

COUNTRY REPORT ON EARLY WARNING SYSTEM FOR THE PREVENTION OF EARLY SCHOOL LEAVING

HUNGARY

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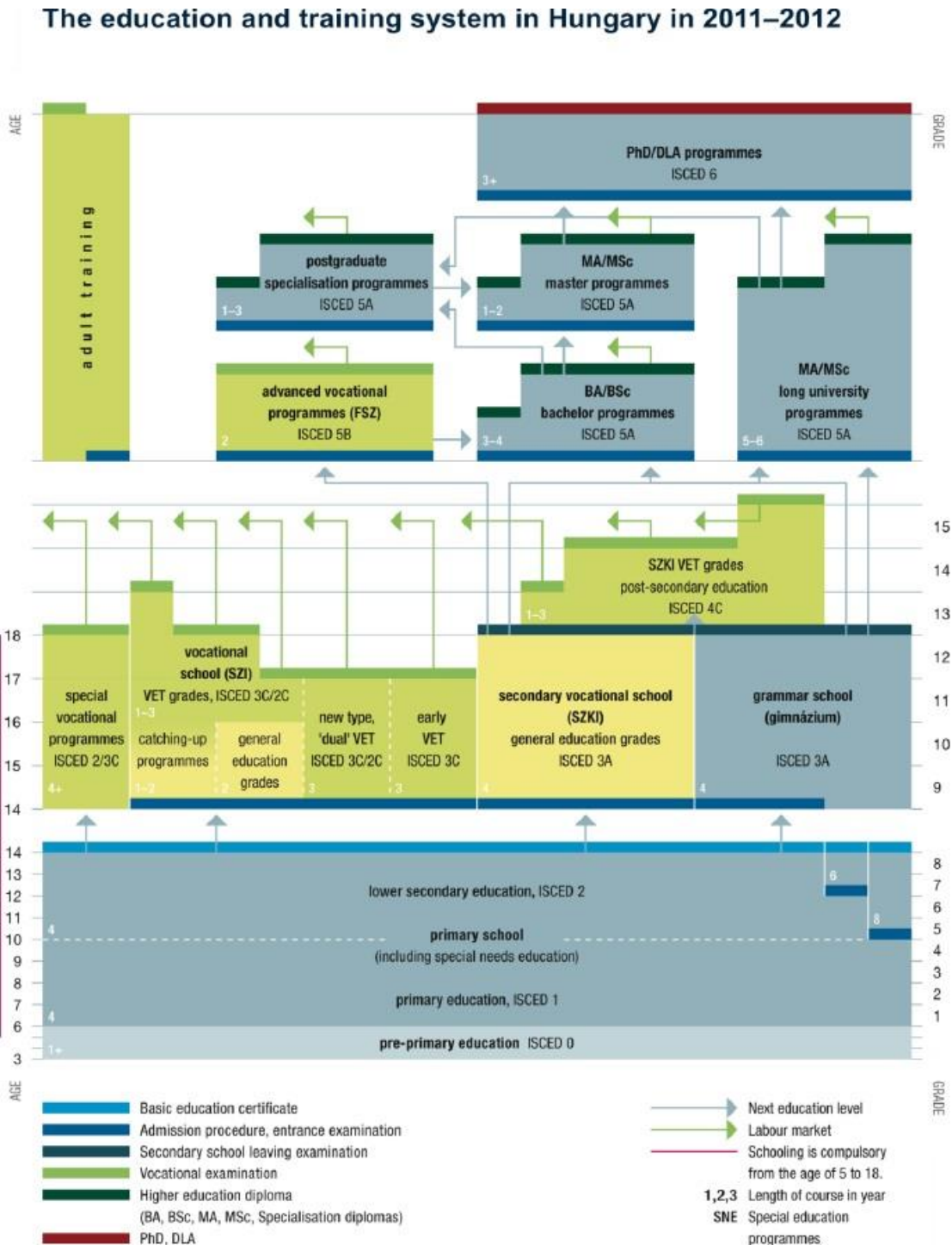
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1. Diagram of the education system

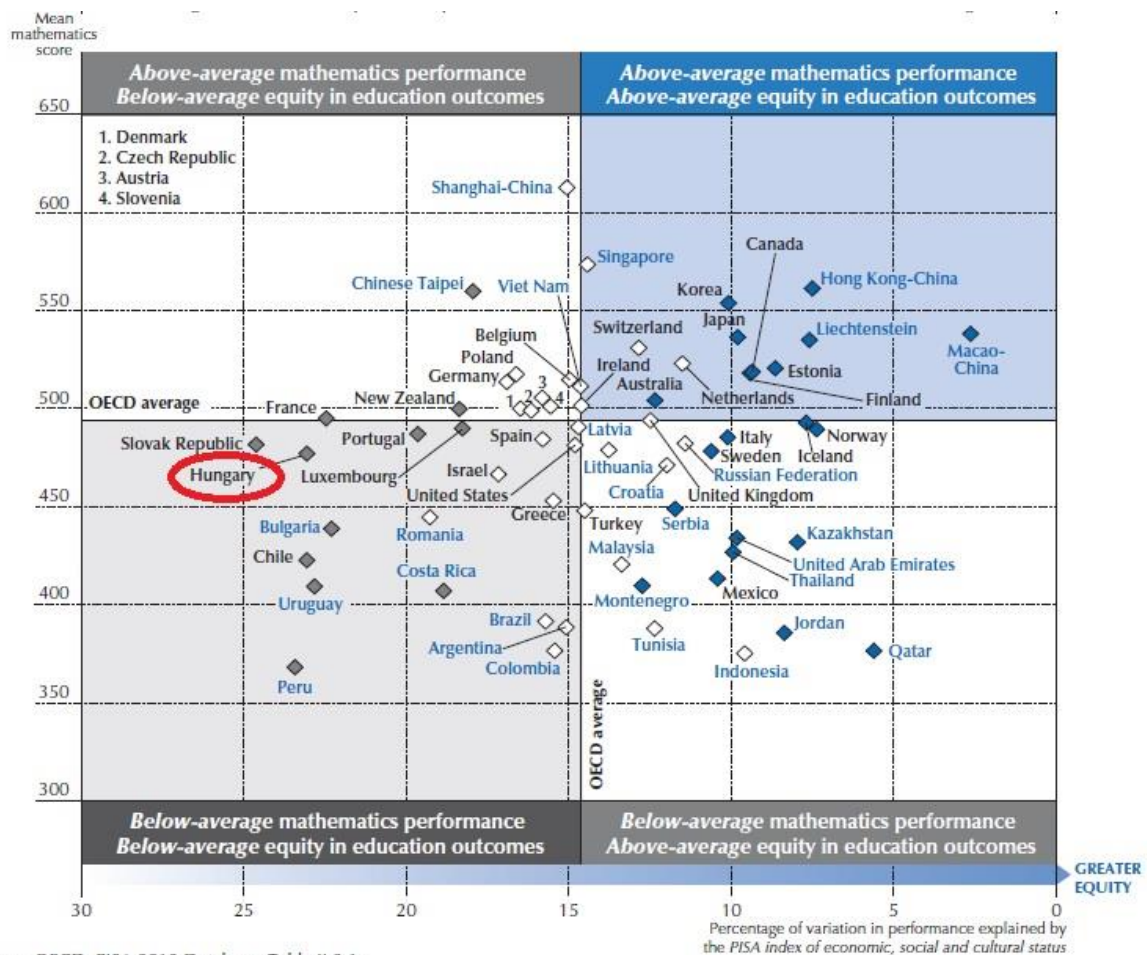
1. Figure. Source: Hungary, VET in Europe – Country report, Refernet, 2012
http://www.observatory.org.hu/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/ReferNet_CR_2012_EN.pdf



A. Basic facts about the Hungarian education system

According to PISA¹ results the Hungarian education system is among the least equitable education systems in the OECD (see 1. Figure) meaning that social background highly influences students' achievement. In addition there is great difference between schools resulting from the practice of collecting homogenous student groups. This way of operation reproduces social inequalities and deepens social differences. Data show that countries where schools work with more heterogenous groups and ensure the accessibility of high quality schools all over the country produce the best overall performance in education (e.g. Finland). This fact connects to early school leaving deeply, as the rate of ESL is higher in socially disadvantaged areas and vocational schools – in the homogeneously contra selected schools.

