

ONLINE TRAINING

Module 2 Unit 2: Recognizing ELSers/ELETs as Active Citizens



Overview of learning objectives

Understand:

- The diversity of trajectories that lead young adults to leave school early;
- The several dimensions that influence students' decision to stay or leave education;
- The constraints and challenges faced by young adults in situations of vulnerability;
- The role of institutions to foster social mobility;
- The potential of education for improving young

Key concepts

ESL - Early School Leaving

ESL is commonly used as related to *dropout* and *school failure*. These concepts are interconnected, but ESL refers specifically to young people aged 18 to 24.

ESL is a statistical indicator.

ELET - Early Leaving from Education and Training

Measures the share of the population aged 18 to 24 with at most lower secondary education and who were not involved in education or training.

Differs from the concept of ESL mainly because ELET encompasses greater diversity of educational offers.

Key concepts

Educational Trajectory

The result of a life course perspective towards education.

A sequence of transitions between educational levels and institutions shaped by individual choices, as well as structural and institutional arrangements.

Successful educational trajectories can be marked by social mobility.

Critical Moments

Events that hold significance for pupils and may lead to school engagement or disengagement.

Do not refer to instantaneous decisions but 'unplanned, unanticipated and uncontrolled' events.

Are characterized by changes that alter the meaning of structures of a life and ways of

Key concepts

Citizenship Education

Develops knowledge, skills and understanding that students need to play a full part in society as active and responsible citizens.

It's based on pedagogical rights of participation, inclusion and enhancement (Bernstein, 1996) According to Bernstein (2000), pedagogical processes are expected to develop the minimal conditions of democracy through a set of three key rights:

- the right to individual enhancement;
- the right to social inclusion;
- the right to political participation

Citizenship Education and **Rights**:

- to be recognized;
- to be heard and make a difference;
- to reflect and act upon own life contexts.

Citizenship Education and **Knowledge**:

- right to know;
- participation in the construction and definition of what knowledge is.

The role of institutions, particularly of education as a **citizenship right**, and as means

Why is ESL a problem?

ESL individual consequences

- Hinders young people from fulfilling their potential;
- Leads to loss of motivation to engage in education;
- Puts young people at risk of social and economic vulnerability (unemployment, social exclusion, poverty);
- Increases the likelihood of becoming NEET;
- ESL has been linked to delinquency, mental

and physical health problems.

Mirko's story - a young boy not in education, employment or training (NEET) in Italy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V0uXEoQXpuE>

ESL societal consequences

- Decreased social justice and increased social reproduction;
- Results in less educated citizens, uninterested or not aware of their rights and duties;
- Leads to unemployment and increased dependence on social welfare systems;
- Increased social costs linked to ESL, such as poorer health, increased delinquency, etc.

Understanding the trajectories of ELSers/ELETs

What's the relevance for your practice to address young adult's educational trajectories?

- their trajectories are often only briefly considered in research and policy making;
- the effectiveness of anti-ESL measures depends largely on young adults' decisions;
- to understand the diversity of factors and dimensions;
- to identify and support young adults' (re)actions, attitudes, difficulties and motivations, building a system of confidence, encouraging those at risk of ESL to continue in education.

Some assumptions and clarifications about ELSers/ELETs

- ELETs are not a homogenous group - each person is a unique individual who attributes diverse meanings to life experiences;
- The ELET status is often temporary, not permanent and unchangeable: each person has specific individual paths and trajectories;
- Periods of ELET are intertwined with returns to education, through alternative pathways, vocational training, and/or labour experiences

