

# **PREVENTING SCHOOL FAILURE**

**Country Information Thematic Analysis**



The European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (the Agency) is an independent and self-governing organisation. The Agency is co-funded by the ministries of education in its member countries and by the European Commission via an operating grant within the European Union (EU) Erasmus+ education programme (2014–2020).



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

The views expressed by any individual in this document do not necessarily represent the official views of the Agency, its member countries or the Commission.

Extracts from the document are permitted provided that a clear reference to the source is given. This document should be referenced as follows: European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2020. *Preventing School Failure: Country Information Thematic Analysis*. Odense, Denmark

The information in this document was current in May 2020.

Further information about the Preventing School Failure (PSF) activities is available on the [PSF web area](#).

**© European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education 2020**

Secretariat  
Østre Stationsvej 33  
DK-5000 Odense C Denmark  
Tel: +45 64 41 00 20  
secretariat@european-agency.org

Brussels Office  
Rue Montoyer, 21  
BE-1000 Brussels Belgium  
Tel: +32 2 213 62 80  
brussels.office@european-agency.org

**[www.european-agency.org](http://www.european-agency.org)**



---

# CONTENTS

---

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1. COUNTRY DEFINITIONS OF 'SCHOOL FAILURE'</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2. POLICIES TO PREVENT SCHOOL FAILURE</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1. Increasing engagement and reducing early school leaving	9
2.2. Focusing on low levels of academic achievement	18
2.2.1. Targeting at-risk learners	18
2.2.2. Focusing on vulnerable groups of learners (migrant learners, Roma, learners with special educational needs, etc.)	24
2.2.3. Increasing attainment in particular areas (e.g. literacy, numeracy)	37
2.2.4. Supporting learners and schools with lower outcomes	40
2.3. Promoting a whole-school development approach	45
2.3.1. Building capacity for inclusion	45
2.3.2. Supporting learner health and well-being	53
2.3.3. Developing curriculum, assessment and pedagogy	58
2.3.4. Improving transition between phases of education	62
2.3.5. Providing career support and flexible career pathways	65



---

## INTRODUCTION

---

This document presents the analysis of policy information conducted for the thematic project [Preventing School Failure: Examining the Potential of Inclusive Education Policies at System and Individual Levels](#) (the PSF project).

Project activities involved collecting information from member countries of the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (the Agency). This was through a survey to identify their policy approaches to dealing with school failure. The analysis was based on 14 individual country reports received from Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Malta, Serbia, Slovakia, Sweden and United Kingdom – UK (Northern Ireland and Scotland).

The individual country reports were treated as data and key excerpts were synthesised into thematic tables. The country information was first organised under broad thematic areas, similar to those identified in the [PSF Literature Review](#). These were then revised and new themes or sub-themes derived from country-specific data were added. This country information and analysis also informed the [PSF Project Synthesis Report](#).

The full analysis grid is divided into two sections in this document:

- Section 1 presents countries' [definitions of 'school failure'](#). It identifies whether the country reports indicate the existence or non-existence of a definition of school failure in official policy documents.
- Section 2 presents existing country [policies to prevent school failure](#). Country policies are organised under the following broad themes and sub-themes:
  - Increasing engagement and reducing early school leaving
  - Focusing on low levels of academic achievement
    - Targeting at-risk learners
    - Focusing on vulnerable groups of learners
    - Increasing attainment in particular areas
    - Supporting learners and schools with lower outcomes
  - Promoting a whole-school development approach
    - Building capacity for inclusion
    - Supporting learner health and well-being
    - Developing curriculum, assessment and pedagogy
    - Improving transition between phases of education
    - Providing career support and flexible career pathways.

The thematic analysis grid provides comprehensive information on national, regional and local policies, measures and initiatives for preventing school failure in the 14 participating countries. It does not, however, address the actual implementation of the policies discussed. Where available, links to the original policies and resources are provided.



---

This output complements other sources of information that describe national education and training systems, such as the Agency's [Country Policy Review and Analysis](#) work and Agency audits in [Malta](#) and [Iceland](#).



## 1. COUNTRY DEFINITIONS OF 'SCHOOL FAILURE'

Country	Definition of 'school failure'
<b>Czech Republic</b>	The report does not provide a legal definition of school failure.
<b>Estonia</b>	There is no legal definition of school failure in Estonia. However, several legal documents describe all learners' rights to receive high-quality education and support according to their needs.
<b>Finland</b>	The report does not provide a legal definition of school failure. However, the concept of school failure is associated with learners who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• are of compulsory education age, did not take part at all in comprehensive school education during the academic year and are regarded as having dropped out completely from compulsory education;</li><li>• have left comprehensive school without a leaving certificate (<a href="#">Statistics Finland</a> collects data on discontinuation of education in upper-secondary vocational education).</li></ul>
<b>Germany</b>	The report does not provide a legal definition of school failure.
<b>Greece</b>	The term 'student drop-out' is used to describe learners' failure to complete a certain level of education.
<b>Iceland</b>	The report does not provide a legal definition of school failure.
<b>Ireland</b>	The report does not provide a legal definition of school failure.



Country	Definition of 'school failure'
<b>Latvia</b>	<p>There is no definition of school failure in the national legislation. However, it is understood as a process in which a learner slips further and further behind their peers and gradually disconnects from the education system. The end result of school failure is dropping out before graduation.</p> <p>At the institutional level, school failure occurs when a school fails the accreditation process that allows the school to issue diplomas.</p>
<b>Malta</b>	There is no legal definition of school failure in Malta.
<b>Serbia</b>	The report does not provide a legal definition of school failure. However, Serbia's national <i>Action Plan for Implementation of the Strategy for Education Development in Serbia 2020</i> (details provided in <a href="#">section 2.3.1.</a> of this report) indirectly aims to prevent school failure.
<b>Slovakia</b>	There is no legal definition of school failure in Slovakia. However, the <i>National Programme for the Development of Education: Quality and Accessible Education for Slovakia (2018–2027)</i> includes a summary of findings, starting points and objectives for improvements relating to school failure. The Government of the Slovak Republic adopted this on 27 June 2018 (Resolution No. 302/2018).



Country	Definition of 'school failure'
<p><b>Sweden</b></p>	<p>The concept of school failure is not commonly found in web material and documents that top-level education authorities use and refer to. These materials focus on the importance of ensuring safe transitions and counteracting drop-out, absenteeism and mental illness.</p> <p>At the national policy level, school failure is understood as being closely related to segregation and lack of equity. In a strategy for the years 2018–2028, the government states how it intends to counteract this development:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>The municipalities have an activity responsibility for young people up to the age of 20 who have not started, who have aborted or who have not completed their upper-secondary education. Activity responsibility means that the municipalities must continuously offer individually adapted measures that primarily aim at education.</i></p> <p>In a broader context, school failure is often discussed in terms of the costs of exclusion.</p>
<p><b>UK (Northern Ireland)</b></p>	<p>Northern Ireland does not use or condone the use of the term school failure. It does not fit with the country's approach to measuring schools or the message the Department of Education wants to relay to teachers, learners and parents.</p> <p>However, the Department aims to ensure that schools deliver teaching and learning to the highest standards. It also aims to ensure that there is a range of policies in place to identify when the risk of failure needs to be addressed.</p>
<p><b>UK (Scotland)</b></p>	<p>Scottish legislation and policy guidance do not refer to school failure. Related 'needs or concerns' are identified through national data analysis or evidence from national strategy groups.</p> <p>Policies define specific duties for ministers, education authorities and schools. These duties are designed to secure an inclusive and equitable education system. In Scotland, 'school failure' would be assumed if the national policies and school systems do not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure a minimum standard of education for every child or young person (inclusion);</li> <li>• promote equality and ensure that socio-economic or personal circumstances do not become barriers to achieving educational potential.</li> </ul>



## 2. POLICIES TO PREVENT SCHOOL FAILURE

### 2.1. Increasing engagement and reducing early school leaving

Country	Policy information on increasing engagement and reducing early school leaving
<b>Finland</b>	<p><i>Monitoring attendance</i></p> <p>According to the <a href="#">Basic Education Act</a>, a child of compulsory school age must attend basic education or otherwise obtain knowledge corresponding to the basic education syllabus. The law requires that the education provider (municipality) monitor the absences of a learner in basic education and notify the learner's parent or guardian of unexcused absences.</p> <p><i>Monitoring discontinuation of education</i></p> <p><a href="#">Statistics Finland</a> collects data on discontinuation of education in upper-secondary vocational education. Finland's statistics describe how new entrants to post-comprehensive school education progress in their studies up to attaining a qualification or degree. This includes data on the start of education, duration of education, change of education and what learners do after they have discontinued education.</p> <p><i>Flexible basic education</i></p> <p>Under the Basic Education Act, a local authority may provide flexible basic education during grades 7–9. The education complies with the statutes applicable to basic education and the National Core Curriculum.</p> <p>Flexible basic education is provided in an effort to reduce drop-out from basic education and prevent exclusion. Its goal is to strengthen learners' motivation to study and to support life management. In addition to completing the basic education syllabus, it supports learners in their transition to the next stage of education and training. They are also supported in developing capabilities for studying successfully.</p>



Country	Policy information on increasing engagement and reducing early school leaving
	<p>Flexible basic education is intended for learners in grades 7–9 who show signs of underachievement and weak motivation to study. It is also for learners who are considered at risk of exclusion from further studies and working life. The instruction highlights the need for co-operation between professional groups, various branches of administration and other organisations. Vocational institutions and general upper-secondary schools, liberal adult education institutions and workshops for young people may also be parties to this co-operation.</p> <p>When learners are admitted to flexible basic education, the school develops operating and teaching methods to meet their individual needs. It pays particular attention to work forms that increase learners’ participation in the school community and support the joint educational work of guardians and all those working in flexible basic education. The instruction emphasises functional and work-oriented methods of study.</p> <p>Flexible basic education is organised in small teaching groups in schools, workplaces and other learning environments relying on cross-sectoral co-operation and support and advisory services. In addition to the teacher, the education provider appoints a professional with special competence to take part in activities. Their competence can be in supporting young people’s social growth, co-operating with families and other support and advisory skills. If necessary, teaching groups may work together to provide instruction.</p> <p>The instruction is referred to as ‘contact instruction’ in schools and as ‘supervised study’ in workplaces and other learning environments. Studying outside of school is an essential part of flexible basic education. When studying outside of school, learners have a right to guidance and instruction from a teacher. The learners receive assignments specified in the curriculum and assessments take into account learners’ ability to manage these assignments. The staff working with the learners in the workplaces and other learning environments must be familiar with statutes on occupational safety, data protection, confidentiality and other requisite areas.</p> <p>Learners are admitted to flexible basic education based on applications by themselves or their guardians. Admission is decided through a cross-sectoral process. Once admitted, a learner in flexible basic education has a right to support for learning and school attendance, guidance and welfare. A learning plan is drawn up for them or their existing learning plan is revised. The plan is drawn up in co-operation with the learner and their guardian.</p>



Country	Policy information on increasing engagement and reducing early school leaving
<b>Germany</b>	<p>For all learners, general compulsory schooling begins the year in which they reach the age of six. It involves at least nine years of full-time schooling. In Berlin, Brandenburg, Bremen and Thüringen, the duration of full-time compulsory education is ten years. Meanwhile, in Nordrhein-Westfalen, the duration is nine years for Gymnasium and ten years for other general education schools. Learners who do not attend a full-time general education school or vocational school at upper-secondary level after completing compulsory general schooling must still attend part-time schooling. This usually lasts three years for a recognised occupation requiring formal training. For learners who do not enter training or attend a general education school at upper-secondary level, some Länder require them to remain in full-time education and attend a vocational school.</p> <p>Learners with disabilities are also required to attend school and complete their compulsory education. Depending on their needs, they are either taught in mainstream schools or special schools. Compulsory schooling involves regular attendance of lessons and other compulsory school events. Both learners and parents are responsible for meeting this obligation. Training companies are also responsible for ensuring that their trainees fulfil their obligation to attend vocational school. The school head checks on attendance records and can enforce attendance through various measures against the learner, parents or the training company. (<a href="#">The Education System in the Federal Republic of Germany 2016/2017</a>)</p> <p>Various approaches and measures are being pursued in the German Länder to support lower-performing learners. These can be grouped into five strategy areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• improving individual support;</li><li>• restructuring learning by developing teaching geared to competences and new forms of acquiring competences;</li><li>• facilitating qualifications, structuring transitions and safeguarding connections;</li><li>• connecting partners, co-ordinating action, building networks and co-operation;</li><li>• strengthening quality assurance and quality development and intensifying educational research.</li></ul>



Country	Policy information on increasing engagement and reducing early school leaving
<b>Greece</b>	<p>In Greece, the Institute of Educational Policy established an Observatory for Identifying and Tackling Student Dropout Issues, within the framework of the Human Resources Development, Education and Lifelong Learning operational programme 2014–2020 (investment priority 10.1). This initiative aims to reduce and prevent early school leaving and promote equal access to quality nursery, primary and secondary education. It also promotes formal, non-formal and informal educational capacities for re-integration into education and training.</p>
<b>Ireland</b>	<p>The <a href="#">DEIS Plan 2017</a> is the key policy document in this area. ‘Deis’ is the Irish word for opportunity. The DEIS programme is the Department of Education’s policy response to tackling educational disadvantage. It focuses on increasing engagement and reducing early school leaving. The percentage of learners choosing to leave school early has decreased significantly in recent years. Those who do leave school early are encouraged to participate in second-chance education provision, known as the Youthreach programme. About 3,300 young people engage with the Youthreach programme annually.</p> <p>Almost 20% of the Department’s overall annual budget is spent on supporting schools to meet the needs of learners with special and additional educational needs and to ensure that they do not leave school early.</p> <p>According to Ireland’s <a href="#">Education Act, 1998</a> and <a href="#">Education Welfare Act, 2000</a>, school attendance is mandatory between the ages of 6 and 16. This legislation outlines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• regulations on when children and young people are obliged to attend school;</li><li>• the requirements of schools to maintain registers of learners and attendance records;</li><li>• the regulations and powers assigned to Tusla Educational Welfare Services (formerly National Education Welfare Board) for supporting parents and learners around school attendance and sanctions for non-school attendance;</li><li>• the regulations open to schools for managing serious breaches of codes of behaviour.</li></ul> <p>Schools are required to have a Code of Behaviour and a School Attendance Strategy. Tusla Educational Welfare Services developed supporting documents for schools creating these materials. These supporting documents are available on the <a href="#">Tusla</a></p>