2. Figure The correlation of socio-economic status and performance in school, OECD, 2012



Source: OECD, PISA 2012 Database, Table II.2.1.

¹ OECD, PISA ESCS index

[http://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisaproducts/pisainfocus/pisa%20in%20focus%20n25%20\(eng\)--FINAL.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisaproducts/pisainfocus/pisa%20in%20focus%20n25%20(eng)--FINAL.pdf)

Mandatory schooling in Hungary is currently between the ages of 5-16. Children are said to be of school age when they reach the stage of development necessary to pass to school, at latest in age 7² which is usually certified by the kindergarten. If the child's stage of development cannot be assessed unambiguously, or the child has not attended kindergarten, or the parent disagrees with the opinion of the kindergarten, an examination can be requested with the expert committee to determine whether the child's stage of development is adequate to pass to school. The examination may be requested by the kindergarten, the parent or the school head master in the manner stipulated in Ministerial Decree No 20/2012 (VIII.31.) on the Operation of Educational Institutions. Basic schools cannot refuse to admit children and students living within their respective districts however there is a free choice of school for the parents. They – in general – cannot organise entrance examinations.³

Hungarian public education system builds up from pre-school education ISCED 0 (óvoda) between the age of 3-6, primary general education ISCED 1-2 (általános iskola) between the age of 6-14 and upper secondary education ISCED 3 (középiskola) between the age of 14-18.

Between the age 6(7)-9(10) it is called the primary general education with only a few teachers. Between 9(10)-13(14) is the lower secondary phase in most cases also as part of the primary general education with subject specific teachers. In some cases the lower secondary phase is part of the secondary school in schools with early selective tracks, these schools usually have high standards and a very strict selection system for students. Besides general upper secondary school there is vocational school (szakiskola) and secondary vocational school (szakközépiskola), the latter is the most popular choice among students currently. The different routes of the system supports the many times criticized (e.g. PISA) early selection system of Hungary which is claimed to influence students' future achievement and job perspectives at a too early age.

Pursuant to the law, in grades 1 to 4, the average number of students organised into one class can be 21 with a permissible maximum of 26, while in grades 5 to 8, the average is 23 with a maximum of 30. The maintainer may, subject to the permission of the Educational Authority, exceed the maximum permissible student number in a class, within the limited scope defined by law.⁴

The general participation rate in education for the 3-22 year old cohort was 88%⁵ in 2012/2013 school year which is a 15% increase since 1990. Compared to the previous year

² Excluded SEN children.

³

https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Hungary:Organisation_of_Single_Structure_Education

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ The data are from: Statistical Yearbook of Education 2012/2013. Budapest, 2013

http://2010-2014.kormany.hu/download/c/93/21000/Oktat%C3%A1si_%C3%89vk%C3%B6nyv_2012.pdf

there was 1% increase in the participation in public education while 11% decrease happened in higher education rate. The 3-6 year old population is almost fully appears in the system whether in nursery, pre-school or school level with its 94.5%. Due to the unfavourable demographic trend the number of primary school students decreased by more than 20% between 2001/2002 and 2012/2013. The participation rate in vocational education has been changed heavily in the last 20 years. In 1990 44% of high school students attended vocational schools, today it is 23% only. The prestige of this kind of school has fallen dramatically which induced a contra selection of their student population.⁶

In 2012 a complete restructuring has been made in the education and training system. A more centralised system was built with county and district level authorities with a central bureau (Klebelsberg Institution Maintenance Centre) as maintainers instead of local municipalities. This change involves a limited financial support than before besides institutional needs can only be fulfilled by a much more bureaucratic procedure. Centralization affects educational material as well. The curricula is mandatory (national basic curricula) and only 10% deviation can be made by the teacher. There are fewer textbooks to choose from. The previous educational governance terminated the usage of grades and year repetition on the primary level (1-4th year) and used written assessment. Currently giving grades and allowing year repetition have been set back. This may increase the number of over-aged students who are much more at risk of dropping out. According to research data 70% of those having repeated a year or more during primary general school have not gained an ISCED3 level degree afterwards.

The private student (magántanuló) system was originally meant to support the talented students with a sport or musician career, however in many cases it has transformed to a method to getting rid of the 'bad behaving' or 'difficult to handle' children. In the latter case it is highly connected to early school leaving. Most of the private students are in Northern-Hungarian region such as the biggest proportion of early school leavers.

2. What is the basis of the mainstream financial allocation to schools? If it is a normative system, what is the formula for state budget funding?

The operation of the public education system is ensured by the funds provided from the central budget as the maintenance of schools is at the centralized Klebelsberg Kuno Institutional Maintenance Center. Institutions have no own budget any more. The system was used to be financed on a normative manner after the number of students. Since 2013 a normative task related system has been operating which supports schools by employing teachers and other staff.

⁶ The data are from: Statistical Yearbook of Education 2012/2013. Budapest, 2013
http://2010-2014.kormany.hu/download/c/93/21000/Oktat%C3%A1si_%C3%89vk%C3%B6nyv_2012.pdf

The operation of the public education system is ensured through the funds provided by the central budget. Since the establishment of the Klebelsberg Kuno Institutional Maintenance Center, the financing of the public education institutions is divided into two main pillars: the Klebelsberg Centre is responsible for the general maintenance and it's financing all the adherent schools, including especially the payroll payments of all the professional staff. Under certain conditions (e.g. number of inhabitants is over 3000) there is possibility for the local governments for maintaining the educational institution based on a contract between the state and the municipality. (Kindergartens are still under the maintenance of the municipalities.) In this case these local governments receive targeted funding from the central budget for these services by taking responsibility for the proper operation of all the related goods and by giving free right of use of these goods to the Klebelsberg Centre.

In the case of the non-state maintained schools, such as foundation schools, the central budget provides funds by a calculation based on the average salary of the professional staff and also additional maintenance, catering and textbook support. Church maintained schools are eligible for an additional normative support by the agreement between Hungary and the Vatican, made in 1997. Besides they have a higher level of freedom compared to state schools in terms of headmaster nominations, text books, they are out of the 'mandatory school admission'⁷ and so on.

3. Trend of early school leaving during the past 10 years

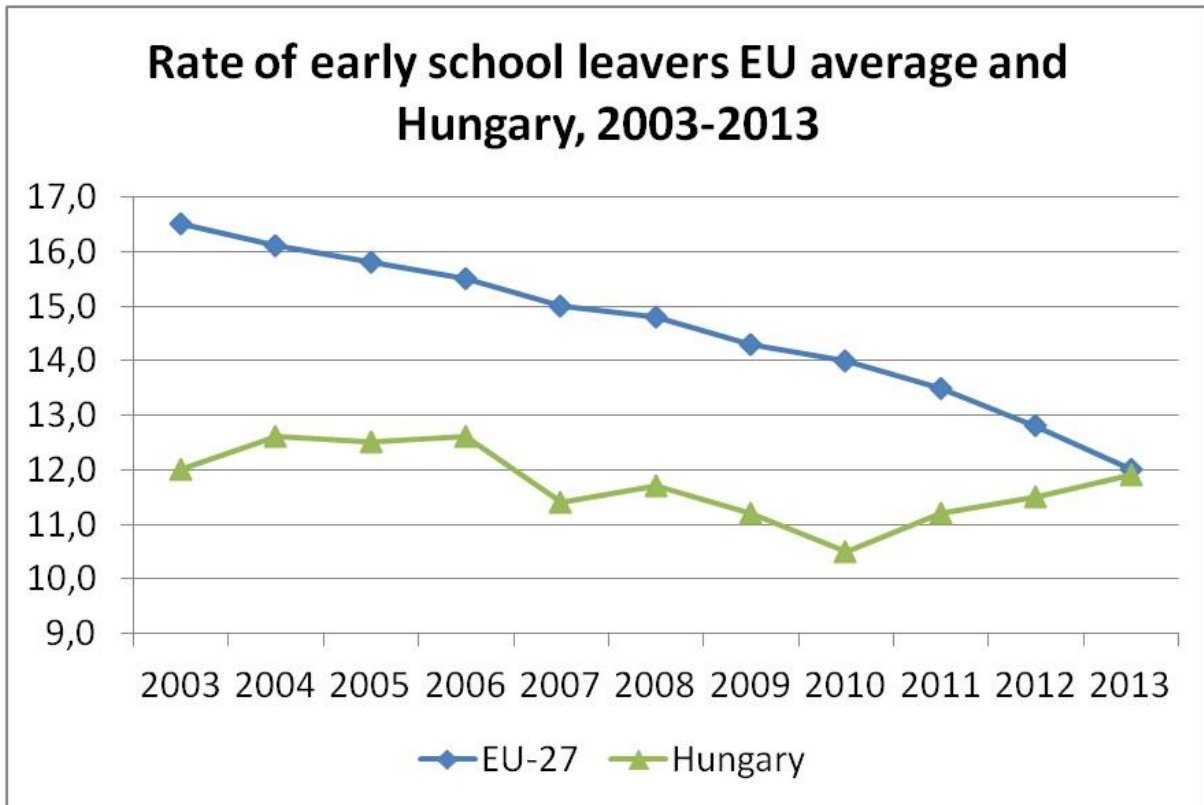
Early school leavers are 18-24 year old young people with ISCED level 2 (lower secondary education) as the highest educational level attained. Besides they had not taken part in any kinds of education or training in the previous four weeks of surveying. Participation in those types of trainings or education which do not lead to obtaining a degree count as being in education implying that the actual rate of ESL is higher than the statistical figure.

