, the lack of substantive representation of ethnic minorities and migrants, including NGOs representing them, on a number of the Local Support Groups for their Local Action Plans for parental involvement for early school leaving is a serious concern, (Downes, 2015). It impinges upon key principles of representation, collaboration and dialogue. This requires systemic change.

The EU Commission's TWG (2013, p. 19) report highlights that 'The administrative process for enrolling newly arrived migrant children needs to be timely and adapted to the specific situation of their families. Curcic et al. (2014, p. 261) observe that 'many Roma parents do not have the means to obtain and submit the array of legal documents necessary to navigate the system'. Other forms of support should also be available, especially for newly arrived migrants, either in the school or outside, in cooperation with local agencies and services (ET2020 School Policy Working Group document 2015. p.12). The issue of system fragmentation of multiple, diffuse services and territories was also raised in the PREVENT project reports across 10 European city municipalities<sup>44</sup> (Downes, 2014a, 2015), where a need was identified for clarity of responsibility to ensure that families and young people do not fall through the gaps in support services, since many vulnerable populations may not be in a position to access the supports available to them. It is key that there is a lead agency who can guide them through the range of service options available in their municipality, to ensure that the educational and more holistic needs of children and young people from ethnic minorities and migrant families are being met. There needs to be a clear path of responsibility to provide such support, and this path must also be clearly communicated to migrants and ethnic minorities. A number of responses from municipalities did not specify a concrete lead agency that coordinates and builds bridges to other agencies which support parents and children as migrants and ethnic minorities (Downes, 2015).

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<sup>42</sup> Garaz (2014) contrasts the variance in education levels between Roma minorities in different European countries in comparison with the general population. Students whose parents have completed at least lower secondary education reaches 79% in Bulgaria for the general population compared with 64 % for Roma; it is 87% compared with 56% in the Czech Republic. In other words, the 31% difference between Roma and the general population whose parents have completed at least lower secondary education in the Czech Republic is double the 15% difference in Bulgaria.

<sup>43</sup> This pilot municipal model aims for the inclusion of Roma families in general and, specifically, for an increase in preschool enrolment of Roma children. Training of Roma mediators, training of pedagogical staff and training of institutional experts consists of 20 persons across 3 days training in 'Family Involvement', 'Effective models for interaction, awareness raising and multilateral partnership', 'Conflict management', and 'Communication with institutions'.

<sup>44</sup> Antwerp (Belgium-Flanders), Gijon (Spain), The Hague (Netherlands), Munich (Germany), Nantes (France), Sofia (Bulgaria), Stockholm (Sweden), Tallinn (Estonia), Usti (Czech Republic), Catania (Sicily).



## 6.2. Overcoming Poverty-Related Barriers to Education

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Monetary poverty is the most widespread form of poverty in Europe with 17.2% of EU citizens affected in 2014. Next is severe material deprivation and very low work intensity, affecting 9% and 11.2% of EU citizens respectively (Eurostat, 2016). Overall, 9.5% of the working EU population was at risk of poverty in 2014 (Eurostat, 2016). Almost 50% of all single parents were at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2014. This was double the average and higher than for any other household type (Eurostat, 2016). Council Recommendations (2011) annex p.5 also recognises teenage pregnancy as an issue for early school leaving<sup>45</sup>.

More than 30% of young people aged 18 to 24, and 27.8% of children aged less than 18, were at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2014. At 17.8%, this rate was considerably lower among the elderly aged 65 or over (Eurostat, 2016). This is related to the issue of hunger in school amongst children and young people due to poverty-related factors, which can affect their concentration, performance, memory, motivation, behaviour, and relations with peers (Downes and Maunsell, 2007). It is neglected in EU documents for early school leaving prevention, arguably due to the lack of European wide research on school system supports regarding this issue. The availability of hot food and kitchens in schools is taken for granted in some European countries, and does not exist in others. The Commission Recommendation (2013, p. 8) mentions this issue only indirectly and only for early years: 'Invest in prevention particularly during early childhood years, by putting in place comprehensive policies that combine nutrition, health, education and social measures'. Against the backdrop of the economic crisis and a substantial increase in child poverty in a number of countries, this key education and poverty related issue merits much firmer attention at EU level for research and policy; it is included, albeit in a preliminary fashion, within the scope of the current framework of structural indicators for inclusive systems in and around education.

The Commission Staff Working Paper (2011, p. 32) recognises that 'Policies against ESL need to take account of the financial difficulties that cause many young people to leave school early... Financial incentives can also be conditional, e.g. based on regular school attendance'. The Council Recommendations (2011, annex p. 10) seeks 'Targeted individual support' which includes 'financial' support.

The Commission Recommendation (2013, pp. 1-5) also recognises issues of 'housing', 'street children' and interventions for homelessness: 'Support families and children at risk of homelessness by avoiding evictions, unnecessary moves, separation from families as well as providing temporary shelter and long-term housing solutions'. However, more attention is needed on the *educational impact* of homelessness and temporary housing, which is often a large distance away from the school location.

EU-28 citizens in rural areas were on average more likely to live in poverty or social exclusion than those living in urban areas (27.2 % compared with 24.3 %) in 2014 (Eurostat 2016). This is an important context in which to place the Commission Staff Working Paper's (2011, p. 9) recognition that, 'In some

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<sup>45</sup>To get a more detailed picture on why adolescents leave school early, Dupere et al. (2014) propose a complex model, which would take into account not only individual and system characteristics, such as developmental trajectories, coping, health, identity, family, school, community support and others, but also the importance of turning points. Teen parenting, academic failure, mobility, and financial hardship all may be turning points profoundly affecting the life course of an individual and inducing stress, which could lead to dropping out. Moreover, stressors often come in bundles; for example teen parenting may also induce financial hardship or academic failure.

Member States ESL is a predominantly rural phenomenon, has high incidence in remote areas and can be linked to insufficient access to education'. Transport barriers to attending school was also noted in a number of the NESET country specific reports (2013-14), especially in rural contexts of poverty. A number of these reports also referred to schemes to aid children in need by funding textbooks and other learning resources, while the issue of teenage pregnancy and early school leaving was also raised.

### 6.3. Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs

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In their review of the international literature on bullying victimisation amongst children with SEND (they are primarily studies from Europe – Ireland, Scandinavia, and UK – and North America) McLaughlin et al. (2010) found that children with SEND faced increased risk of victimisation in both mainstream and special settings, ranging from 80% for children with learning disabilities, 70% for children with autism, to 40% for children with speech and language difficulties; some studies indicated that students with mild or hidden disabilities may be at even more risk. Various reviews of the literature in the US (e.g. Rose et al., 2011; Rose et al., 2009) and the UK (McLaughlin et al., 2010) have shown that bullying victimisation and perpetration are over-represented in SEND, suggesting that children and young people with SEND are not only more likely to be victimised but also more likely to bully, relative to their peers.

Transition is an issue related to bullying but also poses wider difficulties for students with SEND who may be in particular need of structured environments (Maunsell et al., 2007). The TWG (2013, p. 17) seeks,

Smooth transition between different levels of education: Measures to facilitate the process of adaption should start from transition from home to the world of education. Transition from primary to lower-secondary education and from lower to upper secondary should be facilitated. Closer cooperation between schools, induction programmes and targeted support for children facing difficulties in adapting to the new school environment can avoid alienation as a result of difficult transition experiences.

These are issues for schools and preservice teacher education to address.

Students with special educational needs are identified as a group at increased risk of early school leaving in the Council Recommendation (2011, p.6). The Council Recommendations (2011, annex p. 7) endorse, 'Mentoring supports [for] individual pupils to overcome specific academic, social or personal difficulties. Either in one-to-one approaches (mentoring) or in small groups (tutoring), pupils receive targeted assistance, often provided by education staff by community members or by their peers'. The TWG report (2013, pp. 18-19) observes that

Pupils with learning difficulties/disabilities or those who face personal, social or emotional challenges often have too little contact with education staff or other adults to support them. They need easy access to teachers and other professionals supporting their educational and personal development. They also need guidance and mentoring together with cultural and extra-curricular activities to broaden their learning opportunities<sup>46</sup>.

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<sup>46</sup> Carpentieri et al.'s (2011) major international review of family literacy highlights the need to address dyslexia, as well as a relative neglect of this issue in Europe: 'Although dyslexia runs in families (van Otterloo et al, 2009), very little of the European primary research we found investigated family literacy interventions targeted at children who were dyslexic or who were at

As the UNESCO (2016, p. 36) report recognises, 'inclusion is about the development of mainstream schools, rather than the reorganization of special schooling'. It also raises the concern that:

The category 'special educational needs' can become a repository for various groups who suffer discrimination in society, such as those from minority backgrounds. In this way, special education can be a way of hiding discrimination against some groups of students behind an apparently benign label, thus, justifying their low attainments and, therefore, their need for separate educational arrangements (p. 38).

The UNESCO report develops the implications of this for preservice education, observing that if teachers are to be trained in inclusive approaches, then their training programmes must also be organized along inclusive lines: 'The rigid separation between mainstream education and special education programmes has to be replaced by more integrated programmes or more flexible pathways through programmes' (p. 41).

## CHAPTER 7. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT

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The family microsystem plays not only a pivotal role in the students' life and education, it is also a key systemic dimension for supports and participation when promoting inclusive systems in and around schools. This section addresses this theme through a focus on: integrating parental involvement with family support, including multidisciplinary and outreach approaches; parent meeting spaces and policy input into schools; community lifelong learning centres linked with schools; and family literacy approaches.

### 7.1. Integrating a Holistic Multidisciplinary Approach to Parental Involvement with Family Support for Early School Leaving Prevention

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Recognition of the importance of family support services for early intervention for bullying and violence prevention, as well as for positive mental health, highlights the need for multidisciplinary community outreach centres that are a 'one-stop shop', where a range of vital services across health and education are available in an accessible local site. Eurochild (2011) advocates the establishment of such centres across Europe, pointing to the expansion of them in specific German and Dutch contexts. Community family centres give practical expression to the benefits of multi-disciplinary cooperation and parental interventions, both of which have been recognised by international reviews (see Downes and Cefai, 2016) as significant features of successful interventions for bullying prevention and for challenging a culture of violent communication.

Outreach engagement and family support appears to be a strategic gap across a number of European countries (Downes, 2011a). Such an outreach dimension would benefit from an integrated outreach

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heightened risk of dyslexia. One exception was a study of the Dutch Sounding Sounds and Jolly Letters (Klinkende Klanken en Lollige Letters) intervention, which was a home-based intervention aimed at children at increased risk of dyslexia (characterised in this instance as having at least one parent who self-reported as dyslexic). Sounding Sounds and Jolly Letters was an adaptation of a Danish programme known as 'Towards initial reading: phonological awareness'. However, the Danish version was set in school classrooms and did not utilise parents. The Dutch Programme, which was designed to take about 10 minutes a day, five days a week for 14 weeks, led to moderate literacy gains in children. Importantly, the programme appeared to be readily implementable by parents (pp. 121-22).

strategy in place for families at levels of moderate risk (selected prevention) and chronic need (indicated prevention), in combination with local multidisciplinary teams (see Downes, 2011; Edwards and Downes, 2013; Downes, 2013a). Regarding individual outreach, the ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015, p. 15) states, 'Where necessary, other services, NGOs and professionals (cultural mediators, mentors, social workers, etc.) can be involved to help build positive relationships with parents, especially those from more disadvantaged backgrounds and/or those who have negative experiences of school in the past'.

The Commission's TWG report (2013, p. 13) encompasses a family dimension through adopting an emphasis on proactive outreach<sup>47</sup> to engage marginalised parents:

Schools should develop specific outreach programmes to encourage the active participation and representation of vulnerable parents and families, such as those from low socio-economic or low education backgrounds, single parent families and parents of migrant background.

An outreach approach to parental involvement for schools and municipalities requires an active effort to engage with groups, in contexts where they feel most comfortable, such as in their homes and local community based contexts; there is a need to distinguish a community outreach strategy for parents and an individual outreach approach.