Country	Policy information on increasing engagement and reducing early school leaving
	<p><a href="#">website</a>. Regulations for parents wishing to home-educate their children and for independent (non-state) schools are also outlined.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018</a> introduced a more parent-friendly, equitable and consistent approach to Irish school admissions policy, aiming for a fair and balanced admission process for all learners.</p> <p>The School Completion Programme provides a range of interventions that support the retention of learners who are at risk of not reaching their full potential because of poor attendance, participation and attainment. It also supports young people who left school early to return to education.</p>
<b>Latvia</b>	<p>Latvia's <a href="#">Guidelines for the Development of Education for 2014–2020</a> recognise the need to address the number of learners who are at risk of failure and early school leaving. The State Education Quality Service is implementing a European Social Fund project (No. 8.3.4.0/16/I/001) called <a href="#">Support for Reducing Early School Leaving</a>. It aims to reduce the number of children and young people leaving school and dropping out before graduation. Eighty percent of municipalities, covering 614 general and vocational education institutions, are involved in the project.</p> <p>The project aims to create a sustainable co-operation system between the municipality, school, educators and parents to identify learners and young people at risk of early school leaving and offer them personalised support. A database is being developed to provide a regular exchange of information at national, municipal and school levels. The database will identify learners at risk of dropping out, preventive measures taken and their outcomes.</p> <p>The project also supports non-governmental organisations formed by young people to raise awareness about early school leaving and to reach out to learners through peer learning and activities.</p> <p>Municipalities provide individual support to learners who might quit education due to lack of resources. This includes reimbursement of the costs of transport, meals, hotels or the purchase of individual learning materials. The project is not focused on providing short-term financial assistance, but on creating a sustainable, comprehensive mechanism for a supportive and inclusive school environment for all learners.</p>



Country	Policy information on increasing engagement and reducing early school leaving
	<p>The project’s target group is learners in mainstream schools from grades 5 to 12, vocational education and training (VET) students from first to fourth year and those in general education institutions offering VET programmes.</p>
<p><b>Malta</b></p>	<p>Malta has an official national publication called <a href="#">A Strategic Plan for the Prevention of Early School Leaving in Malta 2014</a> (the timeframe is 2014–2020). This facilitates focused action that will support learners to make the best of their school years, from early childhood, to the end of compulsory school and beyond. It aims to enable learners to develop their potential as human beings, citizens and stakeholders in the economy. The plan includes Strategic Action 5.2, which aims to decrease the rate of early school leaving among people with disabilities.</p>
<p><b>Serbia</b></p>	<p>The objectives of the <a href="#">Strategy for Education Development in Serbia 2020</a> are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increase the quality of the process and the outcomes of education to the highest attainable level – one that stems from scientific knowledge of education and renowned educational practices;</li> <li>• increase the coverage of the population of the Republic of Serbia in all levels of education, from pre-primary education to lifelong learning;</li> <li>• achieve and maintain the relevance of education, especially education that is entirely or partly publicly funded, by aligning the structure of the education system with the immediate and developmental needs of individuals, economic, social, cultural, research, education, public, administrative and other systems;</li> <li>• increase the efficiency of the use of educational resources, that is, the completion of education on time, with minimal extension and reduced drop-out.</li> </ul> <p>The Strategy precisely defines the development of pre-primary institutions, programmes and services. It also analyses the ‘considerable discrepancy between the vision of primary education and the current situation’. It emphasises the need to increase coverage and reduce learner drop-out rates in primary schools. In general and arts secondary education, along with the priority of increased coverage, the Strategy envisions concrete measures to improve the quality of syllabus and curriculum. This includes a more flexible curriculum and greater teacher autonomy. The Strategy also defines strategic measures for secondary vocational education for more efficient inclusion in the labour market and continued education. An example is the</p>



Country	Policy information on increasing engagement and reducing early school leaving
	<p>establishment of the <a href="#">National Qualifications Framework</a> for lifelong learning. Another strategy is to align school networks and educational profiles with economic needs.</p>
<p><b>Slovakia</b></p>	<p>Slovakia collects and uses various statistical data at the national policy level. The data includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the number of early school leavers, i.e. those who leave school without completing primary and/or secondary education or without a professional qualification;</li> <li>• the participation of learners from vulnerable, socially marginalised groups in pre-primary education (this is the biggest group of learners who leave school without completing primary and/or secondary education);</li> <li>• the learning outcomes of primary school learners in international measurements.</li> </ul> <p>In 2015, for the first time, Slovakia provided secondary schools with data on the ‘value added’ for learners, accompanied by data showing progress between their school entrance (Testing 9) and school-leaving examinations. The National Institute for Certified Educational Measurements (NUCEM) and the State School Inspection (SSI) are currently preparing proposals and models for setting other school quality indicators to reflect the context of these cognitive measurements and school and individual results. These indicators will include school climate, teaching staff climate, learner motivation and classroom climate.</p> <p>The <i>National Programme for the Development of Education: Quality and Accessible Education for Slovakia (2018–2027)</i> indicates the aims, objectives and steps to improve the existing situation related to school failure. This is addressed in line with national needs and the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy in the field of education.</p>
<p><b>Sweden</b></p>	<p>Sweden uses a digital platform focusing on drop-out called <a href="#">PlugInnovation</a>. It is the country’s largest project to support young people to complete upper-secondary school. It offers almost 80 method workshops in 47 Swedish municipalities aiming to help reduce study interruptions in upper-secondary school and to get more young people to finish their education successfully. Common types of interventions indicated by PlugInnovation are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentoring/coaching</li> <li>• Identification and mapping risk groups</li> </ul>



Country	Policy information on increasing engagement and reducing early school leaving
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach</li> <li>• Transitioning from primary to secondary school</li> <li>• Promoting learner health</li> <li>• Person-centred approaches.</li> </ul>
<b>UK (Northern Ireland)</b>	<p>Northern Ireland aims to maximise learners’ attendance rates and support them to reach their full potential. The <a href="#">Miss School = Miss Out, Improving Pupil Attendance Strategy</a> provides a framework for all those involved in managing and improving school attendance. This simple phrase, ‘Miss School = Miss Out’, summarises and simplifies the potential impact of non-attendance at school and reflects the evidence that suggests a link between school attendance and educational achievement.</p> <p>This strategy identifies four key themes underpinning a successful approach to managing attendance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School leadership</li> <li>• Early intervention</li> <li>• Tailored support</li> <li>• Collaboration and engagement.</li> </ul> <p>For each theme, the strategy sets out a strategic goal, good practice indicators and roles and responsibilities for all relevant parties. It also recognises the need to enable schools to learn from techniques and approaches that other schools have used successfully. Good practice can be shared via formal local mechanisms such as Area Learning Communities, where schools directly engage with each other, through informal relationships between school leaders or through central provision like the Education and Training Inspectorate’s good practice guide.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Education Other than at School (EOTAS)</a> legislation (<a href="#">Article 86 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998</a>) enables education provision for children with social, emotional, behavioural or other issues who, without its provision, cannot sustain access to suitable education. It allows children who have been expelled, suspended or otherwise disengaged from their</p>



Country	Policy information on increasing engagement and reducing early school leaving
	registered school to maintain their education until compulsory school leaving age or to participate in education until they achieve a new school place or are prepared for re-entry to an existing school place.
<b>UK (Scotland)</b>	<p>Scotland promotes a two-part strategy called Included, Engaged and Involved. <a href="#">Included, Engaged and Involved Part 1</a> includes guidance on managing attendance and absence in Scottish schools, aiming to promote good attendance. Absence from school, whatever the cause, disrupts learning. This guidance draws together advice on good practice and establishes requirements for classifying and recording attendance and absence.</p> <p><a href="#">Included, Engaged and Involved Part 2: A Positive Approach to Preventing and Managing School Exclusions</a> provides guidance on managing school exclusions, with a strong focus on approaches that can be used to prevent the need for exclusion.</p>



## 2.2. Focusing on low levels of academic achievement

### 2.2.1. Targeting at-risk learners

Country	Policy information on targeting at-risk learners
Czech Republic	<p>The <a href="#">Long-Term Plan for Education and Development of the Education System of the Czech Republic 2019–2023</a> includes a measure to engage socially disadvantaged children in pre-primary education. In co-operation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, it aims to increase children’s participation in kindergartens, especially in areas with social disparities that are at risk of social exclusion. Actions include providing free school meals, reducing or cancelling fees, social worker provision and co-operating with municipal authorities.</p> <p>In September 2017, pre-primary education became compulsory in Czech Republic. This means that any child who has reached age five by the beginning of the school year must attend a pre-primary school. From the age of five, pre-primary education is free. This measure aims to integrate children from socially disadvantaged areas.</p> <p>From September 2018, every child who has reached the age of three should be admitted to pre-primary education for free. Early pedagogical diagnostics (e.g. speech therapy and literacy) occur in kindergarten. These policies aim to reduce school failure.</p> <p>Related measures in the previous national plan, the <a href="#">Long-Term Plan for Education and Development of the Education System of the Czech Republic 2015–2020</a>, aimed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote effective primary prevention activities targeted to learners, schools, pedagogical staff and regions to minimise or delay risky behaviour. Specific aims included announcing multi-annual grant programmes to ensure continuity activities, ensuring stability of primary programmes funding prevention, co-operation with regions, etc.</li><li>• Develop and promote effective counselling for learners to prevent risky behaviour. Specific aims included providing methodological support to schools in the area of risky behaviour prevention, implementing further education programmes for teaching staff for prevention methodologies, pedagogical-psychological counselling centres</li></ul>



Country	Policy information on targeting at-risk learners
	co-ordinating the activities of school prevention methodologists, etc. The target groups for these activities included learners, schools, pedagogical staff and counselling centres.
<b>Germany</b>	<p>In 2008, the Federation and the Länder agreed on a <a href="#">catalogue of objectives and measures</a> (2015 report available in German). It addresses all areas of education, from early childhood education to continuing training.</p> <p>The German Länder take various and far-reaching measures concerning areas such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Expanding full-day offers with the aim of extended educational and support options</i></li><li>• <i>Raising the educational level of disadvantaged people</i></li><li>• <i>Measures to improve linguistic competence</i></li><li>• <i>Measures to improve dovetailing of the pre-school sector and primary school</i></li><li>• <i>Measures to improve school education, reading competence and the understanding of mathematical and scientific correlations</i></li><li>• <i>Vocational orientation measures and measures to improve transition from school to work</i></li><li>• <i>Measures to strengthen the link between vocational and higher education.</i> (<a href="#">The Education System in the Federal Republic of Germany 2016/2017</a>, p. 303)</li></ul>
<b>Malta</b>	<p>The XL/Achieve Programme, developed by Prince's Trust International, has been running in seven secondary schools in Malta since November 2015. Young people aged 13 to 16 who are at risk of underachievement or exclusion are offered a personal development programme as an opportunity to re-engage in education. According to data from June 2019, 44 centres have delivered and presented work in relation to the Achieve Programme.</p>



Country	Policy information on targeting at-risk learners
Serbia	<p>The <a href="#">National Youth Strategy 2015–2025</a> includes strategic and specific objectives to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increase access to education and educational impact and improve the functional literacy of young people;</li> <li>• enhance social inclusion of young people from socially vulnerable categories of the population by improving the adaptability, availability, scope and quality of inclusive programmes and services;</li> <li>• standardise the system for recording and analysing the quality of life of young people from socially vulnerable groups;</li> <li>• develop a network of services to prevent social exclusion.</li> </ul> <p>The Law on Preschool Education and Training aims to improve the quality of educational work and expand the diversity of available programmes, forms of work and services. It also aims to increase the coverage of children in pre-primary programmes that are not mandatory, targeting vulnerable learners including national minority children, children without parental care, children with disabilities, foreigners and stateless children, etc.</p> <p>The <i>National Strategy for Resolving the Issues of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons</i> specifically aims for the inclusion of the most vulnerable categories of refugees at all levels of education and in the local community.</p> <p>The Law on Financial Support for Families with Children defines rights and support systems for families with children from vulnerable groups. The right to financial support for families with children includes the cost of attending pre-primary school for children without parental care, reimbursement of expenses for attending a pre-primary institution for children with disabilities, reimbursement of the cost of attending pre-primary institutions for children of social welfare recipients, and reimbursement of the costs of attending pre-primary institutions for children from materially affected families.</p> <p>The Inclusive Preschool Education Project is intended to provide subsidies to local governments to ensure that the most vulnerable families get priority for enrolling their children aged three to five and a half in free pre-primary education programmes. Grants for at least 30 municipalities will make it possible for the most vulnerable and economically deprived families and their children to have access to community-based programmes and services (within health, education, social protection) designed for children and parents.</p>



