

# EARLY SCHOOL LEAVING

- Early school leaving (ESL) is a multi-faceted and complex problem caused by a cumulative process of disengagement.
- It is a result of personal, social, economic, education or family-related reasons. Schools play an important role in addressing ESL but they cannot and should not work in isolation. Comprehensive approaches that focus on the root causes of ESL are required to reduce ESL.

# Definition

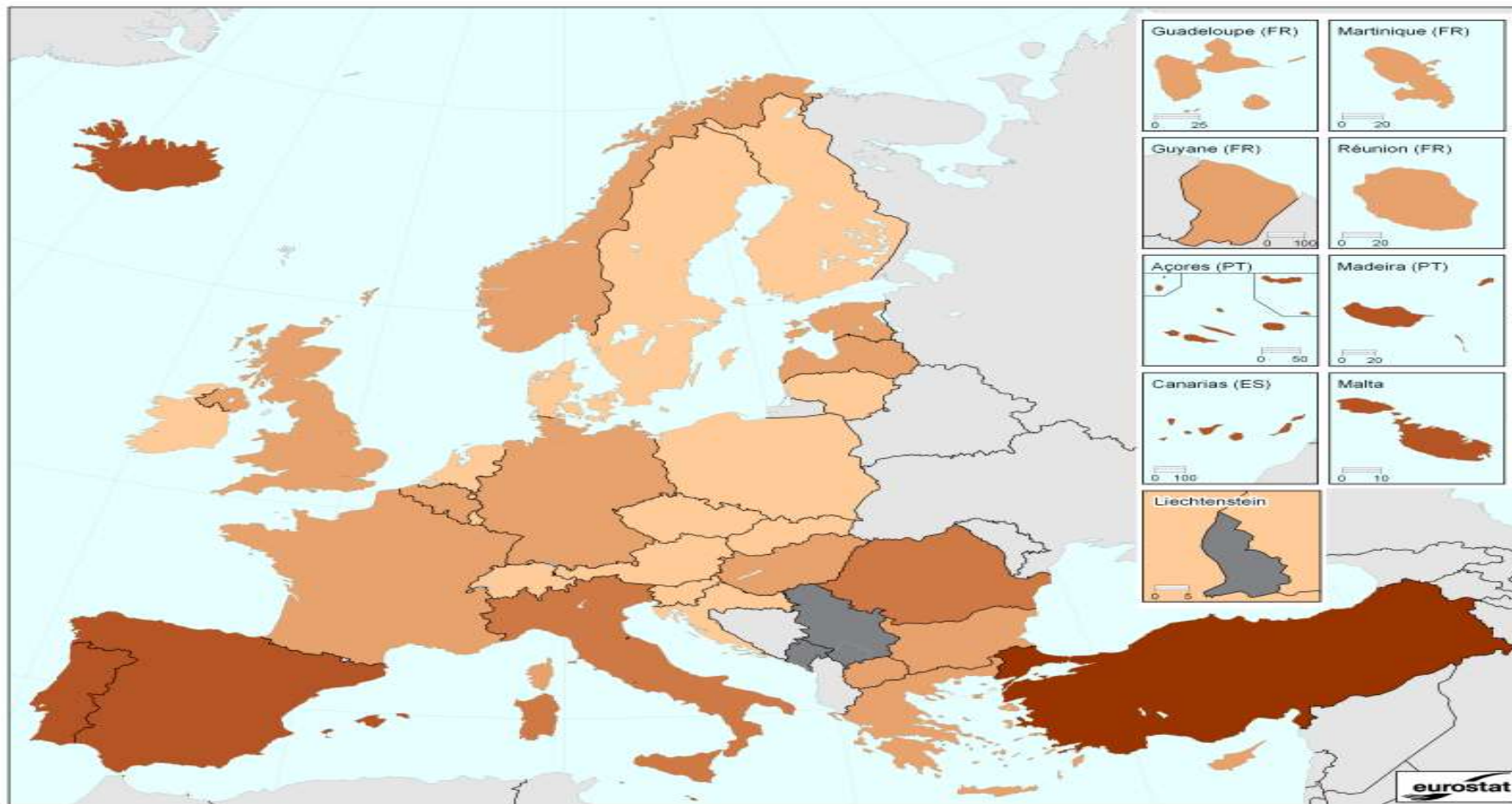
- The definition of 'early school leaving' used at EU level refers to 'those young people who leave education and training with only lower secondary education or less, and who are no longer in education and training'.

# Rate of ESL in some countries

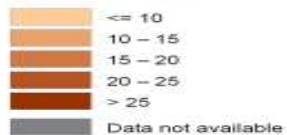
- Turkey % 39.6
- Spain % 24.9
- Portugal % 20.8
- Italy % 17.6
- United Kingdom % 13.5

# Early leavers from education and training, 2012

## % of 18-24 year-olds



Map Units  
EU28: 12.8



Administrative boundaries: © EuroGeographics © UN-FAO © Turkstat  
Cartography: Eurostat — GISCO



Footnote:

Provisional data for DE, LU, NL, PL and EU28. Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (online data code: edat\_ifse\_16)

# Cost of ESL

Research findings show that ESL and low levels of educational attainment reduce lifetime earnings, lead to higher unemployment rates, and to large public and social costs. This can be in the form of reduced tax revenues and higher costs of public services costs related to healthcare, criminal justice and social benefit payments

# Measures against ESL

Early school leaving requires a long-term response with sustained political and financial commitment together with strong leadership from all key actors. This includes policy makers, educational authorities as well as parents, pupils, teachers and their representative associations.

A national strategy to reduce ESL is necessary to ensure a coherent, systemic and coordinated approach, the exchange of good practice, and the efficient use of resources. It requires strong coordination and cooperation between national, regional and local actors.



# Prevention

Prevention measures seek to tackle ESL before its first symptoms are visible. Successful prevention of ESL considers the pre-conditions for successful schooling and the design of education and training systems. It must ensure that education and training institutions and their learning environment (including the physical environment) provide a stimulating learning climate for all pupils. This includes equal access to quality education for all children and young people.

# Characteristics of Education Preventing ESL

- Access to good quality early childhood education and care (ECEC)
- Relevant and engaging curriculum
- Flexible educational pathways
- Better integration of newly arrived migrant children
- Involvement of pupils and parents in school decision-making
- Strong and well-developed guidance system

# Intervention

- Intervention measures are defined as measures addressing emerging difficulties at an early stage. Many intervention measures apply to all pupils, but are especially beneficial and relevant to those at risk of ESL.

# Intervention measures

- Early Warning Systems (EWS)
- Systemic support frameworks within schools
- Focus on the needs of the individual pupil
- Extra-curricular and out-of-school activities to enrich the learning offer
- Empower families and parents to support their children's education
- Raise parental awareness of ESL