Direct references to the role of parental involvement<sup>48</sup> in prevention and intervention are in the Annex framework to the Council Recommendation (2011, pp. 5-7): Prevention policies could include: ... 'Enhancing the involvement of parents, reinforcing their cooperation with the school and creating partnerships between schools and parents can increase learning motivation among pupils'. Suggested intervention policies at the level of the school or training institution include: networking with parents and other actors outside school, such as local community services, organisations representing migrants or minorities, sports and culture associations, or employers and civil society organisations, which allows for holistic solutions to help pupils at risk and eases their access to external support such as psychologists, social and youth workers, and cultural and community services. The Annex observes that 'This can be facilitated by mediators from the local community who are able to support communication and to reduce distrust'. This latter emphasis on the role of parents is notably part of a wider holistic approach that encompasses a multidisciplinary, cross-sectoral focus as part of a community level interaction with schools.

Wider holistic and multidisciplinary approaches to parental engagement is also a feature of key EU Commission documents in this area of early school leaving prevention<sup>49</sup>. The Commission Recommendation (2013) adopts a framework which explicitly seeks to 'enhance family support' (p. 8) and 'promote quality, community-based care' (p. 9) as part of a challenge to the effects of poverty and social exclusion in education. Again, a multidisciplinary approach across different levels to engage with complex needs in a holistic fashion is a feature of the Commission (2013) framework recommendations for investment in children through 'multi-dimensional strategies'. This recognition of the importance of family support issues also emerges in the Eurydice (2014, p. 36) report, 'A number of family-related

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<sup>47</sup> This need for an outreach approach is echoed in the Council Conclusions (2015, p. 11): 'support for schools in reaching out to all parents and families beyond the formal requirements for participation, and in building a culture of mutual trust and respect in which parents and family feel welcome at school and feel involved in their children's learning'.

<sup>48</sup> The Council Recommendation (2011) is stronger on the issue of voices of parents than of children.

<sup>49</sup> The Commission Communication (2011) recognises that 'Early school leaving is not just a school issue and its causes need to be addressed across a range of social, youth, family, health, local community, employment, as well as education policies'.

factors such as family instability and lifestyle, single-parenthood, poor living conditions, physical and mental health and domestic violence can, moreover, increase young peoples' likelihood of giving up education and training prematurely'.

It should be emphasised that there is consensus across these various EU documents on a vision for an integrated strategic approach, which combines parental involvement in education with family support needs in a holistic fashion, and which is part of a multidisciplinary approach to early school leaving. This holistic approach bridges health and education domains for a wider understanding of the systemic needs of families.

## 7.2. Developing Parent Meeting Spaces and Policy Input into Schools

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The European Parents' Association manifesto (2015) observes that 'policy frameworks should be adopted for all levels that ensure the consent of children and their parents when major decisions are made affecting them'. The inclusion of marginalised parents' voices in efforts to encourage parental input into school policy (Mulkerrins, 2007) is a dimension requiring more emphasis across Member States; parents' voices should be recognised as being a further aspect of a child's right to be heard (Downes, 2014a). International research in the area of school bullying pays too little attention to this issue of parental input into school bullying policy (Downes and Cefai, 2016).

A further rationale for the need to bridge schools and homes is provided by the Commission Staff Working Paper (2011), which highlights the need to enhance parental involvement, noting that if parents are disengaged it deeply undermines the success of school education because warning signs will be more frequently missed. It recognises that parents from socio-economically excluded and low-education backgrounds are often reluctant to contact the school. They might believe themselves to be unwelcome, be affected by their own experiences of school failure, or may not expect much support from the school. This Commission Staff Working Paper (2011) concludes:

... sometimes schools may find it difficult to reach out to families because of a real or perceived attitude of non-cooperation among some families. Building trusting relationships between parents and schools is a crucial and challenging task in reducing ESL. Innovative approaches which support communication with parents, which create partnerships between parents and schools and which enhance mutual understanding do exist, but are not yet sufficiently widespread.

The ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015, p. 15) highlights the need for specific spaces in school for parents to meet and classroom and extracurricular participation of parents<sup>50</sup>. Building on parents' strengths, municipalities can play a key role here in three aspects (Downes, 2015). First, they can facilitate communication between ethnic minority parents across schools to connect parent associations that may currently already exist. Second, they can provide outreach spaces in welcoming and accessible locations for ethnic minority groups and migrants, in order to build bridges to them socially and educationally. Third, they can foster approaches to develop parent mutual peer support processes.

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<sup>50</sup> The ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015, p. 15) states: 'A school in which parents from all backgrounds and educational levels feel welcome and are considered as a resource for schools should be promoted. This can be achieved, for example, by offering designated time and spaces for parents to meet and support each other, inviting parents to share their skills and expertise as volunteers in educational activities within the classroom (e.g. reading to the class, give additional support to individuals, lead small groups) or in other in-school activities (both curricular and extra-curricular)'.

The ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015, p. 18), notes that ‘Special outreach activities, for example through intercultural mediators, may be necessary to reach parents who are not proficient in the language of instruction’. For community outreach, as distinct from an individual outreach strategy, The ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015, p. 15) suggests that, ‘Cultural events/festivals and outreach activities can help develop cultural bridges in order to reach to marginalised and ethnic minority parents’.

### 7.3. Establishing Community Lifelong Learning Centres

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The European Parents’ Association manifesto (2015) observes that ‘parenting is lifelong learning’; it recommends that ‘schools should become autonomous community learning spaces providing settings for lifelong learning’. Based on a European review, key features of good practice in community based lifelong learning centres include: a welcoming, supportive, nonhierarchical environment for the nontraditional learner, with a personalized learning focus, a proactive outreach strategy to engage those on the margins, a commitment to both leadership development within the organization and to fostering community leaders for communities experiencing marginalization, and a commitment to democratic engagement with the voices and real needs of the learner, as part of a learner-centred focus and commitment (Downes, 2011b). It is notable that the Lifelong Learning Platform in Europe (previously EUCIS-LLL) Policy Paper (2016) also emphasises the importance of community centres and citizenship learning centres for collaborative wider communities for inclusive educational institutions.

Community arts can operate within a lifelong learning framework; not only does it bring stakeholders, including parents, into children’s learning process, but it also raises children's interest in their neighbourhood, community, city, and raises their awareness about civic rights. This in turn has an effect on non-cognitive skills such as awareness, confidence, and trust (Tsevreni, 2014; Tweedie, 2007). Although community arts interventions are widely practiced in Europe and the US, rigorous scientific evaluations are not available for these initiatives. One of the reasons for this may be that community interventions are usually focused on transforming the wider environment, and not focused on the improvement of grades or test results; most of the evidence-based evaluation frameworks are intended to justify arts intervention in relation to grade improvement in other subjects, especially mathematics and literacy. The other important issue is that these projects often are created and continue working outside of education institutions, so they are not considered to be the subject of education policy, and thus reports about these initiatives and their results is undertaken either by authors or art critics, who may or may not have the relevant expertise, motivation or interest to perform the rigorous scientific evaluation. Some reporting about these initiatives take the form of exhibitions, website-reports, videos, podcasts and other artistic productions. Despite the differences in reporting language, it is important to find the relevant tools to acknowledge the change that community arts brings to children’s and their parents’ education and life experience, and to establish a dialogue reaching beyond education institutions and sectorial policy approaches.

The ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015, p. 16) offers an important rationale for a lifelong learning lens for engaging parents, whether through school based activities after school hours, or in other community lifelong learning settings:

Opening up school facilities outside school hours for language support and other classes for parents can be highly advantageous, particularly for parents who may be overwhelmed by their school system. This helps to break down barriers schools face when working to increase parental engagement. However, for parents with very negative experiences of school in the past, working in

partnership with NGOs would help create other opportunities to foster parental education in different locations.

The Commission Recommendation (2013, p. 9) mentions parental communicative processes that can be interpreted as being within a lifelong learning framework: 'Enable all families to participate in social activities that boost their parental skills and foster positive family communication'.

The Commission Staff Working Paper (2011, p. 24) stresses that 'Schools striving for 'learning communities' agree on a common vision, basic values and objectives of school development. This common vision shared by teachers, parents and other stakeholders increases commitment and supports the development of school level curricula, the organisation of teaching and learning, assessment and evaluation.'. It is a natural extension of this vision to include the school itself as a lifelong learning community centre. Moreover, the Council Conclusions (2015, p. 9) offer a significant recognition of the importance of community education through non-formal learning and youth work to engage marginalised students: 'Pursue - as appropriate - the reform of education systems, looking at the whole spectrum of education and training, including non-formal learning and acknowledging the role of youth work, with a view to reinforcing structural, pedagogical, curricular and professional continuity, easing transitions'.

## 7.4. Developing Family Literacy Interventions

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The term family literacy typically describes literacy development work that focuses on how literacy is developed at home, and education courses that support and develop this dimension of literacy development. It can refer to a set of programs designed to enhance the literacy skills of more than one family member.

The Harvard Family Research Project's Home-School Study of Language and Literacy Development (Snow et al., 2001) found that supporting literacy both at home and in school was a much more powerful predictor of early literacy abilities than were either families' socioeconomic status or cultural background. Carpentieri et al., (2011, pp. 158-164) offer a comprehensive review of family literacy programmes in Europe. They identify the need for structured family literacy approaches for those with low levels of education and at risk of poverty: Programmes based on evidence collected from relatively advantaged families may not provide the structure possibly required by less advantaged families. Such an argument is not unique to family literacy programmes; it also appears in policy debates about schools. They identify a concerning obstruction: 'a key obstacle highlighted by family literacy stakeholders is the widespread lack of knowledge or interest in family literacy on the part of key policymakers, including many policy makers working in the field of education', while observing that 'many programmes suffer or disappear because of the short-term nature of much family literacy funding'.

Carpentieri et al.'s (2011) review also highlighted a strategic gap in European policy: at the level of national or regional policy, they did not find evidence that family literacy initiatives were coordinated. In other words, governments did not appear to actively seek to facilitate the existence of a range of purposefully complementary programme types.

A family literacy approach is resonant with a lifelong learning focus, though this has only begun to be explored in EU policy documents on early school leaving. The ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015) recognises a focus on parental involvement for literacy and numeracy, as well as a lifelong learning, as 'family education can provide a range of benefits for parents and children including

improvements in reading, writing and numeracy. Raising the educational level of parents is one of the successful actions to prevent early school leaving... Parents benefit from self-efficacy, empowerment, and greater involvement in their child's school as well as greater parental confidence in helping their child at home. This leads to increased pupils' engagement in school and better educational achievements (p.16); 'Parents may also benefit from language support – here schools could work in partnership e.g. with NGOs to support language learning for parents from a migrant background'. (ET2020 School Policy Working Group document 2015. p.12). This is in line with the vision of schools as a community lifelong learning centre for engaging parents.

## CHAPTER 8. IMPLEMENTATION PROCESSES FOR STRUCTURAL INDICATORS

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This report has sought to establish an overarching European framework of structural indicators for inclusive systems in and around schools, to guide both national policy makers and schools. Establishing a substantial, clearly defined set of structural indicators of the range and scope proposed would be a significant undertaking, one that would require clear lines of communication between a designated part of the Commission in its Directorate-General, Education and Culture and a designated section in each Member State's Education Ministry. Since the focus is on structural indicators rather than quantitative indicators, the key responsibility would lie with a policy-oriented section/unit in national Education Ministries, more so than it would by national educational statistical services. Such social inclusion policy units already exist in a number of countries' Education Ministries, while the process of dialogue between the European Commission and national Education Ministries is well-established through the country-specific review focus on EU2020 headline targets in education for early school leaving prevention. In education systems with a strong regional or municipal focus, there would additionally need to be a process of engagement for implementing the indicators.