Country	Policy information on targeting at-risk learners
<b>Sweden</b>	<p>According to the <a href="#">Education Act</a>, Swedish schools have a far-reaching compensatory duty. They are directed to compensate for factors that put some learners at a disadvantage in relation to their opportunities to develop and achieve learning and social educational goals. This compensatory duty often involves learners at risk of school failure, with absences and drop-out as a consequence and, in the long run, at greater risk of exclusion and mental illness.</p> <p>The Swedish Government offers state grants for targeted efforts relating to sports and health, mathematics, reading and writing skills and school development programmes, such as ‘Collaboration for Best School’. These efforts aim to strengthen teachers’ competence and to raise the quality of education and learner outcomes. The aim is for improvements to help learners succeed in their studies and for school failure and drop-out to decrease.</p> <p>Relating to identifying at-risk learners, Chapter 3, § 7 of the Education Act states: ‘The principal must ensure that the pupil’s need for special support is investigated promptly. The need for special support should also be investigated if the student presents other difficulties in his/her school situation’.</p> <p><i>The SiSam-model for children and young people in care: a model for unbroken schooling</i></p> <p>From 2013 to 2015, the Swedish National Board of Institutional Care (SiS) and the Swedish National Agency for Special Needs Education and Special Schools (SPSM) developed the SiSam-model for unbroken schooling, which targets children and young people in care. The model comprises about 1,400 learners who are placed in compulsory care. As of 2017, every third learner placed at SiS was an unaccompanied boy whose school background had no connection to the Swedish school system.</p> <p>In 2017, SPSM, the Swedish National Agency for Education and the National Board of Health and Welfare began adapting the SiSam model to include children and young people who are placed in family homes, emergency homes and other homes for care or housing. The SAMS-model was presented to the government in June 2018.</p> <p>The SAMS-model’s overall purpose is to ensure unbroken schooling for placed children and young people when the placement involves school change. The model supports those who work with placed children and young people in social services and schools. The target groups are:</p>



Country	Policy information on targeting at-risk learners
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principals (their actions to ensure that placed learners are given continuity in schooling)</li> <li>• Municipalities (their ability to follow up the process so that learners receive the continuity in schooling that they are entitled to and need)</li> <li>• Social service employees (when, how and for what purpose they should interact with the school in connection with a placement).</li> </ul> <p>The models provide concrete support for collaboration between social services and schools. They outline a clear structure for creating an unbroken education in four phases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prior to placement: This phase begins before the child has been placed. Unbroken schooling requires that the social service informs the school early and that the school has an early opportunity to prepare school placement and pedagogical handover.</li> <li>• During placement: The second phase describes what should be done when the child is placed.</li> <li>• Before closing: The third phase describes what should be done before closing the placement. Continuity in schooling and careful planning are as important in this phase as when the placement begins. If there is a need for relocation, the first step must be reconsidered.</li> <li>• Follow-up: The final phase describes what can be done to follow up continuity in schooling.</li> </ul> <p>Each phase is divided into steps describing their purpose, actions and who is responsible. Each step corresponds to a critical point in the collaboration process and rests on current regulations. The municipality of Skövde has started working on the SAMS-model.</p> <p>Currently, the two models work in parallel and have similar target groups. The next step is to develop one common model. A challenge is to develop tools for the follow-up step. The SiS mentions that the models make it easier for professionals to collaborate, but it is still a challenge to reduce or prevent school failure for children and young people in care.</p>



Country	Policy information on targeting at-risk learners
<b>UK (Northern Ireland)</b>	<p>One of the ways ‘success’ is measured is in terms of General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) outcomes at age 16. The <a href="#">Tackling Educational Disadvantage Team</a> operates within the Department of Education. The team particularly focuses on children who have Free School Meals Entitlement (FSME). This team explores policies and interventions that are effective in helping FSME learners achieve their full potential and in closing the gap between FSME and non-FSME children. One of the Department’s key challenges is to reduce that gap between FSME and non-FSME children while improving attainment overall.</p> <p>In addition, a considerable <a href="#">Targeting Social Need</a> budget of about GBP 77 million per year is distributed to schools. This is allocated directly to schools to target the learning of socially disadvantaged learners and those at risk of educational underachievement. The Department also continues to provide funding targeted at disadvantaged communities and at improving school-community links.</p>
<b>UK (Scotland)</b>	<p>Section 2 of the <a href="#">Standards in Scotland’s Schools etc. Act 2000</a> includes a particular aim ‘to reduce inequalities of outcome’. The policy reflects Article 29 of the <a href="#">United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child</a> (1989). Section 3A specifically refers to learners who are socially and economically disadvantaged.</p> <p>More recently, the 2016 <a href="#">Delivering Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education: A Delivery Plan for Scotland</a> states the government’s commitment to ‘raising attainment and making demonstrable progress in closing the gap in attainment’ between the least and most disadvantaged young people. This Delivery Plan outlines the steps the government will take to achieve these improvements, building on the work contained in the National Improvement Plan.</p> <p><a href="#">Pupil Equity Funding</a> (GBP 750 million for 2016–2021) is allocated directly to schools to close the poverty-related attainment gap. Various measures show an inter-generational poverty cycle that directly correlates with poor educational attainment (see the latest national statistics on <a href="#">attendance and exclusions</a> and <a href="#">attainment</a>).</p>



## 2.2.2. Focusing on vulnerable groups of learners (migrant learners, Roma, learners with special educational needs, etc.)

Country	Policy information on focusing on vulnerable groups of learners
<p><b>Czech Republic</b></p>	<p>The main strategic document in the field of education in the Czech Republic is the <a href="#">Strategy for Education Policy of the Czech Republic until 2020</a>. It contains three priority aims for education policy, one of which is equal opportunities for all. This aim is achieved through measures to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increase the availability and quality of pre-primary education and early care;</li> <li>• reduce external differentiation in basic education and effectively integrate learners into mainstream;</li> <li>• strengthen common elements in secondary education;</li> <li>• maintain open access to a diverse tertiary education offering;</li> <li>• create conditions for easier transition of graduates to the labour market;</li> <li>• promote the availability and quality of in-service training;</li> <li>• individualise consulting services.</li> </ul> <p>These measures are implemented through documents such as the <i>Long-Term Plan for Education and Development of the Education System of the Czech Republic 2015–2020</i> and the <i>Action Plan for Inclusive Education 2016–2018</i>.</p> <p>The existing <i>Action Plan for Inclusive Education 2019–2020</i> is a national strategy document that contains measures for verifying the role of school social pedagogue. This involves professional discussions on the inclusion of a social pedagogue among legally recognised teaching staff. The social pedagogue’s support is intended for primary schools with a higher proportion of Roma learners, learners from diverse cultural backgrounds and learners living in different conditions.</p> <p>The social pedagogue’s role is to help improve primary and secondary preventive effects on different learners. One of the many benefits of a social pedagogue could be to improve co-operation with families and authorities for the social and legal protection of children. Another outcome is to create links between schools and other entities, such as municipalities, police, prosecutors and health care facilities. The social pedagogue’s work involves the provision of mediation between schools,</p>



Country	Policy information on focusing on vulnerable groups of learners
	<p>parents and these institutions and help with legal and social issues. A pilot verification of this position is currently in progress and outputs will be available later.</p> <p>According to <a href="#">Act No. 561/2004 Collection of Law on Pre-school, Basic, Secondary, Tertiary Professional and Other Education (Education Act)</a>, learners with special educational needs (SEN) have the right to receive supportive measures from schools. Supportive measures can relate to changes in education and training, health or living conditions of a learner.</p> <p>Learners with SEN may be at risk of school failure. Supportive measures are provided so they can have equal conditions for education as others.</p>
<b>Finland</b>	<p><i>Support for learning and school attendance</i></p> <p>At the national level, the government aims to prevent marginalisation. This involves finding ways to support educational equality. The Basic Education Act and the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education support those in compulsory education. According to the <a href="#">Basic Education Act</a>, an enrolled learner is entitled to guidance, counselling and sufficient support in learning and school attendance as soon as the need arises. There are three levels of support in pre-primary and basic education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• General support is the first response to a learner’s need for support and is given to all learners. This usually includes singular pedagogical solutions and guidance. Specific tests or administrative decisions are not required for providing general support.</li><li>• Intensified support is more continuous, stronger and more personalised. For instance, learners can focus on certain subjects, studying only the key concepts.</li><li>• If intensified support is not enough, a learner may receive special needs support. This may include individually tailored syllabi and/or timetable adjustments.</li></ul> <p><i>Instruction in particular situations</i></p> <p>Individual arrangements for instruction and support needs require particular consideration. For example, when a learner is</p>



Country	Policy information on focusing on vulnerable groups of learners
	<p>seriously ill or in a difficult life situation, basic education may be organised by means of instruction in a hospital school, reform school, reception centre, prison or other penal institution.</p> <p>The municipality in which a hospital is located has the duty to organise instruction for a patient, to the extent that this is possible considering their state of health. The municipality in which the hospital responsible for a learner's care is located also has the duty to organise instruction and support. This is for learners subject to compulsory education who are receiving other specialised medical care, according to their state of health and specific pedagogical needs. It also depends on the treatment and rehabilitative procedures of the specialised medical care and whether organising instruction in other ways is in the learner's best interests (regardless of support measures referred to in the Basic Education Act or other legislation). A municipality in which another type of operating unit of specialised medical care is located may also organise instruction for a learner who is receiving care.</p> <p>The goals of instruction provided for a learner in specialised medical care include maintaining their learning and school attendance and supporting the goals of their treatment through holistic rehabilitation. When the learner is transferred into a hospital school or back to their previous school, the education provider and the municipality in which the hospital is located agree upon and organise support for them through cross-sectoral co-operation. Distance learning may also be used in instruction provided in a hospital school.</p> <p>Education of learners placed outside their homes is the responsibility of the municipality in which the learners are placed. The education of a learner placed in a child welfare institution is the responsibility of the school operating in the institution if the institution is authorised to provide education. Instruction provided in prison is the responsibility of the municipality in which the prison is located.</p> <p><i>Supporting language minorities and migrants</i></p> <p>Finland has two official languages: Finnish and Swedish. Approximately 5% of learners in basic and upper-secondary education attend a school where Swedish is the language of instruction. Both language groups have their own higher education institutions. In addition, there are educational institutions where all, or at least some, instruction is provided in a foreign language, usually English. Local authorities are also required to organise education in the Sami language in Sami-speaking areas of Lapland. Care is taken to ensure educational opportunities for Roma and other minorities, as well as</p>



Country	Policy information on focusing on vulnerable groups of learners
	<p>for people who use sign language. Education providers can apply for additional funding for organising instruction in Roma and Sami languages and in migrant learners' languages. Education providers also organise preparatory education for migrants to enable them to enter basic or upper-secondary education.</p> <p><i>Preparatory education</i></p> <p>Preparatory education for basic education is available for children and young people of immigrant backgrounds (aged 6–17 years) whose Finnish language skills are not adequate to study in Finnish-speaking groups in early childhood education and comprehensive education. During preparatory education, pupils learn Finnish and the skills necessary for comprehensive education. Every learner receives an individual education plan, which defines the objectives of preparatory education. Preparatory education is offered for 24–26 hours a week, depending on the learner's age, for a maximum of one year (including pre-primary). The learner is also entitled to move on to comprehensive education before a year has passed if they are able to follow instruction provided in Finnish.</p> <p><i>Preparatory education for upper-secondary school (LUVA)</i></p> <p>Over the course of one year, learners study Finnish or Swedish and gain study skills. The study programme may also include other language studies and some upper-secondary school courses.</p>
<b>Greece</b>	<p>In Greece, there are two main supportive structures and practices aimed at increasing equal access to education and enhancing the inclusion of vulnerable social groups.</p> <p><i>Educational Priority Zones (ZEP)</i></p> <p>ZEP Reception Classes aim for participatory, active and effective education for primary education learners with little or no knowledge of Greek (Roma, refugees, vulnerable social groups, etc.) for their inclusion in the Greek education system. The Reception Classes include two distinct sets of courses within the school timetable.</p>



Country	Policy information on focusing on vulnerable groups of learners
	<p>Reception Classes I are intensive Greek language courses intended for learners with minimum or no competence in the Greek language and last for a school year. Learners who attend Reception Classes I attend some mainstream classes, e.g. physical education and arts.</p> <p>Reception Classes II are for learners with average competence in the Greek language that may cause difficulties in mainstream classes. Learners who attend Reception Classes II receive support in the Greek language and/or in other subjects. This can be provided either with parallel support in mainstream classes (second teacher in class) or out of the mainstream classes. Attendance lasts three years.</p> <p><i>Reception Structures for Refugee Education (DYEP)</i></p> <p>A Greek law from 2018 called ‘Enrolment in the Reception Structures for the Refugee Education (DYEP)’ (Law 4547/2018, Article 73) states that DYEP focuses on learners becoming familiar with the ethics of school life and schoolwork. This is based on their individual educational needs, exposure to Greek and European culture and literacy background. DYEP attendance lasts for one school year and may extend to one more year, aiming to facilitate inclusion in mainstream classes. By decision of the Teachers’ Board of the respective school unit, the learner may then enrol in a mainstream primary or secondary class, provided that they are found capable of attending all school subjects.</p> <p>The act Individualised Support Programmes for the inclusion of pupils with disability and/or special educational needs for the 2018/2019 school year aims to support learners with disabilities and/or SEN attending mainstream schools. It includes parallel support and the provision of special educational and specialist support staff.</p> <p>In an effort to promote inclusive education, the Directorate of Special Education of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs implements the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systematic collection of statistics on inclusive education in Greece through the ‘Myschool’ platform (data on learners with disabilities and/or SEN who attend mainstream schools)</li> <li>• First attempt to record refugee children with disabilities or SEN, aiming to place them in appropriate school settings.</li> </ul>



Country	Policy information on focusing on vulnerable groups of learners
Ireland	<p>The <a href="#">DEIS Plan 2017</a>, which replaces the Action Plan launched in 2005, sets out a vision for future intervention in the critical area of social inclusion in education policy. The plan supports the Department of Education’s vision for education to become a proven pathway to better opportunities for those in communities at risk of disadvantage and social exclusion.</p> <p>The plan presents an ambitious set of objectives and actions to support learners who are at greatest risk of educational disadvantage. It introduces the actions required to support them, based on five key goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• to implement a more robust and responsive assessment framework for identification of schools and effective resource allocation;</li><li>• to improve the learning experience and outcomes of learners in DEIS schools;</li><li>• to improve school leaders’ and teachers’ capacity to engage, plan and deploy resources to their best advantage;</li><li>• to support and foster best practice in schools through inter-agency collaboration;</li><li>• to support the work of schools by providing research, information, evaluation and feedback to achieve the plan’s goals.</li></ul> <p>The <a href="#">2017 Resource Allocation Model</a>, informed by policy advice provided by the <a href="#">National Council for Special Education</a>, removes the need for diagnosis and allocates teaching resources to schools based on their profiles. A recent <a href="#">review of the Special Needs Assistant Scheme</a> has recommended that learners be able to access support without a diagnosis.</p> <p>The Department of Education and Skills has reconfigured the manner in which additional resources are allocated to schools to assist them in meeting the needs of learners with SEN. One of the fundamental principles that underpins this model is that learners with the greatest level of need will receive the greatest level of support. Giving schools autonomy to make decisions about the deployment of teachers is at the heart of the <a href="#">revised resource allocation model</a>.</p> <p><i>Department of Justice and Equality – <a href="#">National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017–2021</a></i></p> <p>Both Traveller and Roma communities have among the lowest school completion rates in Ireland. Certain ethnic groups show poorer educational outcomes, e.g. Irish Travellers. The <i>National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy</i> outlines</p>



