Apprenticeship courses to tackle Early School Leaving in Portugal

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Early Leavers from Education and Training – “the percentage of the population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education and who were not in further education or training during the last four weeks preceding the survey” (Eurostat, 2016).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GEO</th>
<th>SEX/TIME</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>European Union (28 countries)</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>15,7</td>
<td>13,9</td>
<td>11,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>17,7</td>
<td>15,8</td>
<td>12,4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>13,7</td>
<td>11,9</td>
<td>9,5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Union (27 countries)</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>15,8</td>
<td>14,0</td>
<td>11,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>17,8</td>
<td>15,9</td>
<td>12,4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>13,8</td>
<td>12,0</td>
<td>9,6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>38,3</td>
<td>28,3</td>
<td>13,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>46,2</td>
<td>32,4</td>
<td>16,4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>30,2</td>
<td>24,0</td>
<td>11,0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Early School Leaving (2)

**Concept:**
leaving “school without attaining a degree or certificate of upper secondary education or similar to an ISCED level 3 (2011 ISCED scale)” (Araújo, Rocha, Macedo, Magalhães, & Oliveira, 2013: 15)

**Implications:**
ESL impairs people from participating in society directly and indirectly. Directly by deficit skills of interpretation, expression, speech organization and critique, among others, and indirectly “through the effects of the self-image of precarity and low wages in a society where work and consumption are key identity elements” (Estêvão & Álvares, 2013: 3)

**ESLers are identified with some common profile:**
Have often school pathways marked by underachievement and detachment & most are from working class and have parents with low school achievement (Guerreiro & Abrantes, 2004)

**Push Factors**
- related directly to school and school environment.
  - Eg.: evaluation performance

**Pull Factors**
- factors outside school
  - Eg.: financial difficulties

(Dekkers & Claassen, 2001; Doll, Esami, & Walters, 2013)
Apprenticeship courses (AC) in Portugal (1)

**Aims to tackle ESL along with diminishing youth unemployment** (IEFP-DFP, 2015; METSS, 1984; MQE, 1996; MTSES, 2008)

**Introduced in Portugal in 1984**

**Initial Vocational Education and Training (IVET) integrated in the employment market**

‘Dual system’ (alternation between on-the-job and off-the-job training)

**Double certification:**
- Level IV National Qualification Framework
- Equivalence to 12th grade (ISCED 2011: 353, ISCED 1997: 3C)
Apprenticeship courses in Portugal (2)

Coordination:
IEFP
(Institute for Employment and Training)

External Training Providers

Supporting Alternation Entities (enterprises/institutions)

Training Centres of Direct & Participated Management

Financial contributions

Training scholarship (41,92€, 2015)

Study material stipend (if app.)

Hosting allowance (if app.)

Meal allowance

Transport allowance

Meal allowance

Study material stipend (if app.)

Hosting allowance (if app.)

Transport allowance
**Target group of Apprenticeship Courses**

- Young adults < 25 years old
- Having concluded 9th grade or equivalent
- Without complete Upper Secondary Education or equivalent
- Pathways of school failure or dropout
- Economically disadvantaged

### Attending

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>&lt; 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31917</td>
<td>19783</td>
<td>13050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12134</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>62,0%</td>
<td>40,9%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Employment situation at entrance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>1st Employment</th>
<th>New Employment</th>
<th>Missing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>11115</td>
<td>20190</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>31305</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0,4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Exits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Without Evaluation</th>
<th>Aproved</th>
<th>Reproved</th>
<th>Dropouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>209</td>
<td>7523</td>
<td>937</td>
<td>4592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,6%</td>
<td>56,7%</td>
<td>7,1%</td>
<td>34,6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IEPF_DPGC, 2016
Methodology

**Exploratory study**

- One External Training Provider (ETP)
- 1 FGD, 10 young adults, 18-23 y.o., 6 F, 4 M
- 5 individual semi-structured interviews, 5 young adults, 3 F, 2 M
- 5 individual semi-structured interviews with the director of the ETP (2), and 2 trainers (3)

With the aim of collecting information to construct instruments (questionnaire and interview scripts) for the PhD research project.
Framework of exploratory study

» «RESL.eu – Reducing Early School Leaving in Europe» - FP7 funded project

• 9 partner countries [Belgium (coord.); United Kingdom; Sweden; Portugal; Netherlands; Spain; Hungary; Austria]

2 types of measures regarding ESL

- Intra-muros measures to prevent and/or tackle ESL (Mainstream Schools)
- Extra-muros measures – compensatory measures to diminish ESL (Alternative Learning Arenas)

