

6. Prevent school drop-out and establish second-chance programmes

WHAT and WHY?

The first step for successful labour market integration is to ensure everyone leaves school with the necessary skills to succeed, including a qualifying diploma. However, migrants who arrived as young children are over-represented among the 15-24 year-olds who leave school prematurely in most OECD countries. School drop-outs lack minimum credentials for both successful labour market entry and for further education and training opportunities. Not surprisingly, therefore, they face a high risk of becoming inactive or unemployed and are prone to long-term social and economic disadvantage. In all OECD countries – with the exceptions of the settlement countries, Israel, Italy, Latvia and the United Kingdom – children of immigrants are more likely to be not in employment, education or training (NEET) than their peers with native-born parents (OECD/EU, 2018^[1]).

Where prevention and early intervention fail to avoid early school leaving, second-chance programmes allow youth to obtain a basic qualification and find a way into the labour market. Such programmes offer alternative pathways. These can lead back into mainstream education, or prepare early school leavers to integrate into vocational education and training (VET) to obtain a professional qualification.

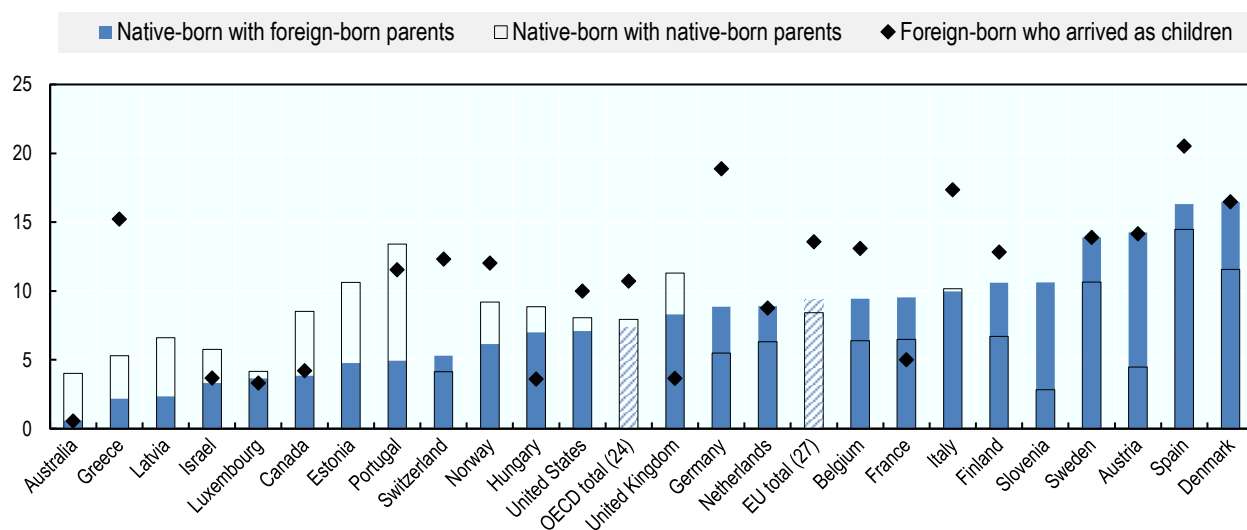
WHO?

OECD- and EU-wide, drop-out levels of immigrant offspring are similar to those of young people of native-born parentage at 7% and 9% respectively. In contrast, 11% of foreign-born youth who arrived as children in the OECD leave school early, and the share of drop-outs is 15% in the EU. Moreover, the native-born children of immigrants are more likely than their peers with no migrant parents to drop out in the majority of European countries, while the reverse is the case in the settlement countries (OECD/EU, 2018^[1]).

Second chance programmes generally target early school-leavers who lack basic qualifications or those with a basic certificate who struggle to enter VET or find a job. Such measures rarely target youth with migrant parents specifically, but cater youth in need more generally. However, youth with migrant parents are often overrepresented among the target group.

Figure 6.1. Early school leavers

Percentages, 15- to 24-year-olds, around 2016

Source: OECD/EU (2018^[1]).

HOW?