Country	Policy information on focusing on vulnerable groups of learners
	<p>specific actions to support and promote better school attendance, participation and retention in education among Traveller and Roma communities.</p> <p><i>Department of Justice and Equality – <a href="#">The Migrant Integration Strategy</a></i></p> <p>This strategy document outlines specific actions intended to address particular issues, as well as the organisation responsible for implementing such actions, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• inclusion of a target of 1% for the employment of European Economic Area migrants and people from minority ethnic communities in the civil service;</li><li>• encouragement of schools outside the established education system to network to receive information on child protection and health and safety regulations and develop relationships;</li><li>• establishment by local authorities of networks aimed at reaching out to hard-to-reach migrant groups to help them engage with governmental departments and share information on their needs;</li><li>• development of the second National Intercultural Health Strategy;</li><li>• establishment of a Communities Integration Fund intended to support organisations in local communities (sports organisations, faith organisations, etc.) to undertake actions to integrate migrants into their communities;</li><li>• monitoring of current school enrolment policies over time to assess their impact on the enrolment of migrant learners;</li><li>• inclusion of a language component in education and training programmes for unemployed migrants with poor English proficiency;</li><li>• establishment of initiatives to address migrant needs in relation to skills acquisition and labour market activation;</li><li>• establishment of initiatives to encourage the business sector to play a role in promoting integration;</li><li>• establishment of a working group to examine data gaps in relation to migrant needs and experiences.</li></ul>



Country	Policy information on focusing on vulnerable groups of learners
<b>Malta</b>	<p>Malta published its <a href="#">Migrant Integration Strategy and Action Plan (Vision 2020): Integration = Belonging</a> in 2017. The government believes that breaking down cultural barriers and building an inclusive society that values diversity enables an on-going learning process towards mutual understanding and recognising cultural identities. Malta continuously evaluates and monitors needs to ensure that the education system promotes a culture of dialogue and democratic values, creating a space for community-building at a national level through a number of best practices.</p> <p>By setting up a Migrant Learners' Unit, it strengthened the provision of inclusive support for learners from migrant backgrounds as they integrate into the school system. This involved developing a one-year induction programme for those learners. The programme includes teaching the Maltese language and sharing cultural heritage among migrant learners for better communication and inclusion.</p> <p>The National Policy document called <a href="#">A Policy on Inclusive Education in Schools: Route to quality inclusion</a> adopts a wide definition of inclusion. It includes learners with disabilities, learners with different sexual orientations, learners from ethnic minorities and different religions and high-ability learners. This reflects the cohort of learners who are supported to reach their full potential in mainstream schools. The policy describes benchmarks and indicators that encourage schools to engage in inclusive practices. The framework is built upon a number of themes that guide schools on implementing the policy. This document encourages a paradigm shift, so that schools move from barriers hindering inclusion towards a truly inclusive education system.</p>
<b>Slovakia</b>	<p>The Methodological and Pedagogical Centre carried out a national project called <a href="#">Pedagogical Employees' Education for Inclusion of Marginalised Roma Communities</a> from October 2011 to October 2015. It was associated with the <a href="#">Modern Education for Knowledge Society</a> project, co-financed by European Union (EU) sources.</p>



Country	Policy information on focusing on vulnerable groups of learners
Sweden	<p><a href="#">Law 2018:1098 on Amendments to the Education Act</a> addresses learning and personal development and the attainment gap between different types of learners. It states:</p> <p><i>Learners who, because of a disability, find it difficult to meet the various knowledge requirements or requirements levels that exist must be given support aimed at, as far as possible, counteracting the consequences of the disability. Learners who easily reach the minimum requirements for knowledge or the level of requirements that apply must be given leadership and stimulation to be able to reach further in their knowledge development.</i></p>
Serbia	<p>The legal framework for inclusive education in Serbia includes the 2017 <a href="#">Law on the Education System Foundations</a>. Article 3 recognises equality in the right to education. In particular, it recognises that learners with disabilities have the right to education that respects their educational needs. This can involve individual or group support in teaching and learning or support in a special educational group or school. This law also recognises that learners with exceptional abilities have the right to education that respects their educational needs, which can involve special classes or special schools.</p> <p>Compared to previous legislation, this law is more sensitive to the various reasons why learners may require additional support. It recognises that influences can include developmental disorders, learning difficulties and social deprivation. It also recognises the risk of early school leaving. The law sets forth new actions, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• expanding the right to education;</li> <li>• providing funds for pre-primary education (the local self-government unit's budget provides funds for half-day and full-day attendance, nutrition, care and preventive care of children of pre-primary age up to 80% of the price per child and additional support);</li> <li>• recognising refugee and migrant learners as a group at risk of discrimination, and educational institutions' obligation to organise additional support for language learning, teaching preparation and supplementary classes;</li> <li>• recognising preventing early school leaving as one of the goals of education;</li> <li>• defining the working conditions of inter-departmental commissions;</li> </ul>



Country	Policy information on focusing on vulnerable groups of learners
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ensuring parents' involvement in decision-making, proposing and monitoring measures in the field of education, upbringing and child safety at the municipal level through the establishment of parental councils;</li><li>• introducing a unified educational number into legal regulation, to allow for mechanisms for monitoring the quality of inclusive education;</li><li>• providing support to learners in need of assistive technology.</li></ul> <p>The <a href="#">Strategy for Education Development in Serbia 2020</a> highlights the low coverage of Roma children in pre-primary education and encourages their inclusion. Lower quality education, segregation in education and irregular attendance of pre-primary programmes for a large number of Roma children go against the right to education. Serbia aims to prevent or reduce all forms of discrimination towards Roma learners, as defined by the <a href="#">Strategy for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination</a>. It involves the formation of a department exclusively for children of Roma ethnicity. It also aims to ensure that Roma children have access to quality education and are not subject to discrimination or segregation, that they can complete at least primary education, that access to quality early education is more widely available, that the number of learners who drop out of secondary school is reduced and that Roma learners are motivated to pursue secondary and higher education.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Roma in the Republic of Serbia 2016–2025</a> states that Serbia's education system should ensure the full involvement of Roma children and young people in quality pre-primary, primary and secondary education and greater inclusion of Roma in the learner population. It should also ensure support for the education of young people and adults who have not been educated or who left school early. This involves introducing effective and efficient anti-discrimination mechanisms and enabling the exercise of all minority rights for Roma in the education system.</p> <p>The <a href="#">National Gender Equality Strategy 2016–2020</a> addresses gender equality in the formal education system. Access to education is more difficult for children, particularly girls, from marginalised groups (such as impoverished Roma, children with disabilities and those in rural areas). In adult education, nearly 10% of women and around 4% of men in urban settlements have not completed primary school. In 'other' settlements, over 30% of women and around 17% of men never attended school or have incomplete primary education.</p>



Country	Policy information on focusing on vulnerable groups of learners
<b>Germany</b>	<p>German schools run various support programmes to integrate learners with migrant backgrounds. These programmes teach the German language and help learners obtain German school qualifications. They focus on enabling learners to take part in education on an equal footing with others, involving all types of schools, teachers and subjects.</p> <p>Additional funds are provided for facilities that are mainly or largely attended by children with migrant backgrounds. This can involve increasing the number of teachers with migrant backgrounds or supporting teachers with socio-educational staff from youth welfare. The aim is to enable an effective, compensatory promotion of language skills, taking into account the legal framework. In the area of early childhood education and care, increasing numbers of state-recognised youth or childcare workers with migrant backgrounds are to be trained and employed. Measures to promote the educational success of learners with migrant backgrounds include recruiting specially assigned teachers for German as a second language and teachers from migrant families.</p> <p>Programmes to integrate learners with migrant backgrounds into German schools are organised differently in each federal state (Land). They can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• preparatory classes for learners with migrant backgrounds without a knowledge of German;</li><li>• special classes that combine instruction in the core subjects with intensive study of the German language;</li><li>• bilingual classes (held in the native language and German);</li><li>• intensive courses in German as a foreign language;</li><li>• special support lessons outside school hours for learners with migrant backgrounds who are already taught in integrated classes with German children and need to improve their German skills;</li><li>• greater co-operation between home and school.</li></ul> <p>All relevant measures can be found in <a href="#">The Education System in the Federal Republic of Germany 2016/2017</a>.</p> <p>The <a href="#">BiSS Education through Language and Writing</a> programme is a research and development programme in the German federal states (Länder). The BiSS programme develops, conducts and evaluates activities that support learners from the</p>



Country	Policy information on focusing on vulnerable groups of learners
	<p>beginning of institutional care to the end of lower-secondary education in the language competences that are central to individual educational success.</p> <p>In the project's second phase (BiSS Transfer 2020–2025), up to 90 alliances of schools and day care centres will work on concepts for language, reading and writing education. Some day care centres and schools that participated in the first phase are also participating in the second phase.</p> <p>Many children from fairground and circus families have to change schools every week. These changes are a great challenge for the children themselves, but also for schools and teachers. In all German Länder, mainstream schools are obliged to teach learners who travel because of their parents' work. These schools serve as 'base schools' during travel and are usually close to the host city. Learners attending these schools receive a school diary, have their own learning plan drawn up by the responsible teacher in the base school and are supported to progress in school according to their age.</p> <p>In 2010, the German Land of Hesse launched a <a href="#">pilot project for travelling learners</a> at the Schule am Geisberg in Wiesbaden. The Hessian children enrolled in this school are taught by teachers and online in eight mobile classrooms across Hesse and other Länder, so they no longer have to attend a different school each week. The mobile classroom is their basic school and the school diary is the basis of the teaching work. During the winter break, the children attend classes at base schools.</p> <p>The Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation at the University of Rostock developed a concept to prevent learning and developmental disabilities and to integrate learners with problems in speech, learning progress and emotional and social behaviour. This is called the <a href="#">Rügen Inclusion Model</a>. Since 2010, this concept has been implemented in primary schools on the Isle of Rügen in co-operation with local special education schools, the Educational Authority in Greifswald and the Ministry of Education of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania.</p>



Country	Policy information on focusing on vulnerable groups of learners
	<p>The model aims to answer the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can successful and integrative education of every learner be realised, with special consideration of those who show development risks?</li> <li>• Which lesson materials, special education materials and learning techniques are not only suitable for learners without special needs, but also for those who need more support to face the demands of school?</li> <li>• How can productive co-operation between teachers from mainstream schools and those from special schools be organised?</li> </ul>
<b>UK (Northern Ireland)</b>	<p>The <a href="#">Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (Northern Ireland) 2016</a> is one part of a new SEN framework that focuses firmly on the needs of the child. The framework promotes a co-operative working approach between education and health in the identification, assessment and provision made for children who have or may have SEN. This is to ensure they are supported to reach their full potential and can be educated alongside their peers in mainstream schools, allowing for greater inclusion. Supporting documents include new SEN regulations and a revised code of practice, which are due for completion in 2021.</p>
<b>UK (Scotland)</b>	<p>Section 4 of the <a href="#">Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004</a> states the need for education authorities to ‘make adequate and efficient provision for such additional support as is required by that child or young person’.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Additional Support for Learning Code of Practice</a> (2017) supports the implementation of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, amended in 2016. It provides the legal framework for identifying and addressing the additional support needs of children and young people who face barriers to learning.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Improving educational outcomes for children and young people from travelling cultures</a> guidance (2018) supports Gypsy/Traveller learners and their families to engage in school education to improve their life outcomes.</p>



### 2.2.3. Increasing attainment in particular areas (e.g. literacy, numeracy)

Country	Policy information on increasing attainment in particular areas
<b>Finland</b>	<p>Finland has introduced a web-based information service called <a href="#">LukiMat</a> for addressing learning difficulties in reading and mathematics. This service is for teachers, other school staff and parents. It provides information about reading and mathematical learning and difficulties in mastering those skills, with a focus on children aged five to eight years. The service is funded by the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture and is done in collaboration with researchers in Niilo Mäki Institute and the University of Jyväskylä.</p> <p>The website has two parts, one for reading (Luki) and the other for mathematics (Mat). LukiMat provides users with information on learning difficulties occurring in early school years in reading and mathematics. In addition, there are computer-assisted instruction methods available for reading (Ekapeli) and for mathematics (Number Race, Ekapeli-Matikka and Neure). The service is available in Finnish and in Swedish.</p> <p>GraphoLearn is an evidence-based learning game that helps children to learn to read. By playing the game, children first learn the basic letters and their sounds. Through a series of levels, they gradually move on to short and increasingly longer words. GraphoLearn dynamically adapts the difficulty level to the child's abilities. Positive feedback sustains the child's engagement in playing for sufficient time to be effective. Learning to read with GraphoLearn is fun and easy, so the child is able to use it alone. It acts as an additional teacher helping children learn important letter sound correspondences, which are the building blocks of reading skills.</p>
<b>Germany</b>	<p>In December 2003, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder adopted basic principles for the individual promotion of learners experiencing particular difficulties with reading and writing. For this group of learners, schools provide general remedial instruction during school hours or complementary remedial instruction after hours. Individual remedial instruction should continue until the end of grade 10. The resolution of December 2003 was revised in November 2007 and enhanced by principles governing support for learners who experience particular difficulties in mathematics. For schools with compulsory sports lessons, adapted physical education may also be offered.</p> <p>The SINUS national project is a trademark for improving mathematics and science education in Germany. The project was initially planned for five years and started with 180 schools throughout Germany. The project focuses on reviewing and</p>



