A positive school climate is important for youngsters to promote both social and cognitive development. In some schools, however, students feel more socially integrated than in other schools. Boys, students from lower socio-economic background or with an immigrant background tend to withdraw from school more often, despite their high expectations and strong motivations (Elffers, 2011). Apart from teacher and parental support, the way schools are organized play an important role in engaging students in education as well (Rumberger, 2001). Schools can compensate for the lack of resources by offering additional support, such as tutoring. There have been several studies in the Netherlands on school engagement but these studies have overlooked the potential importance of institutional arrangements and the role of social resources in the school environment (e.g. Traag, 2012; Elffers, 2011). Hence, it is interesting to examine what kind of school characteristics tend to relate to the marginalization of groups of students within schools. In which types of schools do students feel less belonging in school and less supported by teachers, show more negative behaviours, such as playing truant, and perceive more discrimination or victimization?

Data from the Reducing Early School Leaving (RESL.eu) project enables us to conduct multilevel analyses to study the role of school and class level characteristics in the social integration of 15 to 19 year old students across 23 lower secondary schools in the Netherlands.