The proposed European framework of structural indicators, as a self-assessment tool, can also contribute to efforts to improve the quality of education systems throughout Europe. The Council Recommendation (2011, annex, p. 3) seeks 'education policies that promote high-quality school systems' for early school leaving prevention. This framework of structural indicators can play a role in promoting high quality school systems, including through whole school improvement processes. In the words of the ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015, p. 11),

Whole school improvement processes should be characterised by openness and transparency; they should be developed and implemented in a participatory way by the entire school community (including learners, parents and families) and with stakeholders, multi-professional teams and external local services. They should be based on common goals and clearly defined roles and responsibilities; clear indicators should be established to monitor improvements.

The proposed structural indicators reconcile local ownership with central direction, and can help translate the conclusions from the ET 2020 WGs into a concrete and usable tool for policy makers at national/local level, and for school leaders. They can be promoted through the 'European Toolkit for Schools', as well as through the activities of the Working Group on School Policy. More specifically, Member States may ask the Commission for support in implementing the structural indicators within the ET2020 processes.



The value of the proposed framework is best understood, initially, as providing scope for self-assessment at national and school levels, with a view to progression, year by year, in implementing strategic system change informed by these structural indicators. In setting out these key areas for monitoring, feedback and transparency for the structural indicators for schools, flexibility is retained as to how these strategic areas are precisely to be addressed, while remaining cognisant of professional autonomy, and the distinctive cultural features and support services of a given country or region. A process would also need to be put in place to review these indicators after a given period of time, such as the four years before 2020, as part of a reciprocal feedback process between the Commission and Member States, and continuing to incorporate future research in this area. These indicators are complementary with anti-poverty indicators, such as those outlined in the Commission Recommendation *Investing in Children*.

To establish an incentive for schools, this framework of structural indicators for schools' self-assessment processes could provide the basis for a voluntary European Label or Quality Mark for Inclusive Systems in and around Schools (Downes, 2015b). The structural indicators also offer a framework to possibly complement and support projects developed under Erasmus+ KA3 policy experimentations, or other Erasmus+ projects related to social inclusion through education. They could also contribute to the work of the ET2020 Working Group on Promoting Citizenship and the Common Values of Freedom, Tolerance and Non-discrimination. The framework of system structural indicators for inclusive systems might also serve as a framework to inform funding opportunities offered by EU instruments, such as the European Social Fund and the European Fund for Strategic Investments, to support measures aimed at reducing early school leaving, including them as a part of comprehensive policies for promoting cooperation in and around schools.

A pervasive theme in this report is the importance of social and emotional education needs of students, as well as the centrality of relational competences of teachers, as well as students, as part of a commitment to inclusive systems in and around schools. This offers an important dimension for consideration in the current review of European *Key Competences for Lifelong Learning*, to ensure that this mental health and wellbeing dimension is sufficiently addressed in a revised framework. It is to be emphasised that social and emotional education, together with relational competences, is not reducible to citizenship education, values or simply social competences or cultural expression. Social and emotional education includes a range of holistic, psychological approaches which emphasise awareness of emotions, caring, empathy and concern for others, positive relationships, making responsible decisions, impulse control, resolving conflict constructively and valuing the thoughts, feelings and voices of students.

According to the Eurydice report on Assuring Quality in Education (2015a), external school evaluation is widespread in Europe. It is carried out in 31 education systems across 26 countries. However, there are exceptions such as Finland, where there are no central regulations on external school evaluation. In such cases, local authorities may decide to use a framework of structural indicators for the schools for which they are responsible. It is to be emphasised that the structural indicators offer local flexibility about how to engage with the more central direction as to what issues need to be addressed; this is key for ownership of the structural indicators review process by schools across Europe, and for development of inclusive systems in and around schools in Europe.

## 8.1. Structural Indicators Matrix Tool on National Policy for Developing Inclusive Systems in and around Schools

Indicator	Description
<b>1. PROMOTING SYSTEM INTEGRATION OF POLICY AND PRACTICE FOR INCLUSIVE SYSTEMS IN AND AROUND SCHOOLS</b>	
<b>1.1. Establishing National Coordination Structures for Inclusive Systems in and around Schools and Local Cross-School Cooperation Structures</b>	<p>National Coordination Structures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A coordinating body exists at national level for inclusive systems in and around schools (e.g., focusing on early school leaving/bullying prevention/children’s voices/migrants’ needs) which ensures coordination across different policy sectors. YES/NO</li> <li>• Representatives from marginalised groups, such as NGOs representing minorities, students and parents, are members of this national coordinating body for inclusive systems in and around schools (e.g., focusing on early school leaving/bullying prevention/children’s voices/migrants needs). YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Local Cross-School Cooperation Structures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National strategic approach is in place to establish local cross-school cooperation structures. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>1.2. Overcoming Socio-economic Segregation in Schools: A Cross-School Cooperation Issue to be Developed at National and Regional Levels</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National strategic approach is in place to seek to prevent socio-economic segregation in schools. YES/NO</li> <li>• Transparent school admission and enrolment criteria at national level to ensure students are not excluded from a local school due to their socio-economic or ethnic background. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>1.3. Developing Early Warning Prevention and Intervention Systems and Data Collection Systems</b>	<p>Early Warning Prevention and Intervention Systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mainstream availability in a large majority of schools of an Early Warning Prevention and Intervention system for engaging students at risk of leaving and to identify solutions, including their parents. YES/NO</li> <li>• Individual Integrated Education and Wellbeing Plan (including physiological, social and psychological needs) as part of early warning system for targeted students of high needs in large majority of schools. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Data Collection Systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a central system for data collection nationally, coordinated by a central body, where data can be integrated at all local, regional and national levels. YES/NO</li> <li>• Data and information covers a wide range of aspects including number, age, gender, socio-economic status, ethnicity (if possible), mother tongue and academic achievement. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>2. MACROSTRUCTURE ISSUES FOR INCLUSIVE SYSTEMS IN AND AROUND SCHOOLS</b>	
<b>2.1. Limiting Early Tracking and Postponing Academic Selection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific targets are in place at national level to delay the age at which tracking/selection processes (if any) of students takes place between schools. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>2.2. Avoiding Grade Repetition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National strategic commitment to substitute grade repetition with investment in individualised learning and targeted learning support. YES/NO</li> <li>• National, regional and local data is available on grade repetition in schools. YES/NO</li> </ul>

Structural indicators for inclusive systems in and  
around schools / 2016

<b>2.3. Enforcing Illegality under EU Law of Ethnic Segregation in Schools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspectorate (at national or regional level) examines school admission/enrolment policies and procedures to prevent discrimination against students experiencing poverty or minority students and to avoid a concentration of ethnic minority students from backgrounds of social exclusion in a given school. YES/NO</li> <li>• Clear evidence that legal enforcement mechanisms are in place to intervene against ethnic segregation in schools. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>2.4. Developing Alternatives to Suspension and Expulsion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National strategic commitment to replace student suspension/expulsion approaches with alternative strategies to keep students in school. YES/NO</li> <li>• National strategic commitment to replace student suspension/expulsion approaches with a multidisciplinary team approach to address complex needs. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Data on Alternatives to Suspension/Expulsion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National, regional and local data is available on numbers of students suspended and expelled. YES/NO</li> <li>• Monitoring of socio-economic and ethnic background (where country allows this) at national, regional and local levels of those experiencing school suspensions and expulsions.</li> </ul>
<b>2.5. Increasing the Flexibility and Permeability of Educational Pathways as Part of Cross-School and VET Cooperation</b>	<p>Permeability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A comprehensive national coordinated strategy which offers links between VET and other kinds of education providers and opportunities for learners to change education provider type if needed. YES/NO</li> <li>• Transition plans<sup>51</sup> consistently set in place in a large majority of VET providers for those moving between VET and general education (and between general education and VET). YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Flexibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different entry points to enrol in VET are available throughout the academic year. YES/NO</li> <li>• Opportunities for large majority of VET learners nationally to undertake a short ‘discovery’ Internship/occupational workshop before choosing a definite pathway. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>2.6. Targeting Priority Zones/Territories with Higher Poverty and Socio-economic Exclusion for Additional Funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeting for additional funding occurs for priority zones/territories with higher poverty and socio-economic exclusion. YES/NO</li> <li>• Different allocation of funding to schools to prioritise resources for most in need. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>3. WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH TO INCLUSIVE SYSTEMS</b>	
<b>3.1. Promoting A Relational School and Classroom Climate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A large majority of schools nationally have a whole school approach (school level action plan) as a written strategy to preventing early school leaving, including students, parents and external agencies in this. YES/NO</li> <li>• Whole school strategy for a positive relational school and classroom climate exists in large majority of schools nationally. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>3.2. Developing Structures such as School Coordination Committees for Inclusive Systems as Part of a Whole School Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A whole school coordination committee is established in the large majority of schools to focus on developing inclusive systems. YES/NO</li> <li>• Students and parents are directly represented on a whole school coordination committee for inclusive systems in the large majority of schools. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>3.3. Promoting Students’ Voices and Active Participation, Including A Differentiated</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student voices are taken into consideration in school development processes and policies in large majority of schools. YES/NO</li> </ul>

51 I.e., a systematic set of measures in dialogue with the learner.

Structural indicators for inclusive systems in and around schools / 2016

<p><b>Approach to Ensure Marginalised Students' Voices and Participation are Included</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular anonymous surveys of young people regarding their needs and experiences of school take place at regional/national levels. YES/NO</li> <li>• Students' Participation, Including Marginalised Students</li> <li>• The right of students to associate at any level in school through student councils is guaranteed by legislation. YES/NO</li> <li>• Dialogue processes with students takes place through focus groups, including a focus on students at risk of nonattendance and early school leaving, in a large majority of schools nationally. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.4. Prioritising Social and Emotional Education</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear strategic commitment at national level to substantial time allocated for social and emotional education at both primary and secondary school levels. YES/NO</li> <li>• Clarity in national curriculum that social and emotional education is not reduced to civic education. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.5. Promoting Arts Education for Inclusive Systems – Benefits for Marginalized Students</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific strategy at national level for the arts to support marginalised groups in education. YES/NO</li> <li>• Specific fund at national level for targeting arts resources (e.g., musical instruments, visual arts materials, theatre visits, poetry books) at students experiencing poverty and social exclusion. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Parental Involvement in the Arts in Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated strategy for the arts and parental involvement in large majority of schools nationally. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.6. Supporting Extracurricular Activities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National strategic commitment to ensuring all students from backgrounds of poverty, social marginalization and minority groups have access (including financial supports if necessary) to extracurricular activities at primary and secondary school levels. YES/NO</li> <li>• National strategic commitment to promote university student volunteers to provide afterschool supports to students from areas of high poverty and social exclusion, including minority groups. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Sports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific fund at national level for targeting sports resources at students experiencing poverty and social exclusion. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.7. Developing Alternative Education – Personalised Approaches</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of alternative education provisions for all, without dependence on the financial capacity of the individual and his/her family. YES/NO</li> <li>• Personalised, small learning groups in large majority of alternative education schools nationally. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. TEACHER AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP QUALITY FOR INCLUSIVE SYSTEMS IN AND AROUND SCHOOLS</b></p>	
<p><b>4.1. Improving ITE and CPD for Teachers for Inclusive Education</b></p>	<p>CPD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional Development available for large majority of teachers nationally for conflict resolution skills, relationship building and bullying prevention approaches, including discriminatory bullying prevention. YES/NO</li> <li>• Professional Development available for large majority of teachers nationally to identify distress signals from students and support in a timely manner students at risk of early school leaving. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>ITE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preservice Teacher Education for student teachers for conflict resolution skills, relationship building and bullying prevention approaches, including discriminatory bullying prevention. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.2. Establishing Professional Communities to Ensure Quality</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National strategy for structured support to new teachers on the personal, social and professional levels. YES/NO</li> </ul>

