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BELOW 10 –

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Intellectual Output 2 Report

Learning by doing: Local Communities work
and learn together to prevent and reduce ESL
and drop-out

FINAL REPORT

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1. Introduction

Following the initial research conducted as part of IO1 and carried out by CIES-UIL (Mateus et al, 2018) on factors leading to ESL, the team at the University of Northampton developed guidelines for the implementation of IO2 (Devecchi, et al, 2018). This document is the final report of the IO2's activities and includes the following:

- The IO2 framework;
- Report on training, its development and implementation;
- Report on the pilot activities carried out by each partner;
- Evaluation of training;
- Evaluation of pilot activities;
- Conclusion and recommendations.

Part 1 of this report focuses on the work carried out in preparation for the implementation of the training and pilot initiatives. It outlines the IO2 framework and the support measure (management and leadership) put in place to ensure the effective and successful fulfilment of the IO2's aims and objectives.

2. Developing Intellectual Output 2 - The IO2 framework

2.1 Aims and objectives of IO2

Following the findings of the survey of young people and relevant adults carried out by each partner, the team in Northampton developed an initial framework for IO2 which was presented and agreed at the transnational meeting in Paris, March 2018. The long-term aim of the BELOW 10 project is,

'To develop a model of professional development such which it enables local actors (2nd level stakeholders) to learn about ESL in their local area and develop a Local Integrated Plan (LIP)'

In more detail the innovative aspects the BELOW 10 project aimed to pursue were:

1. To introduce and develop pedagogical strategies and approaches which motivate and support 'all' young people's educational success irrespective of whether they are at risk of ESL. While focused on supporting teachers and schools, the truly innovative aspect of the BELOW 10 project is that of taking learning 'outside the classroom'.
2. To support teachers to develop medium and long-term strategic plans as a means to prevent ESL first, and to support young people at risk of ESL second. To support teachers and school to collaborate with community and political actors and stakeholders to develop long-lasting local policies to prevent, reduce and support young people.
3. To actively involve community stakeholders and local policy makers in the development of plans, strategies and approaches to prevent ESL and/or to support

young people at risk or seeking to continue their education by affording them a variety of options including vocational education opportunities.

In pursuing the three above project aims, there was an emphasis on making use of formal, informal and non-formal education ([Council of Europe, 2018](#)) so as to bring together all those who have an interest in and can provide support for the cause of reducing ESL in ways which were appropriate to the local needs of the young people. In doing so, the framework stressed the importance of the collaboration between formal and informal education sectors, and the need to involve social and educational actors to develop, together with the young people, activities which were stimulating and interesting. Aware of the diversity of the educational system in each of the six partner countries, the option of maintaining formal education in the morning and provide informal educational opportunities in the afternoon was included.

The framework took into account the aims and objectives of the original proposal, together with the findings from the IO1 to:

- Outline the main details on methodology, fieldwork and pedagogical approaches for the development of training and the implementation of the pilot activities;
- Delineate a common standard on reporting back to IO2 coordinators

So as to develop,

- a 'syllabus' or curriculum for the development of initiatives stemming from the findings of IO1, and
- an action-research based approach inclusive of all stakeholders

With consideration to the findings of IO1, these aims were reframed as the need to develop a joint pedagogical experience through 'learning by doing' approaches aimed at building capacity among the stakeholders working in the field of ESL. The project aims were pursued by fulfilling the following objectives:

- Development, implementation, evaluation and improvement of a professional development model for stakeholders, replicable at EU level;
- The development of a concerted and agreed vision and understanding of the ESL problem
- Development of pilot initiatives replicable across the EU;
- Development of Integrated Local Plans aimed at preventing and/or coping with the ESL phenomenon

2.2 Methodology: 'Learning by doing' through action research

Given the practice-based and experiential approach outlined in the aims of the project, and considering the findings of IO1 stressing the need of teachers, community actors, families and young people working together, action research was chosen as the most appropriate approach to develop, implement and evaluate the change initiatives to be carried out in each national context. In this regard the action research approach aimed to raise the stakeholders'

awareness and understanding of the causes of ESL and be knowledgeable of solutions through learning opportunities finalised to establish dialogue and knowledge exchanges.

The action research and its professional development aspects were intended to:

- Be the outcome and output of an agreed plan across the 7 areas of the project (one for each country but including both Verona and Cuneo for Italy)
- Involve all second level stakeholders – those at the forefront of working in the formal informal, and non-formal education sector;
- Provide a Facilitator for each one of the 7 territories will ensure the success of the experimentation and support the stakeholders
- Benefit from engaging with sociologists, educators, psychologists, economists, social workers, employers, artists and other community stakeholders as fit for each local context.

In pursuing the above, the partners agreed to,

1. Map and provide evidence of factual and likely 1st level stakeholders and supporting the participation of 2nd level stakeholders. Partners will inform stakeholders about the action research project, will build and/or strengthen the local network and will identify the workshop participants;
2. Adapt and adopt the pilot professional development programme on the dedicated space on the Northampton Integrated Learning Environment (NILE) Blackboard platform hosted and maintained by the University of Northampton. Partners were to decide the timing of the workshops and prepare the teaching material and resources most suited to the local context.
3. Analyse the local situation and plan pilot initiatives and strategies as suitable.
4. Implement the pilot initiatives phase considering the involvement of schools and other education providers, families and, where possible, local employers so as to involve young people in meaningful experiences to enhance their self-esteem and restore their self-efficacy. The use of digital and other technologies was made to involve young people in all parts of the experimentation (development, evaluation and modification).
5. Develop the Local Integrated Plans. The aim is for each area to have a LIP

2.3 IO2 Structural elements

IO2 was a complex but pivotal intellectual output consisting of a number of interrelated and overlapping aims and tasks requiring,

- Clearly defined deliverables
- Tight deadlines

- Flexible implementation aware of both local differences, the specific nature of the education system in each country, and the needs and aspirations of stakeholders
- Mutual understanding between partners
- Collaboration and teamwork
- Effective communication

To achieve its aims as previously outlined, IO2's 'Learning by doing' framework comprised 4 distinct elements (see Fig. 1),

1. **'Syllabus'** – the pedagogical element
2. **Action research** – the methodological element
3. **Evaluation** – the assessment element
4. **Stakeholders** – the network building element



Fig. 1 IO2 elements

To ensure an effective, efficient and supportive management of the tasks, colleagues at UoN shared the leadership and management of the 4 elements considering leadership as the act of facilitating and supporting partners. As element managers they will be the key person responsible for all aspects of the element and provide partners with a designated person to communicate with in regard to the element and its deliverables (Table 1).

Table 1: UoN’s IO2 responsibilities

General responsibilities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop in collaboration with partners the activities related to each element and its deliverables • To monitor the implementation of the activities related to the element • To support partners and respond to queries and provide suggestions • To support the evaluation of the activities related to their element • To report on the progress of the activities and their evaluation 	
Element specific responsibilities	
Syllabus – pedagogical element	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing online resources focusing on aspects of supporting young people at risk of leaving school or who have left school • To design the use of resources for the purpose of local workshops led by local facilitators • To train local facilitators in the use of the resources • To provide ongoing support to local facilitators • To monitor the implementation of the syllabus in its entirety • To support the evaluation of the syllabus and its related resources and their use
Action research – methodological element	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing online resources focusing on action research elements • To design the use of resources for the purpose of local workshops led by local facilitators • To train local facilitators in the use of the resources • To provide ongoing support to local facilitators • To monitor the implementation of the syllabus in its entirety • To support the evaluation of the action research projects and its related resources and their use
Evaluation – assessment element	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining methodology for data collection and analysis • In collaboration with partners and stakeholders define a set of success indicators • Provide support during process of data collection • Analyse data • Write evaluation report for pilot phase • Provide set of recommendations for next phase and for Local Integrated Plans
Stakeholders – Network building element	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create database of 1st and 2nd level stakeholders • Monitor events, progress and developments • Support dissemination • Produce reports for transnational meetings

2.4 Outline of suggested elements content

Two key elements define the approach to support teachers, community actors and employers: the syllabus and the action research material. In both cases, the two elements helped partners and stakeholders to:

- Understand the phenomenon of ESL starting based on the findings of IO1;
- Identify areas of action which would improve young people’s chances of success;
- Learn how to implement the action and collect evidence to prove success.

