



NATIONAL STUDY AND STATISTICS ON EARLY SCHOOL LEAVING BY COUNTRY - BULGARIA

Target group of students aged 16-18

1. Participation of youth in education and the labour market

1.1. Employment and education patterns by age

According to the Law for pre-School and School education in Republic of Bulgaria everyone has the right of Education and can upgrade his/her education and qualification through lifelong learning, as the inclusive education is a fixed part of the right of education.

Pre-School education is compulsory and starts at the age of five, as the state and the municipalities engage themselves to ensure conditions for getting children into kindergartens and pre-primary groups.

School Education is compulsory until the age of sixteen and starts when the child is at the age of seven. The compulsory pre-school and school education at the state and municipality kindergartens and schools is for free for the children and the students.

Education at mandatory age is provided by:

1. Primary (I - IV class included);
2. Basic (I - VII class included);
3. High schools (VIII – XII class included)
4. United (I - X class included);
5. Secondary (I – XII class included).

According to the content of training, high schools are:

1. Specialised High Schools
2. Secondary Vocational Schools

Depending on the level, school education is basic and secondary.

The training for basic education is from 1st to 7th class.

The training for secondary education takes place from the 8th to the 12th class in two stages, as follows:

1. Lower secondary school - from classes VIII to X included, and
2. Upper secondary school - from XI to XII class included.

According to the training, school education is General, Specialized and Vocational.



1.2. Employment and education patterns by gender

As of 31.01.2018, according to data of the National Statistical Institute, the registered unemployed persons in the labour offices up to 24 years from the districts of the participants in the project compared to the largest and the smallest number for the country are:

DISTRICT	MAN AND WOMEN – TOTAL					
	TOTAL	HIGHER EDUCATION	SECONDARY EDUCATION	INCLUDING SECONDARY VOCATIONAL	BASIC EDUCATION	PRIMARY AND LOWER EDUCATION
for the country	12 155	1 063	5 782	3 231	2 492	2 818
Plovdiv	991	71	371	224	170	379
Gabrovo	120	14	88	64	13	5
Dobrich	272	31	145	58	40	56
Sofia	540	28	253	141	135	124

According to gender are:

DISTRICT	WOMEN					
	TOTAL	HIGHER EDUCATION	SECONDARY EDUCATION	INCLUDING SECONDARY VOCATIONAL	BASIC EDUCATION	PRIMARY AND LOWER EDUCATION
for the country	6 305	748	2 886	1 492	1 102	1 569
Plovdiv	518	50	198	101	76	194
Gabrovo	51	12	33	22	3	3
Dobrich	146	20	74	27	20	32
Sofia	282	21	140	84	54	67



Professional structure:

DISTRICT	MEN AND WOMEN – TOTAL										
	TOTAL	WORKING PROFESSION	INCLUDING BY AREAS OF EDUCATION								No speciality and profession
			<i>Educ</i> <i>ation</i>	<i>Humanit</i> <i>ies and</i> <i>arts</i>	<i>Society,</i> <i>economics</i> <i>, law</i>	<i>Mathem</i> <i>atics and</i> <i>societal</i> <i>science</i>	<i>Technics</i> <i>and</i> <i>technolo</i> <i>gy</i>	<i>Agricult</i> <i>ure</i>	<i>Health</i> <i>care</i>	<i>Public</i> <i>services,</i> <i>Transport,</i> <i>Security</i> <i>guard,</i> <i>etc.</i>	
For the country	12 155	2 087	60	108	734	117	535	110	58	613	7 733
Gabrovo	120	18	1	2	17	2	31	1	1	8	39
Dobrich	272	48	0	1	19	2	6	3	1	11	181
Plovdiv	991	168	2	16	43	6	35	3	7	30	681
Sofia	540	56	2	3	23	9	21	3	0	54	369

DISTRICT	WOMEN										
	TOTAL	WORKING PROFESSION	INCLUDING FIELDS OF EDUCATION								NO SPECIALITY AND PROFESSION
			<i>Educ</i> <i>ation</i>	<i>Humanit</i> <i>ies and</i> <i>arts</i>	<i>Society,</i> <i>economics</i> <i>, law</i>	<i>Mathem</i> <i>atics and</i> <i>societal</i> <i>science</i>	<i>Technics</i> <i>and</i> <i>technolo</i> <i>gy</i>	<i>Agricult</i> <i>ure</i>	<i>Health</i> <i>care</i>	<i>Public</i> <i>services,</i> <i>Transport,</i> <i>Security</i> <i>guard,</i> <i>etc.</i>	
For the country	6 305	988	52	68	524	62	155	32	49	365	4 010
Gabrovo	51	6	0	1	13	1	7	0	1	6	16
Dobrich	146	22	0	0	13	1	3	1	1	6	99
Plovdiv	518	77	2	12	27	3	6	1	7	22	361
Sofia	282	31	2	3	19	8	9	2	0	31	177