The European Union set up new targets for 2020. One of its priority areas is to decrease the rate of early school leavers below 10% in EU average. The Hungarian Government joined this target by benchmarking 10%.

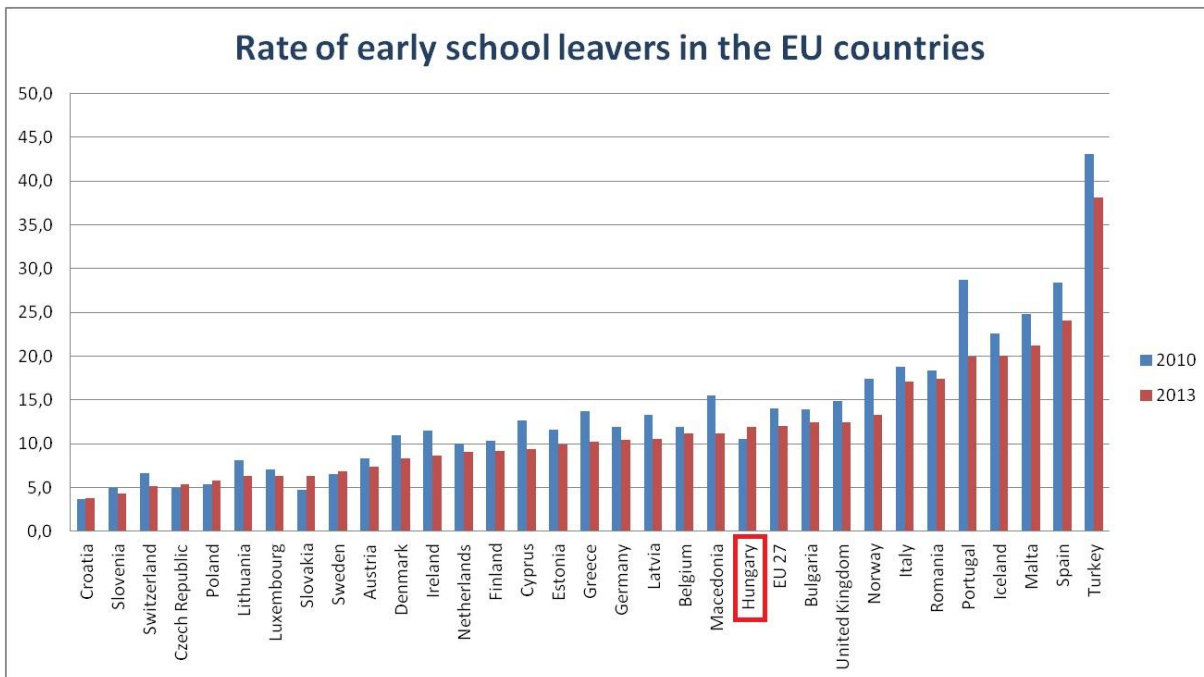
The problem itself is not simply the level of ESL in Hungary but its increasing trend illustrated in 2. Figure: the rate increased from 10.5 to 11.9% between 2010 and 2013. With this trend Hungary is among those very few countries where an increase has happened. In addition other countries with an increasing trend have better results than Hungary see 3. Figure.

⁷ However there is a free choice of school in Hungary, basic schools cannot refuse to admit children and students living within their respective. Church schools are exceptional in this sense. See details on page 5. and 21-22.

3. Figure Rate of early school leavers EU average and Hungary, 2003-2013. Source: Eurostat, 2013



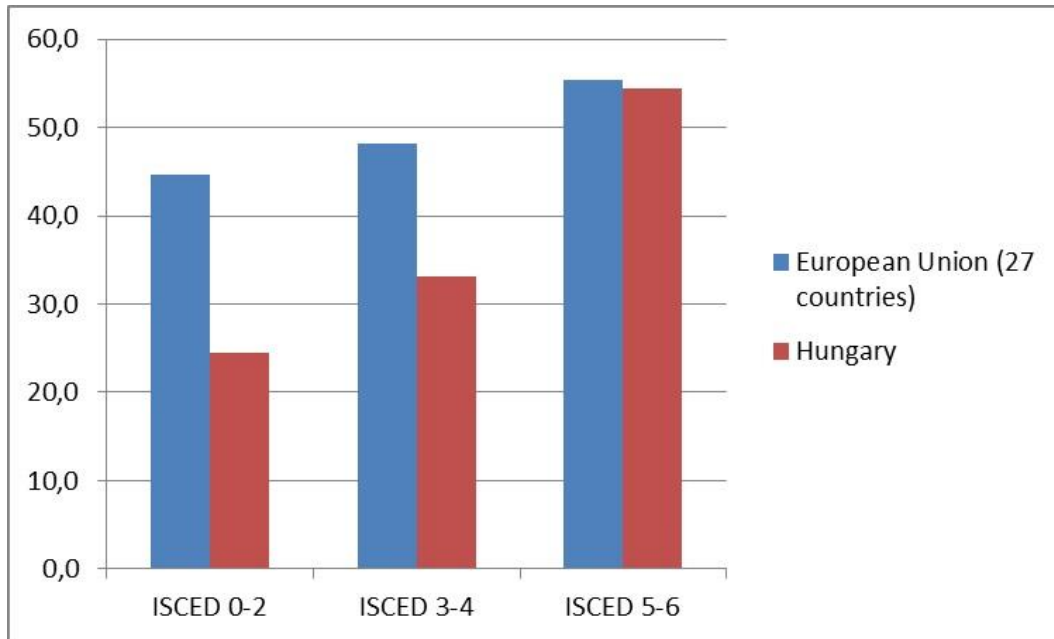
4. Figure Rate of early school leavers in the EU countries. Source: Eurostat, 2013



This data also call for attention because of the unfavourable labour market situation of the early school leavers. The difference in chances of being employed is significantly high among

the younger population with ISCED 2 as shown in 4. Figure: only one fourth of the population with low educational attainment level is employed in Hungary while almost half of this cohort finds a job in the EU.