2.4.1 Syllabus – Pedagogical element

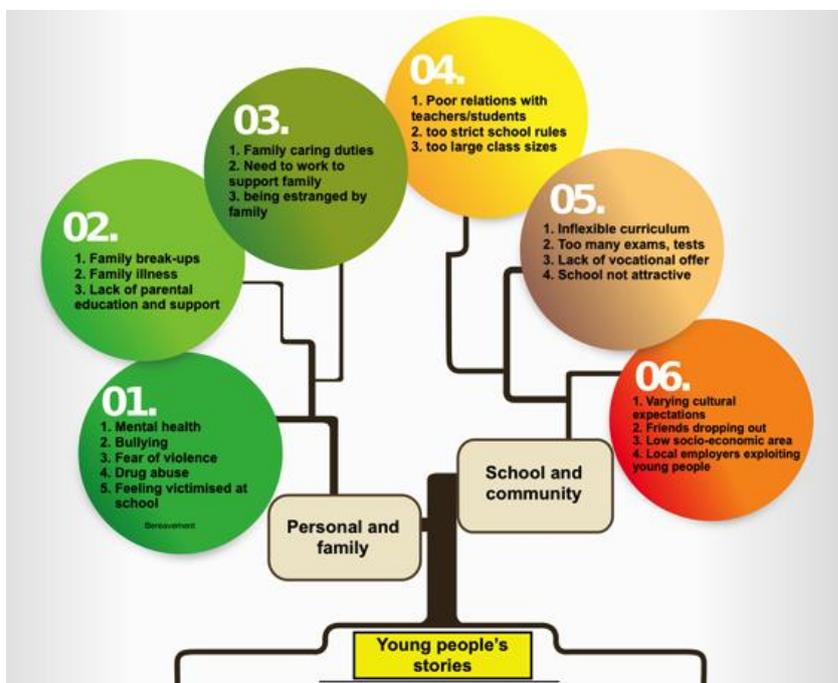
This element consisted of a number of sessions with related online resources that the Facilitators could use for the workshops with stakeholders as they saw fit. It drew from the findings of IO1 (Fig. 2) and the professional practice and expertise of UoN’s colleagues. It

focused on significant issues related to the causes of ESL, and provided partners and stakeholders with evidence-based understanding of broad ESL issues which they could use to design and implement their initiative/s(see Action Research element).

In collaboration with partners and in response to their initial feedback, UoN colleagues developed and uploaded on NILE a set of resources aimed to,

- Support stakeholders to gain the underpinning knowledge necessary to understand the identified issues of early school leaving (ESL) from IO1
- Support stakeholders to gain an appreciation of children and young people's development, health and learning
- Allow stakeholders to understand the interplay of individual and structural factors that shape and influence children and young people's lives.

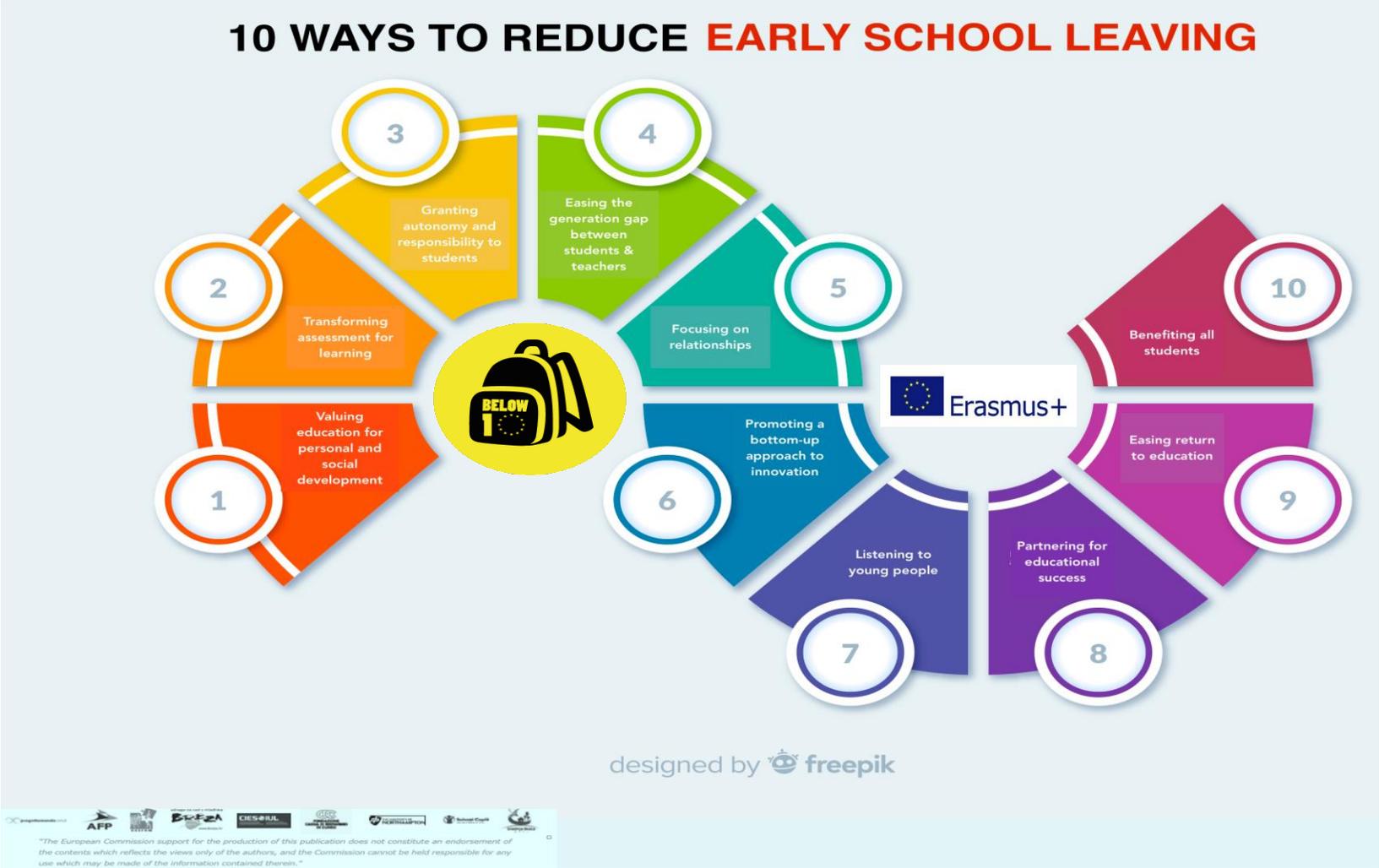
Fig. 2 Syllabus's themes and sub-themes



The syllabus was constructed using the 10 key findings from IO1 on why ESL happens and can be tackled:

1. *Benefiting all students*
2. *Valuing education as a means of personal and social development*
3. *Transforming assessment of learning gaps and avoiding repetition cultures*
4. *Granting autonomy and responsibility to students*
5. *Decreasing the generation gap between students and teachers*
6. *Focusing on relationships*
7. *Promoting innovation from a bottom up approach*
8. *Listening to young people*
9. *Partnering for education success*
10. *Easing the return to education*

Fig. 3: 10 ways to reduce ESL



Following feedback from partners at the transnational meetings in 2017, based on the key finding that ESL is a multifactorial phenomenon, and aware that the training needed to be useful to practitioners with varying degree and type of expertise, we identified that the following topics needed to be developed within the syllabus:

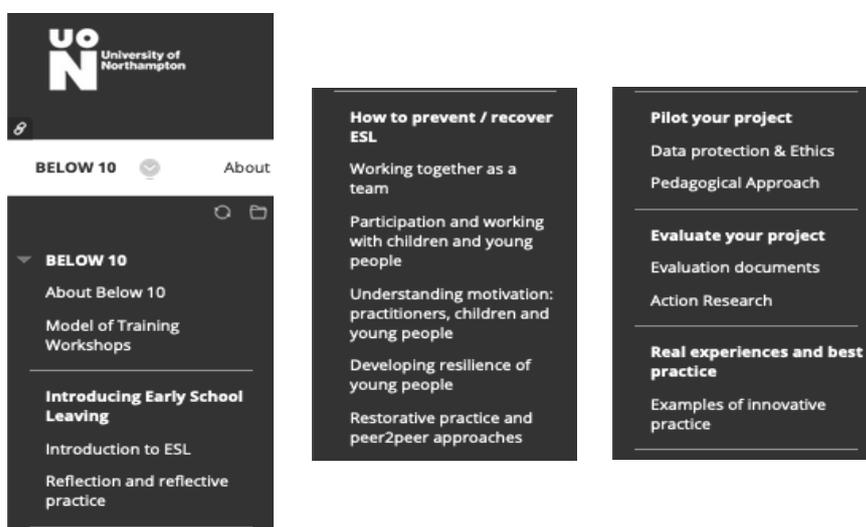
1. **Action research** needs to be explained clearly and supported to completion
2. The **pedagogical approach** of the syllabus should use innovative methods including cooperative and peer learning, experiential learning, flipped classroom
3. Partners and stakeholders need to be exposed to **professional reflection and reflective practice**
4. **Working together as a team**, as part of an **inter-agency and multi-professional** working approach, is pivotal in reducing ESL and help to tackle drop-out
5. To understand '**motivations**' from an adult and young person perspective
6. To understand and practice **participation** with children and young people
7. To understand **working with families and communities**
8. To explore **VET and apprenticeships** as a way to prevent school drop out
9. To cultivate "**second chance**" education
10. To give examples / case studies from **practice and the pilots**.