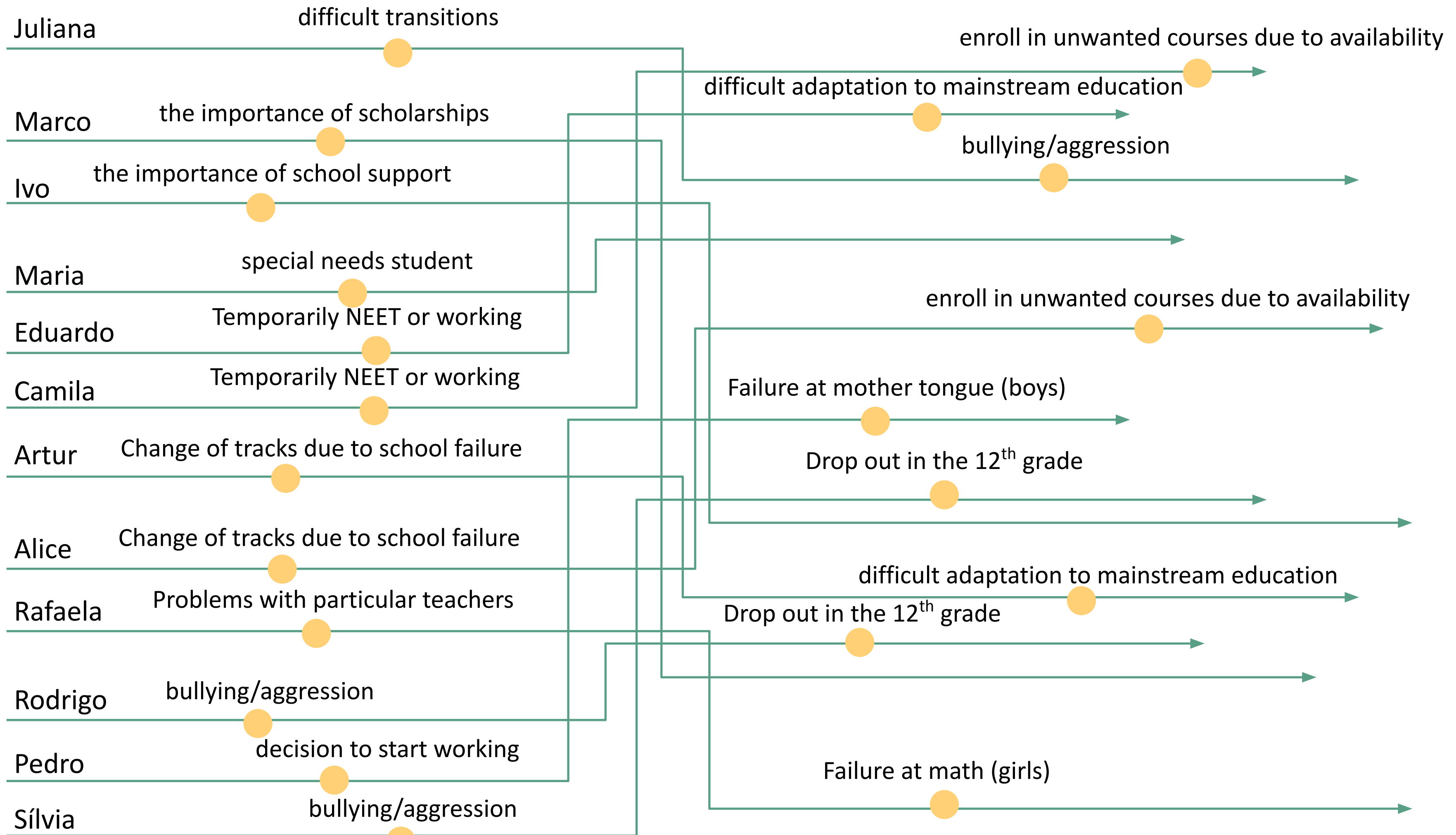
Therefore, this non-linearity of education trajectories of ELET must be considered by those who work with this target group.

Activity

Getting to know some educational trajectories of young adults gathered in the framework of the RESL.eu project




Youth Trajectories



***Examples of Critical Moments found in the trajectories of young adults participating in the RESL.eu project**

Referring to someone as an early school leaver tells little about that person's educational trajectory, the reasons for leaving and the factors that contributed to it.

More than relying on a typology of early school leavers that will classify, labelling and stigmatizing certain groups of young adults, we must be aware of the diversity of educational trajectories, before and after leaving educational contexts, so that we can support and empower them.



Activity

Learning lessons from young adults' trajectories in and out education

In the upcoming slides, we will read two stories of real young adults who left school without attaining compulsory education for different reasons.