5. Figure Employment rate of 20-24 year-old people with ISCED 2 as the highest level attained. 2012. Source: Eurostat, 2012



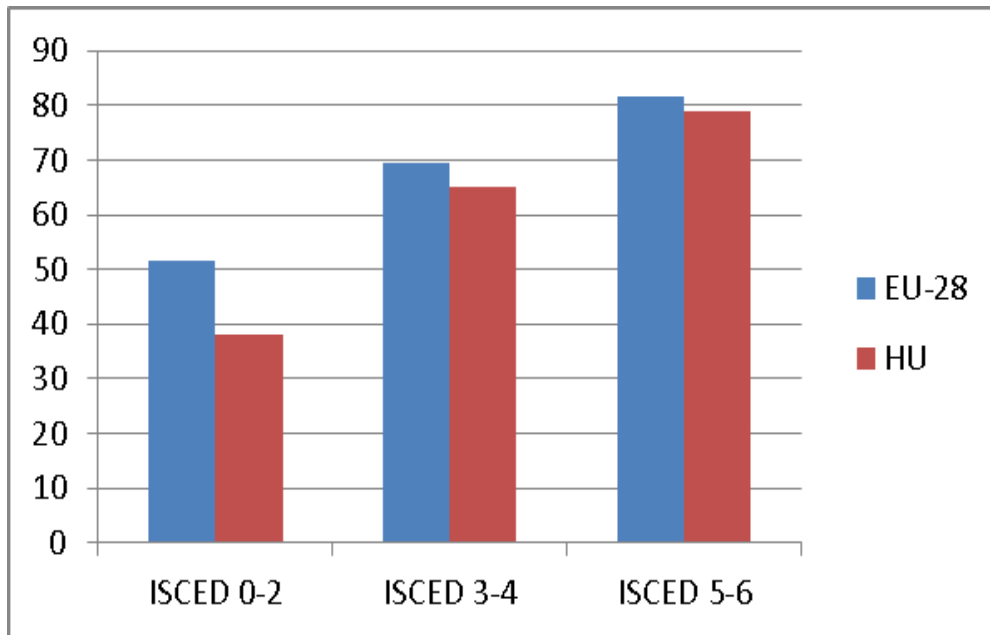
The disparity of different locations deepens the problem of ESL in Hungary. Budapest and its surrounding and the north-western part of Hungary is more improved in services, while the north-east south-west axis - where the ratio of disadvantaged students is higher - lack ESL related institutions and professionals, especially in small settlement areas. Unemployment rate exacerbates this problem so that people with the mostly socially disadvantaged background live in areas lacking job opportunities and accessible good quality services. This shows up in the ESL statistics as well (see 5. Figure).

6. Figure Rate of early school leavers in Hungarian regions, 2012, the darker is the more. Source: KSH, Central Statistical Office, Hungary



Early school leaving goes much beyond than simply not finishing a school: it predicts a future with no job, no social security and no chances to a quality life for the individual. In Hungary there is a huge gap in employment chances of people with different levels of education (see 6. Figure) compared to the EU average: only approx. 35% is employed from those having at most ISCED 2 level educational attainment whereas in the EU the respective figure is 50%.

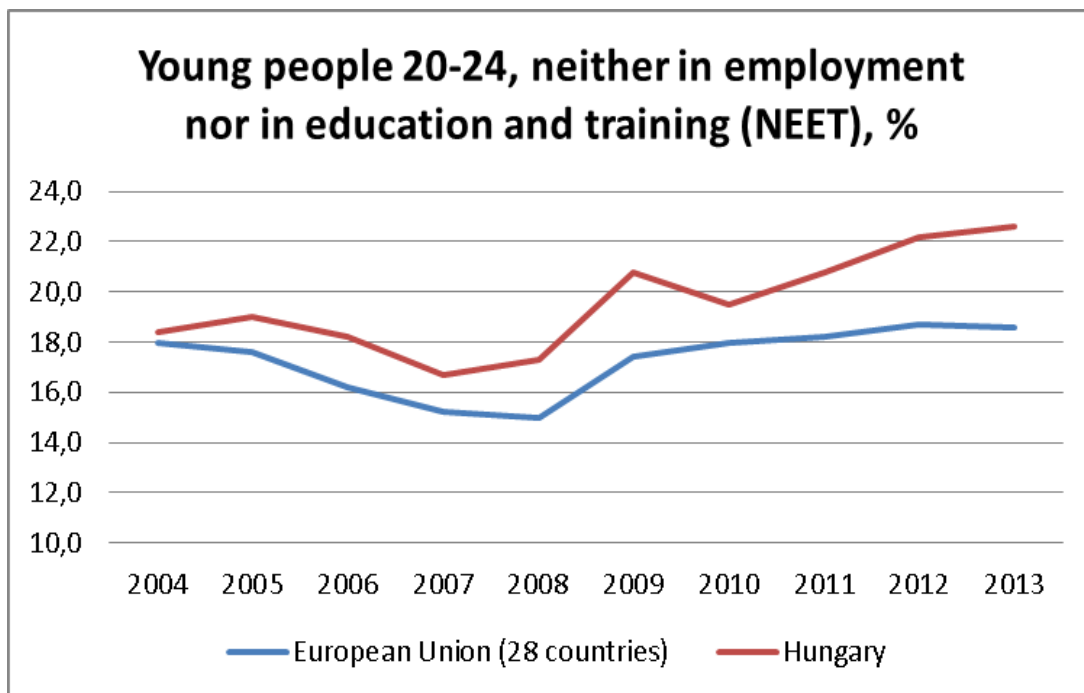
7. Figure Employment rate by level of education, 20-64 year olds EU and Hungary Source: Eurostat database, LFS, 2014



4. Diagram of NEET of the past 10 years

Besides the category of early school leavers or early leavers from education there is another category for those not attending any education, nor having a job. This is NEET, which shows the rate of economically inactive population see 7. Figure. Unfortunately Hungary has an increasing tendency concerning this indicator as well.

8. Figure Young people (20-24) neither in education, employment or training, %, 2004-2013. Source: Eurostat, 2015



According to a CEDEFOP report⁸ the demand for low educated people will decrease by 28.5% between 2010 and 2020. This predicts a further raise even in the already 40% unemployment rate of early school leavers in Europe. The situation is worrying in Hungary as the rate of NEET young people is going up and reaches almost one quarter of the population.

5. Most relevant measures taken during the past 5 years which might affect the trends

In 2012⁹ the Hungarian educational system was transformed to a much more centralised one: before that the majority of schools were under the administration of municipalities while today a centralised institution (Klebensberg Institution Maintenance Centre) maintains the schools with its county/district level authorities. As a result of this the practice of

⁸ CEDEFOP: Skills forecast: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/about-cedefop/projects/forecasting-skill-demand-and-supply/skills-forecasts/main-results.aspx?CountryID=31&case=LFBQ>

⁹ 202/2012. (VII. 27.) Korm. rendelet a Klebensberg Intézményfenntartó Központról http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy_doc.cgi?docid=A1200202.KOR

nominating headmasters, the employment of teachers and other decision making process have been changed. Much less authority remained on school level therefore decision making process e.g. applying for a tender or decision about the employment or promotion of a teacher became more bureaucratic. The flexibility of the curriculum and the selection of textbooks have become narrowed as well.

The Act on Child Protection defines the roles connected to endangered or socially disadvantaged students.¹⁰ In statistics data exists for 'disadvantaged social status' and 'multiply disadvantaged social status' for students, however the regulation has recently been changed and become narrower¹¹: according to the discussions with practitioners in the field, several people fall out of these categories and they miss out on subsidies connecting to these ranking due to the legal changes.

The Act on Public Education defines some responsibilities for actors in relation to students who belong to these categories and those who have certain problems in school (e.g. absenteeism). Since it is not a coherent system, there is no clearly defined goal or name connected to these."¹²

The system monitors the signals detailed below:

- truancy/absenteeism
- triggers a warning when a student has failed, receives poor overall marks/grades or has to repeat a year
- allows teachers, youth workers and social workers (and others) to raise a concern about a young person who they think may be at-risk of dropping out
- schools and training institutes are obliged to inform authorities or youth bodies/workers of young people who they think may have dropped out

However it does not monitor poor marks/grades in one or more subjects, course/subject failure, contact with social services, and contact with law enforcement. These are definitely considered as distress signals by experts though.

The law requires reporting on student's absenteeism for the local authority and for the local child care institution after 10 missed classes. It also prescribes employing other, non-teacher professional¹³ besides the regular teachers who are responsible for student's welfare

¹⁰ Previously, the concerning rules were regulated by the Act on Public Education. After the modification this Act does not define the disadvantaged and the multiple disadvantaged statuses but only refers to the Act on Child Protection.