1.3. Youth employment situation – age 16-24

In Bulgaria, employment in the 16-24 age group is about 23%, that is, a little under ¼ of the young people of this age are employed. The inclusion of young people in the labour market is limited because they lack practical and professional experience in the acquired specialty and because very few employers invest in the training and qualification of young workers and employees. Young people feel disillusioned with the pay and working conditions. Young people find employment in commercial services, and practice in agricultural cooperatives or seasonally in tourism. For the more highly qualified the job opportunities are in the sphere of education, municipal administration and healthcare. There is no opportunity for professional realization of newly graduated young specialists, which limits their personal realization. Employers often require experience and practice. For these reasons, a large number of young people from small settlements, for example, are forced to start work in many cases not in the completed specialty and in the nearby bigger cities and some of them leave the country. This leads to a very serious problem - impoverishment of smaller municipalities and the country as a whole by intelligent young people. As a result of the ubiquitous macroeconomic situation, young people find themselves in an unfavourable employment situation.

Unemployment rates - age 16–24

According to the Employment Agency, in January 2017 the unemployed young people in Bulgaria were 35420. For comparison, in 2012, the number was 74 779, and last year - 37 998, or 13.3% of all unemployed people in the country.

The main reasons for the difficult job placement among young people are:

- Early school leaving;
- Lack of specialty;
- Low education.

The chances of people without education and training to find a job are very small.

The quality of the workforce in the 16-24 age group is worrying in terms of their educational status and the presence of specialty and profession. It is extremely worrying that about 22% of young people in Bulgaria aged 16-24 do not work and do not study and are part of the so-called NEETS group, according to an ESTAT study.

The results of an ESTAT study show that the proportion of NEETs among school-aged young people (16-18 years) is slightly below 11% and among the older (between 19 and 24) it reaches 28%.



According to the study, education is the factor that determines to a large extent the formation of the NEETs group. About 47% of young people in this group are dropped out of school prematurely, i.e. they have either basic or lower than primary education. And 64% of them live in a village or a small town. The survey also shows that 51% of non-working and inactive young people are of Turkish and Roma origin and 46% are Bulgarians.

69% of youngsters in NEETs have almost no qualifications, and 67% of them have never worked.

The most serious problem in this group is motivation. 15% say they do not want to start work or continue their education, and these are the most vulnerable youngsters - those living in small towns or villages, have a low level of education and no qualifications.

Average length of the transition from school to work

The transition from school to employment varies from one group of young people to another depending on the level of education. A part of the young people who complete secondary education continue to study in the higher education system. At the same time, most of them work during their years of training. If we look at the group of young people who are not working, we see that some of them very early left the education system and it would be very hard for them to find a job without education or training. They have encountered significant learning difficulties while being at school and at an early age have lost interest and motivation to become involved in education. Two major problem areas in the education system, which are also registered by young people and the institutions working directly with them, are at the heart of the difficulties at school. The first is related to subjects, lessons and teaching methods, and in particular, the poor connection between learning process and practice, the large volume and lack of focus and structure of the curriculum, the passive model and the lack of an interactive approach to teaching. It is necessary to apply modern technologies in training and to increase the participation of young people in the process of acquiring knowledge by stimulating creative and analytical thinking and formulating ideas and vision for their own future. Efforts need to be made on the smooth transition of young people from school to the labour market by extending traineeships and practices in the real sector. Often, young people feel lacking the necessary information to get the right job. Employers' practice of investing in training and qualification of young workers and employees has not yet been enforced. A large number of young people are discouraged by the payment and the working conditions. They are becoming a potential resource of employment in the gray economy and the insufficient professional skills and practices in a real environment and the lack of professional experience make the situation worse. The analysis of Youth Policy Challenges in Bulgaria shows that the students from the earliest age are forced to start "the first possible



job" after they graduate school, most often in the field of public services, trade and servicing, without requirements to the working conditions. Labour productivity and adaptability of young people are still low.