Fig. 4: Practitioner training: 10 topics



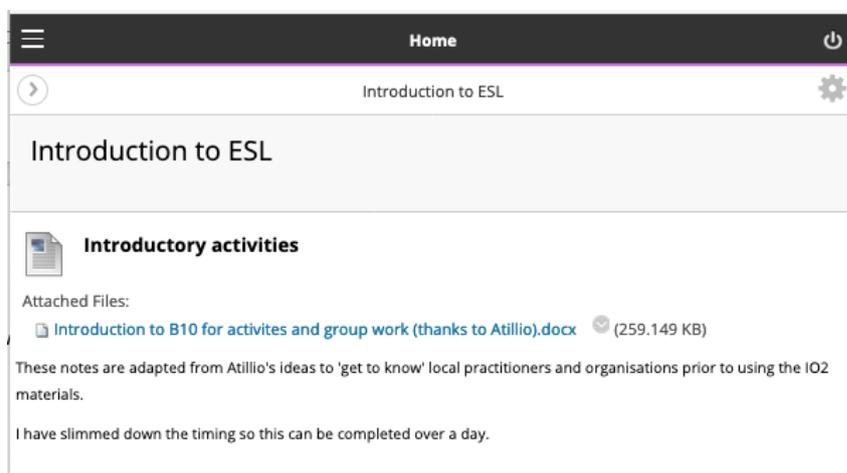
Drawing from the professional and practical expertise of the colleagues at the University of Northampton, the syllabus was divided in key areas, each one with self-standing modules reflecting the key topics and which the partners could choose as they saw fit for their context. Each module contained a power point presentation and further reading on the topic. Moreover, additional modules were added to ensure the quality of the delivery and of the evaluation. In regard to the first, the 'Data Protection & Ethics' module ensured that training and pilot initiatives were carried out respecting the participant and their right to privacy. With regard to the latter, all information about the process of data collection was available to partners for reference and final submission. Fig. 5 below shows how the various elements of the project were organised on the NILE Platform.

Fig. 5: Below10's Syllabus on NILE



Each item on the list in Fig. 5 opened a new window where partners could find the resources needed to deliver the session (see Fig. 6 as an example). These included flexible and adaptable instructions as suggestions on how to deliver the session.

Fig. 6: Screenshot of 'Introduction to ESL' resource page



2.4.2 Action research – methodological element

This element consisted of 4 sessions and workshops to be delivered by local facilitators. The aims of the sessions were to enable stakeholders to:

- Gain high quality research skills
- Put their research skills into action
- Reflect critically on their findings and their roles in the research process.

The action research element made use of a set of material as follows:

Table 2: Outline of action research resources for trainers and facilitators

Material	Title
Facilitators' Handbook	BELOW 10 - Action Research Training
Delegates' handbook	BELOW 10 – Being a Teacher Researcher
Facilitators' Ppt for Session 1	BELOW 10 – Being an Action Researcher: the Foundations
Facilitators' Ppt for Session 2	BELOW 10 - Being an Action Researcher: the Plan
Facilitators' Ppt for Session 3	BELOW 10 - Being an Action Researcher: the Action
Delegates' Ppt for Session 1	BELOW 10 - Being an Action Researcher: The Foundations
Delegates' Ppt for Session 2	BELOW 10 - Being an Action Researcher: the Plan
Delegates' Ppt for Session 3	BELOW 10 - Being an Action Researcher: the Action
Delegates' Ppt for Session 4	BELOW 10 – Project Report

Mindful that Below10 focused on young people, some of whom below the age of 18 and/or considered to be vulnerable, an ethics approval was gained by both the Faculty of Education Ethics representative and Faculty Research and Enterprise Committee at the University of Northampton. Ethics guidelines were shared with partners and the Ethics Booklet was developed as part of the resources available on the NILE platform. In addition, a session and related resources were uploaded in regard to Data Protection, specifically GDPR regulations.

3. Learning by doing: Partners' training practice

3.1 Implementation of syllabus by partners

The modular format of the two pedagogical elements were designed to be used flexibly to allow partners to choose the module/s depending on the context and in response to the knowledge gathered during the IO1 phase. As a consequence, this aspect of IO2 shows great variations between partners in relation to the timings of the sessions, their length, focus, type of stakeholders attending, and regular attendance. The same variability is also found in regard to the pilot experiences which, even more than the training, were designed to address local issues in partnership with adults and young people. Evidence is therefore reported here by show-casing each partner's contribution to the Below10 project finishing with a project overview. The decision to report the findings by partner is due to the presence of more than one partner in two of the project's countries (Italy and Croatia).

Table 4: overview of Below 10 partners' contribution: training & pilot initiatives

Organisation	Sessions	Adults
Progetto Mondo Mlal (PMM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early school leaving: a multifactorial phenomenon • Prevention of ESL: good practices • Building the pilot experience: define goals, methodological approach, partnership and working plan • Building pilot experiences: defining assumptions, indicators, adaptation mechanisms, sustainability's aspects 	Teachers, educators and psychologists
Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Cuneo (FCRC) / Azienda Formazione Professionale (AFP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early school leaving: a multifactorial phenomenon • Prevention of ESL: good practices • Building the pilot experience: define goals, methodological approach, partnership and working plan • Laying out of pilot – experiences: starting from the concept of "Action/Research, the participants define purposes, methodological approach, partnership, work-plan of such pilot-experiences 	Teachers, VET teachers, social cooperative operators, public office representatives, international youth coordinator, local government officer & council member, NGO president
Youth Association Breza / Dalj High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early school leaving: a multifactorial phenomenon • Prevention of ESL: good practices • Building the pilot experience: define goals, methodological approach, partnership and working plan • Building pilot experiences: defining assumptions, indicators, adaptation mechanisms, sustainability's aspects 	Teachers, educators and trainers
ASSFAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early school leaving: a multifactorial phenomenon • Prevention of ESL: good practices • Building the pilot experience: define goals, methodological approach, partnership and working plan • Building pilot experiences: defining assumptions, indicators, adaptation mechanisms, sustainability's aspects 	Teachers, school nurse, principal education advisors

University of Northampton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and developing resilience • Developing functional educational and skills • Mentoring and coaching • Vocational education for employment 	Police officers, youth offending officers, learning mentors, learning advisors
Organisation	Sessions	Adults
CIES-IUL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School failure and drop out: investigate, reflect and act • Youth in conflict: challenges and opportunities • Youth cultures and "new dream professions": learning, expectations and paths of professional insertion among peers • Inclusive educational environments • Transforming the school classroom: innovation and creativity in education • Transforming the school: organisational change and school success • Beyond the school walls: partnership for school success • Prevent and act: construction of the Integrated Plan for Prevention and Action on School Dropout and Abandonment • Presentation of the action plan to Below 10 project partners. Closing discussion and assessment 	Teachers, school mediators, student support workers, vocational trainers, social workers, student support workers, vocational training supervisor
Salvati Copiii (Save the Children)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early school leaving: a multifactorial phenomenon • Prevention of ESL: good practices • Working together as a team • Participation and working with children and young people • Restorative practices and peer2peer approaches • Understanding motivation: practitioner, children & young people • Non formal education 	Teachers, school counsellor, teacher librarian

3.2 Evaluation of the training

As a measure of quality control but also ongoing support, UoN also designed the parameters and criteria for the evaluation of the two key elements of IO2. The purpose of the evaluation was to collect evidence to ascertain 'if', 'to what extent' and 'how' Intellectual Output 2 has managed to fulfil the project's aims and objectives in respect to IO2's aim to:

'develop a model of professional development such which it enables local actors (2nd level stakeholders) to learn about ESL in their local area and develop a Local Integrated Plan (LIP)' in collaboration with 1st Level stakeholders (social actors and policymakers).

In supporting the fulfilment of the overall project aim, data were collected using a number of quantitative indicators together with qualitative methods aimed at capturing the dynamic, relational and contextual nature of the pilot initiatives as experienced by the stakeholders and young people. The key methods used were surveys and interviews/focus groups together with partners' and facilitators' accounts.

Mindful of the principles onto which the syllabus was designed and as a consequence of discussion with partners during the meetings which took place throughout the process, we designed the evaluation by asking our partners six questions that gave us descriptive data and qualitative information in order to evaluate the B10 training syllabus. The questions were:

1. What parts of the syllabus did you use?
2. How did you use the syllabus?
3. How often did you access the syllabus?
4. Who did you use the syllabus with?
5. What was helpful about the syllabus?
6. Suggestions to improve the syllabus.