¹¹ Previously the socially disadvantaged status meant those who received regular child protection benefit. After the modification it was supplemented with the following conditions of which one has to meet: low educational level of the parent, unemployed status of the parent, inadequate living circumstances. Multiply disadvantaged status means the existence of two of these conditions besides receiving the benefit

¹² Early warning system questionnaire. TWG on ESL 2013 p3

¹³ eg. pedagogical assistant, psycho-pedagogue, youth care worker. Their main tasks are: assessing the needs of young people, planning and delivering individual guidance as well as programmes related to areas such as

however it could be a part-time worker only, having time mostly for administration instead of real care work. Since September 2013 the conditions of employing certain professionals is prescribed by the law.¹⁴ (More details in part 11.)

The first responsible person is usually the form master/class teacher who can intervene at the very beginning when he/she realizes any signals of potential dropping out. This person is the one who has to warn parents and local authorities and work on an individual development plan for the involved student usually in cooperation with the local child care service.

The institutional responsibility lies on the school leader as s/he can direct the teachers' attention towards early distress signals and can make decisions about the solutions which are not mandatory but made possible by the law.

B. Policy measures connected to EWS

The Hungarian National Reform Programme reflects on EU2020 requirements. Hungary declared to reduce the dropout rate to 10% until 2020 partly through measures supporting kindergarten care and early intervention and partly through targeted measures for the successful school progress of disadvantaged children and by the strengthening of vocational training providing new opportunities to vulnerable groups. Special programs have been implemented to support the most disadvantaged, mostly Roma population's participation in early childhood education.

Concerning the policy level changes regarding early school leaving the return of primary school grading and repetition of year practice are crucial. Nevertheless the lowering of compulsory education to 16 years old is as well important especially without any other incentives to stay in some sort of education or bridge program for the labour market. Furthermore early school leavers above the age of 16 are not monitored any more by the educational statistics. The placement of still in the compulsory age students without a general primary education remains a challenge. The question of private students is still not answered and the new role of pedagogic advisory service as well not transparent.

At vocational education the duration of studies decreased to 3 years instead of the general 4 or 5 year-long system after the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and the Government's agreement. The aim is to getting closer to the dual system on VET however firms are not

health, relationships or bullying. This is regulated by a governmental decree: 326/2013. (VIII. 30.) Korm. rendelet a pedagógusok előmeneteli rendszeréről és a közalkalmazottak jogállásáról szóló 1992. évi XXXIII. törvény köznevelési intézményekben történő végrehajtásáról, 4. Melléklet.

¹⁴ It is determined by a government decree: A halftime school psychologist is an obligation for every 500 students. (Az iskolapszichológus kötelező létszámát az iskola tanulólétszáma alapján kell meghatározni oly módon, hogy 500 tanulónként egy, a teljes munkaidő ötven százalékában foglalkoztatott iskolapszichológust kell alkalmazni. 326/2013. (VIII. 30.) Korm. rendelet a pedagógusok előmeneteli rendszeréről és a közalkalmazottak jogállásáról szóló 1992. évi XXXIII. törvény köznevelési intézményekben történő végrehajtásáról.)

prepared and not supported in efficiently contributing to these aims. Another controversial element of the current changes is the lower amount of general subjects in VET despite the fact that employers expect new workers with an ability to learn, to communicate well and to be able to understand systems. These so called soft competencies can be strengthened by the general subject such as literature or language.

C. Strategies

The Commission expressed its concerns about the actual developments of educational law and institutional reorganization and formulated its recommendations regarding e.g. the adoption of a national ESL strategy. The 2014 recommendations still urges the formulation of an ESL strategy and other interventions to tackle the problem:

“(15) The proportion of early school leavers is on the rise and the adoption of an early school leaving prevention strategy has been repeatedly delayed. Further efforts are needed to equip pupils with basic skills, competences and qualifications that are relevant for the labour market. Equal access to mainstream quality education still remains a major problem for disadvantaged children, in particular Roma. A new law on vocational training, which inter alia introduces a new ‘dual model’, has been enacted to reduce the still-difficult transition from education to the labour market, the effects of which need to be closely monitored.”¹⁵

The Council recommends for 2014-2015:

“(6) Implement a national strategy on early school leaving prevention with a focus on drop-outs from vocational education and training. Put in place a systematic approach to promote inclusive mainstream education for disadvantaged groups, in particular Roma. Support the transition between different stages of education and towards the labour market, and closely monitor the implementation of the vocational training reform. Implement a higher-education reform that enables greater tertiary attainment, particularly by disadvantaged students.”¹⁶

The European Commission set 2016 as the deadline for a strategic document with concrete long-term targets and initiatives based on statistical data and monitoring results.

As ESL is a complex phenomenon related to family, personal and institutional issues the prevention and intervention has to involve other sectors beyond education. It is deeply a

¹⁵ COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 8 July 2014 on the National Reform Programme 2014 of Hungary and delivering a Council opinion on the Convergence Programme of Hungary, 2014 (2014/C 247/15), 4p http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/csr2014/csr2014_council_hungary_en.pdf

¹⁶ Ibid. 5p

question of social inclusion, child- and family-care, and employment, especially the transition from school to labour market, career orientation, segregation and ethnicity, healthcare and housing. For these reasons the elements of a comprehensive policy tackling ESL has to be appearing in other strategic documents of the co-areas and these documents have to be highly connected to each other.

The National Social Inclusion Strategy¹⁷ was adopted in December 2011. It refers to the early school leaving especially concerning Roma and Roma women and highlights the importance of the equal access to quality education for the ethnic minority groups as well.

A new Lifelong Learning Strategy¹⁸ for the period of 2014-2020 has been adopted by the government in 2014. It has a separate chapter devoted to ESL and NEET. It also highlights the fact that there is twice as much early school leavers in permanently unemployed families than in the employed ones. It enumerates the probably most important measures to support young people to get an ISCED 3 level degree and to get a job.

In November 2014 the Hungarian Strategy tackling early school leaving has been approved with the title, Midterm strategy against leaving school without a final certificate.¹⁹ This strategy reflects on the different levels of this problem: individual, institutional and society. Besides it analyses solutions on prevention, intervention and correction levels.²⁰

D. Policy measures on prevention level

Some measures seem to be supportive for the goal of decreasing early school leaving. From September 2015 pre-primary education will be compulsory 3 years of age. Currently it is compulsory for 5, as a pre-school year. As seen from the data a high proportion of the 3 year olds attend pre-school education, however most disadvantaged, multi-child families living in rural area have most of the children not attending kindergarten. Early socialization is determining both on cognitive and social levels which influence future attainment and integration very much. However the capacity building of pre-school education system concerning infrastructure, number of kindergartens and the number of pre-school teachers too is needed to fulfil the 100% coverage. It means that kindergartens' capacity should grow by about 30 thousand free places until 2015.

In the school year 2011/12, the government in a call for tenders provided HUF 300 million support for the restart of schools in settlements with a population below 3000.

¹⁷ <http://romagov.kormany.hu/download/8/e3/20000/Strat%C3%A9gia.pdf>

¹⁸ Az egész életen át tartó tanulás szakpolitikájának keretstratégiája a 2014/2020 közötti időszakra http://andragogiai szakbizottsag.hu/mu_pdfs/mu_32/LLL_keretstrategia.pdf

¹⁹ Approved by 1603/2014. (XI. 4.) Korm. határozat presented in MAGYAR KÖZLÖNY 150. szám 2014. november 4., kedd.

²⁰ Can be downloaded from here, in Hungarian: http://www.kormany.hu/download/5/fe/20000/V%C3%A9gzets%C3%A9g%20n%C3%A9lk%C3%Bcl%20iskola_elhagy%C3%A1s%20.pdf

According to a new regulation full-day school has been launched aiming at providing a more flexible school day for students distributing classes for the whole day (between 8-16h) instead of the traditional half day system.