Policy efforts to ensuring that youth with migrant parents leave the education system with a qualifying diploma broadly cluster into two approaches:

- preventing early school dropout and tackling early school leaving at the systematic and individual level
- establishing comprehensive second chance programmes including alternative educational routes to higher education and improving high-quality apprenticeship opportunities

Preventing early school dropout and tackling early school leaving involves addressing its causes at the systemic level of the education system as well as targeting specific high-risk groups at the individual level. Measures at the *systematic level* typically include expanding and promoting the use of high-quality early childhood education and care, postponing educational tracking, limiting the use of grade repetition and raising the minimum official school leaving age for compulsory education (Lyche, 2010^[59]; De Witte et al., 2013^[60]; Nouwen, Clycq and Uličná, 2015^[61]; European Commission, 2013^[62]).

In Europe, the European Union encourages member countries to address common risk factors for early school leaving. The goal is to lower the average dropout rate to less than 10% by 2020 at different levels of the education circle. Typically, these measures focus on students from disadvantaged backgrounds, including – but only rarely specifically targeting – youth with migrant parents.

Among the few countries to have set up schemes that specifically target students with migrant parents is Denmark. Since 2003, the country has been running the “We Need All Youngsters” campaign to support 13-20 year-old youth to complete their education. The initiative initially focused on youth with migrant parents exclusively, but has been expanded to help struggling youth regardless of their background by enhancing their professional, social and personal skills through homework assistance; role model groups;

internships; and fairs informing about available VET opportunities. The campaign also promotes parent involvement in educational choices. Since 2011, 'We need all Youngsters' has focused on boys.

Another example of a dedicated programme to tackle school drop-out among youth with migrant parents is the Austrian programme 'Integration Ambassadors'. As part of the broader "Together Austria" initiative, the scheme encourages successful young migrants to become ambassadors of integration and pay visits to schools and associations to motivate other youth with migrant parents to see education as an opportunity and to make use of existing career options.

In Portugal, the 'Choices Programme' (Programa Escolhas) promotes the integration of 6 to 24 years old from disadvantaged social backgrounds, many of whom are immigrant descendants. The programme involves local authorities and civil society organisations. It includes several strategic areas of intervention, including combatting early school drop-out through the creation of new educational tools; the development of personal, social and cognitive skills through formal and non-formal education; and the promotion of family co-responsibility in the parental surveillance process. The current seventh round (2019-20) aims to benefit about 50 000 youth.

Measures to retain youth in schools at the individual level involve targeted interventions to support at-risk students and institutions. Approaches typically include case-by-case mentoring, tutoring and initiatives to engage parents in their children's education. Such a personalised approach is expensive and not easy to deliver, but the costs that would arise if these youth fail to complete education and do not integrate into the labour market are much higher.

Where preventive intervention comes too late, second-chance programmes provide school drop-outs and other youth with an opportunity to catch up. Some programmes enable participants to obtain an occupational qualification. Others focus on preparing youth to reintegrate into mainstream education and training programmes. Successful second-chance programmes display several characteristics that distinguish them from mainstream education. These include a focus on individualised teaching methods; flexible and needs-based curricula; holistic assessment approaches; small classes with low student-teacher ratios; multi-professional teams supporting learners, welcoming learning environments; and partnerships with mainstream education institutions, local communities and employers (UNICEF, 2017^[63]). Youth with migrant parents often benefit more from mainstreamed support tools for all underachieving students than from targeted migration -history-specific approaches, found a review of second-chance programmes in the EU (European Commission, 2014^[64]). However, these have to be adapted, notably with respect language training where needed.

In Slovenia, the PUM-O programme helps young people ready themselves for re-entering formal education or finding a job. Length of participation is adjustable to individual needs. The programme operates with small groups of 15-20 youth with an average age of 19-20 supported by three mentors. While not specifically targeted to them, shares of youth with migrant parents are growing (OECD, 2017^[65]). In Germany, the Joblinge programme trains, mentors and connects young people with the labour market. Participants who have on average been out of school for two years before joining the programme, are mostly between 16 and 25 years of age and over two-thirds have migrant parents. Based on a close collaboration with regional employers, individual mentorship and skills training the programme supports youth to find their own vocational training place or job. Since 2016, the programme runs a specific stream for refugees, which offers additional language classes and job trial periods for young refugees (Joblinge Foundation, 2018^[66]). In Flanders, second-chance education (Tweedekansonderwijs) is part of the formal adult education system and is provided by the Centres for Adult Education. It offers early school leavers the opportunity to obtain a degree of secondary education based on a modular structure and evening courses. It also allows young adult learners to set out their individual learning path. As a financial incentive, graduates are paid back their tuition fees when obtaining a diploma (OECD, 2019^[67]). While available to all youth, by the nature of the programme youth with migrant parents are a key group among those eligible.