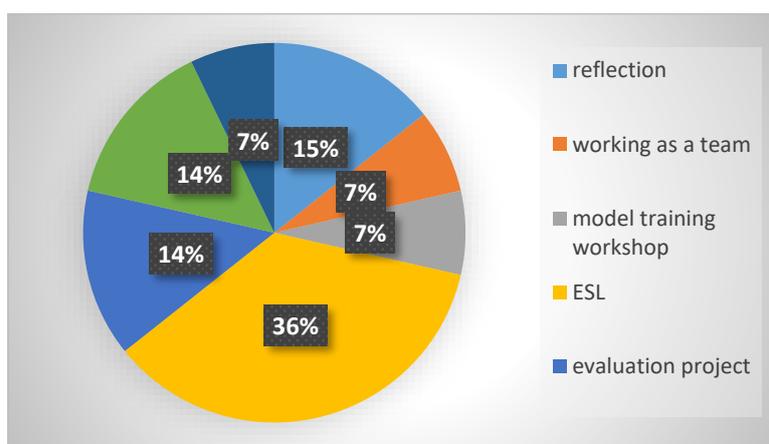
3.3 Findings from the evaluation of syllabus delivery

As already mentioned the syllabus was designed to be used flexibly by partners in the way they saw fit to their context and the aims and pilot projects that stakeholders wanted to develop. In this regard, CIES-IUL did not make use of the syllabus as designed, but they created their own, based on the findings from IO1 which they led on, as a module accredited by the University of Lisboa.

1. What parts of the syllabus partners used

All partners responded that they had read and used the syllabus generally. The majority started their training with an overview of the nature and causes of ESL drawing from the general and country-specific finding of the IO1 report. In highlighting the specific aspects of the syllabus, partners reflected that they used syllabus topics that were explicit to their pilot issues such as motivation of adults and young people or evaluation of the pilot.

Fig. 7: Parts of the syllabus used by partners



In respect to the sessions used, partners said that,

‘We read it all and used this for our workshops’

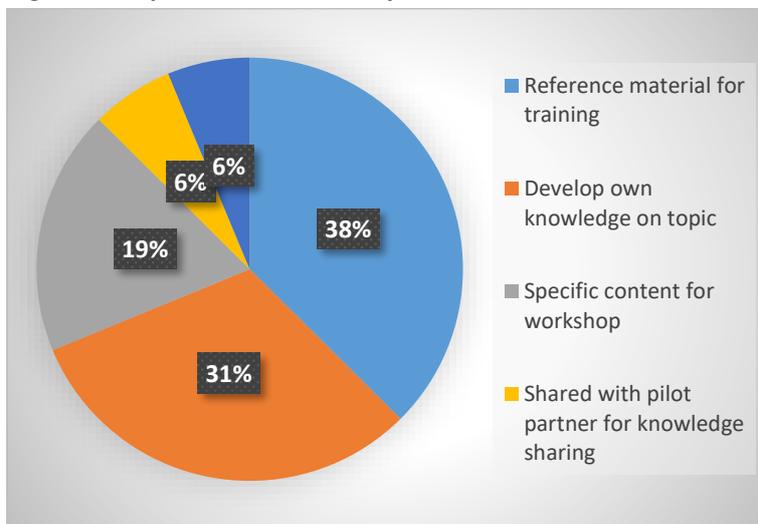
'We went back to this as we prepared our materials'

'We used topics that matched our training'

'We read all the available documents which could help us to work better with young people. For example, « theories of motivation ». But we used specifically those about training sessions like Introduction to ESL, articles about reflective practices and the section named « how to prevent ESL ». We didn't use files about Resilience even if we read it'

2. How the syllabus was used by partners

Fig. 8: How partners used the syllabus



All partners accessed and used the training syllabus as a reference and guide in order to develop their own bespoke training for their territories and adult teams. Some partners reported using the syllabus to develop their own knowledge in preparation to train adult actors / audiences. Specific syllabus content was targeted to meet needs of the adult audiences: relationships, motivation, why ESL happens, evaluation. One partner shared the syllabus with pilot adult actors / teams who used this for their own training which was with adult actors and parent workshop.

'We first read files to understand the topics'

'we used this as a resource to create and design training. Read the materials / structure and understand links of topics – made the applied to ESL / drop out. Structure was clear and easy to use'

'used structure and contents of each topic within set structured session. Used for preparation and use of terms of reference'

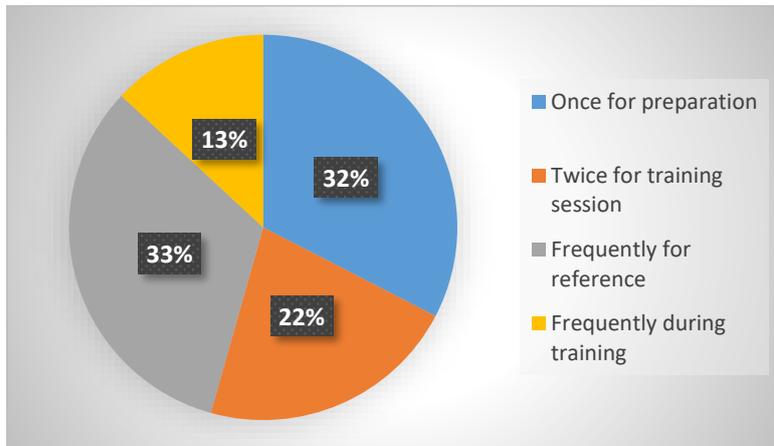
'Used the content to create own training workshops. Used for pilot experiences and evaluation'

'Given to colleagues to prepare their workshops'.

3. How often was the syllabus accessed

Partners reported using the syllabus as a source of information, knowledge, activities and learning plans for the topics and all stated they had used this to prepare their own training and workshops. This reflects the 'once' response for frequency of access of the syllabus. Other partners frequently went back to the syllabus during their workshops / training and two partners said they frequently revisited the syllabus as a reference and learning point.

Fig. 9: Frequency of syllabus use



A number of partners commented that,

'We used the syllabus many times, to prepare training sessions, in pilot experiences, as often as needed'

'Used once / twice for each training session'

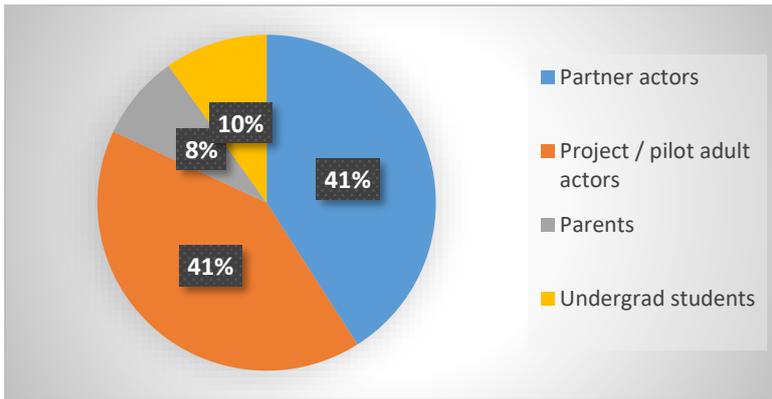
'As needed to create workshops for stakeholders'

'For preparation and training once, and then went back to help 2 times per week for the e-learning'.

4. Use of syllabus with specific stakeholders

Partner actors used the syllabus to develop their own topic knowledge and help structure and build the content of the learning for their workshops and training. One partner used the syllabus to develop parent workshops and another partner used the syllabus as points of learning for undergraduate students.

Fig. 10: Syllabus used with stakeholders



Further comments included the following:

'Structure was clear and easy to use'

'Participatory activities in group work was useful'

'Materials helped (us to) understand the links of topics to why ESL and tackling this'

'Used the structure and contents of each topic within our set training'

'Parent feedback was that they wanted more workshops on this'

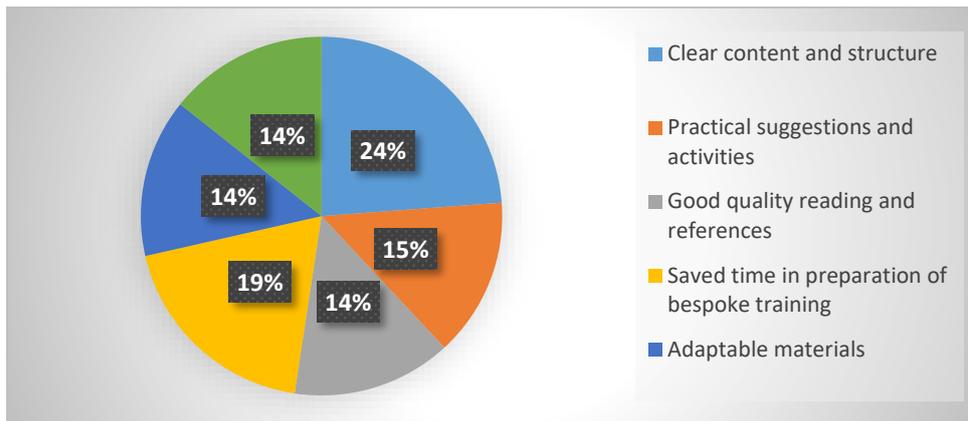
'We used it at different moments to first do the training workshops presentation (Sent to partners), then to create tools/documents for the training workshops and to organize pilot experiences. We also used it for the evaluation, in order to understand what is expected and how to do it'.