The Hungarian introduction of the Sure Start program serves to compensate for the disadvantages and develop the skills of children living in disadvantaged families at the earliest possible age. This program is for the comprehensive support of families raising small children between 0 and 6 and living in disadvantaged regions, villages and housing estates in towns. The program aims at developing cooperation between sectors and NGOs based on local needs in the field of the health and social care of children, their day-time care, as well as in the field of caring for families and for the prevention of the reproduction of poverty.²¹

Certain screenings can be considered as part of the early warning system concerning health conditions. The logopaedic screening and care for example is one of them organized in every kindergarten. This kind of screening can identify hidden problems with the ears too which problem could otherwise lead to literacy or writing problems.

The already mentioned screening of the student's stage of development necessary to pass to school is also aiming at avoiding school failure.

Ear and eye examination, and other basic health conditions are regularly screened (vaccination as well) in schools by health visitors and school doctors – however the adequate supply afterwards is sometimes precarious.

In 2011 a new regulation²² was launched which divided family benefit (a type of normative state support connected to the number of children) into two distinct supports: one part for the pre-school ages and the other for the school-ages of the child. The condition for schooling support is bound to the school attendance of the children. It means that above 50 unjustified missed classes per a school year the family leave out of support automatically and the child has to be taken under supervision by the child care services. For multiply disadvantaged families it practically means social benefits in kind instead of money support. The measure is supervised in every three month time when the family can get the support again in case of zero (unjustified) missed class during the last 3 month. According to experiences this measure effects mostly the accuracy of the administration and it may contributes to a closer cooperation of schools and child care however this cooperation is more of a bureaucratic action.

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https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Hungary:Early_Childhood_Education_and_Care

²²2010. évi LXVI. Törvény a családok támogatásáról szóló 1998. évi LXXXIV. törvénynek, valamint a gyermekek védelméről és a gyámügyi igazgatásról szóló 1997. évi XXXI. törvénynek a tankötelezettség teljesítésével összefüggő módosításáról.

http://www.bmtk.hu/data/2010_LXVI_torveny_csaladok_tamogatasarol.pdf

Experiences from the field

Collected by a recent project QALL – Qualification for All!

The project lasted from March 2013 to May 2014 with the involvement of different professionals from every region in Hungary. During local conferences experts were talking about cooperation of different actors and there were two general conclusions:

1. Institutional cooperation is primarily based on project cycles with only a few system level initiatives. Projects are accompanied by always a new network building event. Good practices are mostly isolated and never became part of the mainstream.
2. Governmental or municipality level people do not see the civic society and what kind of services they already offer. A complex database with all the initiatives locally available would be very useful for local professionals. NGO-s must be supported financially, in networking, in their continuous presence in school and strengthening personal connections.
3. Change takes time – usually longer, than just a project period.

These list of interventions shows that elements of the system are exist but the actual operation is a bit uncertain and there is no comprehensive system.

E. Policy measures on intervention and correction levels

Due to the new law the definition of disadvantaged and multiply disadvantaged narrowed the population that fits to these categories (see footnote 12.). The situation and the features of the excluded should be supervised as the risk is possibly still high in their case.

Some measures has been started to support especially VET students and lower educated people. The Vocational School Development Programme (Szakiskolai Fejlesztési Program, SZFP) in 2003-2009 was such an initiative involving all together 160 VET schools and many content development and training elements. The 'Road to vocation' (Út a szakmához) sub-programme was part of the 'Supply for the Journey' (Útravaló) programme from 2005. It supported participating, disadvantaged students with a monthly income.

„Some of the catching-up programmes aim to assist students who have not completed the eight years of primary school to enter VET; however, the 'Dobbantó' programme implemented in 2008-2011 in 15 schools also involved dropouts from VET, thus carrying out preventive as well as compensatory functions. Catching-up programmes reached only a small portion of their target group. These programmes have been discontinued, and will be succeed by the so-called Bridge programmes from 2013 in 86 designated vocational schools. These also aim to undertake preventive as well as compensatory tasks and are expected to

reach a much larger segment of their target group than previous catching-up programmes. Bridge programmes will usually lead to VET, or in a few cases to upper secondary schools offering the secondary school leaving certificate; and by issuing partial vocational qualifications they may enable to enter the labour market. The VET catch-up programs offer an institutional 2nd chance by more flexible shifts from one program to another, or by the 2 year-long opportunity to get the final exam after having a VET degree.” (Mártonfi; 2014 15.)²³

The Bridge programs offer another way of catch-up for those having primary school deficiencies. Bridge operates in a single framework under the law of national public education, aligned with the vocational training act. Its primer aim is to prepare students to join VET besides it can lead to a partial qualification (rész-szakképesítés). Bridge has different sub-programs for obtaining ISCED2 degree, or catching-up in a VET training, or continuing interrupted studies. According to practitioners’ experiences²⁴ this system is not well transparent yet, and it is not known by primary schools in which upper-secondary school can they find a programme. The later would help the orientation of students at risk.

In the framework of the Youth Guarantee program²⁵ Hungary has also started some initiatives to support young people on the labour market. According to statistic there is approx. 90 thousand unemployed young people (15-24 year-olds), and approx. 170 thousand NEET (below 25, nor in education, not employed). The employment rate of young people is much smaller than in the EU: 23,1% vs 32,3% (Eurostat data). According to Eurofound²⁶ Hungary loses 2-2,5% of its GDP by letting these people to stay inactive.

A supportive initiative is the Action plan for saving the workplace (Munkahelyvédelmi Akcióterv) which offers benefits to workplaces if they employ people below 25. Other programs serve the entrants (First workplace guarantee), and to be an entrepreneur or the employment of trainees.

6. Is there any kind of early warning system presently applied by the educational governance or by the schools to prevent early school leaving?

According to Hungarian experts who were involved in the Thematic Working Group on Early School Leaving²⁷ early warning system as such does not exist in the country however early warning in some elements is part of the mainstream school monitoring system. Hungary has no comprehensive system and there is a deficit in the cooperation between different sectors that are involved in the problem of early school leaving. Furthermore there is no

²³ Mártonfi, Gy. (2014): Early leaving from vocational education and training Hungary. Observatory Centre for Educational Development, Corvinus University of Budapest

²⁴ QALL – Qualification for all! see the details in part 13.

²⁵ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1079>

²⁶ <http://www.eurofond.europa.eu/emcc>

²⁷ Early warning system questionnaire. TWG on ESL 2013

systematized data collection and monitoring on the practice. Efficiency of policy measures with regards to prevention, intervention or correction is also lack of a systematic follow up. Several good practices have been identified however on institutional level but school practices highly depend on the actual leader of the institution. There is a lack of systematic control mechanisms for quality assurance and there are no measures counterbalancing differences between institutions and localities.

7. Is the statistical system of education and the schools' system of data provision capable of monitoring the students on an individual level?

Hungarian Educational Database collects yearly data on every educational institution. There is a register for institutes, for teachers and other staff, and for children and students. Every institution has an own ID so that school level changes can be followed up. The database consists of school level information on budgetary issues, personnel, maintainers, and students' background. The route of a student can also be followed up by the student ID.

In the Hungarian Educational Database data are kept on students from the beginning of their educational career containing information about their special educational needs and their disadvantaged background.

The public education information system (KIR) provides yearly data about a wide range of information concerning institutes, students, and teachers. The data is uploaded by the schools – in most cases by the deputy headmaster(s), themselves. Since 1997 every children get an individual ID from the age of starting kindergarten, presently from age 5 (from 2015 Sept. 3 years old) which identifies him/her throughout the whole public education system. However the whole adult education system doesn't use this number which inhibits the follow up of students finishing upper secondary level within this form of education. Data exists whereas the usage of it is not clarified.

According to the regulation of data protection, personal data of students can be transferred from the system to the various connected sectors only for those specific purposes which the regulation strictly allows for each institution. For example, data about absenteeism can be given only to the institutions of maintenance, jurisdiction, public administration and policing. These restrictions are consistent with the European and Hungarian data protection regulation; nonetheless, due to the lack of communication among the sectors, data transfer cannot be smooth within the framework of the regulation mentioned above.

Since 2001 national competence assessments have been conducted in grades (4), 6, 8, 10 to measure the Mathematic and Literacy competences of the students. Since 2007 a special individual measurement ID has been connected to these tests so that schools and parents are entitled to see the data of their students and children. This measurement provides useful information about the school's practice and effectiveness and provides opportunity to

investigate the pedagogical added value showing the relative added value of a school to the actual student's improvement regarding his/her original abilities and knowledge.