Structural indicators for inclusive systems in and  
around schools / 2016

<p><b>4.3. Developing Teachers' Expectations of Students</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preservice teacher education for student teachers on developing children's voices in class and school takes place in large majority of teacher education institutions. YES/NO</li> <li>• Active learning (i.e., constructivist approaches) and activity-based learning consistently adopted in classes in the large majority of schools. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Formative Assessment for Challenging Feedback Based on High Expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formative assessment measures are consistently in place in a large majority of schools nationally. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.4. Developing Teachers' Cultural and Language Diversity Competences for Working with Ethnic Minorities and Migrants</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practical placements in schools in areas of high poverty and social exclusion take place for the large majority of student teachers nationally. YES/NO</li> <li>• Preparation for student teachers on diversity awareness, including a focus on avoiding stereotyping, prejudice, labelling and other forms of discrimination takes place for the large majority of student teachers nationally. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Language Diversity Competences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation for student teachers on teaching pupils whose first language is not the main language of classroom instruction takes place for the large majority of student teachers nationally. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.5. Developing Teachers' Competences on Career Guidance for Working with Marginalised Groups</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation for student career guidance teachers (ITE) on diversity awareness, including a focus on avoiding stereotyping, prejudice, labelling, other forms of discrimination and promoting high expectations in marginalised groups, takes place for the large majority of student teachers in career guidance nationally. YES/NO</li> <li>• Continuing professional development (CPD) for career guidance teachers on diversity awareness, including a focus on avoiding stereotyping, prejudice, labelling, other forms of discrimination and promoting high expectations in marginalised groups, takes place for the large majority of career guidance teachers nationally. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.6. Promoting CPD for School Governance and Leadership</b></p>	<p>Competence Frameworks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National competence framework in place for school leaders. YES/NO</li> <li>• National competence framework for school leaders includes all of the following: diversity management strategies, relationship building, conflict resolution skills, bullying prevention approaches, students' and parents' voices, and distributed leadership. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>CPD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continual professional development for school leaders includes all of the following: diversity management strategies, relationship building, conflict resolution skills, bullying prevention approaches, students' and parents' voices, and distributed leadership YES/NO</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. A MULTIDISCIPLINARY FOCUS ON HEALTH AND WELFARE ISSUES IN EDUCATION</b></p>	
<p><b>5.1. Establishing Cross-Sectoral Cooperation Regarding Health and Welfare Issues in Education</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case management system in place involving different professionals for students at chronic need levels in large majority of schools nationally. YES/NO</li> <li>• Clear framework of shared goals at local level for cross-sectoral cooperation between local services and schools in large majority of schools nationally. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<p><b>5.2. Developing Multidisciplinary Teams in and around Schools</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-disciplinary teams work inside schools or in cooperation with several schools in large majority of schools nationally. YES/NO</li> <li>• Clear data protection and data sharing protocols (e.g., parental and student consent processes) in place nationally for multidisciplinary teams and communication of these to parents and students. YES/NO</li> </ul>

Structural indicators for inclusive systems in and  
around schools / 2016

<b>5.3. Providing Emotional Supports in Relation to the School System for Early School Leaving Prevention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Universally available emotional counselling supports for students who seek them available in large majority of schools. YES/NO</li> <li>More intensive targeted emotional counselling for students who need them available in large majority of schools or in structured links from schools to local health or social service. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>5.4 Preventing Bullying, Including Discriminatory Bullying in School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existence of a national school bullying and violence prevention strategy. YES/NO</li> <li>Bullying prevention built into school external evaluation processes nationally. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Preventing Discriminatory Bullying</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Input from ethnically or culturally diverse students into bullying prevention resource materials is established at national or regional level. YES/NO</li> <li>Cultural identities of sizeable minority groups clearly visible in physical environment of large majority of schools. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>5.5. Supporting Students with Substance Abuse Issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multidisciplinary teams available in and around school for supporting students with complex needs (e.g., substance abuse, trauma, mental health, family difficulties, and high nonattendance) in large majority of schools nationally. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>5.6. Promoting Adequate Sleep for Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A national strategic commitment to pilot projects in areas of high poverty and socioeconomic exclusion to raise awareness of students and parents of sleep issues and need for regular sleep. YES/NO</li> <li>Primary and Postprimary student national surveys to include focus on sleep patterns to identify scale of issue of sleep loss. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>6. VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS</b>	
<b>6.1. Supporting Migrants and Roma</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sociocultural mediators for/from minority groups (e.g., Roma, migrants) are consistently available in large majority of schools nationally. YES/NO</li> <li>Migrant and Roma children are placed within the same age group as their native peers in a large majority of schools nationally. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Language Supports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National provision of targeted support to acquire language of instruction in school. YES/NO</li> <li>National provision of targeted support for mother tongue language development in school (where different from the language of instruction in school). YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>6.2. Overcoming Poverty-Related Barriers to Education</b>	<p>Child Hunger</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Free school breakfasts available for those in need (whether targeted to them or available for all more generally) in your school. YES/NO</li> <li>Free school lunches available for those in need (whether targeted to them or available for all more generally) in your school. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Financial Costs of Schooling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial support for textbooks and other learning resources, transport for those in poverty (or for all) in your school. YES/NO</li> <li>Financial supports for apprentices during apprenticeships based on high levels of poverty/financial need in a large majority of VET Providers. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Vulnerable Groups to Experiencing Poverty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategy at national level of supports for teenage parents to attend school is available where this is needed. YES/NO</li> <li>Strategy at national level to address needs of homeless children or children living in temporary accommodation to assist their school attendance and engagement in school. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>6.3. Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic commitment with concrete targets nationally to integrate students with SEND into mainstream schools. YES/NO</li> </ul>

Structural indicators for inclusive systems in and around schools / 2016

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External monitoring to ensure minority groups are not notably overrepresented in special schools. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Transition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structured transition plans are available for students with SEND for transition from primary to secondary school in large majority of schools nationally. YES/NO</li> <li>Structured transition plans are available for students with SEND for transition from pre-primary/Early Childhood Care and Education settings to primary school in large majority of schools nationally. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>7. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT</b>	
<b>7.1. Integrating A Holistic Multidisciplinary Approach to Parental Involvement with Family Support for Early School Leaving Prevention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Outreach strategy to individual families in their home for child-centred support at high levels of need (mental health issues, addiction, high nonattendance at school). YES/NO</li> <li>National outreach strategy to establish multidisciplinary ‘one stop shop’ centres for family support with links to schools. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Key Workers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specific key school workers in a large majority of schools nationally with a concrete role to engage with marginalised parents to facilitate their involvement in school and in their children’s education. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>7.2. Developing Parent Meeting Spaces and Policy Input into Schools</b>	<p>Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parental involvement is embedded in whole school planning in large majority of schools nationally. YES/NO</li> <li>External inspection of schools includes a focus on parental involvement for marginalised groups. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Outreach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools have outreach programmes in large majority of schools nationally to encourage the engagement of vulnerable families in particular in school education. YES/NO</li> <li>Specific space in school building for parents to meet (e.g., parents’ room) in large majority of schools nationally. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>7.3. Establishing Community Lifelong Learning Centres</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National strategy for community lifelong learning centres (non-formal and formal education). YES/NO</li> <li>School site used as community lifelong learning centre (after school hours, at weekends, in summer) for parents in a large majority of schools nationally. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>7.4. Developing Family Literacy Interventions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National strategic commitment to establish family literacy initiatives across targeted areas of municipalities/regions. YES/NO</li> <li>Majority language supports for migrant and minority parents in a large majority of schools nationally. YES/NO</li> </ul>

## 8.2. Structural Indicators Matrix Tool for Schools for Developing Inclusive Systems in and around Schools

Indicator	Description
<b>1. PROMOTING SYSTEM INTEGRATION OF POLICY AND PRACTICE FOR INCLUSIVE SYSTEMS IN AND AROUND SCHOOLS</b>	
<b>1.1. Establishing National Coordination Structures for Inclusive Systems in and around</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local area cross-school cooperation committee for inclusive systems in and around schools (e.g., focusing on early school leaving, bullying prevention, children’s and parents’ voices, migrants’ needs) is in place. YES/NO</li> </ul>

Structural indicators for inclusive systems in and  
around schools / 2016

<b>Schools and Local Cross-School Cooperation Structures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarity on whether the sending or receiving school is responsible for the transition plan for individual students of higher need. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>1.2. Overcoming Socio-economic Segregation in Schools: A Cross-School Cooperation Issue to be Developed at National and Regional Levels</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local area cross-school cooperation committee for equity of admission of students is in place. YES/NO</li> <li>• Transparent school admission and enrolment criteria for your school to ensure students are not excluded due to their socio-economic or ethnic background. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>1.3. Developing Early Warning Prevention and Intervention Systems and Data Collection Systems</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multidisciplinary team in and around school operates for an early warning/ intervention system with a focus on transitions for students of higher need. YES/NO</li> <li>• Clear data protection and sharing protocols (e.g., parent and student consent processes) in place for early warning prevention and intervention systems for your school. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>2. MACROSTRUCTURE ISSUES FOR INCLUSIVE SYSTEMS IN AND AROUND SCHOOLS</b>	
<b>2.1. Limiting Early Tracking and Postponing Academic Selection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic commitment in your school to eliminate within school tracking (i.e., sorting students between classes within the same school according to academic characteristics) for early secondary school. YES/NO</li> <li>• Individual Integrated Education and Wellbeing (including physiological, social and psychological) Plan is developed for targeted students of high needs in your school. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>2.2. Avoiding Grade Repetition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individualised learning supports as an alternative to grade repetition is available in your school. YES/NO</li> <li>• School level data is available on grade repetition. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>2.3. Enforcing Illegality under EU Law of Ethnic Segregation in Schools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal representation of NGOs representing minority groups on your school coordinating committees for inclusive systems in and around schools to ensure transparency. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>2.4. Developing Alternatives to Suspension and Expulsion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternatives to suspension/expulsion are provided in your school. YES/NO</li> <li>• Alternatives to suspension/expulsion available in your school through a multidisciplinary team approach to address complex needs. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>2.5. Increasing the Flexibility and Permeability of Educational Pathways as Part of Cross-School and VET Cooperation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have the opportunity at an early stage to experience the world of work (e.g. through short-term traineeships, episodes of work experience) in order to understand job demands. YES/NO</li> <li>• Case management approach for VET learners at risk of early leaving in your VET institution. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>3. WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH TO INCLUSIVE SYSTEMS</b>	
<b>3.1. Promoting A Relational School and Classroom Climate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole school approach to developing a positive relational school and classroom climate exists in your school. YES/NO</li> <li>• Welcoming environment as perceived by the student is examined in your school through clear feedback processes from students. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Differentiated Relational Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your school takes steps to ensure that your students are welcome in a positive atmosphere after a period of unexcused absenteeism. YES/NO</li> <li>• Cultural identities of minority students actively included in classroom lessons in your school (e.g., bringing something from home into class, national days of students of foreign origin acknowledged). YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>3.2. Developing Structures such as School Coordination Committees for Inclusive Systems as Part of a Whole School Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A whole school coordination committee is established in your school to focus on developing inclusive systems. YES/NO</li> <li>• Students and parents are directly represented on a whole school coordination committee for inclusive systems in your school. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Recognition Processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural identities of sizeable minority groups clearly visible in physical environment of your school. YES/NO</li> <li>• Public ceremonies in school to recognise and celebrate achievement take place in your school. YES/NO</li> </ul>