Many school dropouts prefer low-paying, unstable and often informal work over schooling; especially for those with parents from countries where labour market entry at a young age is common. Second-chance programmes can combine studies with work experience and labour market measures to address the incentives faced by youth with migrant parents to privilege work over education. Sweden, for example, has introduced an education contract in 2015 to encourage unemployed youth between the ages of 20 and 24 to return to adult education to gain an upper-secondary qualification. The agreement increases the financial aid available while offering increased flexibility to combine studies with work and labour market initiatives. The initiative does not explicitly target youth with migrant parents. Still, they are likely to be among the primary beneficiaries given their overrepresentation among those who do not qualify for upper-secondary education (OECD, 2016^[68]).

Table 6.1. VET bridging programmes and second chance offers for school drop-outs, including young people with migrant parents in OECD countries, 2016

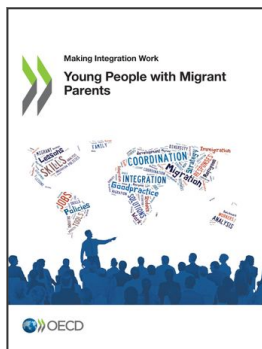
| | Yes/No | Type of programme |
|----------------|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Australia | Yes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Transition to Work</i> service (administered by Department of Employment) provides intensive pre-employment assistance to young people who have disengaged from work and study and are at risk of long-term welfare dependence. The service is designed to improve the work readiness of young people aged 15 to 21 years of age and help them get into work (including apprenticeships and traineeships) or education. • Pilot programmes in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne (administered by the Department of Social Services) support young refugees and other vulnerable migrants under 25 years of age to stay engaged in education and make successful transitions to employment through i) addressing barriers to employment; ii) accessing vocational opportunities; iii) staying engaged with education; iv) building social connections through sport. |
| Austria | Yes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Initiative adult education</i>: Joint federal-provincial programme enabling youth to acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills or to take a compulsory school leaving exam (not exclusively for youth with migrant parents); approx. EUR 7.5 million funds in 2014 • <i>Production schools</i> preparing for regular VET or apprenticeships through training workshops in crafting, social and career counselling, internships and basic skills training; approx. EUR 26 million funds in 2015 |
| Belgium | Yes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Services d'Accrochage Scolaire</i> (SAS): 3-6 months temporary social and academic reintegration support for school dropouts • <i>Work-Up</i> project: (Migrant) youth counsellors support Flemish Public Employment Service in reaching out to unemployed migrant youth |
| Canada | Yes | <i>Canada Youth Employment Strategy</i> : Funding for employers who provide skills and knowledge development ('Skills Link'), career guidance and work experience ('Career Focus') and summer job opportunities ('Canada Summer Job') to youth facing barriers to employment |
| Chile | No | / |
| Czech Republic | No | / |
| Denmark | Yes | Preparatory basic education and training (FGU) |
| Estonia | | |
| Finland | Yes | Foreign-language vocational upper secondary education and training combining Finnish or Swedish as a second language and vocational training |
| France | Yes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of VET programmes • Second Chance Schools providing vocational training, individual coaching and traineeships to unemployed early school leavers |
| Germany | Yes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductory training (development of basic employability skills through e.g. long-term (6-12 months) company placements with subsidised pay and social insurance contributions) • Early starter programme: Employment agency supports 25-35 year-old adults to obtain a professional qualification and basic skills and pays them a premium after successful completion of the interim and final exams; 120 000 prospective participants between 2016-20 • Vocational orientation, guidance and placement into training • Career entry support through mentoring • Training-related assistance and assisted vocational training • Vocational preparation schemes (attainment of apprenticeship entry maturity) |