Country	Policy information on increasing attainment in particular areas
	<p>evaluating teachers' maths and science lessons. Co-operation among teachers has played an exceptional role in the SINUS programme. Teachers in regional associations of schools (school groups) have improved their teaching methods considerably. This school-level approach ensures quality and optimises teaching and learning of mathematics and science.</p>
<p><b>Ireland</b></p>	<p>The <a href="#">DEIS Plan 2017</a> sets out new goals to improve outcomes for learners and opportunities for those in communities at risk of disadvantage and social exclusion. The plan sets down targets to be achieved in certain areas, including literacy and numeracy, increased retention rates to secondary school leaving certificate level and progression to further and higher education.</p> <p>The national strategy <a href="#">Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life 2011–2020</a> seeks to address concerns about how well young people develop the literacy and numeracy skills they need to participate fully in the education system, to live satisfying and rewarding lives and to participate as active and informed citizens.</p>
<p><b>Malta</b></p>	<p>The <a href="#">National Literacy Agency</a> is a strong focal point for literacy support in schools. It promotes and enhances lifelong and life-wide high-quality literacy practices among children, young people, adults, third-country nationals and persons with learning difficulties. It strives to improve literacy outcomes, resulting in inclusive practices, higher educational qualifications and better job prospects.</p>
<p><b>Serbia</b></p>	<p>A serious challenge for the Serbian education system is the low levels of reading literacy, in terms of comprehension and ability to work on text. To tackle this, the <a href="#">National Youth Strategy 2015–2025</a> aims for increased access to education and educational impact and improved functional literacy of young people. The Strategy highlights inequities in access to education, which may lead to a lack of required competencies and/or drop-out.</p>
<p><b>Sweden</b></p>	<p>On 1 July 2019, Sweden introduced new provisions in its <a href="#">Education Act</a> (SFS 2010:800) as a guarantee for early support measures. According to the <a href="#">Read, Write, Count guarantee</a>, early support should be put into pre-primary schools, primary schools, compulsory schools, special schools and Sami schools. The guarantee ensures that learners in need of special support or adaptations get them early and designed for their specific needs (the right support at the right time). The head teacher is responsible for ensuring sufficient organisational and financial conditions to fulfil the guarantee.</p>



Country	Policy information on increasing attainment in particular areas
<b>UK (Northern Ireland)</b>	<p>The <a href="#">Count, Read: Succeed</a> literacy and numeracy strategy supports teachers and school leaders working to raise overall standards in literacy and numeracy. It aims to close gaps in achievement between the highest and lowest achieving learners and schools, between the most and least disadvantaged learners and between girls and boys.</p> <p>Schools across Northern Ireland have also benefited from the Literacy and Numeracy Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 CPD (continuing professional development) Project. Funded by the Department of Education, this project started in 2014 and ran until the end of March 2020. It aimed to improve pedagogy in literacy and numeracy to raise standards and improve attainment. In particular, it strove to ensure progress in attainment during Key Stage 3 (secondary education) by improving learners' transition from primary to post-primary school. In 2018–2019, the programme was extended to include development for middle leaders. This programme serves the most disadvantaged learners in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>In 2019–2020, funding is being provided to support a programme to improve the quality of the delivery of the Key Stage 3 curriculum with participating schools. It focuses on using action research and collaborative working to review the effectiveness of current curriculum implementation.</p>
<b>UK (Scotland)</b>	<p>Scotland's national plan to raise standards in education includes the <a href="#">Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC)</a>. The SAC is designed to raise attainment in literacy, numeracy, health and well-being and to close the poverty-related attainment gap. Pupil Equity Funding is provided to individual schools and the challenge fund is provided to local education authorities in areas of high deprivation (as measured by the social index of multiple deprivation).</p> <p>As the <a href="#">Education Scotland website</a> states:</p> <p><i>The First Minister launched the Scottish Attainment Challenge in February 2015 to bring a greater sense of urgency and priority to [closing the poverty gap]. It is underpinned by <a href="#">The National Improvement Framework</a>, Curriculum for Excellence and Getting it Right for Every Child.</i></p> <p>For example, the holistic strategy of <a href="#">Glasgow's Improvement Challenge</a> (2015–2020) seeks to raise attainment and achievement for all learners. It aims to improve numeracy and literacy across Glasgow's primary schools through a</p>



Country	Policy information on increasing attainment in particular areas
	two-pronged approach. One part is Glasgow Counts, which aims to raise attainment in numeracy, and the other is Literacy for All, which aims to raise attainment in literacy.

#### 2.2.4. Supporting learners and schools with lower outcomes

Country	Policy information on supporting learners and schools with lower outcomes
<b>Estonia</b>	<p>Within the <a href="#">Basic Schools and Upper-Secondary Schools Act</a>, § 46 outlines the ‘duties of school and owner of school upon identification and implementation of required support’. It states that schools should provide:</p> <p><i>... a student who has difficulties in performing the duty to attend school or lags behind in achieving the study outcomes with general support, which involves individual additional instruction by a teacher, the availability of the services of the support specialists and, where necessary, the organisation of study assistance lessons individually or in a group.</i></p>
<b>Finland</b>	<p>Finland’s positive discrimination funding policy provides extra resources for schools in Helsinki that serve larger portions of low-performing learners. The first wave of the existing positive discrimination funding model was implemented in 2008. The first cohort of learners potentially impacted by the funding graduated from middle school in 2009. An earlier model provided extra resources to schools located in deprived areas. However, it operated with fewer funds and targeted a smaller and different group of schools.</p> <p>The newer model aims to support schools without tying current performance, as measured by test scores, to financial support. Instead, an index constructed using area-based characteristics determines the funding schools receive. These characteristics have been shown to correlate with school performance in Helsinki for several years.</p> <p>The positive discrimination index is calculated based on immigrant share (the number of immigrant families in the area), parental education, income level and the school’s popularity. Principals decide how the extra resources are spent. In most schools in Helsinki, these decisions are then ratified by the school’s governing board, generally composed of the principal, teachers and other staff, parents and often a learner.</p>



Country	Policy information on supporting learners and schools with lower outcomes
	<p>Apart from reporting a breakdown of their budget to the school board, principals and schools are not under the pressure of performance-based accountability. Moreover, schools are not compared using test-based performance indicators. As a result of this policy, significant improvement was identified in transitions to secondary education for low-performing native learners, as well as those from an immigrant background.</p>
<b>Germany</b>	<p>In 2010, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder agreed on a funding strategy for low-achieving learners (see Resolution of the Standing Conference of 4 March 2010). This multi-year funding strategy aims to improve the performance of low-achieving learners. It aims to substantially reduce the proportion of learners who do not reach a minimum level of competence development at the end of their education. It also aims to increase learners' chances of obtaining a school certificate and promote successful participation in professional and social life.</p> <p>Over the past 15 years, the Conference has focused on developing and introducing nationwide educational standards. Its educational standards describe performance expectations in subject competence that learners should meet at the end of a particular period of education.</p> <p>The Länder and the federal government agreed to halve the number of learners without a school leaving certificate in 2006 as part of the initiative called <a href="#">Advancement through Education – The Qualification Initiative for Germany</a> (website in German). This goal forms the second main objective of the support strategy for lower-achieving learners. Within the framework of the support strategy, the German Länder have agreed on common guidelines to promote low-achieving learners. These guidelines highlight the diversity of existing actions and support further efforts to raise the achievement of these learners.</p>



Country	Policy information on supporting learners and schools with lower outcomes
<p><b>Greece</b></p>	<p>In Greece, lower-secondary school learners who lag behind or wish to improve their performance in particular subjects can opt for remedial tuition. Remedial tuition aims to re-integrate learners in the learning process, improve performance in order to complete compulsory education, decrease drop-out rates and increase learners' access rates to upper-secondary education.</p> <p>Remedial tuition covers one to five teaching sessions per day after school. Each learner is entitled to attend from one to all subjects provided by remedial tuition. A 'subject class' is defined as a group of learners who attend the same remedial subject. Each subject class has ten to fifteen learners, but there may be five to nine in exceptional cases.</p>
<p><b>Iceland</b></p>	<p>The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture supports upper-secondary schools with learners from lower-secondary level who have not achieved competences described in the National Curriculum Guide, e.g. grades C or D in reading and mathematics. The Ministry assisted upper-secondary schools for three years (2015–2018) in supporting learners at risk of drop-out/early school leaving.</p>
<p><b>Slovakia</b></p>	<p>The <a href="#">Action Plan for Support of Least-Developed Districts</a> is a binding document approved by the Government of the Slovak Republic. It aims to eliminate socio-economic underdevelopment and reduce the high unemployment rate in the least-developed districts. Education is one of the supported areas of the Action Plan. It aims to create conditions for learners to access quality education in their local area. It also aims to increase social inclusion and to improve learner outcomes throughout schooling and for joining the labour market.</p>
<p><b>UK (Northern Ireland)</b></p>	<p>The <a href="#">Every School a Good School improvement policy</a> sets out the vision for a high-quality education system. It focuses on raising standards across all schools and addressing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged. If a school requires external support to bring about improvement, the necessary focused and appropriate support is provided.</p> <p>An important element of the policy is a formal intervention process for schools with lower quality of education provision. At the local level, the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) assesses school performance. If the school needs to address urgent areas for improvement in the interest of its learners, the school will enter a formal intervention process supported by the Education Authority (and, in the case of Catholic Maintained Schools, by the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools).</p>



Country	Policy information on supporting learners and schools with lower outcomes
	<p>The Education Authority and, where appropriate, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools work with the school to prepare and agree on detailed action plans to address the areas identified for improvement.</p> <p>The Education Authority has a responsibility to support and, where necessary, challenge schools. This includes supporting schools to draft school development plans, appointing new principals and vice principals, creating senior leadership teams and building the capacity of recently appointed principals.</p> <p>The ETI carries out a follow-up inspection within 18–24 months of the original inspection. The ETI considers the actions or changes that affect the school’s work and comments on key findings on the outcomes for learners, the quality of provision and the school’s leadership and management. If the school does not show a capacity to address the previously identified areas for improvement, the Department of Education considers further actions required to deliver improvements for the benefit of the learners. This process is in collaboration with the school’s board of governors, the Education Authority and, where appropriate, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and the ETI. Actions may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• restructuring governance and/or leadership and management within the school;</li><li>• merging the school with a neighbouring school;</li><li>• closing the school and re-opening after a period with a new management team (‘fresh start’);</li><li>• closing the school, with learners transferring to other suitable schools.</li></ul>
<b>UK (Scotland)</b>	<p>The <a href="#">2020 National Improvement Framework (NIF) and Improvement Plan</a> states:</p> <p><i>We have a moral imperative to ensure that all young people in Scotland receive a first class education in their local school. That is why the relentless focus of this Government is to deliver an education system in Scotland which raises attainment for all, closes the attainment gap, and enables all children and young people to fulfil their potential. ... Scottish Ministers have a statutory duty, introduced by the Education (Scotland) Act 2016, to review the NIF and publish a plan on an annual basis. ...</i></p>



Country	Policy information on supporting learners and schools with lower outcomes
	<p data-bbox="524 309 1234 339"><i>Key priorities of the National Improvement Framework</i></p> <ul data-bbox="573 368 1995 568" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="573 368 1469 399">• <i>Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy</i></li><li data-bbox="573 424 1883 454">• <i>Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people</i></li><li data-bbox="573 480 1469 510">• <i>Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing</i></li><li data-bbox="573 536 1995 568">• <i>Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people.</i></li></ul> <p data-bbox="427 593 1984 663">A holistic approach is used to ensure the priorities are met with drivers such as parental engagement, school leadership, teacher professionalism, assessment of learners' progress, school improvement, etc.</p>



## 2.3. Promoting a whole-school development approach

### 2.3.1. Building capacity for inclusion

Country	Policy information on building capacity for inclusion
Finland	<p>The <a href="#">Innovation Centre at the Finnish National Agency for Education</a> 'is an experimentation, development and innovation unit that supports municipalities as they develop their systems of schools and early education to better meet the needs of all learners'. Through experiments, trials and pilots, it aims to understand how 'education governance could better support schools across Finland and to identify, test and co-create new tools and approaches to build that capacity'.</p>
Germany	<p>The development of inclusive education in mainstream schools aims to make every learner's education as successful as possible, to promote social cohesion and social participation and to avoid discrimination. Diversity is part of the real world and is the responsibility of all schools to embrace. Schools need to take the different aspects of diversity into account. This includes disabilities based on the <a href="#">United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</a> (2006). It also includes language, living situation, cultural and religious orientation, gender and special gifts and talents.</p> <p>According to the <a href="#">Educating teachers to embrace diversity</a> joint recommendations:</p> <p><i>Teachers need professional competences to allow them to recognise pupils' special gifts and any disadvantages, impediments and other obstacles that they might exhibit or experience and to put in place appropriate pedagogical measures for prevention or support. Cooperation and communication between teachers in different teaching functions and between the various professions are gaining in importance. Therefore, degree programmes which lead to a teaching position in any type of school and at any level of schooling should prepare prospective teachers cooperatively to take a constructive and professional approach to diversity.</i></p> <p>The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder issued a recommendation entitled <i>Inclusive education of children and young people with disabilities in schools</i> in 2011. Inclusive education issues are expected to gain substance and authority within the national Standards for Teacher Training in the Educational Sciences and the Jointly Issued Content Requirements of the Federal States for Academic Disciplines and Subject-Specific Didactics in Teacher Education, thus creating the necessary framework for teacher education curricula.</p>