2. Current situation on ESL

Despite the use of appropriate traditional and new approaches to the implementation of education policy, currently 13% of students drop out of the secondary education system in Bulgaria. The young people who have dropped out of the education system have no acquired professional qualification and their opportunities for return to the education system are limited.

STILL AT SCHOOL AND DROPPED-OUT STUDENTS BY REASONS AND LEVEL OF EDUCATION according to the **NATIONAL STATISTICAL INSTITUTE**

Year	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
IX - XII class						
Students still at school	302684	281671	272487	268395	267540	260515
Students left school	6084	5978	5708	5587	6632	6351
including:						
Because of reluctance	1897	1641	1495	1424	1672	1745
Due to family reasons	3026	3162	3040	2750	3148	2659
Moved abroad	876	910	965	1152	1335	1498

2.1.Reasons for Early School Leaving

Reasons for early school leaving can be classified into several major categories:

1. Economic reasons;
2. Social reasons;
3. Educational reasons;
4. Ethnocultural reasons;
5. Institutional reasons;
6. Health status reasons.

Economic reasons:

Unemployment, low incomes, reduced living standards, and poverty place children in conditions leading to an increased risk of dropping out of school. As a result of financial and economic difficulties, they are forced to help their families which leads to a distortion of their participation in the learning process. Another economic reason is the migration of parents. Often, in the case of migrant parents in Western Europe, children remain in families of relatives who are not interested in education. In recent years, parents tend to take their children abroad for months, and often on a permanent basis.



Social reasons:

They relate to parental disinterest, controversy, conflicts, tensions and crises in the family, negative impact of the home environment, functional illiteracy or low education of parents, incomplete families, children and students at risk of committing antisocial behaviour, students with behaviour that is difficult or in conflict with the law, domestic violence, disregard of the right to children's choice, the imposition of strict penalties.

Socio-economic reasons: Poor quality of life of certain social strata; low incomes - inability to cover costs (textbooks, notebooks, clothes, food); due to an obligation to look after his/her younger sibling; use of the child not attending school as a labour source (supports the formation of the family budget or participation in household work).

Educational Reasons:

Educational reasons also relate to the way of assessment, teachers' qualifications, learning habits, negative attitudes of learners to the learning process, lack of motivation and the quality of textbooks used. The large number of absences, the lack of a sufficiently effective system of control over how they are kept and counted, worsened discipline, violence and aggression at school, low educational outcomes are also internal to school processes. Difficulties in learning the lessons; low interest in the learning process and the following desire/unwillingness to attend school; presence of conflicting relationships with classmates and/or teachers, etc; opportunity for training in a vocational class;

Ethnocultural reasons:

These are the specific ethnic, religious and linguistic dimensions. Strong intragroup norms and the pressure of ethno-cultural traditions among vulnerable ethnic communities and groups predict the specific reasons for early school leaving: lack of cognitive motivation, low level of readiness for school, lack of motivation of parents to receive education from their children, early marriage; parents' fear due to the danger of stealing; lower value of education, etc.

Psychological reasons: feeling of failure; alienation from the accumulated school experience, lack of self-confidence; self-perception: "I have no luck", "I stroke a bad patch", a sense of limited control over events;

Institutional reasons:

As such, an insufficiently coordinated approach between different services and specialists at national, regional, local and school level to tackle early school leaving can be qualified; insufficiently effective control over the management and functioning of policies for the coverage, retention and reintegration of children and students in the education system.



Health status reasons:

In the context of policies for the development of inclusive education, the tendency to integrate children with special educational needs into mainstream schools continues. This includes all the factors of the necessary equipment, the educational environment, human and financial resources that do not meet the requirements for applying the principles of inclusive education.

The reasons for the schoolchildren's irregular attendance at school and the large number of unjustifiable absences are:

- students do not have the necessary parental control;
- students are not taught to accept education as a value;
- difficult adaptation of Roma children to the educational process and educational activities at school;
- increasing demotivation and unwillingness for completion of basic education among the Roma community and the continuation of a higher educational level;
- the poverty line and unemployment among minorities are increasing;
- Parents and students generally recognize their rights as minorities and are increasingly difficult to adapt to their duties and responsibilities. They take advantage of minority preferences;
- lack of legislative norms and flexibility in reintegration of children or prevention of dropping out of school;
- Poor hygiene-living conditions and habits in the family;
- Attracting pupils to work in the family, raising young children in the family and hindering their attendance at school, etc.