| | Yes/No | Type of programme |
|-----------------|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Greece | Yes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Chance Schools targeting young adults (not exclusively immigrants) who have not completed compulsory education (budget of 3.6 million for Jan-Jul 2016) • Life-long Learning Centres (Kentra Dia Viou Mathisis) operated by municipalities in the framework of Continuing VET (CVET) that offer training programmes (including language training) to all persons in need (not exclusively targeted at immigrants) (budget 23.7 million for Apr 2012 – Sep 2016) • The “Odysseas” education programme in Greek language, history and culture for immigrants (budget EUR 9.7 million Oct 2008 – Nov 2015) • The “Triptolemos” education programme promoting employment of young (primarily unemployed) people in the agricultural sector |
| Hungary | Yes | Vocational Training Bridge Programmes assist students in joining secondary education or vocational training or prepare them for employment (EUR 48 680 total budgeted expenditures for 2016-20) |
| Iceland | | |
| Israel | | |
| Ireland | No | / |
| Italy | Yes | <p>Main competences and funding on education system are at regional level. Promotion for VET programmes are equally open to nationals and non-nationals.</p> <p>Second chance schools provide vocational training, individual coaching and traineeships to unemployed early school leavers.</p> <p>2014-20 EU Youth Guarantee scheme supports an increasing number of young people not in education or employment.</p> |
| Japan | No | / |
| Korea | | |
| Latvia | Yes | 3-9 months vocational education programs within the Youth Guarantee Programme for young people aged 15-29 years |
| Lithuania | No | / |
| Luxembourg | Yes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training focused on competence-based and modular qualifications incl. guidance and access to labour market (over 6 000 courses provided, including evening classes) • VET programmes in English language |
| Mexico | No | / |
| Netherlands | Yes | <i>Step to Work Programme</i> : One-year work placement with a private sector employer along with preparatory courses and ongoing training (joint venture of municipalities, PES and social partners) |
| New Zealand | Yes (not systematic) | n.a. |
| Norway | Yes | <i>Programme for increased completion (of Upper Secondary Education and Training)</i> involving research projects and administration of regional networks to share best practice, funded jointly by federal government and counties |
| Poland | No | / |
| Portugal | Yes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific employability support structures (GIP) for unemployed immigrant youth and young adults helping them define and develop their path of integration or reintegration into the labour market through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional information and support in active job search Disclosure and referral to job offers and training Placement activities Information and referral to support measures for entrepreneurship, employment and training Information about community programs to promote mobility in employment and vocational training in Europe Motivation and support for participation in temporary occupations or activities on a voluntary basis Periodic presentation control of the beneficiaries of employment benefits Personalised follow-up of the unemployed people during the integration or reintegration phase • <i>Chances Programme</i>: reintegrated into school, employment or vocational training |
| Slovak Republic | No | / |
| Slovenia | No | / |
| Spain | Yes | <p><i>PCPI -Initial Vocational Qualification Programme</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combination of basic general and vocational education for students who failed or are at risk |

| | Yes/No | Type of programme |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | of failing the compulsory secondary schooling exam • Possibility to obtain a compulsory school leaving diploma |
| Sweden | Yes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductory programmes (including VET) for teenagers in upper secondary education • VET courses in municipal adult education (part of the ordinary education system) • Trainee Jobs – allows youth with incomplete education to combine work (subsidised) and study for a vocational certificate • Education contract – to encourage unemployed youth between 20-24 to return to adult education to gain an upper secondary qualification. The contract increases financial aid while increasing flexibility to combine studies with work and labour market initiatives |
| Switzerland | Yes | Varies depending on the partner organising the programme (e.g. Motivation Semester) |
| Turkey | No (but scholarships for foreign students to attend regular VET programmes) | / |
| United Kingdom | Yes | n.a. |
| United States | Yes (not specific for youth with migrant parents) | <i>US Job Corps Programme</i> |

Note: n.a. = information not available.

Source: OECD questionnaire on the integration of young people with migrant parents 2016.



From:

Young People with Migrant Parents

Access the complete publication at:

<https://doi.org/10.1787/6e773bfe-en>

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD (2021), "Prevent school drop-out and establish second-chance programmes", in *Young People with Migrant Parents*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/2ad78416-en>

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