Country	Policy information on building capacity for inclusion
Greece	<p>Greece has a broad institutional framework for supportive structures and practices aimed at enhancing schools' inclusive capacity. These are linked to increasing equal access to education, enhancing vulnerable social groups and implementing compensatory education programmes. Part of this framework regulates the connection of schools and support services. This includes school co-operation with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the Educational and Counselling Support Centres, which support schools and teachers on issues of inclusive education;</li><li>• the Regional Centres for Educational Planning (PEKES), which provide scientific and pedagogical support for teachers to tackle exclusion and discrimination.</li></ul> <p>A recent Greek law (4547/2018) promotes the operation of School Networks of Education and Support and Inter-disciplinary Educational Evaluation and Support Committees. According to Article 11 of this law, each teacher or member of the Special Educational Staff of the Educational and Counselling Support Centres assumes responsibility for a cluster of schools and acts as a contact person.</p> <p>Article 48 of the law introduces teacher groups in schools. These groups comprise teachers who teach the same or relevant subjects or the same class and have regular meetings throughout the year. Additionally, according to § 2 of the law:</p> <p><i>The Directorates of Education establish clusters of neighbouring schools, comprising 5 to 10 schools. Each school unit is represented in the cluster of schools by the Principal and the Deputy Principal, or if there is no Deputy Principal, by a teacher selected by the Teachers' Board. Small schools are represented by their Supervisor. The Teachers' Boards of the cluster of schools keep contact and exchange information regarding training initiatives, activities and participation in various educational programmes with a view to increase collaboration of their school communities. The representatives of the school units of the co-operating cluster of schools meet at least three times during the school year, to exchange ideas, proposals and concerns regarding the development of initiatives and action plans to solve pedagogical problems, with a focus on educational task planning.</i></p>



Country	Policy information on building capacity for inclusion
	<p>The PEKES aim to train 540 Co-ordinators of Pedagogical Tasks. Staff at the centres are responsible for educational planning, monitoring, co-ordination and support of educational tasks, inclusive education, scientific and pedagogical support for teachers and support for planning and evaluating educational tasks at the regional level.</p>
<b>Iceland</b>	<p>In Iceland, the evaluation of school activities is, by law, part of the supervisory work of schools and school authorities. This is to ensure the rights of learners and promote school improvement. In addition, the Ministry of Education stipulates a three-year plan for external evaluation, surveys and evaluations to provide information about the execution of school activities in pre-primary schools, compulsory schools and upper-secondary schools.</p>
<b>Ireland</b>	<p>In recent years, initial teacher education programmes have developed to include compulsory modules on inclusion for student teachers. Since 2012, schools are formally required to engage in self-evaluation processes aimed at improving teachers' approaches and learners' experiences. This process has been further supported by the publication of the 'Looking at Our School' quality framework in 2016. This framework is designed to support schools' internal self-evaluation processes and external inspection. The framework sets out standards across a range of areas in leadership and management and teaching and learning.</p> <p>A broad range of support is available to teachers to support their inclusion practices. The <a href="#">National Council for Special Education</a> regional support service and other teacher support services, including the <a href="#">Professional Development Service for Teachers</a> and the <a href="#">Junior Cycle for Teachers</a>, help schools to build their capacity for inclusion.</p> <p>The <a href="#">National Council for Curriculum and Assessment</a> has supported schools' work to be more inclusive by publishing the Level 1 and Level 2 learning programmes. These aim to support learners with mild, moderate, severe or profound learning disabilities to engage in state-accredited learning.</p> <p>The Department of Education and Skills Inspectorate operates a comprehensive external evaluation programme using a range of <a href="#">inspection models</a>. Some of these inspection models focus on evaluating whole-school efforts to meet the needs of children most at risk of failing in the school system (e.g. DEIS evaluations, SEN inspections, inspections of schools attached to special care units).</p>



Country	Policy information on building capacity for inclusion
Slovakia	<p>The following national projects include objectives for improving competences of pedagogical and professional staff in inclusive education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>School Open to All</b> is aimed at pedagogical and professional staff in schools and counselling centres. It focuses on improving the results and competences of learners, improving competences of pedagogical and professional staff in the field of inclusive education and preventing misclassification of children from marginalised Roma communities into special classes. The project is funded by the EU Structural Funds and Operational Programme Human Resources.</li> <li>• <b>Inclusive Education (PRINED)</b>, carried out in 2014 and 2015, was aimed at primary schools and kindergartens. The objective was to improve the readiness of children from marginalised Roma communities for education, support their social inclusion and create inclusive teams of psychologists, special pedagogues, teacher assistants and social pedagogues. The project was co-financed by EU resources from the Operational Programme Education, Priority Axis 2.</li> <li>• <a href="#"><u>More Successful in Primary School II</u></a> (2018–2019) is a follow-up to the national project called More Successful in Primary School I. The project aims to create inclusive teams in primary schools (school psychologists, special pedagogues, social pedagogues, teacher assistants). It is funded by the EU Structural Funds and Operational Programme Human Resources, Priority Axis Education.</li> </ul>
Serbia	<p>The <i>Action Plan for Implementation of the Strategy for Education Development in Serbia 2020</i> includes the following priority activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• establish an early identification system for learners at risk of leaving education or at high risk of not being included in education and develop a prevention, intervention and compensation system in case of early drop-out;</li> <li>• improve the system of educational support for learners from vulnerable groups by developing resource centres for additional support to learners, teachers and parents (Article 54, Law on the Foundations of the Education System, <i>Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia</i> Nos. 88/2017, 27/2018 and 10/2019);</li> <li>• establish a monitoring system for the inclusive education process at national, local and institutional levels;</li> </ul>



Country	Policy information on building capacity for inclusion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• further develop inclusive education competencies of employees in educational institutions through various training programmes.</li> </ul> <p>The role of local self-government in developing pre-primary institutions is important in this sense. According to the Strategy, it should:</p> <p><i>... develop and maintain inclusive education policy, be flexibly organised, apply interactive and active methods of educational activities aimed at children, be active in the exercise of children’s rights, open to the local community, organise programmes for children from the local community who are not covered by the mentioned institutions and promote intensive co-operation with parents and other social partners from the local community.</i></p> <p>The Monitoring Framework for Inclusive Education includes indicators of inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups, such as coverage by mainstream education, school drop-out, active participation in school and out-of-school activities and performance of learners from vulnerable groups in education process development. It also includes implementation and monitoring of individual education plans and teaching and co-operation of various inclusive education stakeholders. These have been indicated as important aspects of inclusive education that need to be improved in Serbia’s education system.</p>
<b>UK (Northern Ireland)</b>	<p>Northern Ireland ensures that schools deliver teaching and learning to the highest standards. A range of policies is in place to identify and address issues. <i>Every School a Good School</i> and <i>Count, Read: Succeed</i> are key departmental policies. The Education and Training Inspectorate also provides a vital independent check on school’s standards of teaching and learning.</p> <p>The <b>School Development Plan</b> is the school’s strategic plan for improvement. It brings together the school’s priorities, the main actions that will be taken to raise standards, the resources dedicated to these actions and the key outcomes to be achieved. Through effective self-evaluation, schools identify areas for improvement and implement changes that can improve learner outcomes.</p> <p><b>School Development Days</b> allow schools to take up to five days for self-evaluation and continuing professional development in pursuit of school improvement and raising of standards. These days are devoted to matters identified in School Development Plans as priorities for school development and improvement. The days should involve all staff, teaching and</p>



Country	Policy information on building capacity for inclusion
	<p>non-teaching, in development activities. Schools are asked to set aside at least one School Development Day per academic year for whole-school development to support learners with SEN.</p> <p>The Education and Training Inspectorate provides external, professional evaluation of provision in schools. Inspection is important to ensuring the safe and proper delivery of education within individual schools. It is a key part of the school improvement process. The <a href="#">Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework</a> is a resource that supports schools in the process of self-evaluation. It transparently publishes the key indicators of its inspection process.</p> <p>The parental engagement campaign '<a href="#">Give your child a helping hand</a>' encourages parents and carers to support their children's education by giving them 'a helping hand'. This includes reading and counting with them from an early age, showing an interest in their day at school, talking to them about their homework and helping them make decisions now that will shape them into the adults they will become.</p>
<b>UK (Scotland)</b>	<p>National and international evidence-based research informs national and local policy and promotes effective practice in schools. At the local level, professional learning and support enable schools and practitioners to be more inclusive and equitable in their practice. This is achieved through capacity building, which focuses on developing teachers' skills and knowledge to raise attainment and promote the well-being of all learners. The system is moving away from top-down, directly delivered, generic and centralised supports. It is moving towards supporting co-design and development of local policies, strategies, resources and professional learning.</p> <p>Recent national policy changes in educational governance have the potential to directly affect 'capacity' at the school, local and regional levels to reduce or prevent school failure. These are outlined below.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Education Bill Policy Ambition – Joint Agreement</a> sets out agreed principles and measures to support and encourage the empowerment of schools in Scotland. The following four principles form the basis of system-wide improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a Head Teachers' Charter where head teachers have more control over their curriculum, school improvement, staffing and how delegated funding is used;</li> <li>• parental and community engagement;</li> </ul>



Country	Policy information on building capacity for inclusion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• learner participation;</li><li>• Regional Improvement Collaboratives.</li></ul> <p>So far, 13 recommendations have come out of the <a href="#">Thematic Inspection of Readiness for Empowerment</a> for national, local and school-level development priorities. Another intended outcome of the Joint Agreement is the de-centralisation of funding and decision-making. This should enable the system to be more responsive to local needs at school level.</p> <p>The proposed <a href="#">Empowering Schools: A Consultation on the provisions of the Education (Scotland) Bill</a> includes provisions to reform how schools are run and put schools in charge of key decisions about a learner’s education. These reforms would enable the education system to give every child the best start in life and to close the poverty-related attainment gap.</p> <p>The Bill aims to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• more freedom to make choices about curriculum, improvement and funding at the school level;</li><li>• more freedom for head teachers to choose school staff and management structure;</li><li>• new Regional Improvement Collaboratives to provide streamlined and strengthened support for teachers, drawing on experts from local authorities and Education Scotland;</li><li>• strengthened engagement with young people and parents in schools;</li><li>• an Education Workforce Council to take on the responsibilities of the General Teaching Council for Scotland and the Community Learning and Development Standards Council and to register other education professionals.</li></ul> <p><a href="#">Education Scotland</a> is a Scottish Government executive agency charged with supporting quality and improvement in Scottish education. It secures the delivery of better learning experiences and outcomes for Scottish learners of all ages. Education Scotland’s support for inclusive education at the school, local and regional levels to reduce and prevent school failure include professional learning and coaching sessions for regional practitioners. These aim to promote equality and diversity of opportunities and improved educational outcomes for learners, with a focus on care-experienced, young carers, anti-sectarian (religion), race, Gypsy/Travellers, English as an additional language, disability and gender.</p>



Country	Policy information on building capacity for inclusion
	<p>The <a href="#">How Good is Our School?</a> (4<sup>th</sup> edition) national framework for self-evaluation and inspection is at the core of Scotland’s approach to evaluating quality. It provides a set of 15 national quality indicators designed to enable providers to undertake self-evaluation and improvement. Self-evaluation works best when staff at all levels and learners, stakeholders and partners are involved in evaluating the quality of education provision. They help identify strengths and priorities for improvement and their findings are verified through inspection and review (school inspectors use the guidance to verify a school’s own self-evaluation). Schools are deemed ‘failing’ if they are weak or unsatisfactory in any of the quality indicators.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Learning together: national action plan on parental involvement, engagement, family learning and learning at home 2018–2021</a> outlines the national vision for parental involvement and engagement from pre-birth to age 18. It also takes into account the national and international evidence base and Scottish education system expertise.</p> <p>Scotland also monitors impact and uses evidence to plan an improvement agenda. Smarter data collection and use will allow for robust prioritisation, decision-making and improvement planning. National data evidence drives policy change and allows for funding to be targeted to areas with the greatest need.</p> <p>For example, in an operational context <a href="#">Glasgow’s Improvement Challenge</a> prioritises, among other things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• supporting families to be better able to support their child’s learning and development;</li><li>• enhancing the leadership of staff at all levels;</li><li>• raising attainment in secondary schools by providing additional supported study and mentoring with a continued focus on improving learning and teaching.</li></ul>



### 2.3.2. Supporting learner health and well-being

Country	Policy information on supporting learner health and well-being
<b>Finland</b>	<p>During compulsory education, all learners in Finland receive welfare support to help them engage in school activities and to prevent school failure. The <a href="#">Student Welfare</a> Act includes two levels of learner welfare: common welfare services and individualised welfare services. Learner welfare for all is primarily preventive and supports the school community as a whole. It aims to promote learning, well-being, health, social responsibility, interaction and participation of learners. It also promotes wholesomeness, safety and accessibility of the learning environment.</p> <p>Individualised welfare focuses on the learner. Services are based on the learner’s right to sufficient support in resolving difficulties. This means access to school health services, social workers, psychologists and other multi-professional services implemented by a team of experts. Multi-professional teams of experts come together if needed to clarify individual learner needs for support and to organise appropriate services.</p> <p>Schools are also obligated to have a plan of action against school attendance problems in their local curricula.</p> <p><a href="#">KiVa</a> is a research-based anti-bullying programme developed at the University of Turku, Finland, with funding from the Ministry of Education and Culture. KiVa’s effectiveness has been shown in a large randomised controlled trial. Most comprehensive schools in the country are registered KiVa schools implementing the programme.</p>
<b>Germany</b>	<p>The local public health office (<i>Gesundheitsamt</i>) has a school health service and is responsible for primary and secondary school health care. The medical officer at the public health office ensures that the school health service meets required standards. A public health officer (<i>Amtsarzt</i>) supervises school doctors.</p> <p><i>The school health service has the following responsibilities among others:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>to carry out medical screening, notably of children starting and leaving school</i></li><li>• <i>to monitor those pupils whose state of health requires regular check-ups</i></li><li>• <i>to perform dental screening</i></li><li>• <i>to hold surgeries for parents, pupils and teachers</i></li></ul>