8. What are the educational effectiveness (participation and learning outcomes) related indicators that the external inspections of schools apply in the course of evaluation?

A school inspectorate used to work in the country under the socialist regime back in the '80-s. From 2015 spring, a new inspectorate system has been launched which means an evaluation and examination process in every 5 years in the school and special educational consultancy (pedagógiai szakszolgálat) too. In the first year it affects about 30 thousand teachers and some hundreds of headmasters. It is all regulated by a ministerial decree.²⁸

Its main aims are declared by the regulation; however there is not much information of its content directly connected to ESL. The law declares the inspection as it happens by general pedagogical approach, aiming at improving the basic skills of the teacher, its method is observation of classes using uniform sheet, analyses of the documents teacher uses for his/her everyday job and a personal interview with the teacher.

The examination of teachers' practice is conducted along the 8 competence areas listed in the national basic curricula (Nemzeti alaptanterv NAT). Among these the personal development, special care, equity and integration, the openness for social-cultural diversity are connected to ESL as values. Furthermore the teacher's professional competence for the integration of disadvantaged or special educational needs student is an important aspect of the process. Nevertheless the aspect of motivation, emotional communication and self-reflexion are as well highly connected to ESL and part of the evaluation system.

9. Where/when does the problem of dropping out start? At what level of education is it the most significant?

Dropping out from school is the end of a cumulative process resulting from personal, social, economic, education and family-related reasons.²⁹

It usually happens at upper secondary level, in the first grade (9th), but problems start much earlier. The highest drop-out rates are registered in 9th and 10th grades of the vocational schools (szakiskola), where one third drops out yearly. Comparably, in secondary vocational schools (szakközépiskola) the percentage of ESL is 7-8%, in general upper secondary schools (gimnázium) it is only 3%.³⁰

²⁸ 20/2012. (VIII.31.) EMMI rendelet a nevelési-oktatási intézmények működéséről és a köznevelési intézmények névhasználatáról http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy_doc.cgi?docid=A1200020.EMM

²⁹ Thematic Working Group on Early School Leaving. Final Report. International expert group of the European Commission. http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/expert-groups_en.htm#schools

³⁰ The data are from: Statistical Yearbook of Education 2012/2013. Budapest, 2013

Concerning early school leaving two data might be important to determine the endangered population. 3.7% of 16 year olds in education has not fulfilled 8th grade meaning that they have not completed primary general school. The supposed age to finish would be 14 or 15 as a maximum. This suggests that these are the overaged students in most cases with serious problems such as poverty or crisis in the family etc. Vocational education is especially affected by early drop out: according to data about one third of the students drop out yearly as an average.³¹ This rate is strengthened by educational researchers based on the deductive analyses of individual data. The rate of those that start 9th year and could not obtain a final degree is about 1/3rd in Vocational Education, where Roma students are especially endangered: only 22% of them attains an upper-secondary level degree.³²

10. Are there any incentives for the teachers/schools to identify students at risk? What kind of measure makes them motivated or counter-motivated in this regard?

The system has some elements to strengthen schools' heterogeneity and the admission of all at risk children to the nearest school.

If more than one basic school or member institution or unit operates in a settlement or district, the basic school districts must be determined so as to ensure the equal ratio of multiple disadvantaged students in all educational institutions. (The ratio of multiple disadvantaged students in each district may only be 15 percentage points higher than the ratio of multiple disadvantaged students attending basic school calculated for the whole settlement or district.) If a basic school can grant additional applications for admission after admitting all applicants from its districts, it is obliged to grant the applications of multiple disadvantaged students first. Students with special educational needs and students whose admission is justified by their special situation may be admitted without a draw³³ after having granted the applications of multiple disadvantaged students.³⁴

For teachers and school there are no specific incentives to identify at risk students.

http://2010-2014.kormany.hu/download/c/93/21000/Oktat%C3%A1si_%C3%89vk%C3%B6nyv_2012.pdf

³¹ Statistical Yearbook of Education 2012/2013. Budapest, 2013

http://2010-2014.kormany.hu/download/c/93/21000/Oktat%C3%A1si_%C3%89vk%C3%B6nyv_2012.pdf

³² Mártonfi, Gy. (2014): Early leaving from vocational education and training Hungary. Observatory Centre for Educational Development, Corvinus University of Budapest

³³ The draw of students in case of applications over the quota is regulated by the law: 24. § (6) 20/2012. (VIII.31.) EMMI rendelet a nevelési-oktatási intézmények működéséről és a köznevelési intézmények névhasználatáról http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy_doc.cgi?docid=A1200020.EMM

³⁴

https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Hungary:Organisation_of_Single_Structure_Education

11. What kinds of internal (within the school) methods are available, both in theory and in practice to care about students identified by the teachers as being at risk?

Appearance of non-school professionals in school is currently a subject to number of students. The employment of a kindergarten psychologist is subject to the number of children in the institute: there must be a half-time professional for every 500 children.

School psychologists and other special professionals (employed by the Klebelsberg Maintenance Centre) are only provided by the law in case of a certain rate of SEN or multiply disadvantaged student and above a certain number of students (see footnote 15). In most cases these specialists carry out their job as a part-time, traveling professional. In practice it means that there is not enough reachable school psychologist as they usually work part time in each school and have less and less time for actual contact with students due to administration, so that their fluent involvement is highly depended on school headmasters.

These professionals can be school psychologists; social-educational professionals; "youth prevention" experts such as peer helpers, usually NGO related professionals.

Case discussions among staff members appear in many EU related projects as an obligation. However it is still not part of the system and considers as something progressive. Supervision is not at all in the system for teachers and it is highly missed.

12. What kinds of external supportive systems (outside the school) are available, both in theory and in practice to care about students identified by the teachers as being at risk?

Due to the lack of a fluent and regulated cooperation between the education and other sectors external support is involved sporadically apart from cases which have a certain protocol to follow.

The pedagogical advisory and support service (nevelési tanácsadó) is an official institute to diagnose behaviour problems and other special education needs. More serious cases have to be decided by the expert and rehabilitation committee to inquire learning ability (tanulási képességet vizsgáló szakértői és rehabilitációs bizottság). A special educational consultancy (pedagógiai szakszolgálat) is responsible for giving special education services according to the diagnose of the advisory service or the committee. In these cases headmasters are obliged to act according to the law.

A crucial problem with these institutes is a long waiting list: sometimes it takes 10 months to get in front of the committee or group of experts who will decide about e.g. the further schooling of a child. With this waiting time the concerned child can lose a year to join to the most appropriate course for him/her. Another problem is the many times incidental recognition of the need of these kinds of screening as school teachers are not trained for

understanding these signs. This means that a child can be treated as a “bad learner” or a “naughty student” with some learning difficulty or organic or psychological problem hidden behind. One really crucial issue in the prevention of ESL is early recognition of any kinds of special needs and a timely and proper intervention – which all together is still unpredictable and unsure in Hungary.

Children's welfare service (gyermekjóléti szolgálat) deals with any kind of issues concerning the wellbeing of a child even against the family, for instance in case of 10 unjustified missed classes the school is obliged to contact the local one. Youth social workers can offer different, free services for local young people from f2f consultations to special after school groups with different aims. The family care centre (családsegítő szolgálat) deals with the whole family with e.g. beneficiary issues and legal advisory. These two are many times work in the same building in close cooperation but it is also a matter of individual attitudes and leadership issues. These kinds of centres work in every district. Their main aims are based on the law however their actual operation may differ from each other a lot. They can offer extra services such as cooperation with the school beyond the tasks defined by law, organizing afternoon programs or summer camps for children. In practice, these depend highly on the team leaders and professional leaders of these centres and their relations with local schools, despite that the Act of Child Protection declares that continuous communication has to be realized between them and the schools, especially in the case of observing any signs which relate to the risk of the wellbeing of the children.

Career guidance as a service can be provided by school teachers, social workers in children's welfare centres or NGO-s but professional career advisory is seldom especially for school students (for e.g. unemployed adults the labour office provides this service). It is generally missing from the education.