Many families are unemployed, others rely on temporary employment (seasonal agricultural work), some of them on monthly child benefits. Parents cannot provide their children with school supplies, clothes, shoes, and essential basic commodities. They live in extremely poor living conditions and are on the brink of survival. Many parents are not educated and do not consider their children to go to school. In this way the attitude to the lack of importance of education is transferred from generation to generation and deeply enters into a comprehensive understanding in the community. The concept of parents that the child does not need education affects his/her motivation. They project their views and beliefs on the child, who gradually absorbs their model and does not perceive school and education as values. Parents' lack of interest in children's education is a major problem because "parents often do not see prospects for their lives and their children to improve through higher education."



The positive change of status requires the implementation of complex measures and good coordination between the institutions of several different sectors at each level of government - national, regional, local and school. The main part of the responsibilities for the implementation of national policy on compulsory education is concentrated in the Ministry of Education and Science, which is a natural focal point for cross-sectoral actions to reduce early school leaving.

3. Tackling Early School Leaving

3.1. Policy actions in tackling Early School Leaving

LEADING STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS FOR PREVENTION OF EARLY SCHOOL LEAVING:

- Strategy for reducing the number of early school leavers (2013-2020)
- National Strategy for Encouragement and Improvement of Literacy (2014-2020)
- National Strategy for Lifelong Learning (2014-2020)
- Framework Programme for the Integration of Roma into Bulgarian Society (2010 - 2020)
- Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination in Education
- Law on Pre-school and School Education
- Ordinance on inclusive education;
- Youth Act

Establishment of an Interinstitutional mechanism for encompassing and retaining in the education system children and schoolchildren in compulsory pre-school and school age, including measures, good practices, institutions dealing with the problem, or providing good training programs to keep the interest in learning. The Bulgarian Centre of Training Firms is represented on the website of the Mechanism, both as an institution and with its participation in the project "Practice Enterprises at School - an innovative educational solution against early school leaving" under the European program ERASMUS + KA2. The Ministry of Education provides different procedures and projects under implementation within the Operational Program "Science and Education for Smart Growth" (OPNOIR), co-financed with EU funds.

At present, under the "Science and Education for Smart Growth" Operational Program (OPNOIR), six grant procedures are being implemented aimed at the coverage and retention of children and students in the education system.

In the field of school education under Project BG05M2OP001-2.004 "Your Time" over 300 000 students from over 2300 schools throughout the country are involved in extracurricular activities of interest and in activities to overcome learning difficulties to increase their motivation for



learning and to develop their skills. The objective of this largest project within the framework of the OPNOIR is to contribute in the long term to reducing the number of early school leavers.

More than 50,000 students are covered by career guidance activities in the 28 career guidance centers established in the regional cities of the country under Project BG05M2OP001-2.002 "Career guidance system in school education". The aim is for children to be directed by career counselors to the most appropriate schools to continue their education.

Nearly 6,000 students from vocational schools in the country undergo practical training in a real working environment within 240 hours under Project BG05M2OP001-2.006 "Student Practices".

Nearly 3000 children and students from ethnic minorities, including Roma, participate in integration activities in the education system. They work with teachers and representatives of non-profit legal entities in partnership with municipalities to ensure the sustainability of the results achieved under two procedures - BG05M2OP001-3.001 "Support for pre-school education and preparation of disadvantaged children" and BG05M2OP001-3.002 " Educational integration of pupils from ethnic minorities and / or seekers or beneficiaries of international protection ".

Future procedures under the OPNOIR aiming at covering and retention of children and students in the educational system:

1) Introduction of a dual training system (DOMINO 2) with main activity training of students from the vocational secondary schools of the XI and XII class on the dual training system according to the existing legislative framework.

2) Adaptation of the systems of secondary vocational and higher education to the requirements of the labour market in Bulgaria.

3) Quality assurance system in vocational education and training.

4) Improvement of the national validation system.

5) Increasing the capacity of the pedagogical specialists to work in a multicultural environment with main activities: updating of the curricula and programmes in the higher schools, preparing pedagogical specialists for the purpose of training for effective work in a multicultural educational environment; conducting short-term trainings for teachers, pedagogical specialists and school and kindergarten principals to work in a multicultural educational environment.

6) Ensuring access to quality education in small settlements and in remote areas. Period for implementation of community-led local development strategies 2017-2023 The main activities are related to improving access and increasing the reach of children from marginalized groups in the system of pre-school, school and vocational education.