Country	Policy information on supporting learner health and well-being
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>to advise and instruct teachers on health care issues.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>The staffing of the school health service at the local public health offices varies from one place to another, with differences between urban and rural areas as to the number of school doctors and their selection according to qualification.</i></p> <p><i>The work of the school psychologist covers individual psychological help, intervention in crises and emergencies, prevention, supervision offers for teaching staff as well as counselling on a primary and secondary level. (<a href="#">The Education System in the Federal Republic of Germany 2016/2017</a>, p. 225)</i></p> <p>School psychological services work outside individual schools. They are located in a centre for counselling and support run by the school supervisory authorities. One exception is in Bavaria, where:</p> <p><i>... school psychologists are always teachers in a certain kind of school and are therefore usually employed directly in a school and are responsible for the school psychological service in their school, and possibly other schools too, as members of the school's own staff. The school psychologists are also responsible for networking extracurricular assistance and counselling [services] and cooperation with the child and youth welfare offices (Jugendämter) and other youth welfare institutions. School psychologists are civil servants employed by the Land. (ibid.)</i></p> <p>The recommendations for health promotion and prevention in schools are consistent with the advanced understanding of modern addiction and the interaction of behavioural and relationship facets. They are key aspects of school prevention work, such as strengthening learners' life skills and the inter-professional networking of all stakeholders involved in health promotion and prevention.</p>
Greece	<p>Greece prioritises learner health and well-being by providing various support services for learners at the school and local levels (i.e. provision of social workers and psychologists in schools, Inter-disciplinary Educational Evaluation and Support Committees and Educational and Counselling Support Centres). School programmes that focus on issues of health education, career education, etc., also promote learner health and well-being.</p>



Country	Policy information on supporting learner health and well-being
<b>Iceland</b>	<p>In Iceland, compulsory schools are expected to organise preventive measures and health promotion for learners’ mental, physical and social well-being. Schools issue a prevention plan as part of the school curriculum guide. This plan includes preventive measures against addiction, alcohol, tobacco and violence. It also includes a plan for security and accident prevention and a policy on discipline. In addition, the plan lays out guidelines for what actions to take if school rules are violated. All members of the school community, including school staff, parents and learners, are made aware of the prevention plan.</p>
<b>Ireland</b>	<p>As set out in the <a href="#">Action Plan for Education (2016–2019)</a>, Ireland aims to improve services and resources to promote well-being in school communities to support success in school and life. To implement this policy, every school and centre for education is required to use the School Self-Evaluation process to initiate a well-being promotion review and development cycle by 2023.</p> <p>The Department of Education and Skills’ <a href="#">Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice (2018–2023)</a> helps to ensure effective implementation of a multi-component, whole-school approach that positively affects all learners in line with international best practice. There are many examples of well-being promotion already in place in schools and centres for education in keeping with this policy.</p> <p>In line with the 2017 <a href="#">Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines</a>, the Department lists the following key areas of well-being promotion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Culture and environment</li><li>• Curriculum (teaching and learning)</li><li>• Policy and planning</li><li>• Relationships and partnerships.</li></ul> <p>The Department of Education’s <a href="#">Active School Flag</a> programme aims to support schools and learners to be as active as possible. Schools that reach various levels of engagement or participation are awarded an ‘active flag’, which they retain for three years.</p>



Country	Policy information on supporting learner health and well-being
<p><b>Malta</b></p>	<p>Malta has put forward the <a href="#">Trans, Gender Variant and Intersex Students in Schools Policy</a> (2015). It aims to foster school environments that are inclusive, safe and free from harassment and discrimination for all members of the community. This includes all learners and adults regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and/or sex characteristics.</p> <p>Malta prioritises learner health and well-being through various learner support services. Psycho-social teams in local schools consist of counsellors, youth workers, social workers, career advisors and experts on discipline. These teams work in constant collaboration with school administrative staff, anti-bullying teams, psychologists and other professionals to address existing issues as early as possible.</p> <p>Nurture Classes (in primary schools) and Learning Support Zones (in secondary schools) support learners with social, emotional and behavioural issues. They provide programmes to develop learners’ emotional literacy skills and to equip them with appropriate resilience skills.</p>
<p><b>Sweden</b></p>	<p>Chapter 2 § 25–§ 27 of the <a href="#">Education Act</a> aims to promote learner health through medical, psychological, psycho-social and other special educational efforts. It states that learner health promotion should primarily be preventive. Health visits in schools support learner development towards educational goals. Each learner in compulsory schools, primary schools and special schools is offered at least three health visits that include general health checks.</p>
<p><b>UK (Northern Ireland)</b></p>	<p>The <a href="#">Children’s Services Co-operation Act</a> (2015) places a statutory duty on designated public authorities (known as ‘children’s authorities’) to co-operate with each other and with other service providers to improve learner well-being. It also places a duty on the government to promote co-operation. The government is adopting an overall strategy outlining how it will work collaboratively to improve learner well-being. It will promote co-operation among policy-makers and service providers for all services including education.</p>



Country	Policy information on supporting learner health and well-being
	<p>The draft strategy contains eight high-level outcomes covering eight areas of well-being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Physical and mental health</li><li>• Enjoyment of play and leisure</li><li>• Learning and achievement</li><li>• Living in safety and with stability</li><li>• Economic and environmental well-being</li><li>• Making a positive contribution to society</li><li>• Living in a society that respects their rights</li><li>• Living in a society that promotes equality of opportunity and good relations.</li></ul> <p>In addition to the overarching strategy, supporting structures will include systems to encourage the participation of learners and parents/carers in the policy process. This will ensure policy-makers take account of their views and perspectives in addressing issues of potential school failure.</p> <p>The Department of Education is currently working with other government departments and agencies (including the Public Health Agency) to develop an ‘Emotional Health and Wellbeing Framework for Children and Young People in Education’. This will emphasise universal promotion and prevention through a whole-school approach. At the same time, it will aim to provide additional support for learners needing further help through holistic and multi-disciplinary working. This includes integrated support from health professionals. The outcomes of this framework will complement the existing counselling services available for every post-primary age learner.</p>
<b>UK (Scotland)</b>	According to the <a href="#">Standards in Scotland’s Schools etc. Act 2000</a> (Section 2A), a school is ‘health-promoting’ if it provides ‘activities’ and ‘an environment and facilities’ that ‘promote the physical, social, mental and emotional health and well-being



Country	Policy information on supporting learner health and well-being
	<p>of pupils in attendance at the school’. The wording of Section 2 reflects Article 29 of the <a href="#">United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child</a> (1989). Section 3A specifically references learners who are socially and economically disadvantaged.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Getting It Right for Every Child</a> (GIRFEC) is central to all government policies that support children, young people and their families. It is delivered through services and people who work with families. GIRFEC is based on children’s rights and its principles also reflect the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. GIRFEC also respects parents’ rights under the <a href="#">European Convention on Human Rights</a>. The GIRFEC approach is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• child-focused;</li> <li>• based on an understanding of the <a href="#">well-being</a> of a child in their current situation;</li> <li>• focused on early and effective interventions and requires strong partnerships between organisations.</li> </ul>

### 2.3.3. Developing curriculum, assessment and pedagogy

Country	Policy information on developing curriculum, assessment and pedagogy
Finland	<p>The National Core Curriculum for Basic Education provides the possibility of <b>grade-independent studies</b> to prevent school failure. This is a flexible arrangement that enables individual progress. It may be used to organise the work of the entire school, certain grades or individual learners. For example, it may be used as a means to support gifted learners or to prevent drop-out.</p> <p>The curriculum states that learners may progress according to personal study plans, rather than a grade-by-grade syllabus, in various subjects. A learner’s personal study plan consists of modules defined in the curriculum. The modules are based on the objectives and contents specified for various subjects. Passing these modules is a requirement for progressing in the relevant subject and the studies as a whole. Learner progress and completion of study modules are monitored regularly.</p> <p>In grade-independent studies, modules specify the objectives and contents of instruction in various subjects. Each subject’s modules are based on the distribution of lesson hours. The grade units may be divided into two or more modules.</p>



Country	Policy information on developing curriculum, assessment and pedagogy
	<p><b>Distance learning</b> may be used in basic education to complement instruction and respond to individual learner needs. The authorised education provider is responsible for providing this kind of instruction. The suitability of this instruction method should be considered from the perspective of the learner’s age and capabilities. It can be used to intensify the support for learning and school attendance offered by the school. It can also serve to provide instruction in certain exceptional situations, such as during long periods of ill health. Telecommunications and different teaching technologies diversify learning environments.</p>
<b>Germany</b>	<p>The material and competences that are important to the educational process are laid down in curricula, education plans or framework plans. These may be subject-related, area-related or inter-disciplinary. Inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary work is the driving force in the context of all subjects. Altered forms of learning contribute to a better understanding of what is conducive to learning and how to assess learner performance. In recent years, the focus has shifted to encouraging individual learners to achieve all they are capable of. This is guided by the learning requirements for their respective school grade. To do this, it is necessary to constantly monitor each learner’s individual development and performance, as well as their working and social behaviour, and assess these factors comprehensively.</p> <p>As <a href="#">The Education System in the Federal Republic of Germany 2016/2017</a> states:</p> <p><i>Pupils with learning difficulties usually receive remedial teaching within the framework of teaching in mixed ability classes. To support these pupils, learning groups may also be set up for a certain period of time. ... The primary focus is on differentiating forms of planning, teaching and organising the teaching and education processes. (p. 261)</i></p> <p>All programmes are implemented slightly differently at Länder level.</p>
<b>Iceland</b>	<p>Completing lower-secondary school is viewed from a competence-based, individual perspective. The <a href="#">National Curriculum Guide</a> defines assessment criteria for each area and subject. These assessment criteria describe the level of competence a learner has acquired. Learners should have opportunities to achieve the competence criteria of the various subject areas and subjects in different ways. These are divided into five categories: expression and communication, creative and critical thinking, independence and co-operation, using media and information, and responsibility for and evaluation of one’s own education. The assessment criteria are only obligatory for learners in grade 10, at the completion of compulsory school.</p>



Country	Policy information on developing curriculum, assessment and pedagogy
<p><b>Latvia</b></p>	<p>The National Centre for Education is implementing a European Social Fund project (No. 8.3.2.2/16/l/001), called Support for the Development of Individual Competences of Learners. The project aims to ensure the diversity of education services in Latvia, based on a personalised learning approach in mainstream education institutions.</p> <p>As a result of the project, at least 253 mainstream education institutions are developing and implementing individual learner-focused approaches. They are introducing new learning approaches, such as individualised lessons, lesson cycles, study visits, etc. They are also providing alternative, non-formal education activities, such as thematic camps, competitions and innovative curricula to attract learner interest (in the field of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, etc.). These schools have access to a comprehensive support system (using foreign methodologies and data repositories) and teacher professional development opportunities.</p> <p>In the framework of the project, learners with diverse needs also receive individual support from specialists such as special education teachers, speech therapists, psychologists and sign language interpreters. The project's main target group is learners from grades 1 to 4.</p>
<p><b>Malta</b></p>	<p>Developing e-learning educational content to better respond to learners is a national priority. This includes investing heavily in staff training to specifically explore ways that e-content may address the learning needs of those at risk of school failure. As part of this, each primary school learner from Year 4 upwards receives a tablet to further enhance e-learning skills.</p> <p>The national initiative <a href="#">My Journey: Achieving through different paths</a> has been implemented in lower-secondary schools since September 2019 (until 2020). It replaces the previous 'one-size-fits-all system' with a more inclusive and equity-oriented programme catering to learners' individual aptitudes. The intended inclusive and comprehensive equitable quality learning programmes for the compulsory secondary schooling structure are driven by values of inclusion, social justice, equity and diversity and the four main targets of the <a href="#">Framework for the Education Strategy for Malta 2014–2024</a>. It is also in line with UNESCO's <a href="#">Sustainable Development Goal 4</a>, which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.</p>



Country	Policy information on developing curriculum, assessment and pedagogy
	<p>Alongside the compulsory core subjects (including Maltese, English, mathematics, science and information technology), <i>My Journey: Achieving through different paths</i> allows secondary school learners to blend relevant and quality academic, applied and vocational subjects, in a personalised and inclusive learning environment, enabling them to reach their full potential.</p> <p>Learners are enabled to achieve up to Malta's Qualifications Framework Level 3 (which is equivalent to the European Qualifications Framework Level 3) through different forms of learning and assessments.</p> <p>Due to this important reform, some new education initiatives are in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 77 laboratories have been set up in 13 secondary schools to offer facilities for teaching vocational and applied subjects.</li><li>• The Secondary Education Applied Certificate (SEAC) is being introduced during the 2019/2020 school year. This will be run by the Matriculation and Secondary Education Certificate (MATSEC) Board and will certify nine applied option subjects and five core subjects: mathematics, English, Maltese, science and information technology.</li><li>• An interactive career guidance platform was launched in December 2018 to facilitate career choices for secondary school learners between the ages of 11 and 15.</li></ul> <p>This initiative values academic, applied and vocational learning programmes equally. Learners will be able to participate in different forms of learning and assessments. They will also have the opportunity to reach the same level of qualifications and be equally employable, regardless of their study options.</p>
<b>Serbia</b>	<p>Through relevant amendments, the Law on Primary Education supports a learner-focused orientation of the educational process. It does so by changing terminology (e.g. moving from 'teaching' to 'teaching and learning') and by emphasising a holistic approach to education, focusing on general inter-personal competencies.</p>
<b>UK (Scotland)</b>	<p>The <a href="#">Curriculum for Excellence</a> provides a coherent, flexible and enriched curriculum from the ages of 3 to 18. It enables all learners in Scotland to gain knowledge and skills for learning, life and work. These skills will help them become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.</p>



Country	Policy information on developing curriculum, assessment and pedagogy
	<p>Under the Curriculum for Excellence, there are two main phases of learning for children and young people: the Broad General Education (BGE) and Senior Phase. The BGE spans five levels and runs from age three to the end of the third year of secondary education. It provides children with a breadth and depth of learning experiences, so they can develop into flexible and adaptable young people with a wide range of knowledge and skills. The Senior Phase provides learners with opportunities for greater specialisation and depth. Learners have the opportunity to build up a portfolio of qualifications over the three years of the Senior Phase while continuing to develop skills for learning, life and work.</p> <p>The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) reviewed the Curriculum for Excellence at the Scottish Government's request. The <a href="#">review's outcomes</a> are incorporated into the National Improvement Plan to ensure continuous improvement.</p> <p>The 2016 <a href="#">Digital Learning and Teaching guidance</a> aims to enable Scottish educators, learners and parents to take advantage of digital technology. This can help to raise attainment, ambition and opportunities for all. The strategy sets out a series of national actions and local expectations structured around four objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to develop teachers' skills and confidence;</li> <li>• to improve access to digital technology for all learners;</li> <li>• to ensure that digital technology is a central consideration in all areas of curriculum and assessment delivery;</li> <li>• to empower leaders of change to drive innovation and investment in digital technology for learning and teaching.</li> </ul>