The story of Sonia

She's from a small village near Porto. During her school trajectory, she was really shy and did not have many friends, she felt depressed and disconnected from education. She failed twice because of health and family problems in secondary school. After losing her father, her loss of interest in school increased. Witnessing her colleagues moving to the next grade was also a shock. She started missing classes and felt left behind by the school.

She moved to vocational school, but she felt forced to leave it due to her mother's illness and consequent problems with teachers. After some months, she got pregnant. She felt overwhelmed and happy. During the first year after giving birth, Sonia remained unemployed and was looking after her family (mother, boyfriend and son). Now, she had found a part-time job through her boyfriend. In regards to the possibility of completing grade 12 at a vocational school, that will depend on the possibility of reconciling school and employment. Sonia dreams

of having her own business ***Example of trajectory found among young adults participating in the RESL.eu project**

The story of Pedro

Pedro has an immigrant background (half-Angolan, half-French) and had very challenging conditions in childhood. He lived in a youth shelter since he was 6, due to his mother's financial difficulties. He grew up without his father. He considered himself a good student and in grade 6 he was on the honor roll. He loves drawing and he wanted to pursue it as a career. When the school put all students living in youth shelters in the same class, he became a bully and started having conflicts with peers and teachers. He gradually became more aggressive, and, in the 6th grade, he got suspended. Students from his class were placed in vocational courses just because were seen as "problematic" but he refused that option.

In grade 10 he moved to an artistic school but felt disappointed with teachers, school organization, peers' competitiveness and pedagogical practices. He left both school and youth shelter and found a job in a café and in a supermarket to be independent and help his unemployed mother. Both teachers and his mother tried to convince him to stay but they were unsuccessful. He didn't feel that not having qualifications was a hindrance in finding jobs. Currently, he enrolled in the army academy and is planning to return to mainstream school as it is a condition for pursuing a military career.

Example of trajectory found among young adults participating in the RESL.eu project

Activity

1. How do you think educational, social and youth institutions reacted towards these young people's challenges?
2. What would you have done differently?

Breakout rooms



Activity

Learning lessons from young adults' trajectories in and out education

Examples/typologies of educational trajectories, as identified by the RESL.eu project

Tomaszewska-Pękała, H., Marchlik, P., & Wrona, A. (2017). Finding inspiring practices on how to prevent ESL and school disengagement. Lessons from the educational trajectories of youth at risk from nine EU countries. *Faculty of Education, University of Warsaw*.



Unanticipated crisis

It refers to a trajectory in which the youngsters' school career develops quite smoothly and there are few risk factors. S/He goes to school regularly and copes with everyday duties. Suddenly something happens (an accident, a death in the family, pregnancy) and the youngster falls behind. The school situation deteriorates abruptly.

Resilient route

The type of trajectory relates to a situation in which the youngster faces considerable issues at school that negatively affect his/her school engagement. There are numerous adversities that are counterbalanced by significant protective factors such as, the youngsters' readiness to actively seek support, accept positive relationships and adapt, that will lead to positive outcomes.

Parabola

This type of trajectory describes a situation in which youngsters who face considerable issues that gradually worsen their school engagement, but after a substantial support the trajectory changes and moves in the opposite direction (including learning difficulties, behavioural issues, etc.) The relationship with school gets gradually worse leading to higher levels of school disengagement, misconduct and detachment from education. The turning point of this trajectory is the power of support and the availability of young adults to accept and benefit from it.

Boomerang

The cycle of leaving and returning to school often happens repeatedly. Thus, it refers to the trajectories of those who experienced periods of being out and having returned to education. Youngsters whose educational trajectory can be described as a boomerang often find their way back to alternative educational settings.

Downward spiral

The educational situation of the youngsters whose educational trajectories can be described as a downward spiral was never easy or smooth. The reason depends on student disadvantaged background and its influence on his/her academic performance (including learning difficulties, behavioural issues, etc.) The relationship with school gets gradually worse leading to higher levels of school disengagement, misconduct and detachment from education.