Structural indicators for inclusive systems in and around schools / 2016

<p><b>3.3. Promoting Students' Voices and Active Participation, Including A Differentiated Approach to Ensure Marginalised Students' Voices and Participation are Included</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students' voices are encouraged and given priority in school development processes and policies in your school. YES/NO</li> <li>• Regular anonymous surveys of young people regarding their needs and experiences of school take place in your school. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Students' Participation, Including Marginalised Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dialogue processes with students take place in your school, through focus groups, including a focus on students at risk of nonattendance and early school leaving. YES/NO</li> <li>• Experiences and perspectives of school students are systematically identified in your school via qualitative surveys and regular one-to-one talks between students and a member of the professional staff. YES/NYES/NO</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.4. Prioritising Social and Emotional Education</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear strategic commitment in your school to substantial time allocated for social and emotional education. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.5. Promoting Arts Education for Inclusive Systems – Benefits for Marginalized Students</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific fund available in your school for targeting arts resources (e.g., musical instruments, visual arts materials, theatre visits, poetry books) at students experiencing poverty and social exclusion. YES/NO</li> <li>• Specific fund available in your school for targeting arts resources (e.g., musical instruments, visual arts materials, theatre visits, poetry books) for students with SEND. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Parental Involvement in the Arts in School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated strategy for the arts and parental involvement in your school. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.6. Supporting Extracurricular Activities</b></p>	<p>Sports and Arts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity for all students in your school, including those from marginalised backgrounds, to engage in school related extracurricular sports activities. YES/NO</li> <li>• Opportunity for all students in your school, including those from marginalised backgrounds, to engage in school related extracurricular arts activities. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity for all students in your school, including those from marginalised backgrounds, to engage in school related nature (e.g. community gardens) activities. YES/NO</li> <li>• Opportunity for all students in your school, including those from marginalised backgrounds, to engage in school related active citizenship (local environment, volunteer, service learning, school boards) activities. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.7. Developing Alternative Education – Personalised Approaches</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personalised, small learning groups in your alternative education school. YES/NO</li> <li>• Common areas in your alternative education environment where teachers and students share facilities and space (e.g., common eating areas) to build relationships based on mutual respect and trust. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. TEACHER AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP QUALITY FOR INCLUSIVE SYSTEMS IN AND AROUND SCHOOLS</b></p>	
<p><b>4.1. Improving ITE and CPD for Teachers for Inclusive Education</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional Development in class and school for conflict resolution skills, relationship building and bullying prevention approaches, including discriminatory bullying prevention. YES/NO</li> <li>• Professional Development in class and school to identify distress signals from students and support in a timely manner students at risk of early school leaving. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.2. Establishing Professional Communities to Ensure Quality</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional Learning Communities exist, which are based on teacher collaboration and the involvement of parents, students and organisations. YES/NO</li> </ul>

Structural indicators for inclusive systems in and around schools / 2016

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher Induction programmes at schools which provide new teachers with structured support they need on the personal, social and professional levels. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>4.3. Developing Teachers' Expectations of Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Processes are in place in your school for developing children's voices in class and school to ensure that all your teachers appreciate, respect and have high expectations of all their students regardless of background. YES/NO</li> <li>Active learning (i.e., constructivist approaches) and activity-based learning consistently adopted in classes in your school. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Formative Assessment for Challenging Feedback Based on High Expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formative assessment measures are consistently in place in your school. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>4.4. Developing Teachers' Cultural and Language Diversity Competences for Working with Ethnic Minorities and Migrants</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports in place in your school for teachers' to develop their cultural diversity competences for working with minorities and migrants to prevent stereotyping prejudice, labelling, other forms of discrimination and promoting high expectations in marginalised groups. YES/NO</li> <li>Supports in place in your school for teachers' to develop their language diversity competences for working with minorities and migrants. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>4.5. Developing Teachers' Competences on Career Guidance for Working with Marginalised Groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports in place in your school for teachers' to develop their career guidance competences with a particular focus on working with marginalised groups to prevent stereotyping prejudice, labelling, other forms of discrimination and promoting high expectations in marginalised groups. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>4.6. Promoting CPD for School Governance and Leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports in place for your school leader to develop skills in diversity management strategies, relationship building, conflict resolution, bullying prevention approaches, students and parents voices, distributed leadership. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>5. A MULTIDISCIPLINARY FOCUS ON HEALTH AND WELFARE ISSUES IN EDUCATION</b>	
<b>5.1. Establishing Cross-Sectoral Cooperation Regarding Health and Welfare Issues in Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case management system in place involving different professionals for students most at risk i.e., at chronic need levels, in your school with a clear leader for any specific child to avoid diffusion of responsibility. YES/NO</li> <li>Clear framework of shared goals at local level for cross-sectoral cooperation between local services and schools in your local area. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>5.2. Developing Multidisciplinary Teams in and around Schools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multi-professional teams work inside your school or in cooperation with several local schools including your school. YES/NO</li> <li>Clear data protection and data sharing protocols (e.g., parental and student consent processes) in place for the multidisciplinary team for your school and communication of these to parents and students. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Clarity of Roles and Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarity on who is leading a multidisciplinary team or cross-agency response in your local area to avoid diffusion of responsibility for the multidisciplinary team engaging with your school. YES/NO</li> <li>Shared framework for goals and outcomes of multidisciplinary teams in place for multidisciplinary teams working in and around your school. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>5.3. Providing Emotional Supports in Relation to the School System for Early School Leaving Prevention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Universally available professional emotional counselling supports for students available in your school. YES/NO</li> <li>More intensive targeted professional emotional counselling supports for students who need them available in your school or in structured links from your school to local health or social service. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Continuity of Emotional Supports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium to long-term availability of the same emotional counsellor (i.e., not high staff turnover) to foster trust available in your school. YES/NO</li> </ul>

Structural indicators for inclusive systems in and  
around schools / 2016

<b>5.4 Preventing Bullying, Including Discriminatory Bullying in School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole school anti-bullying policy is implemented in your school. YES/NO</li> <li>• Participation of all key stakeholders (including students and parents) in whole school approach to bullying prevention in your school. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Preventing Discriminatory Bullying</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Input from ethnically or culturally diverse students into bullying prevention and anti-prejudice materials, activities and goals is included in your school. YES/NO</li> <li>• Cultural identities of sizeable minority groups clearly visible in physical environment in your school. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>5.5. Supporting Students with Substance Abuse Issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multidisciplinary teams available in and around school with a clear focus on supporting students with complex needs (e.g., substance abuse, trauma, mental health, family difficulties, high nonattendance) are available for your school. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>5.6. Promoting Adequate Sleep for Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curricular education initiatives in your school for primary school pupils and their parents about the importance of sleep for general health and school performance. YES/NO</li> <li>• Awareness programmes (with school and/or municipality) for parents and students on issue of sleep needs in your school. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>6. VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS</b>	
<b>6.1. Supporting Migrants and Roma</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roma and migrant children are placed within the same age group as their peers in your school. YES/NO</li> <li>• One lead agency who can guide migrant families to the overall picture of services available for them in your local area/municipality. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Social and Language Supports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sociocultural mediators for/from minority groups (e.g., Roma, migrants) are available in your school. YES/NO</li> <li>• Provision of language supports in your school for students whose native language is not the language of instruction in schools. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>6.2. Overcoming Poverty-Related Barriers to Education</b>	<p>Child Hunger</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free school breakfasts available for those in need (whether targeted to them or available more generally) in your school. YES/NO</li> <li>• Free school lunches available for those in need (whether targeted to them or available more generally) in your school. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Financial Costs of Schooling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial support for textbooks and other learning resources for those in poverty in your school. YES/NO</li> <li>• Free transport to your school for those in need who live far away from your school. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Vulnerable Groups to Experiencing Poverty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports for teenage parents available in your school where this is needed, to attend school. YES/NO</li> <li>• Strategy at local level to address needs of homeless children or children living in temporary accommodation to assist their school attendance and engagement in school. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>6.3. Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structured transition plans are available for students with SEND and their parents, for transition from primary to secondary school in your school. YES/NO</li> <li>• Structured transition plans are available for students with SEND and their parents, for transition from pre-primary/Early Childhood Care and Education settings to primary school in your school. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Parental Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structured dialogue between parents and your school on an ongoing basis to meet the needs of children with SEND. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<b>7. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT</b>	

Structural indicators for inclusive systems in and  
around schools / 2016

<p><b>7.1. Integrating A Holistic Multidisciplinary Approach to Parental Involvement with Family Support for Early School Leaving Prevention</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An outreach approach to individual families in their home takes place for child-centred support for students in your school at high levels of need (mental health issues, family addiction issues, high nonattendance at school). YES/NO</li> <li>• Specific key workers in school for parental involvement are part of a wider multidisciplinary team engaged with your school. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<p><b>7.2. Developing Parent Meeting Spaces and Policy Input into Schools</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents are involved as educators in formal settings in your school (e.g., minority parents offering language support, parents with special professional knowledge, involvement in sports, arts, etc.). YES/NO</li> <li>• Specific space in school building for parents to meet (e.g., parents' room) in your school. YES/NO</li> </ul> <p>Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents are encouraged to be involved in decision-making processes in your school. YES/NO</li> <li>• Parental involvement is embedded in whole school planning in your school. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<p><b>7.3. Establishing Community Lifelong Learning Centres</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School site used as community lifelong learning centre (after school hours, at weekends, in summer) for parents in your school. YES/NO</li> <li>• Educational opportunities available in your school or local area for parents with low levels of educational attainment. YES/NO</li> </ul>
<p><b>7.4. Developing Family Literacy Interventions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family literacy interventions available in your school targeting marginalised parents. YES/NO</li> <li>• Majority language supports for migrant and minority parents available in your school. YES/NO</li> </ul>

## GLOSSARY

**Active learning** – a central tenet of lifelong learning and of learner-centred approaches. Active learning builds from students' previous life experiences, questions and interests. It encourages students to engage actively in the learning process. It is contrasted to passively receiving knowledge through didactic teaching as mere transfer of information 'top down' from the teacher.

**Bullying** – physical, verbal and relational behaviours, which involve one party having the intention to repeatedly hurt or harm another, within an uneven power relationship where the victim is unable to defend him/herself.

**Case management approach / system** – early identification of vulnerable students at risk of dropping out and/or other risks such as mental health difficulties, and provides support in a coordinated and structured way. It involves a multi-agency approach, which can include education, health, social affairs and/or employment sectors.

**Chronic level need** – a persistent need of personalised support which requires intensive individualised work with the child and often their family to address complex, multiple interconnected needs.

**Community lifelong learning centre** – a site located in an accessible location for local community participants which engages in nonformal and/or formal learning sessions. The learning goals are defined in dialogue with the learners. Roles and decision making processes generally involve local community stakeholders. Community lifelong learning centres are often part of a community outreach strategy to engage marginalised groups.

**Conflict resolution skills** – a broad range of listening and communication skills informed by psychological understandings which seeks to engage people in a relational dialogue based on mutual respect and empathy to address issues of conflict or tension.

**Cultural identity** – features of a group that unite its members and gives them a sense of mutual belonging, as well as distinctiveness in relation to other groups or cultures.

**Differentiation** – beyond a one size fits all approach; a differentiated approach acknowledges that different levels of needs of learners require different strategies, including strategies for students and families experiencing moderate risk and chronic needs.

**Discriminatory bullying** – bullying against minority groups. Nondiscrimination includes a right to equality of concern and respect in a supportive environment free of prejudice.

**Distributed leadership** – Principles and structures that seek to disperse leadership roles and responsibilities throughout a school organisation treated as a complex system of relations and situations.

**Diversity management** – a range of approaches that reflect a sensitivity to different cultures and backgrounds, in order to build on the strengths of differences and to promote a culture of respect for minorities and celebration of diversity.

**Early Warning Prevention and Intervention System** – is a warning system informed by data collection with the aim to identify and support students at risk, often involving multidisciplinary professionals.

**Emotional counselling** – emotional supports that are to be distinguished from simply mentoring or career guidance by the level of emotional complexity of the issues experienced by the individual, such as traumatic experiences or emotional stress that require skilled intervention through professionals qualified in emotional counselling or therapeutic approaches.

**Expulsion** – forcing a student to leave school permanently.

**Family literacy** – literacy development work that focuses on how literacy can be developed at home. Family literacy comprises education courses that support and develop this dimension of literacy. It can also refer to a set of programs designed to enhance the literacy skills of more than one family member.

**Formative assessment** – feedback on a student’s work which helps students identify their strengths and weaknesses and targets areas that need improvement, while also challenging students to reflect more profoundly on their responses. In contrast to summative assessment, formative assessment takes place continuously during the learning process.

**Grade repetition / grade retention** – a process whereby a student is not transferred to the next grade along with the majority of her/his classmates, but instead has to repeat classes with a younger cohort.