Two partners have used the syllabus materials in other work and projects as extended outcomes for IO2

5. What was helpful about the syllabus

Partners found the materials easy to navigate, up to date and with supportive references and research which allowed deeper learning and linked theory to practice.

Fig. 11: Aspects of usefulness of the syllabus



All partners found they were able to adapt the materials for their own bespoke training (as with Q4) for their pilot experiences and this saved them much time and research in their preparation of this. They also reported using the materials as terms of reference and as learning points for their own staff teams, as shown in their comments below,

'Helpful as (I was) able to adapt the materials for my own audience'

'Reminds staff about important issues such as participation, sharing power (relationships), model such as iceberg'

'The additional reading and materials helped on (my) quality of preparation'

'syllabus is very interesting and good'

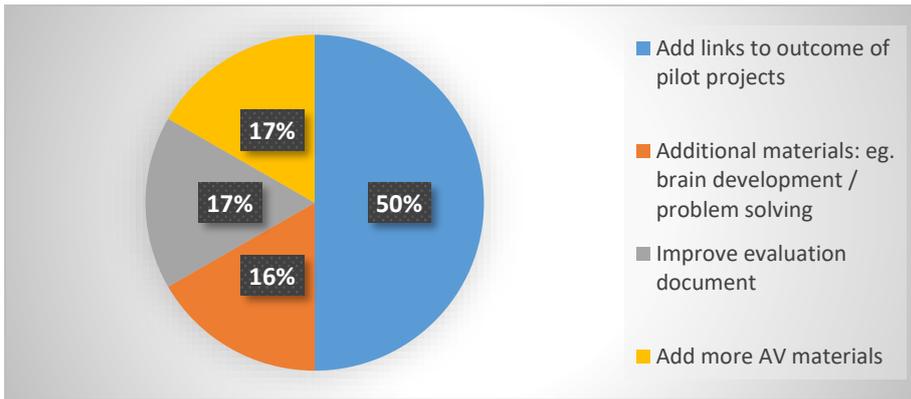
*'It was very helpful to have the files and PowerPoint about how we should do the training sessions, pilot experiences and evaluation. If we hadn't had the syllabus, we wouldn't have all the **theoretical information** about how to work with children and we would lose a lot of time in document research'.*

In addition to Q4, another partner identified their use of the activities, research and topic material in other work in their organisation and projects

6. Suggestions to improve the syllabus.

Partners suggest that links to the pilot projects can be added once IO2 is completed. This would provide a real link to 'case studies' that help illustrate outcomes and meaning for the pilot experiences. Increasing the amount of audio visual material was suggested as an improvement, this can be considered for a future change.

Fig. 12: Partners' suggestion on how to improve the syllabus



Partners added that although the content was ‘abundant’ a revised syllabus could *‘include more interactive supports like videos and practical cases (studies)’*.

4. Partners' pilot initiatives

As for the way in which the syllabus was used and adapted, pilot initiatives varied across the partnership. This variation was justified because the participatory approach required to take into consideration the context and the wishes and decision making of the stakeholders, adults and young people alike. This pragmatic approach resulted in an innovative and rich set of pilot initiatives which were meaningful to those who participated and whose impact was beneficial for all stakeholders involved. This report draws from summaries provided by the partners. Fuller detailed can be found in the brochures.

The pilot initiatives are varied ranging from those working at multiple levels to those focusing on fewer young people as case studies. They reflect the contextual variations, partners' affordances and networks, and local political circumstances. In all cases, the initiatives show the benefits of the action research approach chosen for this phase of the project. In doing so the partners involved the stakeholders as decision-makers in all phases of the initiatives and worked as facilitators.

4.1 Progetto Mondo Mlal – Villafranca di Verona, Italy

Implementation of Below10 school cooperative to encourage young people's entrepreneurship

Encouraging entrepreneurship means to support young people to discover their abilities and skills, believe in themselves and value who they are with the ultimate aim of cultivating a spirit of initiative in their environment. Entrepreneurship requires motivation and it is therefore an important concept and means to tackle the risk of school drop-out. As a result of the training and consultation with stakeholders, the Below10 partners identified that motivation, or lack of, was one of the risk factors among young people in the area of Villafranca, Verona. The working group also identified the need to develop a pilot initiative with long term impact, where young people were in the driving seat, and which challenged the divide between formal, informal and non-formal education through the creation of an entrepreneurship opportunity.

Sixty-nine students at the *Istituto Professionale Agrario "Stefani Bentegodi"* established a co-op and, as real members, create a Board of Directors, an assembly and a statute. Hermete, a social cooperative with a wide experience in business simulations, played a key role in the working group and in the final creation of the experimentation. Along the way, students identify their abilities and skills and put them into practice through managing some school's projects. The goal was to produce some products, which the students were to sell at community events and which could raise money to fund further projects.

The Co-op initiative stressed students' participation, care and action in both their own school and out of-school environment as a decisive factor and part of a multidimensional approach to

tackle early school leaving. As a result of the participatory approach, teachers collaborated with and put trust in young people recognising their changed role as facilitators. The new environment enhanced different abilities, especially emotional ones, such as empathy, active listening and management of interpersonal relationships.



When school and local educational services meet: the Memorandum of Understanding

Early school leaving is a multidimensional phenomenon. In order to address and prevent the risk of dropping out of school, there is a need for partnership and local networks to be able to discuss and deploy shared and useful strategies to identify the risk cases and to take action before "losing" just a student.

Despite internal school procedures and services implemented by the Municipality and the local government, separate actors tackle the problem without being aware of mutual opportunities, thus undermining the effectiveness of interventions in support of young people in conditions of school and/or social vulnerability. In the context of Verona, the Municipality of Villafranca has believed in the Below10 project since its inception, involving the Educational Services and educators who has worked with young people during the project. The experience demonstrated that schools were not often aware of the available procedures and services and, in turn, the educational services came to deal with young people already in serious situation of academic, domestic and social discomfort. The working group recognised that working in a situation of emergency is not effective and do not prevent the risk of early school leaving, but, rather, that joined action and shared strategies are necessary to respond within appropriate timeframes.

Another factor, which the working group considered, referred to the recognition that young people, who attend the schools in the area of Villafranca, come from the surrounding areas. The different educational services might have different areas of expertise and follow different procedures and interventions. Despite the existing institutional coordination between the educational services of the neighbouring areas, the need to launch a wider dialogue to strengthen the collaboration with local schools emerged. This priority laid the ground for the

implementation of a shared Memorandum, which was still absent in the area of intervention, between secondary schools and educational services.

The school principals from the following secondary schools: ISS "C. Anti", Liceo Statale "E. Medi", IIS "E. Bolisani", "Scaligera Formazione", IPSAR "L. Carnacina", I.I.S. Stefani Bentegodi, ENAIP e CFP "Casa Nazareth" and the educators from the following areas: Isola della Scala, Povegliano, Valeggio sul Mincio, Vigasio, Nogarole Rocca, Villafranca, Mozzecane e Sommacampagna, have formed a new active network.

The Memorandum *Communication Procedure between Schools and Local Socio-educational Services on Social Hardship and Non-compliance with Compulsory Education* includes the procedures to follow when dealing with cases of young people in situations of risk. The Memorandum distinguishes between an extreme case of crime and other conditions that cause the social discomfort and/or non-fulfilment of compulsory education. In the latter case, the Memorandum offers shared definitions of the different cases grounding on the national and regional legislation in force. These are important in order to identify the situations and take action promptly. It also establishes the flow of information between schools, socio-educational services and other relevant institutions; in this way, they are not distinct areas of action, but rather "subjects in collaboration". Finally, the Memorandum includes a communication module that help to identify the student's hurdle and recognise the resources and their potential (relational, affective-emotional and skills), as well as analyse both internal and external critical issues. The family plays a central role in both the flow of communications and the overall analysis of the situation.