Unanticipated crisis

It refers to a trajectory in which the youngsters' school career develops quite smoothly and there are few risk factors. S/He goes to school regularly and copes with everyday duties. Suddenly something happens (an accident, a death in the family, pregnancy) and the youngster falls behind. The school situation deteriorates abruptly.

Shading out

It describes a situation in which experience small issues or problems gradually accumulate, leading to the loss of motivation towards learning and an increase in school disaffection. As most of these problems are not externalised go unnoticed by school staff. Therefore, minor problems could gradually lead to disengagement and the youngster slowly shades out of school and quits education.

Resilient route

The type of trajectory relates to a situation in which the youngster faces considerable issues at school that negatively affect his/her school engagement. There are numerous adversities that are counterbalanced by significant protective factors such as, the youngsters' readiness to actively seek support, accept positive relationships, and adapt, that will lead to positive outcomes.

Boomerang

A cycle of leaving and returning to school often happens repeatedly. Thus, it is similar to the trajectories of those who have experienced periods of being out and returned to education.

Downward spiral

Youngsters whose educational trajectory can be described as a downward spiral often find their way back to education. Educational trajectories can be described as a downward spiral was never smooth. The reason depends on student disadvantaged background and its influence on his/her academic performance (including learning difficulties, behavioural issues, etc.) The relationship with school gets gradually worse leading to higher levels of school disengagement, misconduct and detachment from education.

Unanticipated crisis

It refers to a trajectory in which the youngsters' school career develops quite smoothly and there are few risk factors. S/He goes to school regularly and copes with everyday duties. Suddenly something happens (an accident, a death in the family, pregnancy) and the youngster falls behind. The school situation deteriorates abruptly.

Shading out

It describes a situation in which youngsters experience small issues or problems related to school performance that do not raise concerns, but gradually accumulate, leading to the loss of motivation towards learning and an increase in school disaffection. As most of these problems are not externalised go unnoticed by school staff. Therefore, minor problems could gradually lead to disengagement and the youngster slowly shades out of school and quits education.

Resilient route

The type of trajectory relates to a situation in which the youngster has considerable issues at school that negatively affect his/her engagement. There are numerous adversities that are counterbalanced by significant protective factors such as youngsters' readiness to actively seek support, accept positive relationships, and adapt, that will lead to positive outcomes.

Parabola

This type of trajectory describes youngsters who face considerable issues that gradually worsen their school engagement, but after a substantial support the trajectory turns and moves in the opposite direction, gaining a new view on education and tries to return to school and successfully complete school. The turning point of this trajectory is the power of support and the availability of young adults to accept and benefit from it.

Boomerang

The cycle of leaving and returning to school often happens repeatedly. Thus, it refers to the trajectories of those who experienced periods of being out and having returned to education. Youngsters whose educational trajectory can be described as a boomerang often find their way back to education in alternative educational settings

Unanticipated crisis

It refers to a trajectory in which the youngsters' school career develops quite smoothly and there are few risk factors. S/He goes to school regularly and copes with everyday duties. Suddenly something happens (an accident, the family, etc.) and the youngster is faced with a crisis.

Shading out

It describes a situation in which youngsters experience small issues or problems related to school performance that do not raise concerns, but gradually accumulate, leading to the loss of motivation towards learning and an increase in school disaffection. As most of these problems are not externalised, they go unnoticed by school staff. Therefore, minor problems gradually lead to disengagement and the youngster slowly shades out of school and leaves education.

Resilient route

The type of trajectory relates to a situation in which the youngster faces considerable issues at school that negatively affect his/her school engagement. There are numerous adversities that are counterbalanced by

Bohola

at protective factors such as, the readiness to actively seek positive relationships and situations to positive outcomes. This trajectory describes a situation in which youngsters face considerable issues that affect their school engagement, but which do not support the trajectory in the opposite direction. Youngsters who do not successfully complete school. The availability of young adults to benefit from it.

Downward spiral

The educational situation of the youngsters whose educational trajectories can be described as a boomerang often find their way back to education in alternative educational settings. The reason depends on student disadvantaged background and its influence on his/her academic performance (including learning difficulties, behavioural issues, etc.) The relationship with school gets gradually worse leading to higher levels of school disengagement, misconduct and detachment from education.