7) Integrated measures to improve access to education for the period 2016-2019. The main activities under the measures implemented are: additional Bulgarian language education for children and pupils (including children and students seeking or receiving international protection) for which the Bulgarian language is not a mother tongue; additional activities with school drop-outs by ethnic minority students and pupils seeking or receiving international protection; reintegration into the education system of young people under 18 who have dropped out of school.

3.2. Good practices in schools tackling Early School Leaving

Good practices for implementing policies to reduce drop-out and early school leaving – Ministry of Education and Science

Interaction between stakeholders

- School interaction with parties concerned and institutions - school board, school council, NGOs, local organizations;
- Interaction of the school and the municipalities in the process of reducing the share of dropouts;
- Interaction of the school and the municipality in the process of implementation of policies for prevention of early drop-out, intervention and reintegration of early school leavers.

Informing stakeholders

- Sharing experience in informing parties in the education process;
- Policies to compensate the effect of early school leaving;
- The role of strategic planning;
- School development strategy to overcome early school leaving;
- School policy to prevent dropping out of school;
- Implement early warning system for early school leaving;
- Successful approaches to increasing participation and engagement of parents;
- School drop-out prevention programme.

Building Early Warning School Systems



GOOD PRACTICES IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM:

138 SECONDARY SCHOOL – SOFIA /the capital of Bulgaria, 1400 students from i-xii class/

Analysis of the reasons leading to the risk of dropping out and the opportunities for overcoming them.

Reasons:

- Insufficient school-parent relationship;
- Insufficient role of student self-government in creating a supportive environment for students at risk of dropping out;
- Students in some classes are grouping on a social basis;
- Insufficiently motivated teachers to tackle the problem;
- A large number of absences of students, which is a prerequisite for dropping out of school;
- Low motivation for achievement in some students;
- Lack of specialized textbooks for children with special educational needs;
- Insufficient care and concern on the part of parents;
- Lack of effective sanctions for parents;
- Low living standard for part of the population;
- Problems in families leading to dropping out of school;
- Lack of financial capacity to support children threatened with dropout;
- Negative influence of the friendly environment on the "street";
- Lack of supportive environment around the school;
- Migration processes, frequent change of residence;
- Negative attitude of participants in the education process;
- Insufficiently coordinated approach between different institutes.

School resources to cope with the problem:

- Qualified teachers;
- Interactive training methods, use of ICT;
- Extracurricular activities;
- Opportunities to appear, show and express;
- Creating a friendly environment;
- Very good facilities and study equipment;
- Work on projects;



- Execution of activities for the prevention of dropping out;
- High motivation of teachers;
- Successful work with social services and police;
- Mental health professionals: psychologists, resource teachers, speech therapists;
- Providing full-day training for primary school pupils.

Opportunities for prevention and intervention:

- to apply for various project proposals aimed at financing of preventive dropping-out activities;
- timely identification of children at risk;
- new forms of engagement of parents;
- active student self-government;
- more sports groups;
- expanding extracurricular forms, creating forms of arts;
- expanding contacts with out-of-school institutions;
- maintaining a database, individual portfolio, individual programmes for each threatened child;
- periodic evaluation and updating of the measures.
- Develop and implement measures to support students at risk of leaving through different forms of self-government.
- Develop a mechanism for controlling regular and accurate coverage and reporting of absences in school documentation.
- Preparing and annually updating the Register to identify children and students at risk (not only by dropping out).
- Periodic qualification of pedagogical specialists working with children at risk of dropping out of school.

SECONDARY VOCATIONAL SCHOOL OF RESTAURANT, TRADE AND SERVICES –

PLEVEN, NORTH REGION

ACTIVITIES TO TACKLE THE PROBLEM WITH EARLY SCHOOL LEAVING

TARGET GROUP: Students from the 9th to the 12th class who are at risk of dropping out for various reasons for whom there is an objective risk of social exclusion and there are no forms of social support. More generally, the target group includes all school students for prevention.