**Holistic approach** – recognises the social, emotional and physical needs, and not simply academic and cognitive ones, of both children/young people and their parents.

**Inclusive Systems** – systems in and around schools that involve a focus on a supportive, quality learning environment, a welcoming and caring school and classroom climate, addressing holistic needs of students, whether emotional, physical, cognitive or social, and recognising their individual talents and voices, preventing discrimination, as well as being open to the voices and active participation of parents and wider multidisciplinary teams and agencies. They take a particular focus on marginalised and vulnerable groups, including those at risk of early school leaving and alienation from society.

**Individualised learning** – a personalised approach to learning, where content and pace of teaching are based on the individual student’s needs.

**Integrated Education and Wellbeing Plan (IEWP)** – an individual education plan (IEP) is designed with concrete goals and targets in dialogue with the students, their parents and the school; an IEWP plan broadens the range of needs of the student to include social, physical and emotional dimensions and may include dialogue with a multidisciplinary team in or around the school.

**Lifelong learning** – a lifelong learning focus from the cradle onwards may involve a distinct educational focus on active citizenship, personal and social fulfilment, intercultural dialogue across communities, as well as on poverty and social inclusion, community development and employment. It embraces informal learning (unstructured), as well as non-formal (i.e. no exams, formal assessments) and formal classes relying on active learning methodologies centred on the needs of the learner.

**Marginalised groups** – include those experiencing poverty and social exclusion, bullying, mental health difficulties and/or special educational needs, students at risk of early school leaving, as well as some groups of migrants and minorities. Such groups need a distinct focus on processes and structures for their representation and participation.

**Multidisciplinary teams in and around schools** – teams composed of different professionals and stakeholders, such as social workers, youth workers, outreach care workers, psychologists, nurses, speech and language therapists and other professionals who work together with schools to address children and young people’s complex needs. The services may be located in the school, near the school in a community context or across both school and community sites in a flexible needs-led fashion.

**National competence framework** – a framework setting out key standards (goals, competences, roles, and functions) to be attained by teachers or school leaders, with a focus also on implementation processes to facilitate the attainment of these.

**Outreach** – engaging with groups and individuals, including those from marginalised backgrounds, in a proactive way to reach them in environments where they feel most comfortable, in order to build cultural bridges, foster trust and facilitate access to education. They go beyond mere information based approaches such as leaflets, etc.

**Relational school climate** – a warm, caring atmosphere promoting supportive relationships across the school viewed as a system of relations. It is contrasted to an unfavourable climate, usually including violence, bullying, inappropriate teaching methods, insufficient learner support, environment in which learners are not respected or valued, poor relationships between teachers and pupils and etc.

**Segregated schools** – education institutions where students are selected so as to include a concentration of overrepresented groups or to substantively exclude groups of students based on their socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, disability, etc. This can happen officially by law, be rendered illegal by law, or may occur unofficially through system processes and practices of exclusion, whether by intent or in effect.

**SEND** – special educational needs and disability. Students with SEND may experience barriers to their learning and therefore benefit from additional support or system intervention.

**Social and emotional education** – includes a range of holistic approaches emphasising awareness of emotions, caring, empathy and concern for others, positive relationships, making responsible decisions, resolving conflicts constructively and valuing the thoughts, feelings and voices of students.

**Socio-economic segregation** – practice of isolation, exclusion and/or discrimination based on social class, residential area or economic status.

**Transition plan** – a systematic set of measures in dialogue with the child and his/her parents to address the child's needs during the transition process from one learning environment to another.

**Suspension** – a form of sanction in schools where pupils are temporarily prohibited from attending school.

**System wide focus** – Schools, agencies and families are distinct and connected systems bringing sets of relationships and mutual influence upon the individual where the impact of the whole is more than the sum of its parts. It involves both system blockages as barriers and system supports.

**VET** – vocational education and training, aiming at preparing students for a specific profession.

**Whole school approach** – focusing on the school as a system affecting the child. The entire school community (school leaders, teaching staff, nonteaching staff, multidisciplinary team members, learners, and parents and families) engages in a cohesive, collective and collaborative action, with strong cooperation with external stakeholders and the community at large.

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## ANNEX A. Structural Indicators as Enabling Conditions for Change in a System

Structural indicators are enabling conditions for change in a system. This goes beyond a reliance on magic bullet causes for change for complex problems in complex systems. The systemic focus for these structural indicators as enabling conditions is at Bronfenbrenner's (1979) macro-exo-meso-microsystem levels.

Recognising that system change is multifaceted, a framework of structural indicators builds on the key point of Rutter regarding the neglect of silent contingent conditions in developmental psychology. Rutter (1985, p. 601) argues that changes to background supporting conditions have been frequently overlooked within developmental psychology:

It is commonly but wrongly assumed that a significant main effect in a multivariate analysis means that that variable has an effect on its own. It does not. What it means is that there is a significant main effect for that variable, after other variables have been taken into account: that is not tantamount to an effect in the absence of all other variables.

Structural indicators are, in this sense, silent background contingent conditions.

Rutter's (1985) position on the tendency to ignore the background conditions which are necessary for, or even simply supportive of, the cause to 'work' is resonant with Mill's (1872, p. 327) challenge to make a clear-cut distinction between causal and non-causal states:

It is seldom if ever between a consequent and a single antecedent that this invariable sequence subsists. It is usually between a consequent and the sum of several antecedents the concurrence of all of them being requisite to produce, that is, to be certain of being followed by the consequent.

Mill noted that very often one antecedent is termed the cause, while the other antecedents are termed conditions. Intervention models that 'work' causally have hidden contingent conditions, without which the more obvious causal elements could not have occurred, just as striking a billiard ball to hit another presupposes the law of inertia. Causes necessarily operate within a background of supporting conditions that are structured sources of the cause's efficacy.

Change to background supporting conditions may shift the whole causal trajectory of a system and can address the issue of system blockages, whether through fragmentation, splitting, inertia or resistance, system blockages that have been largely overlooked in Bronfenbrenner's (1979) system's framework (Downes 2014, 2014c). This need not be a negative phenomenon; it may potentially be a constructive phenomenon if the causal trajectories from the environment are destructive ones bringing system blockage. In other words, a focus on changes to contingent or supporting background conditions may play a key role in the resilience of children and young people to overcome damaging causal trajectories; if the individual or wider societal system can be active in fostering other background supporting conditions as system supports, this may be a key avenue for resilience and change (Downes 2017). This shift is from individual resilience to system inclusion structures. Indicators of system scrutiny need to reflect this key role of system supports as background conditions affecting outcomes. The focus is not on structural indicators viewed in isolation but rather viewed in clusters, to give recognition to the multidimensional aspects of the need for complex system development.



## ANNEX B. Thematic Structure with regard to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Systems Framework of Macro-Exo-Meso-Micro Systems for the Issues Examined in this Report

**Table 3.** Promoting System Integration of Policy and Practice for Inclusive Systems in and around Schools

1.1. Establishing National Coordination Structures for Inclusive Systems in and around Schools and Local Cross-School Cooperation Structures	Exosystem relationships between different government departments (systems in which the individual is not directly participating), departments that operate with macrosystem level policy decisions; cross-school cooperation is primarily an exosystem focus on relations between school decision-making bodies across schools.
1.2. Overcoming Socio-economic Segregation in Schools: A Cross-School Cooperation Issue to be Developed at National and Regional Levels	This is both a macrosystemic national policy dimension as well as being due to local and regional exosystemic relationships between housing policy decision making and school admission requirements and processes – decision making system processes within which the individual does not tend to actively participate.
1.3. Developing Early Warning Prevention and Intervention Systems and Data Collection Systems	Macrosystem data collection systems also involve an exosystemic relation between national and regional and/or local data collection system levels in which the individual is not actively participating.

**Table 4.** Macrostructure Issues for Inclusive Systems in and around Schools

2.1. Limiting Early Tracking and Postponing Academic Selection	Macrosystem policies on these structural issues and system level decisions taken at school level by decision-making exosystems in which students may not be actively participating.
2.2. Avoiding Grade Repetition	Macrosystem policies on these structural issues and system level decisions taken at school level by decision making exosystems in which students may not be actively participating.
2.3. Enforcing Illegality under EU Law of Ethnic Segregation in Schools	A tension might exist between a macrosystem law and the exosystem relationship between local decision making processes on ethnic segregation and wider legal obligations – again systems in which the individual does not actively participate.
2.4. Developing Alternatives to Suspension and Expulsion	This is a macrosystem issue of national policy.
2.5. Increasing the Flexibility and Permeability of Educational Pathways as Part of Cross-School and VET Cooperation	This is a macrosystem issue of national policy as well as exosystemic relations between schools/VET providers at a decision making level in which the individual student rarely participates.
2.6. Targeting Priority Zones/Territories with Higher Poverty and Socio-economic Exclusion for Additional Funding	Macrosystem policies and relations between regions and national systems that are exosystemic as the individual is not directly participating in these.

**Table 5.** Whole School Approach to Inclusive Systems

3.1. Promoting A Relational School and Classroom Climate	This is a microsystem focus on the classroom and school in which the individual student is actively participating.
3.2. Developing Structures such as School Coordination Committees for Inclusive Systems as Part of a Whole School Approach	The focus of this committee is on change to the school microsystem, and the committee includes students; relations between the committee and the school are mesosystem relations between two systems that the student is at least potentially direct participating in.

Structural indicators for inclusive systems in and  
around schools / 2016

3.3. Promoting Students' Voices and Active Participation, Including A Differentiated Approach to Ensure Marginalised Students' Voices and Participation are Included	This is a microsystem focus on the classroom and school in which the individual student is actively participating.
3.4. Prioritising Social and Emotional Education	Though a curricular aspect derives from a macrosystem policy level, its impact on the school and classroom climate is directly on the student's microsystem.
3.5. Promoting Arts Education for Inclusive Systems – Benefits for Marginalized Students	Though a curricular aspect derives from a macrosystem policy level, its impact on the school and classroom climate is directly on the student's microsystem.
3.6. Supporting Extracurricular Activities	This is a microsystem in which the student directly participates, while also potentially offering a mesosystem relation between the afterschool and school settings, both of which the student is actively participating in.
3.7. Developing Alternative Education – Personalised Approaches	Though an organisational aspect derives from a macrosystem and mesosystem level, the focus here is on microsystem supports directly for the student.

**Table 6.** A Multidisciplinary Focus on Health and Welfare issues in Education<sup>52</sup>

5.1. Establishing Cross-Sectoral Cooperation Regarding Health and Welfare Issues in Education	Schools and local services are both microsystem settings in which the student participates, and the mesosystem focus is on relations between these settings.
5.2. Developing Multidisciplinary Teams in and around Schools	The individual student may engage directly with both teachers and other professionals in microsystem settings; the focus here is also a mesosystemic one on the team based relation between these microsystem interactions.
5.3. Providing Emotional Supports in Relation to the School System for Early School Leaving Prevention	The individual student may engage directly with emotional counselling professionals in a microsystem setting; the focus here is also a mesosystemic one on the relation between the school microsystem and the emotional counselling support.
5.4. Preventing Bullying, Including Discriminatory Bullying in School	School bullying is a microsystem problem which involves exosystem problems and solutions involving school and family, as well as relations between services the individual student can directly participate in. While the symbolic violence of discriminatory bullying may have its root in macrosystemic tensions between groups, it is also a microsystem problem in school which involves mesosystem problems and solutions involving school, family and community, as well as relations between services that the individual student can directly participate in.

<sup>52</sup> The themes in Section 5 'Teacher and school leadership quality for inclusive systems in and around schools' pertain to relations between a) one setting in which the student does not directly participate, i.e. the initial teacher education or CPD setting; and b) one in which the student does directly participate, i.e. the school. This places this setting in the middle between being an exosystem and mesosystem focus in Bronfenbrenner's (1979) terms – it could be term a 'mexosystem' focus.