Boomerang

The cycle of leaving and returning to school often happens repeatedly. Thus, it refers to the trajectories of those who experienced periods of being out and having returned to education.

Youngsters whose educational trajectories can be described as a boomerang often find their way back to education in alternative educational settings. The reason depends on student disadvantaged background and its influence on his/her academic performance (including learning difficulties, behavioural issues, etc.) The relationship with school gets gradually worse leading to higher levels of school disengagement, misconduct and detachment from education.

Unanticipated crisis

It refers to a trajectory in which the youngsters' school career develops quite smoothly and there are few risk factors. S/He goes to school regularly and copes with everyday duties. Suddenly something happens (an accident, a death in the family, pregnancy) and the youngster falls behind. The school situation deteriorates abruptly.

Shading out

It describes a situation in which youngsters experience small issues or problems that gradually accumulate, leading to a loss of motivation towards learning and school disaffection. As most of these issues are not externalised, they go unnoticed by others. Therefore, minor problems could gradually lead to disengagement and the youngster slowly stops attending school and quits education.

Resilient route

The type of trajectory relates to a situation in which the youngster faces considerable issues at school that negatively affect his/her school engagement. However, after an adverse event, the youngster finds a way to overcome the situation and returns to school.

Parabola

This type of trajectory describes the situation of youngsters who face considerable issues that gradually worsen their school engagement but, after a substantial support, the trajectory changes and moves in the opposite direction. Youngsters gain a new view on education and try to return to school. The turning point of this trajectory is the power of support and the availability of young adults to accept and benefit from it.

Boomerang

The cycle of leaving and returning to school often happens repeatedly. Thus, it refers to the trajectories of those who experienced periods of being out and having returned to education.

Mid spiral

This trajectory can be described as a cycle of leaving and returning to school. The trajectories can be described as a mid spiral was never before. The reason depends on the youngster's background and its economic performance. The relationship with school is not leading to higher levels of engagement, misconduct and dropping out of education.

Unanticipated crisis

It refers to a trajectory in which the youngsters' school career develops quite smoothly and there are few risk factors. S/He goes to school regularly and copes with everyday duties. Suddenly something happens (an accident, a death in the family, pregnancy) and the youngster falls behind. The school situation deteriorates abruptly.

Shading out

It describes a situation in which youngsters experience small issues or problems related to school performance that do not raise concerns but gradually accumulate, leading to the loss of motivation towards learning and an increase in school disaffection. As most of these problems are not externalised go unnoticed by school staff. Therefore, minor problems could gradually lead to disengagement and the youngster slowly shades out of school and quits education.

Resilient route

The type of trajectory relates to a situation in which the youngster faces considerable issues at school that negatively affect his/her school engagement. There are numerous adversities that are counterbalanced by significant protective factors such as youngsters' readiness to actively seek support, accept positive relationships, and adapt that will lead to positive outcomes.

Parabola

This type of trajectory describes youngsters who face challenges that gradually worsen their school performance. After a substantial support and moves in the opposite direction, they gain a new view on education, return to school and successfully turn a turning point of this trajectory into a support and the availability of resources to accept and benefit from it.

Boomerang

The cycle of leaving and returning to school often happens repeatedly. Thus, it refers to the trajectories of those who leave school and return to it.

Downward spiral

The educational situation of the youngsters whose educational trajectories can be described as a downward spiral was never easy or smooth. The reason often lies on students' disadvantaged background and its influence on his/her academic performance (including: learning difficulties, behavioural issues, etc.). The relationship with the school gets gradually worse leading to higher levels of school disengagement, misconduct and detachment from education.

To sum up the unit

The diversity of educational trajectories

are important to consider, since it's fundamental that educators and youth workers are aware of the diverse circumstances that push or pull students from leaving school early.

Students' stories

need to be listened to as to recognise that there are several reasons for school disengagement and early school leaving and, simultaneously, to develop effective anti-ESL strategies.

As youth workers

we should consider that by acknowledging the challenges these young adults face, we are more prepared to provide the right tools that will support young adults in breaking the vicious cycle of disengagement from education and poverty.