

EARLY SCHOOL LEAVING

the silent epidemic

MADO auditorium

21 October 2009, 11.30-14.30



Early school leaving (ESL) has devastating consequences for individuals and for society. It is a major problem not only in Europe but across the developed world. It carries with it astounding economic and social costs. In the long-term, it constitutes a tremendous waste of potential, for individual, social and economic development.

Currently, one in six young Europeans drops out of school with lower than upper-secondary qualifications. Despite recent declines in some Member States, the EU-27 benchmark of 10% by 2010 will not be attained. The severity and persistence of the problem shows that appropriate strategies to deal with ESL are yet to be put into place in the majority of Member States.

- Who are the early school leavers and why do they leave school?
- Why is ESL a problem?
- Which education and training policies and measures contribute to preventing ESL?
- What are the supportive conditions (in employment, youth, family, health, housing, migration and other policies) that are needed to maximise the impact of education and training measures?

11.30-11.45: Video

11.45-12.45: Dr. Andreas Walther, University of Tübingen and IRIS, the Institute for regional innovation and social research (DE).

Education access, treatment, outcomes and early school leaving - How social and educational inequalities lead to different individual decisions

Research shows that a whole range of structural factors increase the risk of early school leaving. These include family or community factors, education system factors, class, gender and ethnicity inequalities. This presentation will show how wider social and education system factors such as poverty, inequalities and selective school systems

affect the life and career decisions of young people in relation to early school leaving. The presentation will point to education/training and wider social policies and measures that are shown to help prevent or reduce early school leaving.

12:45-13:30: Lunch break

13:30-14:30: Dr. Christoph Meng, ROA, University of Maastricht (NL)

Why do youngsters leave school prematurely? What are their chances on the labour market?

We will first discuss the main causes of early school leaving and will show measures that are shown to help prevent or reduce it. The provision of information, support and guidance when students choose their studies -particularly at their transition from lower secondary professional education to vocational education and training- can be very important. We will also show that early school leavers, despite their significantly fewer chances in the labour market, appear to be satisfied with their jobs and have positive expectations for career development.



Dr. Christoph Meng is project manager and senior researcher at [the Research Centre for Education and the Labour Market \(ROA\)](#). He is in charge of the annual school-leavers surveys. Christoph studied Economics at the University of Zurich. He holds a Masters' degree in International Economics and a PhD from Maastricht University. His main research interests are the transition from school to work, determinants of drop-outs, the acquisition and role of competencies and gender-based wage-gaps.



Dr. Andreas Walther has studied education. His PhD is on comparative analysis of the trajectories of unemployed youth in Germany, Italy and the UK. He is a lecturer in social pedagogy at the Institute of Education, University of Tübingen and a freelance researcher at IRIS, the Institute for regional innovation and social research. Since 1994, he coordinates the European research network EGRIS (European Group for Integrated Social research) and a series of European research projects on the changes in young people's transitions to adulthood.



A DG EAC/NESSE seminar for Commission staff

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