Structural indicators for inclusive systems in and  
around schools / 2016

5.5. Supporting Students with Substance Abuse Issues	While this may be affected by national level macrosystem policy and socio-economic factors, interventions to prevent substance abuse and the effects of substance abuse relate both to the school microsystem environment of the student and also to mesosystem relations between the school, family and multidisciplinary teams.
5.6. Promoting Adequate Sleep for Students	Solutions to the issue of sleep deficits involve a mesosystem focus on relations between both home patterns and school health promotion approaches.

**Table 7.** Vulnerable Individuals and Groups

6.1. Supporting Migrants and Roma	While these issues are affected by macrosystemic socio-economic factors and policy, overcoming education and poverty-related barriers for migrants and Roma can be facilitated by microsystem approaches that target supports in specific settings in which the individual participates, as well as mesosystem relations between settings such as school and community services.
6.2. Overcoming Poverty-Related Barriers to Education	While these issues are affected by macrosystemic socio-economic factors and policy, overcoming poverty-related barriers can be facilitated by microsystem approaches that target specific settings in which the individual participates.
6.3. Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs	Supports at school microsystem level are the focus here.

**Table 8.** Parental Involvement and Family Support

7.1. Integrating A Holistic Multidisciplinary Approach to Parental Involvement with Family Support for Early School Leaving Prevention	The mesosystem focus is on relations between settings/services in which parents directly participate, such as school and family support services.
7.2. Developing Parent Meeting Spaces and Policy Input into Schools	This is a microsystem focus from the perspective of the parent and is a mesosystem perspective for the student regarding the relations between family and school systems in which the student directly participates
7.3. Establishing Community Lifelong Learning Centres	For the individual student, community lifelong learning centres based in school and attended by their parents are a mesosystem setting – a relation between home and school.
7.4. Developing Family Literacy Interventions	This is a focus on the family microsystem and a mesosystem focus on potential relations between home and school.

## ANNEX C. School and Classroom Climate as Perceived by Marginalised Students in Europe

**Table 9.** Percentage of Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Students who Agree/Disagree with the Following Statements: School Belonging and Feeling Like an Outsider (PISA 2012)

Countries	I feel like I belong at school, % Agree (S.E)	I feel like an outsider (or left out of things at school), % Disagree (S.E)
Austria	82 (1.6)	89.9 (1.1)
Belgium	63.5 (1.6)	88.4 (1.0)
Czech Republic	73.6 (1.9)	80.5 (1.6)
Denmark	69.3 (1.6)	90.3 (1.0)
Estonia	78.2 (1.8)	90.0 (1.3)
Finland	80.5 (1.1)	89.2 (1.0)
France	38 (1.7)	73.2 (1.8)
Germany	83.8 (1.6)	89.7 (1.4)
Greece	87.8 (1.2)	83.9 (1.4)
Hungary	83.5 (1.1)	85.6 (1.6)
Ireland	76.7 (1.5)	91.6 (1.0)
Italy	75 (0.9)	89.3 (0.6)
Luxembourg	71.9 (1.7)	85.9 (1.2)
Netherlands	82.4 (1.7)	89.8 (1.3)
Norway	83.5 (1.5)	89.1 (1.0)
Poland	73.2 (1.8)	88.2 (1.3)
Portugal	87.9 (1.2)	87.4 (1.5)
Slovak Republic	75.4 (1.8)	74.0 (2.3)
Slovenia	83.7 (1.7)	89.0 (1.2)
Spain	92.1 (0.7)	90.1 (1.0)
Sweden	74.8 (1.9)	87.0 (1.3)
United Kingdom	74.9 (1.5)	86.9 (1.1)
OECD Average	78.1 (0.3)	86.2 (0.2)

## ANNEX D. Social and Emotional Education and Students' Voices

Programs had moderate immediate effects on positive self-image, pro-social behaviour, academic achievement and anti-social behaviour, improving each by nearly one half a standard deviation. It is notable also that the majority of studies examined for Durlak et al.'s (2011) meta-analysis of SEL curricular approaches were from primary schools (56%) that exhibited success across six outcomes,

many of which are at least indirectly related to early school leaving prevention. This provides strong support for SEL in primary school contexts. A total of 56% of evaluated SEL programmes were delivered to primary school students, 31% to middle school students. A limitation is that most of the reviewed studies took place in a US context and may not directly transfer to European contexts. Nevertheless, Sklad et al.'s (2012) meta-analysis, which includes more European studies (11 out of 75 studies, i.e., 14.7%), found no significant variation between the US studies and other parts of the world in effect size for social skills (though there was only one non-US study for anti-social behaviour). Significant support for early intervention at a curricular level through SEL is also evident from the finding of Sklad et al.'s (2012) meta-analysis, that programmes in primary schools had significantly larger reported effects than programmes in secondary schools on anti-social behaviour. Anti-social behaviour was defined as including aggressive behaviour, fighting in the past year, hurting someone on purpose, verbal aggression in the past month, active bullying, teachers reporting physical aggression, and disruptive, off-task behaviour.

With older students, the question also arises as to their particular resistance to didactic style approaches that would undermine their increased sense of autonomy. Yeager et al. (2015) raise a concern about the limitations of intervention strategies for older adolescents that rely on adult authority, or that imply that they lack basic social or emotional skills. Secondary school students may resist being literally 'programmed' into particular modes of behaviour and thought. A shift in conceptualisation is needed to make these students active agents of policy rather than simply passive recipients of policy and programmes (Downes & Cefai 2016), including marginalised and minority students.

The debate regarding age-related interventions may be at least somewhat reconciled through a strong focus on social and emotional education with younger children to ensure early intervention for emotional awareness, empathy and communicative skills (Downes & Cefai 2016). While a systematic focus on social and emotional education at curricular level exists across almost all EU Member States, it is unclear to what extent an explicit focus on bullying and violence prevention is present in these social and emotional education curricular initiatives (Downes & Cefai 2016).

The basic principle behind the inclusion of student voices is thus to strengthen the agency and symbolic power of all students in a school. Various forms of implicit exclusion (ignoring, negative paraphrasing, meritocratic options for participation, etc.) encourage disengagement and strengthen both marginalisation and early school leaving (Smyth, 2006). Studies show that students prolong their truancy periods simply because they fear negative and derogatory reactions from teachers and school management. They are given few – if any – opportunities to express their fears and needs, and do not receive enough emotional support (Gase et al., 2016; Strand and Lovrich, 2014; Virtanen et al., 2014).

Robinson and Taylor's (2007; 2013) UK review and two case studies propose the following key areas for the development of theories and programmes to strengthen student voices:

- I. Communication as dialogue;
- II. Democratic participation;
- III. Recognition of social and educational inequality;
- IV. Planning school development and transformation.

The right of children to participate formulated by the European Commission picks up on these areas. In general, mechanisms should be created 'that promote children's participation in decision making that affects their lives' (European Commission Recommendation, 2013). All children, regardless of their

origin and financial background, should have access to informal learning activities by the overcoming of 'barriers such as cost, access and cultural differences' so that they can participate equally in 'play, recreation, sport and cultural activities outside school' (ibid.). Also, outreach measures need to be established to ensure that children from socio-economically excluded and marginalised backgrounds are better involved in existing participation structures. All teachers and school-related staff therefore need to live up to their profession and make sure that they 'work with and for children'. However, this can only be achieved if the school community is aware of and sensitised both to children's rights and the obligations that go with them. This includes enabling and encouraging 'children to express informed views', which are then 'given due weight' and reflected on by the various stakeholders (ibid.).

On a daily basis in school, it is important to teach students how to become more effective learners, this includes academic behaviours, perseverance, mind-sets, learning strategies and social skills. Their school and classroom contexts play an important role, which include the relationships between teachers and peers, beliefs about their ability, and the nature of learning. Students' mind-sets towards their own ability and possibility to complete a task, learning strategies, and perseverance, are all malleable and can be promoted by creating favourable classroom contexts (Farrington et al., 2012).

## ANNEX E. The Arts and Social Inclusion in Education

The arts can avoid giving right or wrong answers to students, and instead offer opportunities for success in school in order to alleviate students' fear of failure and to offer avenues for multiple intelligences (Ivers et al. 2010) and culturally meaningful activities for marginalized groups (Hefferon 2007, Murphy 2007). The DICE consortium study revealed that students who regularly participated in theatre and drama were more likely to feel confident in their learning abilities, feel creative, enjoy school, be emphatic and more able to change their perspective, be more tolerant toward their peers from different backgrounds, and were more active citizens who showed more interest in public affairs. They were also reported to participate in more different arts activities than the control group (DICE 2010). Similar results concerning self-esteem, self-confidence, sense of worth were reported by other studies and program evaluations focused on music, dance, creative writing, community arts and other (Costa-Giomi, 2004; Charmaraman and Hall, 2011; Lorenzi and White, 2013; Shin, 2011; Tsevreni, 2014; Tweedie, 2007). Frankenberg et al. (2016) quantitative study with 159 migrant background students from North Rhine-Westphalia from 14 different schools reported that the participants in a specialised music program oriented towards intercultural understanding felt more accepted by their peers and felt more positively towards their peers than those who had not participated in the intervention.

Learning arts skills help students learn to appreciate arts in general (Charmaraman and Hall, 2011; Shin 2011). Through arts children can learn to express more complex ideas (Tweedie 2007); arts education improves communication and emotional development that are normally not tackled by any other subjects in school (Bamford and Wimmer, 2012). Because of available quality arts education, students were reported to enjoy school more (DICE, 2010; Bamford and Wimmer, 2012). A cross-European DICE study involving 4,475 students from 12 different countries showed that students who regularly participated in drama education felt that they were more creative and enjoyed school more (DICE, 2010).

## ANNEX F. ITE and CPD for Early School Leaving Prevention and Inclusion in Education

The EU Council Recommendation (2011) on early school leaving proposes the following actions:

Supporting and empowering teachers in their work with pupils at risk, which is a pre-requisite for successful measures at school level. Initial teacher education and continuous professional development for teachers and school leaders help them to deal with diversity in the classroom, to support pupils from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds and to solve difficult teaching situations.

The Commission's TWG report (2013) on early school leaving further develops this point:

Teachers should be capable of identifying different learning styles and pupils' needs and be equipped with the skills to adopt inclusive and student-focused methods, including conflict resolution skills to promote a positive classroom climate. Teachers should be supported in dealing with diversity in terms of the social and ethnic background of pupils as well as supporting individuals with special learning needs and/or learning disabilities. They need to understand ESL, its different triggers and early warning signs and be highly aware of their role in preventing it.

Key results observed in TALIS (OECD 2009) include:

One teacher in four in most countries loses at least 30 % of the lesson time, and some lose more than half, in disruptions and administrative tasks – and this is closely associated with classroom disciplinary climate, which varies more among individual teachers than among schools (p. 122)<sup>53</sup>.

The ET2020 School Policy Working Group document (2015) states,

teachers are in an advantaged position to detect school disengagement and the existence of learning difficulties at a very early stage and thus can help take immediate action to address the situation. They need to be aware that their expectations, attitudes and language may have a significant impact and influence on pupils and families; they need to acknowledge the role which parents and families play in the learning process and be enticed to reap the benefits of parental involvement (p.14).

The changing situation in society and, above all, the consequences of globalization that are to be expected in the future, have altered the priorities of the function of the school and led to a necessary expansion of its horizons towards the diversity and complexity of student and parent needs, expectations and competencies, the diversity and complexity of relationships, and the diversity and complexity of learning contents, methods and effects (European Commission, 2013a, 2015).

Against the backdrop of geographical, housing and school selection processes which bring socio-economic segregation, there is cause for concern that children are already classified according to their cultural capital, even in the primary school enrolment process. Language codes and social manners, and socially selective structures of expectations appreciation and rewards, discriminate in particular those students who did not acquire such habitualised language codes and manners through familial socialisation (Parazzoli, 2013; Neumann et al., 2014; European Commission/EACEA/ Eurydice/Cedefop, 2014; Ibrahim, 2011; Cederberg and Hartsmar, 2013). Underprivileged children therefore often experience tacit and explicit discrimination and stigmatisation as soon as they start school, since their endowment with cultural and economic capital is assessed to be inadequate. Such children are thus

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<sup>53</sup> In the EU Commission public consultation 'Schools for the 21st century', classroom management strategies were raised as an issue needing to be better addressed by teacher initial education (see also Commission staff working document 2008).

already assigned an inferior position from a very early stage in their school careers, a situation which emphasises their existing familial and socioeconomic exclusion. Again this needs addressing at ITE and CPD levels.