13. EWS initiatives in respective countries (using a matrix format or boxes to answer each question related to each initiative when there are more than one) & Evaluative comments on each initiative above (using the matrix format or boxes again)

Certain project related initiatives targeted early school leaving during the last few years. These programs were in a big proportion financed from European Union funds and lasted by the end of the project. Unfortunately in most cases these initiatives are doomed to stop directly at the end of the project as there is no own budget to sustain new actions.

Here is a list with some of these programs shortly presented by their websites.

1. Table

Name of the project/initiative contact	Project partners	Time period	Which level of education it works, what is the program	How does it work (tools, data usage, process)	Finance	Evaluation
Reduction of Early School Leaving of Young People http://www.reslea.eu/index.php/en/documents Hungarian webpage: http://www.szamalkcsoport.hu/projects/RESLEA.htm	Nine European Organisations from six European countries (Portugal, Germany, UK, Hungary, Belgium and Slovenia). SZÁMALK from Hungary	2012-2014 (did not find the exact dates on the webpage, just concluded from documents)	SZAMALK started a pilot project at one of its partner school, at Szamalk-Szalezi Post-Secondary Vocational School in Budapest. This school is a popular IT and multimedia training centre among secondary school graduates. The objectives of the pilot were to test the EPIS model on students and prevent school dropouts.	EPIS method from Portugal screening of students at risk, method based on the involvement of students, teachers, family and community EPIS 360° Intervention Model <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapted from an established intervention programme –‘Mediators for school success’ – developed in Portugal by EPIS (Empresários Pela Inclusão Social), a privately funded NGO. ‘Mediators for school success’ is an intervention program focused on empowering low-performing adolescent students (12 to 15 years old) for school success and motivating them to achieve the 12 mandatory school years in Portugal. Based on a clear screening process of at-risk students and delivered over 2 to 3 school years with 12- 	EU LLP Policy Co-operation and Innovation in Lifelong Learning (Key Activity 1), European Cooperation in Education and Training (ECET) of the European Commission	There was a systematic evaluation, main results: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive impact on the school dropout problem The RESLEA model is a suitable tool to reduce early school leaving More 2-3 school years need for testing all tools of the model and for the Hungarian adaptation Possible Improvements in Hungarian Pilot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The model should be tested in other schools in Hungary with more vulnerable pupils, specially Roma pupils Make some questions easier Strengthen the parental relationship Continuous contact with the mentors Relations with local communities

				15 year-olds, using full-time dedicated mediators teachers, psychologists or equivalent). Further details available at: http://www.epis.pt/		
<p>Forum Theatre against Early School Leaving (FOTEL) http://www.fotel-project.eu Hungarian webpage: http://artemisszio.blog.hu/2014/12/20/lezarult_a_fotel_projekt</p>	<p>Hungary, Poland, France, Spain, Italy ARTEMISSZIÓ from Hungary</p>	<p>2012-2014</p>	<p>ARTEMISSZIÓ worked with Burattino Elementary and Vocational School. The school's aim is to offer the underprivileged children from first grade to the age of 22 education (both primary school and vocational training), provide orphans and children in difficult family situations with shelter in one of the three children homes, thus and giving them an alternative to staying on the streets. The students, mostly Roma, of this school had a lot of personal experiences concerning early school leaving; most of them were dropped out at least once from other schools.</p>	<p>Its main tool is a Forum Theatre performance with the involvement of the students and the whole school, parent's community. The objective of the project is to examine to what extent the application of Forum theatre methodology by teachers, combined with practical knowledge about intercultural relations, may reduce the risk of early school leaving by youth aged 13 to 16.</p>	<p>EU LLP</p>	<p>The final Comparative Assessment Report consists of description of the local context, impact of drama workshops on participants, impact of Forum Theatre and conclusions of what was similar and different in each country. Internal evaluation with the project staff about the drama process emphasized the development of participating students in terms of their capabilities. Among the obvious results stronger group cohesion, development of verbal capacities, capability to present themselves, and speak out for themselves were emphasized by both local teachers and external practitioners of Artemisszió Foundation.</p>
<p>Common Goals, Common Ways project</p>	<p>Hungary, Germany, Scotland, Poland</p>	<p>Nov. 2012 – Oct. 2014</p>	<p>For last grades of lower secondary level (7. 8. in Hungary)</p>	<p>2 tools and know how-s were transferred and implemented in the Hungarian schools (11):</p>	<p>EU LLP LeonardoTol</p>	<p>In Hungary extensive dissemination events were launched. T-Tudok was the</p>

<p>Only HUN: http://www.commoggoals.edunet.hu/index.php/a-projektrol</p>				<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. German model from München: career guidance competence measurement device to avoid wrong choices on upper secondary level 2. Scottish model for risk analysis by teachers <p>Both can be easily handled by VET teachers.</p>		<p>responsible organization for the evaluation. The report cannot be reached through their website.</p>
<p>QALL – Qualification for All! www.qall.tka.hu</p>	<p>Hungarian project consortium: Tempus Public Foundation, Equal Opportunities of Persons with Disabilities Non-profit Ltd. (FSZK), Hungarian Institute for Educational Research and Development</p>	<p>March 2013-May 2014</p>	<p>Policy level, professionals level</p> <p>QALL project was aiming at reducing the level of early school leaving by conducting research, facilitating a countrywide consultation and policy level recommendations.</p>	<p>It used desk research, 7 conferences throughout the country, involved local coordinators from diverse professional areas connected to ESL.</p>	<p>EU fund and EMMI (Hungarian Ministry for Human Resources) fund</p>	<p>A complex background study has been made with the involvement of the Hungarian Institute for Educational Research and Improvement. Training was held for local coordinators to have a common understanding about the project with the involvement of Public Foundation for Equal Opportunities of People with Disabilities – Hungary. They then formulated 3 member groups and organized regional</p>

	(OFI)					<p>conferences where local stakeholders could share ideas. The biggest result was the different sectors local discussion, their common understandings and dilemmas that they have shared.</p> <p>Evaluation was provided by the regular after-event evaluation questionnaires and the dissemination events.</p>
<p>RESL.EU</p> <p>https://www.uantwerpen.be/en/projects/resl-eu/</p>	<p>Belgium, UK, Sweden, Portugal, Netherlands, Poland, Spain</p> <p>Hungary, Austria: here no empirical study is conducted</p>	2013-2017	system, policy and different levels of education	<p>“This project aims to provide insights into the mechanisms and processes that influence a pupil’s decision to leave school or training early; as well as into the decision of school leavers to enroll in alternative learning arena’s unrelated to a regular school. These alternative locations of knowledge and skill transfer could provide us with creative or innovative methods of learning or training. In addition to this, RESL.eu</p>	EU Seventh Framework Programme	in progress

				will also focus on the pupils that left education or training early, and are identified as NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training), for these are the most vulnerable among European youngsters.”		
<p>TITA project</p> <p>http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/events/2014/documents/kickoff-ka1-ecet/550471_tita_pdf</p>	<p>France, Luxemburg, Slovenia, Spain, Hungary</p> <p>Hungary is associated partner with Public Foundation for Equal Opportunities of People with Disabilities – Hungary</p>	<p>May 2014- April 2017</p>	<p>TITA has 3 main pillars which all together builds up a scientific base database: early school leaving as phenomenon, cooperation of different actors and training for teachers and new materials.</p>	<p>“Many research reports, statistics, « good practices » exist in different countries ... It seems useful to collect them and create a database of European scientific data on ESL, to present the problem in a very comprehensive way, to avoid duplication of research and to give the actors in different countries the information they need.” In the TITA framework three countries (France, Luxemburg, Spain) are implementing local and multi-professional teams to set up measures addressing emerging</p>	<p>EU LLP, E+</p>	<p>in progress</p>

				<p>difficulties at a different stage of ESL.</p> <p>The TITA scientific database will be available on the TITA project website and will follow the following structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The title - Key messages of the article (40-50 words) - Abstracts (250-300 words) - Scientific review articles (3000-3500 words) 		

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Regulatory environment and suggestions of experts

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