Apprenticeship courses in Portugal (PhD research project)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nr</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Apprenticeship course</th>
<th>Previous retention</th>
<th>Mother academic level</th>
<th>Father academic level</th>
<th>Parents’ conditions</th>
<th>Father work situation</th>
<th>Mother work situation</th>
<th>Data collection</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>J01MTG</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Gas Technician</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>ISCED 2</td>
<td>ISCED 2</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>Deceased</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>Interview</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>J02FTG</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Gas Technician</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>ISCED 3</td>
<td>ISCED 3</td>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>Businessman (family)</td>
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<td>FGD</td>
<td>Interview</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>J03MTG</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Gas Technician</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>ISCED 1</td>
<td>ISCED 1</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>Cleaner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>Interview</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>J04FAFC</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Family and Community Support</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ISCED 1</td>
<td>ISCED 1</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
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<td></td>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
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<td>5</td>
<td>J05FAFC</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Family and Community Support</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>ISCED 1</td>
<td>ISCED 1</td>
<td>Early retirement</td>
<td>Housepainter</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Interview</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>M</td>
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<td>nd</td>
<td>nd</td>
<td>nd</td>
<td>nd</td>
<td>nd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Gas Technician</td>
<td>nd</td>
<td>nd</td>
<td>nd</td>
<td>nd</td>
<td>nd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>J08FAFC</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Family and Community Support</td>
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<td>nd</td>
<td>nd</td>
<td>nd</td>
<td>nd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>J09FAFC</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Family and Community Support</td>
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<td>nd</td>
<td>nd</td>
<td>nd</td>
<td>nd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>J10FAFC</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Family and Community Support</td>
<td>nd</td>
<td>nd</td>
<td>nd</td>
<td>nd</td>
<td>nd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Social vulnerability

- Socioeconomic vulnerability

  “We have students that pay the light [energy] to the parents, that is, there is this misery. (...) Socioeconomic issues are here fundamental, because in fact they live in a very high financial shortfall” (F01MEFE-01, trainer, male)

Lack of family support

- “Even the parents give up on them” (F02FEFE-01)
- “Are kids with family problems, most of them have family problems, that is, dysfunctional families; there is none... some do not have the father, others have neither father nor mother, that's a bit ... it is difficult situations” (F02FEFE-01, trainer, female)
Experience of ESL

- **Experience on ESL**
  
  - “Almost all the people who go on these courses have dropped out of school for at least a month or two, I think. I think there is no one who has just finished school and went straight away to a course of these” (J07MTG, 20 years old)

- **Reasons for not continuing in education**
  
  - “I had the teachers talking to me, my father talking to me, but as my father had the establishment and…, I did not feel obliged, but I felt I also had to help him, and earn my own, but I was wrong, sometimes to take a step forward you need to take two steps back” (J06MTG, 22 years old)

- **Reasons for returning to education**
  
  - “a person gets out of school, sees how the world truly is and sees that can’t get away with it and has to go back to school to finish, to make ourselves to life again” (J06MTG, male, 22 years old)
The apprenticeship course

- Reasons to enroll in an apprenticeship course
  - “I came because I was working, in the meantime my boss deceased, I couldn’t get a job and the course seemed the best source” (J09FAFC, 20 years old)

- Choosing of the apprenticeship course
  - “As I was already 21, couldn’t get to any course, and the teacher L. [pedagogical director of the training centre] let me in and I stayed because it is not a course that I like, but I had to submit myself, because it was the only course that accepted me” (J02FTG, 23 years old)

- Apprenticeship courses as a last option
  - “When they get to us they get because the normal curriculum system gave up on them (...) have been excluded from so many courses that reach a time that do not even want them here nor there” (F01MEFE-01, trainer, male)

- Imminent dropout
  - “If it were a safe job of course I’d leave it [the course] without looking back (...) if the work was safe, with contract, course I would rather prefer thousand times the work, which is a living” (J09FAFC, 20 years old)
  - “If I’d get a job, I’d quit the course” (J05FAFC, 21 years old)

- The future...
  - “Work to help at home, get the first job that shows up. We don’t have many options” (J01MTG, 19 years old)
Young apprentices’ profiles in line with the scarce studies on AC in Portugal (Almeida, 2005; Neves & Figueiredo, 2007) and in conformity with studies about the profiles of young people that attend vocational education in general (Cieslik & Simpson, 2013; Guerreiro & Abrantes, 2004) AC in Portugal are seen as ‘second-line’ options (Torres & Araújo, 2010), influencing the social status of this training modality. This may interfere with the expectations of the participants about their future in what relates to getting a job in the area.

AC to this participants signify a way, for the most the last option, of completing upper secondary education, needed to get a job in an expected near future

The limbo that this time of training signifies for this participants means a delay in the transition to work that is the crucial desire that participants express.
AC have also a lot of dropout suggesting that this is not the ultimate solution for the young people that leave school without attaining upper secondary education.

It seems to be a gap between the aim and the achievements of the AC in taking ESL as it suggests the 34.6% of dropouts (data from November 2015).

It seems that pull factors (Dekkers & Claassen, 2001; Doll et al., 2013) were the most important in the participants decisions either for leaving school, either for enrolling in an AC.

Pull factors are also the referred ones for young apprentices to dropout of AC.

Apprentices are often seduced by temporary jobs.
References


Doll, Jonathan Jacob, Eslami, Zohreh, & Walters, Lynne. (2013). Understanding why students drop out of high school, according to their own reports. SAGE Open, 3(4).


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Gràcies! Gracias! Thank you! Obrigada!

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