This pilot experience has developed with the careful and constant participation of both schools and socio-educational services. The goal is to put in place a timely and joint system that guarantees every single student the possibility of "staying inside the system" and the right to find their own space within their community and the sense of a shared responsibility.

4.2 Azienda Formazione Professionale and Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Cuneo – Cuneo, Italy

After having held a negative record at regional level for years, the Province of Cuneo has progressively improved, starting in 2014/2015, reaching 10.6% in the 2015/2016 two-year period, in line with the regional average and close to the 10% Lisbon target. This positive trend was interrupted in the two-year period 2016/2017, when the IRES Piemonte estimated the ESLs in the province of Cuneo at 12.9%, up 1.7 percentage points compared to 2014-2015, while remaining below the average Italian level (14%). In fact, between 2012 and 2016, the province of Cuneo recovered about 6 percentage points, falling below the Piedmont average.

Together, the two partners, with a consolidated and rich network of local schools, developed and carried out a series of training workshops between April and May 2018. They involved about twenty people, including teachers, trainers, educators and out-of-school workers in the

analysis of the data collected for IO1, in the sharing of good practices activated at European, national and local level, and finally in the design of pilot experiences to be carried out in the territory. The workshop shared the characteristics of these experiences:

- Greater involvement of young people in activities (with the support of teachers and educators);
- Focus on active learning in curricular and / or extra-curricular hours;
- The effects on young people's families;
- The links with the development of school curriculums and recognition at the level of academic and / or training credits.

The experiences developed were divided into two areas:

- Experiences for didactic - methodological innovation and experiential learning (in both formal and informal contexts), illustrated in the table below:
- Strengthening of existing networks that operate on the topic, in order to increase their effectiveness through integration with the Below 10 project.

In line with the IO1 findings, discussion with local stakeholders validated the claim that the choice of leaving school is never painless and often generates isolation. Sometimes it becomes the only way to protect oneself from a school environment considered to be poorly inclusive, if not hostile to the interpersonal relationships that are created as well as for problems of academic performance. Even returning to school, unfortunately, is seen by young people as a complicated step that requires strong determination on the part of the individual.

In light of these considerations, the pilot experiences in the province of Cuneo are part of a multi-voice and long-standing approach focused on educational innovation, early orientation, the transition from school to the world of work as ways to tackle ESL. Above all, the approach placed young people at the centre, giving them an active role, and focus on active learning, involving families and exploring new links with school curriculums. The number of pilot initiatives carried out were multiple as shows in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Outline of pilot initiatives carried out by partners in the Province of Cuneo

Institutions	Locality	Pilot initiative	Additional institutions
Centro Formazione Professionale Cebano Monregalese VET Agency 1 st Level secondary school	Mondovì Ceva, Villanova Mondovì	Training school workshops for multi-references students of 1 st Level secondary school	Social Services and other Compulsory Schools of the territory

Institutions	Locality	Pilot initiative / project	Additional institutions
Compulsory school	Saluzzo	Afternoon recovery and enhancement workshops (basic subjects, artistic expressions, music, coding)	
Compulsory school	Centallo-Villafalletto	Mathematical support desk with peer-to-peer support	High school students
AFP VET Agency	Verzuolo	Mechanical workshops within dual experimentation	
Apro Formazione VET Agency	Alba	Involvement of parents	
Professional High School, "Piera Cillario Ferrero"	Alba	Peer-to-peer education in dealing with bullying	
Technical and professional High School, "Cigna-Baruffi Garelli"	Mondovì	Development of protocol for alternative sanctions to disciplinary exclusion	Voluntary Service Centre and Inter-regional Forum of voluntary associations
Compulsory school	Chiusa, Pesio and Peveragno	Training school workshops for multi-references students of 1 st Level secondary school	Social services and other schools in the area
Piedmont Region together with School Guidance Project and Monviso Solidale (Social Assistance Consortium)	Fossano, Savigliano, Saluzzo	Objective Orientation Piedmont disseminates the anti-dispersion intervention protocol to other territories	Institutes, social welfare consortiums and other bodies involved in other areas of the province of Cuneo
"Orso" Cooperative and High Technical and Vocational School "Aimone Cravetta"	Savigliano	Support activities in the transition to the secondary level preparatory to reach a good school atmosphere	Compulsory Schools of the territory

4.3 Dalj Secondary School - Municipality Erdut, Croatia

The Secondary School Dalj, as representative of Municipality Erdut, focused their pilot projects on working with young people not in school. In addressing this issue, they successfully implemented several sessions of *E-learning as ESL prevention tool*. The pilot included two first grade students aged 16 studying economy, and 6 teachers of the secondary school Dalj. It started in November 2018 and continued to August 2019. E-learning, delivered via skype, addressed the need to include youngsters at risk of ESL, who are, because of health or behavioural problems, not able to attend regular classes, into the regular school system. Online classes were scheduled 2-3 times a week in the following subjects: Croatian and English language, Maths, History and vocational related subjects such as Basics of Economy, Family Business, and Entrepreneurship.

Teachers evaluated the pilot initiative positively because the technology was easily adaptable for students of all ages and for any type of school, and not requiring high ICT skills from either

teachers or students. However, teachers highlighted the following common drawbacks: lack of physical presence of the teacher and nonverbal communication demanded higher concentration and motivation from the students, which was not always the case; some subjects, especially language classes should be interactive and encourage students to work in pairs or in teams, to do role play. A bad internet connection can be an additional aggravating factor. ***E-learning as ESL prevention tool*** remains a good method to the inclusion of youngsters at risk of ESL but it should be seen as a starter activity leading to a complete inclusion process into regular classes and into the regular school system.

Fig. 13: E-learning as ESL prevention tool, Secondary school Dalj (Jan, 2019)



4.4 Youth Foundation Breza - City of Osijek, Croatia

Youth Association BREZA, as representative of City of Osijek, successfully implemented several workshops on the theme of ***School for parents***. The pilot included free workshops and education sessions for parents of primary and secondary school students. It started in October 2018 and continued to June 2019. The initiative aimed to support parents in preventing and overcoming risky behaviour of their children which could result in ESL. The 2-hours workshops address a variety of important topics such as: Taking personal, parental and professional responsibility; Communication and assertive behaviour; Behavioural risks and risky behaviour; Social networks related risks; Addictive behaviours addictions, Nutritional disorders; ADHD and other behavioural difficulties; Gifted students at risk of ESL, etc. The focus was on group work and experience sharing among participants aiming to propose solutions and methods to identify, prevent and get through difficult and risky situations and problems with youngsters at risk of ESL. The workshops were conducted by experts from YA BREZA Suzana Vargović – pedagogue and Zoran Vargović – external expert and psychologist at Family Centre Osijek. So far, ***School for parents*** workshops have been successfully conducted in Osijek and are to be implemented in Secondary school Dalj during March and/or April 2019.

Fig. 14: School for parents, Osijek (Feb, 2019)



4.5 ASSFAM – Paris, France

Following the findings of the project Below 10 IO1, Assfam chose to focus on student-teacher relations (STR) to tackle ESL. STR was identified as a key factor to success or failure in school impacting on the atmosphere in the classroom and even in the whole school. Two Training workshops were organized with the stakeholders and took place in “Sugar High School” in November 2018 and January 2019. The groups consisted of teachers, social workers, and educators. These meetings proposed an extensive set of proposals which should improve STR, and prevent/reduce ESL. Following the exchanges, 3 « innovative practices » were selected for the pilot experiences, which took place in 3 schools : Sugar High School, Marcel Cachin High School, and Voillaume High School in Seine-St-Denis.

1. *Distinct’ Go* : a way to enhance STR

Distinct’ Go! is a successful game, created by ASSFAM and partners like the Regional Council of Ile-de-France to address discrimination by developing young people’s interests and flexibly adapting to their needs. The Below10 project allowed us to use it for the first time as a way to prevent/reduce ESL.

The game is designed to:

- Promote higher-order critical thinking by creating a space for listening, talking, reflecting and arguing. It changes the teaching and learning by giving teachers an opportunity to incorporate curricula in playful activities.
- Help young people to build their identity in an environment where they can express their views without any judgement (because it is a game).
- Provide a space for dialogue and discussion about the place of young people in society, their needs, values, relationships with others (friends, family, ...), secularism, school and rules.



2. Sport activities with families

Involvement of parents plays an essential role to enhance STR and help youngsters to reach the goal of educational success. The school staff interviewed agreed on the existence of a lack of communication between school and families, who do not always have the right information on their child's school progress. This pilot experience aimed to improve the parent-school relationship by promoting a playful approach to motivate students, parents and school staff to tackle ESL, and therefore to develop a more attractive vision of both school and families.