#### 2.3.4. Improving transition between phases of education

Country	Policy information on improving transition between phases of education
Estonia	<p>§ 50 of the <a href="#">Basic Schools and Upper-Secondary Schools Act</a> covers additional studies for basic school graduates. The law includes specific provision for developing learners' transition plans.</p>



Country	Policy information on improving transition between phases of education
	<p>For example, a school may decide to offer additional studies to basic school graduates with mild learning difficulties, moderate learning difficulties and severe and profound learning difficulties. A transition plan is made for learners who, due to their special educational needs, need additional preparation and support to continue with their studies or move to the labour market. Each learner's transition plan specifies the subject matter and daily schedule of their studies. The transition plan takes into account the learner's knowledge and skills, the requests and needs of the learner and a parent, and the school's facilities.</p>
<b>Finland</b>	<p>In Finland, compulsory-level schools are obligated to share information during school transition phases and when progressing to the secondary level. According to Section 40 of the Basic Education Act:</p> <p><i>If a pupil transfers to education or activities provided by another education provider under this Act, the former education provider must without delay forward information necessary for arranging instruction for the pupil to the new education provider. The information may also be provided at the request of the new education provider.</i></p>
<b>Germany</b>	<p>In the German Länder, the transition processes are organised through Länder law slightly differently from early childhood to vocational education.</p>
<b>Ireland</b>	<p>Schools in the DEIS programme are expected to plan for the successful transition of their learners to the next level of education. This is one of the key themes of the DEIS programme. Additional support is available to schools in the programme, such as reduced learner-teacher ratios and access to the Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) Scheme and the School Completion Programme.</p> <p>The HSCL Scheme is a key element of the <a href="#">DEIS School Support Programme</a>. The HSCL Co-ordinator works primarily with the key adults in a child's life to empower them to better support the child's school attendance, participate in education and develop positive attitudes to lifelong learning. The HSCL Co-ordinator role supports transitions from early years to primary, primary to post-primary, and post-primary to further and higher education and employment.</p> <p>The scheme is delivered by 416 full-time HSCL Co-ordinators. These are teachers assigned to HSCL duties either in individual schools or clusters of schools, catering for approximately 156,000 learners. Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, is the</p>



Country	Policy information on improving transition between phases of education
	dedicated state agency responsible for improving well-being and outcomes for children. Tusla is responsible for managing the HSCL Scheme together with the School Completion Programme and the statutory Educational Welfare Service.
<b>Latvia</b>	<p>Latvia has specific regulations on the transfer of learners to the next class. In the Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 591 (adopted 13 October 2015), paragraph 34 of Chapter 4 discusses the transfer of learners to the next class.</p> <p>It states:</p> <p><i>... the learner shall not be transferred to the next class of general education programmes and additional training measures should be provided throughout the school year within the framework of the implementation of the curriculum of subjects and lessons ... if the learner has failed in any academic subject he/she has to be involved in the additional learning measures that are no longer than two weeks and should be completed by the beginning of the next school year.</i></p>
<b>Malta</b>	In Malta, meetings are held to prepare transition documents for learners with an official decision of SEN when they move from primary to middle school and then to secondary school. A transition co-ordinator also supports learners with SEN in the transition from compulsory schooling to further education or employment.
<b>Serbia</b>	<p>According to Serbia's <a href="#">Law on the Education System Foundations</a>, the institution a learner is transitioning from should co-operate with the institution the learner is transitioning to. Joint activities between the institutions should contribute to successful transition and continuity of education and childcare.</p> <p>In October 2018, a new rulebook was published about the right to an individual education plan, replacing the 2010 rules. The individual education plan contains a personalised programme of teaching and learning. It can also include a transition plan for supporting a learner when they are joining education, moving to the second level of education or moving to another educational institution. A plan can also be made to prevent early school leaving for an at-risk learner.</p> <p>The rulebook regulates the criteria and standards for providing additional educational, health and social support to learners to facilitate their transitions. It also regulates the composition and method of work of the Interdepartmental Commission.</p>



Country	Policy information on improving transition between phases of education
<b>Sweden</b>	<p>Swedish municipalities are responsible for monitoring how young people transition from education to the labour market. The <a href="#">Education Act</a> (SFS 2010:800) has a section on municipalities' responsibility for youth activities. It states that a home municipality will monitor the employment of young people who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• have not reached the age of 20;</li><li>• have completed compulsory schooling or have been registered in the country at a time when they do not have a compulsory school;</li><li>• are not attending education in upper-secondary school or upper-secondary school for learners with learning disabilities or equivalent education;</li><li>• do not have an upper-secondary school diploma;</li><li>• do not have an upper-secondary school for learning disabilities certificate;</li><li>• have not completed education corresponding to upper-secondary school or upper-secondary school for learners with learning disabilities with approved results.</li></ul> <p>The home municipality offers young people appropriate individual measures to motivate them to commence or resume education. The municipality documents its actions appropriately.</p>

### 2.3.5. Providing career support and flexible career pathways

Country	Policy information on providing career support and flexible career pathways
<b>Estonia</b>	<p>If a school so decides, additional studies may be offered to basic school graduates who need additional preparation and support due to their special educational needs (<a href="#">Basic Schools and Upper-Secondary Schools Act</a>, § 50). Learners can be admitted to additional studies if they have obtained their basic school graduation certificate in the same year and are not ready to continue their studies or enter the labour market, or were not admitted to the desired educational institution. The duration of additional studies is one academic year. Learners attending additional studies are provided with instructed</p>



Country	Policy information on providing career support and flexible career pathways
	<p>studies consisting of general education, vocational training and development of social and self-related skills. Vocational training is carried out in co-operation with a relevant vocational education institution or employer.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020</a> includes the following aims and measures to prevent school failure and drop-out and provide career support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Providing information and counselling services</b> that help individuals to make informed decisions about their career path (career information and studies, information about employment opportunities, unemployment, wages and career counselling for different professions). Informed decisions allow a person to realise their potential while avoiding the pitfalls of societal gender and age stereotypes. An informed choice of specialisation helps prevent drop-out and creates a basis for the person to be able to use the acquired knowledge and skills later in their work.</li> <li>• <b>Guaranteeing access to good quality vocational education and higher education that addresses the labour market's needs.</b> Financing principles will be developed to increase the efficacy of vocational education institutions, to decrease the number of drop-outs and place greater value on quality. The results and effectiveness of these principles will be monitored.</li> </ul> <p>The Ministry of Education and Research has drafted an implementation plan and programmes to implement the strategy. These documents are available in Estonian (for example, the <a href="#">programme of general education 2018–2021</a>).</p>
Finland	<p>Preparatory vocational education (VALMA) is intended for learners who would like to take a degree programme leading to a vocational upper-secondary qualification. VALMA education provides learners with knowledge and skills that will help later in their vocational studies. Learners can also improve their language skills and their comprehensive school grades.</p> <p>VALMA education takes approximately one school year. During this time, learners have the opportunity to familiarise themselves with various fields and consider what they would like to study. They can also visit workplaces and participate in workshops.</p>



Country	Policy information on providing career support and flexible career pathways
Germany	<p>According to <a href="#">The Education System in the Federal Republic of Germany 2016/2017</a>:</p> <p><i>The cooperation between schools and career advice is regulated in the framework agreement between [the Länder (through the Kultusministerkonferenz – KMK)] and the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit – BA), which was rewritten in 2017. The Employment Agencies are systematically integrated into schools through the state concepts of vocational orientation. The concrete implementation takes place through the schools and the local careers advice service. The goal is an individualised vocational orientation. ...</i></p> <p><i>The Employment Agency is also responsible for career advice for young people in accordance with the Social Security Code III (Drittes Buch Sozialgesetzbuch – Arbeitsförderung – R163). Their career advice service is an important partner for schools and counselling teachers. It advises pupils from all kinds of schools, trainees, students and graduates as well as anyone looking for vocational training for the first time or who wants to strike out in a new direction professionally.</i></p> <p><i>Counselling in schools takes the form of regular consultation hours in the school and in the Employment Agency as individual counselling. In some cases, vocational guidance measures are also held on site during regular lessons in agreement with those concerned. Furthermore, the career advice service can also take part in parents’ evenings and occupational events at the school locations with its counselling and training placement measures. Employment Agency [services] usually begin three years before the school-leaving qualification in the lower and upper secondary levels, in the lower secondary level too in schools with an Oberstufe [senior class].</i></p> <p><i>Vocational guidance for [learners] exist in all Länder [and has become] a fixed part of the curricula and guidelines or regulations. ... The advanced vocational guidance at general education schools incorporates ... information on professional fields, exploration of interests, establishment of aptitudes and skills, teaching of decision-making strategies, practical professional experience in companies, and improved reflection on aptitudes, interests and abilities.</i></p> <p><i>Systematic skills profiling procedures (e.g. competence analysis, career choice passport (Berufswahlpass), skills passport, competence portfolio, Profilpass, etc.) are used in all Länder on an occasional basis or across-the-board for the individual support of learners. These offers are systematised and further developed with respect to further</i></p>



Country	Policy information on providing career support and flexible career pathways
	<p><i>vocational guidance measures within the scope of the initiative “Qualification and connection – education chains through to the completion of training” (“Abschluss und Anschluss – Bildungsketten bis zum Ausbildungsabschluss”). In this, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung – BMBF) together with the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales – BMAS) and the Federal Employment Agency are concluding bilateral agreements also with the Länder to make the transition from school to training and work or a choice of studies more efficient. (pp. 269–270)</i></p>
<p><b>Greece</b></p>	<p>The <i>A New Beginning for Vocational Education</i> policy initiative aims to improve the performance of the country’s VET system and offer attractive and challenging pathways to all learners, including those at risk of educational disadvantage or labour market exclusion. In this framework, the Greek Ministry of Education has adopted specific educational VET policies with an inclusive focus, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provision of newly designed, differentiated VET curricula based on the national economy’s needs;</li> <li>• provision of work-based training and learning both in and outside the formal education system;</li> <li>• apprenticeship opportunities (i.e. introduction of an optional fourth year of vocational secondary schools combining school lessons with workplace training).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ireland</b></p>	<p>Post-primary schools in the DEIS programme receive additional resources to assist them in supporting learners to make effective choices regarding higher and further education and progression to work.</p> <p>The Department of Education and Skills, the <a href="#">Tusla Education Support Service</a> and other partners are reviewing alternative education options currently available. Their aim is to provide a more consistent alternative for young people who require an alternative to formal school-based education.</p>



Country	Policy information on providing career support and flexible career pathways
<b>Malta</b>	<p>The <a href="#">Malta National Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020</a> outlines the importance of supporting inclusiveness and empowering marginalised communities through lifelong learning. This is part of an integrated strategy to invest in talent and provide fair opportunities for enhanced labour market integration and social cohesion. The Lifelong Learning Strategy reiterates the fundamental principles that there must be ‘equality of opportunity for women and men in education and training, work and career as well as in family work’.</p> <p>Raising the quality of apprenticeships is also a top priority for Malta’s education system. The aim is to strike a balance between theoretical and on-the-job training and hence enable the apprentice to remain employable in the long run on the basis of transferable and regularly updated expertise. The <a href="#">Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship Act</a> provides regulations, governance and administration of accredited training programmes for work placements, apprenticeships and internships.</p> <p>In recent years, Malta has also identified the need to continue developing VET within secondary schools. It is doing so through the introduction of new VET and applied subjects. Since 2019, the five VET subjects being taught in schools have increased to nine: retail, media literacy, hairdressing and beauty, textiles and fashion, agribusiness, engineering technology, health and social care, hospitality, and information technology. The Faculty of Education, the Institute of Education and the Ministry for Education and Employment are currently conducting teacher training for vocational and applied subjects. VET subjects form part of the Secondary Education Certificate run by the MATSEC Board.</p>
<b>Serbia</b>	<p>Serbia’s Government adopted an Annual Adult Education Plan in 2016 and an <a href="#">Annual Adult Education Plan in 2017</a>. The primary adult education programme (based on the functional primary adult education model), was implemented in 68 primary schools, with 6,072 (46.6% female) learners enrolled in 2017. This is an increase from 2016, when 5,908 learners were enrolled. Part-time secondary education for learners older than 17 was implemented in 209 secondary schools, with 2,801 learners. In addition, 6,747 learners attended re-training, additional qualification and specialisation activities in 238 secondary schools. In the 2016/2017 school year, 1,158 Roma learners completed the third cycle of primary adult education.</p>



Country	Policy information on providing career support and flexible career pathways
UK (Scotland)	<p>The Scottish strategy <a href="#">Developing Scotland's Young Workforce</a> (2016) aims to produce better qualified, work-ready and motivated young people with relevant skills to be the employees and entrepreneurs of the future. This strategy contains 39 recommendations for enhancing vocational education across six main areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• better preparing school leavers for the world of work;</li><li>• college education focused on employment and progression in learning;</li><li>• modern apprenticeships focused on higher level skills and industry needs;</li><li>• more employers engaging with education and recruiting more young people;</li><li>• advancing equalities;</li><li>• successful implementation based on success targets.</li></ul> <p>Additionally, the <a href="#">Opportunities for All: supporting all young people to participate in post-16 learning, training or work</a> policy aims to enable Scotland's young people to take advantage of job opportunities now and in the future. It brings together a range of existing national and local policies and strategies as a single focus to improve participation in post-16 learning, training and employment. This is done through appropriate interventions and support until at least the age of 20.</p>