Modern professionalisation and development models likewise address the potential inherent in teacher collaboration to develop the critical skills teachers need to reflect on their teaching practices and strengthen their collective understanding of pedagogic challenges. Inclusive education can also be measured on two dimensions: first by the collaboration culture in the school (in contrast to the individualistic school culture), and second by the level of internal accountability. These indicate a reciprocal sense of professional teacher responsibility, and 'measure' whether teachers feel committed to their peers, students and parents (Bellei et al., 2015).

A quality criterion for good professional development is the regular evaluation and improvement of all of these programmes (Caena, 2014; European Commission, 2015b). To this end, collaborations with education researchers should be fostered, and it is important to engage teachers as well as teacher educators with research (Carneiro et al., 2015; Cordingley, 2015; OECD, 2016). Since teacher educators can significantly impact the teaching and learning quality in schools, it is necessary to provide systemic conditions that allow for a careful selection and recruitment of teacher educators, and a regular quality assessment on their work and the teacher education system (European Commission, 2013c). Other approaches which do not centre on traditional qualifications and goals, but instead focus on other meaningful goals and values in society, like the capacity to reason, creativity or insights into other world views, also merit a mention here (Carneiro et al., 2015).

## ANNEX G. Multidisciplinary Teams

In its priority recommendations, 'Support cooperation between schools, local communities, parents and pupils in school development and in initiatives to reduce ESL', the TWG report (2013) states:

Reducing ESL requires the active involvement and cooperation of stakeholders at national, regional, local and school level. This includes teachers, parents, pupils and their representative associations together with guidance centres, trade unions, employers, and other experts such as social workers or school psychologists. Key representatives from policy fields such as employment, youth, health, welfare and social policy need to be involved in a collective approach to reducing ESL from the start.

The Commission Staff Working Paper (2011a) on early school leaving also gives this emphasis to a holistic, multi-disciplinary approach when referring to 'Networking with actors outside school':

Difficulties at school often have their roots outside. Solving problems at school cannot be done effectively without tackling the range of problems that put children in difficulty, which can include drug or alcohol use, sleep deficits, physical abuse and trauma. Some of the most successful measures have been those which provide a holistic solution by networking different actors and so support the whole person. Partnerships at the local level seem to be highly effective ways of doing this (p. 12).

Multidisciplinary teams need to be part of an early intervention focus, and linked with childcare settings: 'Use ECEC as an early-warning system to identify family or school-related physical or psychological problems, special needs or abuse' (Commission Recommendation 2013, p. 7).



The strategic approach of the Commission (2011a) not only locates the issue of early school leaving prevention in a wider systemic context than school, but also recognises parent and social support services as being central to this issue:

In addition, all policies relevant to children and young people should contribute to the strategy against ESL. This concerns especially social policies and support services, employment, youth and integration policies. Every new policy or measure aimed at children, young people, parents or professionals working with children and young people, irrespective whether it is related to the formal education system or not, should therefore be tested against its contribution to reducing ESL.

Thus, the issue of family support policies is envisaged as being relevant to early school leaving prevention.

## ANNEX H. Discriminatory Bullying in School and Stigmatisation as Symbolic Violence

A number of studies confirm how schoolchildren incorporate derogative classifications (like students on free school meals, non-district students, at-risk students, truants, dropouts, and school leavers) into their own images of themselves or, to use Bourdieu's term, into their school habitus (Dunning-Lozano, 2014; Clycq et al., 2015; Nouwen et al., 2015a)<sup>54</sup>. These classificatory schemes are used in official documents and media reports and are internalised by students, parents and teachers alike. Labels like these have the potential to expedite social segregation and the stigmatisation of the 'labelled' groups (Foster and Spencer, 2010; Folleso, 2015). Social withdrawal and isolation can be the next consequence. Exclusion by others is followed by self-exclusion, a fatal outcome of symbolic violence.

Discriminated and non-discriminated students alike acknowledge and accept the school, its rules, the authority of the teachers and the official view as 'natural', as something that 'is a matter of course' and that cannot be changed (Dunning-Lozano, 2014; Segedin, 2012). Many early school leavers have experienced stigmatisation since early childhood and have a low self-efficacy as a result of their cumulated experiences of failure in school. This is also the reason why many early school leavers try to avoid failure, tend to resign quickly and withdraw from school or employment (van Praag et al., 2016; Nouwen et al., 2015; Rennie-Hill et al., 2014; Nairz-Wirth, 2011; Little et al. 2015).

If nothing is done on a political and professional level to counteract these dynamic processes, the result is a downward spiral: students who resist instruction or try to sabotage this power relationship through non-participation are just one of the consequences of sustained experiences of symbolic violence. This symbolic violence may also occur in wider cross-sectoral services and require systemic addressing, as highlighted in a 9 city European study, which recommended that municipalities lead the professional

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<sup>54</sup> When students fall in line with the default learning environment, even when it is disrespectful of their needs, they subordinate themselves to what Bourdieu refers to as symbolic violence (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 2003). While a minority of schoolchildren might resist, in doing so they also however increase their risks of exclusion exponentially, since the handling of non-conformist student behaviour also serves to legitimise the prescribed structures. In other words, students who try to sabotage this power relationship through rebellious behaviour or disengagement can also find themselves subjected to symbolic violence, as this behaviour in school further deteriorates their subaltern position (Razer et al., 2013; Garcia-Reid, 2008; Munn and Lloyd, 2005; Helmer, 2013). In seeking to move beyond deficit labels, New's (2011-12) words in a Slovakian context are relevant for a much wider context, 'official policy discourse continues in the spirit of formal, rather than ontological, equality, whereby little has been done to address underlying negative beliefs about the Roma except to deny that they exist and to put the burden of proof back on the victim (p.58)'.

development of staff in the community based services it funds, and which have direct work with marginalised ethnic minority groups and migrants, to ensure they are working with them in accord with progressive principles - and that are not based on deficit labelling and discriminatory viewpoints which may exist in the wider population more generally, in at least some cities (Downes 2015). The UNESCO (2016) report on supporting inclusion in schools asks 'is the work of all students displayed around the schools and classrooms', as part of ensuring that all students are 'equally valued' (p.48).

## ANNEX I. Substance Abuse

According to recent ESPAD data, on average 20 percent of 15-16 year olds in Europe have once or more used cannabis, 10 percent – inhalant and volatile substances, 2,9 percent –amphetamines, 2,6 percent have once or more times used ecstasy and cocaine<sup>55</sup>. Relationships with peers in and out of school has a strong impact on youth drug and alcohol use (Stekete et al., 2013; Walsh et al., 2014). Youth who more frequently went out with friends at night were more likely to be involved in gang activities, and tended to drink alcohol and use drugs more often. Alcohol use was also associated with victimisation; pupils who were victims of violent offence tended to consume alcohol, especially in Scandinavia. On the other hand, the relationships with socially integrated peers tended to decrease alcohol use (Stekete et al., 2013).

Engagement in school and positive school relationships are interwoven with substance abuse and reinforce one another. The findings of a study in the US, with 1272 pupils through 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> grades, showed that adolescents who were experiencing a decline in engagement in school were also more prone to delinquency and substance abuse over time (Wang and Frederics, 2014). A study of 161 Italian adolescents had similar findings about alcohol use: if adolescents felt belonging at school in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, they were less likely to drink in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, and if they were drinking in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, they were less likely to feel that they belong at school in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. It must be noted that those disengaged from school are more likely to associate themselves with others who disengage from school and receive less positive support from teachers (Stekete et al., 2013; Wang and Frederics, 2014), and overall tend to be a part in the 'waterfall mechanism' of social vulnerability, where low teacher expectations about pupils from lower socio-economic backgrounds prevents pupils and teachers from forming productive and positive relationships, and these pupils are more likely to end up in the lower educational tracks (Stekete et al., 2013).

Socio-economic status is one of the risk factors in alcohol and drug abuse. A cross-European study showed that 12-16 year old youth from deprived neighbourhoods, which they described as disorganised, and which also can be characterised by high crime rates and abandoned buildings, are more likely to drink alcohol (Stekete et al., 2013). However, a study from Britain of 5837 younger children aged 13 showed an opposite correlation; children coming from high-income households were more likely than their peers to be involved in binge drinking or consume a whole drink, though the offspring of mothers with higher education level were less likely to use alcohol (Melotti et al. 2011).

Substance abuse is related to other risk behaviours and is related to disengagement from school, while holistic, multidisciplinary strategies tackling these risk behaviours and preventing early school leaving need to be adopted (Downes, 2011a). For substance disorders, multidimensional family therapy, which

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<sup>55</sup> Data not available for Austria, Turkey and Spain. <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/data/stats2016>

includes the adolescent, the family and their environment, has been demonstrated to be more effective than individual psychotherapy and to lead to lower dropout rates (EMCDDA, 2014).

A study on arts-based relapse prevention therapy concluded that this type of therapy is especially useful for people who have difficulty vocalising their feelings and emotions, and have a strong sense of guilt, especially regarding their families, thus demonstrating that integrated arts and family-based interventions are preventative (Tam et al., 2016). Parent involvement in prevention strategies has an crucial effect; if parents have a negative opinion about alcohol use and use specific parenting practices, it correlates with lower alcohol use in adolescents. This was shown by a study in Netherlands based on 9797 questionnaires from both students and their parents (De Looze et al. 2014).

## ANNEX J. Sleep

Studies from across Europe based on 2010 HBSC (Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children) data showed that many adolescents sleep less than recommended (Leger et al. 2012, Nuutinen et al. 2014). The prevalence of insomnia symptoms and tiredness in Finland increased in adolescents from the mid-1990s to the 2010s, based on data from an HBSC study of more than 1 million cases (Kronholm, 2015). The older children get, the less they sleep (Leger et al. 2012, Loureiro and Matos 2014). One of the reasons for the lack of sleep might be that, on average, the older children get, the later they go to bed and the later they get up (Kirby et al., 2011; Williamson, 2014). According to Williamson et al. this pattern of behaviour peaks at 20, and then gradually returns back to earlier waking (2014). Later bed time is also associated with the use of electronic media devices in bedroom, especially smart phones and MP3 players (Kubiszewski et al., 2014), but also with social, psychological and biological influences (Nuutinen et al., 2014; Williamson, 2014). Short term sleep curtailment seems to have less dramatic impacts; Voderholzer et al. experimental study on 88 adolescents in Germany showed that short term sleep deprivation during four nights had no significant impact on memory (Voderholzer et al., 2010). Perceived sleep quality is shown to be more important to perceived health than total sleep time (Segura Jimenez et. al. 2014). Moreover, sleep deficiency, especially too short sleep, was associated with obesity, poorer eating habits and sedentary lifestyles in a cross-European study in 10 cities, where 3311 adolescents participated (Garaulet et al., 2011).

Sleep is also a health issue relevant for school transition. A Swedish longitudinal study involving 6693 questionnaires from a sample age 6-16 (Holmstrom et al. 2014) explored three school based transitions – from preschool to elementary school (6-10), elementary to junior high school (10-13) and junior high to upper secondary 13-16). It found an association between experiencing positive sleep and feeling comfortable in school and not feeling afraid or worried, for all children age 6-10. Likewise all children age 10-13 years who reported positive health reported positive sleep.

Adolescents who attend schools with later start times were sleeping more, and had better temperament and less behavioural problems, and this more positively correlated with their performance in school (Kirby et al., 2011). In experimental designs where school start times were delayed 25-60 minutes, total sleep time in a weeknight increased from 25 to 77 minutes (Minges and Redeker, 2016), so it is possible that later school start times for adolescents could help to improve sleep length.

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