Because of some difficulties about engaging families and local organizations (local authorities, associations, parents, and cultural bodies), this activity will be organized during the school year 2019-2020, even after the end of Below 10 project.

3. Keeping at-risk students in the classroom/ school and giving them value

Voillaume High School decided to experiment one of the practices resulted from the training workshops: to keep and value potential early school leavers in the classroom and in school.

The main idea of this initiative was to work differently in the classroom and avoid the use of punitive methods. In doing so it departed from traditional methods like exclusion.

This proposal is innovative in as much as it support the teacher to help the young people to acquire self-esteem, self-confidence, new skills and have to make them feel connected to him, to others students and to school.

4.6 University of Northampton – Northampton, United Kingdom

The University of Northampton drew from their contacts and ongoing collaboration with alternative providers and focused on how to support young people out of school times. It therefore worked with a national organisation which support young people, and with the local police to support one of their initiatives. The UoN's report will be considered by the Police and Crime Commissioner in order to ascertain continuation and growth of the project. Already we understand this scheme may be replicated and extended to another urban locality to tackle ESL, reduce youth offending and support young people to gain employable skills.

1. The Resilience App: how Prospects support young people to succeed



[Prospects](#) is an organization working with half a million young people to transform 'lives and communities through innovation and expertise in employment, skills, care and education. They provide resources for teachers and other stakeholders and support employability skills and apprenticeships. Above all they also work with young people who are disengaging with school and education and are at risk of ESL.

The Prospects Advisor works in small groups or 1:1 with young people in meeting their needs to help them re-start schooling. To which end they have developed a '**Resilience app**' to support the young person to develop and maintain their levels of resilience and engage with problem solving to enable them to stay in education and facilitate educational success.

The B10 team at the University of Northampton evaluated the trial of the Resilience App linked to the resilience training Prospect Advisors undertook. The aims of the evaluation were to:

- Develop the knowledge and the abilities of Advisors to use innovative tools and approaches to support tackling ESL.
- Enhance relationships and Increase effective communication with adults and young people to reduce ESL and improve educational aspirations.

Using action research as an adapted model and mixed methodology enquiry, the pre-post survey based evaluation involved advisor and young people sharing their experiences so as to gain baseline and post use information from the Advisors about their knowledge of resilience and use of a resilience tool.

The evaluation showed that Prospects advisors told us that

- *development of resilience* for young people is important
- *overcoming adversity* is the key factor in helping young people stay in education.
- *life pressures has increased for young people* and being resilient helps them towards a positive outcome.

And that

- they *needed targeted* training in knowledge and techniques of developing resilience for young people.

The next steps are to gather information from the young people to ascertain the impact of this project in developing their resilience supported by their Advisor.

2. Cycl-ops: how Northants Police support young people to succeed



Cycl-oppo is run by Northants Police and Youth Offending Service to support young people at risk of being excluded from school. They work with young people in Northamptonshire who have engaged with offending behaviour or are at risk of offending behaviour.

Fig. 15: Cycl-oppo workshop

The Cycl-oppo scheme engages young people in vocational training that teaches them how to repair or recondition bicycles for sale to the public. Youth workers and police officers work

directly with young people on a sessional basis which is set out as part of a programme. This is often part of a youth order, which sets out a contract of commitments the young person must work towards to redress any harm caused and look at actions to help change offending behaviour, for example, re-engage with education and learning opportunities. Young people can also be referred to the scheme from school, the early intervention services, or their social care worker. Cycl-ops support the young person to better themselves, achieve higher and make smarter decisions. They do so through one-to-one training and mentoring to support the young person with their educational and behavioural needs. They work from the phrase that **“you coach the person and not the problem”**. This coaching and mentoring reflects upon the restorative justice model as set in IO2, Below 10 NILE materials.

The B10 team at the University of Northampton evaluated the use of coaching and mentoring and restorative justice used at Cycl-ops with the aims to:

- Assess the police officers use of the tools and approaches to support tackling ESL. In coaching and mentoring young people using a practical skills-based training approach.
- Enhance relationships and Increase effective communication with adults and young people to reduce ESL and improve educational engagement and reduce offending.
- Seek the views of the young people who have engaged with Cycl-ops to find out their lived experiences and outcomes from being part of Cycl-ops.

Police officers and young people were invited to share their experience. A questionnaire to police officers asked about their experiences of coaching and mentoring the young people and the training they undertook for this. Young people were asked about being coached and mentored with the Cycl-ops project and how this has supported / made a difference for their outcomes with education and ESL.

From speaking to the service providers and carrying out two case studies on two of the current service users, we were able to understand whether the scheme, and the benefits that young people felt that they gained from being involved, aligned with the findings from the Below 10 findings in intellectual output 1. If Cycl-ops supported young people in the areas that had been identified as problematic pre-cursors or sustaining influences of early school leaving, and the accompanying negative life outlooks that it generates, then Cycl-ops, and its underpinning approach, may be of value as a model for working with young people in other locations.

From both case studies, they were two main shared themes that the young people identified as being pre-cursors to their early school leaving. They were poor relationships with teachers and the lack of vocational training or teaching sessions in the traditional school environment. Both felt that the Cycl-ops scheme dealt with both of these core problems. First, the police officers running the Cycl-ops scheme worked with the young people as equals, rather than in a adult-child or teacher-child paradigm. This represented significant value to both of the young people spoken to. They felt that equality in relationships was absent at school and a strong motivator to leave early; so Cycl-ops was successful in this regard. Also, because the scheme workers were police officers, and the young people had previously had negative

relationships and views of the police, the young people's views about authority figures being something to avoid was changed. This has implications for intervention design that is worthy of future consideration. Traditional authority figures working with young people, outside of their normal professional roles, could add value to schemes that seek to support young people who have had challenging relationships with the authorities throughout their early life.

Two of the Cycl-ops practitioners were asked to comment on their views related to two of the benefits that appeared to be offered by the scheme, according to the young people spoken to. They were resilience and mentoring and also the reasons they felt that young people leave school early.

- **Resilience and mentoring:**

The practitioners working on this project were clear that they understood what resilience was, and how young people develop resilience. They were asked about the role that mentoring plays in helping young people to develop. Both practitioners agreed that resilience was developed by tackling a difficult challenge but in a supportive environment that is structured around praise. They also felt that being a mentor for young people is an active role; providing guidance, help, advice and support to a young person so that they can achieve their goals. When asked whether resilience could be developed in an educational environment, both stated that if the environment was supportive and allowed students to learn for themselves through experience, then this was possible.

Both practitioners rated the importance of resilience in young people as essential and that resilience is a life skill, something that is learned and that supports a young person's ability to cope with adverse life events and to react in a measured way. Both practitioners felt that the Cycl-ops scheme provided an environment for young people to be mentored and supported to develop resilience. The young people spoken to continue to have difficulties relating to crime and relationships with family and lack of work. The Cycl-ops scheme was seen by the practitioners as a place where support could be provided while the young people worked through these issues.

- **Reasons for leaving education:**

The practitioners were asked to explore the factors that young people had said (IO1 – Below 10) might contribute to early school leaving; selecting those that they believe to be impactful. Both practitioners felt that mental health issues were a very important issue underlying much ESL, whilst being victimised at school also featured as important. Influencing factors within a young person's family were identified as having family caring duties, family break-up, fear of violence at home, living away from the family and bereavement. These were identified by the practitioners as very important factors. Some school and community issues that were identified as important were bullying, lack of support for mental health and socio-economic deprivation.

When asked a similar question, except that the factors were those identified by practitioners/professionals, both practitioners felt that mental health was a very important factor. However, their overriding view was that family problems were the most impactful such

as not living at home with family, family break ups, family illness, drug or alcohol abuse and lack of family support.

Overall, this small-scale case study has provided insight into the potential benefits that Cycl-ops provides to young people who are at risk of, or who are early school leavers. It identified that the strongest benefit for the young people was the provision of mentoring, ostensibly from authority figures, while also providing them with the skills that they had craved during their schooling, but were unable to access.

4.7 CIES-IUL – Lisbon, Portugal

To think and to act upon failure at school and school leaving in Amadora

In Amadora – Portugal-, CIES-IUL carried out, between January 16 and March 27 2019, a 25 hours/9 sessions training course involving 18 teachers and other school professionals. Entitled ***To think and to act upon failure at school and school leaving***, this course aimed:

1. To promote the understanding about failure and school drop out in Amadora from the results of the research, using dynamic, participative methodologies, case studies, life histories
2. To generate skills in the area of prevention and intervention in the event of failure and drop out
3. To design, in a participatory and informed way, a local action plan that is relevant and consistent with the local reality and the identified educational needs.

The course, developed and delivered by ISCTE-IUL, included a set of topics that stemmed from the IO1 report. Contents included: a) Youth in conflict situation: challenges and opportunities b) Youth cultures; c) Inclusive educational environments; d) Transforming the school class: innovation and creativity in education e) Transforming the school: organizational change and school success f) Beyond school walls: partnerships for school success.

The course was carried out by local and national Below 10 stakeholders, such as schools of education, community inclusion projects based on art and music, researchers and university professors. Final assignments consisted in designing a set of actions aimed at tackling failure at school and school leaving. The actions were presented in a public session to the stakeholders of the Below 10 project and will be integrated into the future “Plan of Action on Failure and School Dropout in Amadora”.

Fig. 16: Training sessions, Amadora, Portugal

Formação

Refletir e Agir sobre o Insucesso e Abandono Escolares

JAN
a
MAR
2019

O curso de formação "Refletir e agir sobre o insucesso e abandono escolares" tem como objetivos principais e específicos proporcionar aos docentes a reflexão e a ação em suas práticas de intervenção. O curso realiza-se no âmbito do projeto "Below 10 (2018-2019)".

DOCENTE RESPONSÁVEL Sónia Almeida e convidado: Observatório Permanente da Juventude, Escola Superior do Município de Lourenço, Associação de Educação de S. Martinho e parceiros locais do projeto Below 10	DESTINATÁRIOS Professores do 2º ciclo do ensino básico e ensino secundário e técnicos especializados das escolas dos agrupamentos de Amadora
DURAÇÃO 25 horas 9 sessões de 3 horas, das 14h às 16h-17h	NOVAS DATAS 2019: 14, 15 e 16 janeiro / 6, 20 e 27 fevereiro / 13, 20 e 27 março

Local: ISCTE-IUL e escolas de agrupamentos de escolas de Amadora

Insucesso
www.governo.pt/portal/pt/educacao/insucesso
até ao dia 31 de dezembro de 2018

o programa e conteúdo do curso da formação "Refletir e Agir sobre o Insucesso e Abandono Escolares" é regulado no âmbito do acordo de cooperação de formação contínua de professores pelo CINEP.

ISCTE IUL
Instituto Superior Técnico
Escola Superior do Município de Lourenço
Associação de Educação de S. Martinho



Telling Stories of “losing and learning” through Art

Another activity developed in Portugal was an Art competition with the title **Stories of Losing and Learning**, open to the participation of young people between the ages of 16 and 20 who lived or studied in the municipality of Amadora. It intended to keep the involvement of young people in the project Below 10, by inviting them to debate failure and early school leaving through Photo, Video, Painting, Illustration and Short Stories. The winner had the opportunity to travel to Italy and participate in the Below 10 final transnational meeting in Cuneo.

Fig. 17: “Stories of losing and learning’ poster



The competition received a strong involvement from national and local partners. The stakeholders defined and validated the competition rules, and a Competition Committee was formed including Arts professors from the Lisbon School of Education. Art works will be delivered in the service of education of the municipality. Registry is open from 4 February to 29 March 2019, and the final results were announced in the 10 May 2019.

4.8 Salvati Copii – Bucharest, Romania

‘Do you believe school is important?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘And why is that?’ ‘Because I want to be able to read the name of the bus stop in order to know where I am in the city.’ This is part of a conversation with a group of disadvantaged young people attending an educational centre of Save the Children Romania in Bucharest.

Almost 366,000 Romanian children between 3 and 17 years old were not engaged in any type of education in 2013. During the school year 2014-2015, the rate of school dropout reached 2% for primary and secondary school and 3.5% for high school and vocational education, almost 1% higher than the previous year. More than half of the Romanian children (51%) are at risk of poverty or social exclusion. Only 42% of Roma children aged between 6 and 15 attended kindergarten, compared to 87% of the children of other ethnic groups living in the same environment. 22% of Roma children are not attending school, compared to 6% in the case of other ethnicities in Romania.

These numbers show the reality of the Romanian school system which provides a truly relevant background for the pilot experiences developed through Below 10 project following the results of the IO1 report. Mainly, they stressed the lack of attractive activities for pupils in and out of the classroom, the poor relationship between parents and school’s staff and lack of

parental engagement, and the fact that schools seldom support the prevention or even more rarely the intervention regarding school dropout and early school leaving. With the support of eleven teachers, educators and school counsellors, Save the Children designed three categories of experiences: activities aiming at the development of children and young people, others involving parents and another category involving the school.

In February, over 30 teachers from different schools in Bucharest started the implementation of these activities which continued until the beginning of April 2019. For the first category, some of the teachers developed workshops and events to help students identify their passions, develop their skills and be drawn to the school environment, such as non-formal sessions during classes or meetings with professionals from different fields who can help them understand the importance of developing a career. For the second one, parents were involved in various events taking place at school and they are also the target group for awareness campaigns regarding the importance of education. As for the category of pilot experiences involving the school, it includes creating procedures regarding gathering specific data for children in risk of dropout, afterschool programs for the pupils coming from disadvantaged families and training opportunities for teachers in order to motivate teachers to open to other pedagogical approaches than the classical ones which do not appeal to children and young people.

Most of the teachers involved in this project found it more accessible to work with children in order to prevent early school leaving in the long run. Their view is that the more attractive school is, the more chances are that children and young people will attend classes. Parents on the other hand had more difficulties in engaging due to limited amount of time they were willing to invest in such initiatives; for other stakeholders (public institutions and even the school management in some cases), bureaucracy and difficult procedures were challenges which made it almost impossible for the teachers to handle them. Therefore, many of the teachers in Bucharest chose to focus on offering nonformal sessions with the aim to develop young people's learning management skills, reflection, self-discovery of personal traits and resources, and social and emotional competences.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Syllabus and training: lessons learned

The syllabus was the result of collaboration with partners. Not only it was evidence-based both in regard to evidence drawn from research and from evidence drawn from professional expertise, but it was also flexible enough to be adapted to the needs and aspirations of those working and studying in each specific context. Training was delivered to a multi-disciplinary group of stakeholders including: teachers, parents, social workers, NGOs, psychologists, health workers and, in some cases, local political representatives.

The syllabus was freely available to partners using the University of Northampton Interactive Learning Environment (NILE). This allowed partners to access the material available at a time suitable to them and the needs of the stakeholders. The material in each module was free to use and modify to provide meaningful use in context or leading to some form of university-based accreditation as in the case of CIES-IUL in Lisbon.

Upon reflection, more time should have been dedicated to training partners in the use of the material, especially in the more challenging research area. This would have allowed for the inclusion of more interactive material as suggested by partners as part of their evaluation.

5.2 The pilot initiatives: key features of success

Each partner developed in collaboration with multi-disciplinary teams of stakeholders specific pilot initiatives which addressed the needs and aspirations of the teachers and, above all, young people involved. The quality, reach, stakeholders' degree of involvement in the pilot initiatives are clear signs of success on the ground. A further sign of success was the fact that the pilot initiatives breached the gap between formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts, thus giving young people the opportunity to show their abilities and challenge their views of being failures.

The partners succeeded in addressing the 10 key points from IO1 and embed as part of daily practice many of the 10 topics covered in the syllabus, such as working in teams, allowing and enabling young people's participation and raising young people's motivation.

A key lesson to be learned is that tackling ESL requires schools to go beyond change their pedagogical approach. As important as this aspect is, the schools and NGOs involved in the initiatives developed a more inclusive mindset. Such a mindset required to conceive the relationship between adults and young people differently by empowering young people to be active participants in decision-making processes.

5.3 Recommendations

Intellectual Output 2 served as a point of triangulation for the findings of IO1. More importantly, it provided evidence to show that the 10 Recommendations distilled by CIES-IUL in collaboration with Below 10 partners, and the 10 topics used by the University of Northampton to develop the syllabus and online material were valid and useful to develop and implement the pilot initiatives.

In line with previous work carried out on the topic of early school leaving, school drop-out and NEETs ([European Commission, 2013](#); [Devecchi, 2015](#)), the Below 10 project as a whole, and its pilot initiatives in particular, addressed the need to intervene and compensate but also, through the notion of the Integrated Local Plan, to help prevent ESL.

As a result of the Below 10 experience, the following are the partnership's key recommendations to **develop and sustain inclusive environments** which foster the following:

1. Foster participation and decision making of all involved through the use of participatory action research and reflective practice approaches
2. Overcome the divide between formal, informal and non-formal education
3. Consider and invest in vocational educational opportunities
4. Think innovatively about assessment
5. Develop a positive approach to behaviour management
6. Provide young people with opportunities to succeed and show their skills, competences and potential
7. Create opportunities for adults to change their long held views about young people
8. Bring together other actors not previously involved
9. Support teamwork and multi-disciplinary collaboration
10. Support teacher continuous professional development.

References

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