1. Applying (participation in) for various projects aimed at financing pre-emptive drop-out activities.
2. Early identifying children at risk by exploring their needs and interests.
3. New forms of greater engagement of parents.
4. Active student self-government.
5. School activities related to student care – textbooks exchange, charity bazaars, engaging in useful and diverse activities and appearances.
6. Effective inclusion of school and community resources in the implementation of school dropout prevention activities.
7. The role of student career guidance - a factor in working with students threatened with dropping out, in view of their future successful realization.
8. Teaching the pedagogical team to identify and address social, educational, behavioral and other issues that put children at risk of dropping out of school.
9. Development and implementation of training, extra-curricular and extra-school programmes to motivate and retain pupils, counseling, vocational guidance and active family work.
10. Engaging the school board and parents in the children's school life - a key element in the approach to preventing the early drop-out of school children.
11. Maintaining a database, individual portfolio, individual programmes for each threatened student.
12. Discovering and developing the strengths of the personality through individual work with students or their inclusion in groups for an extra-curricular and out-of-school activities to give a meaning to their free time. Formation of extracurricular groups according to students' wishes. Class teachers, pedagogical councillors, and members of the students' parliament motivate the children threatened by dropping out to participate in their chosen forms.
13. Establishing an effective dialogue between school and external relevant institutions, with a view to preventing the dropping out of school children - State Agency for Child Protection, Centre for Work with Children, Sports School for Students, Regional units of Ministry of Interior and others.

THE SEVENTH SECONDARY SCHOOL "KUZMAN SHAPKAREV" - BLAGOEVGRAD is one of the schools in Western Bulgaria, where there are no drop-outs. The annual statistically in-depth analysis of the preventive activities that accompany the school year's work shows that this is mainly due to the consistent policy of the educational institution towards realising activities underlying its Development Strategy under the principles of:



- carrying out activities to prevent bullying and violence, as well as activities to motivate and overcome problematic behaviour, which are an expression of the common will and the coordinated efforts of all participants in the educational process;
- publicity and transparency of overall policy;
- through the school's website and media partnership, documenting problematic and risky situations and good practices;
- Feedback with institutions, parents, pedagogical counsellor, class teachers, students and teachers;
- succession - by preserving traditions and not forgetting the good old, equality of all priorities in the development of the educational institution;
- Identification of risk factors - report analyses of pedagogical counsellor and class teachers.

Measures against early school leaving due to early marriages and childbirth: provision of continuous forms of teenagers' awareness of their sexual development as well as their inclusion in training seminars and lectures, provide topics relevant to youth development in the thematic teachers' plans; ensuring the possibility for continuing school in an self-dependent form of education.

Main guidance pathways in partner schools (personal, social support for students, involvement of outside authorities)

Secondary school ASEN ZLATAROV - SHABLA – PROJECT PARTNER –

EASTERN BULGARIA, 240 students from I to XII class

Since 2011 Secondary School "Assen Zlatarov" has been registered with the Bulgarian Centre of Training Firms and successfully applies the method of practice enterprises in classes for project work in XI class and in the practice classes in XII class, as the idea is for the students to get the most practical skills and knowledge with which to compete with their peers from the bigger cities on the labour market.

Thus, in 2011, the first practice enterprise "Greenrest" Ltd. was created by students from the XI class, who accepted the challenge to work in a team. All the students were very motivated, used their creativity, entrepreneurial thinking and despite the lack of a business mentor in our territory have succeeded in building a strategy of a company refracted through the prism of their imagination, whose purpose was to fill the market niche in our territory.



The next challenge was the International Fair TF FEST 2012 "Young Entrepreneur" Plovdiv. They decided to join as exhibitors and also took part in the competitions. As a school, for the first time in these exhibitions, the performance was at the level and the practice enterprise was awarded three first places. Thus, the method of the practice enterprise in Secondary school "Assen Zlatarov" has become a promotional message to those who have to make their choice of a profession in IX class. With organising "Profession Days", "Open Doors Day", in which former and present students, who had been PE trainees share thoughts and experience, answer questions, present their work in the practice enterprise over the years. They motivate those who are after them not to give up the chance they are given. They have the opportunity to get involved in the work of practice enterprise, to give freedom to their creative ideas and be enterprising and not afraid. That is how, within three years, it came to the registration of the second practice enterprise "Biofuture". The students worked with a lot of enthusiasm and were highly motivated. From the very beginning they had decided to participate in the International Fair TF FEST 2012 "Young Entrepreneur" Plovdiv. Everyone's responsibility for the activities of the practice enterprise was of great importance. Participating in all possible competitions gave the strength and the belief of students to show their best. They realised ideas and did a lot of work, so that all that was required to get the necessary vision, experience, skills and strategy. Thus "Biofuture" became an overall winner at the PE Trade Fair - Plovdiv.

In September 2014 Secondary school "Assen Zlatarov" participated in the project "Practice Enterprise at School - an innovative educational solution against early school leaving", under the European programme ERASMUS + KA2. The aim of the project: Carry out a study and create a learning enterprise model to develop key, social, ICT and entrepreneurial skills for 14-16 year-olds at risk of early school leaving and applying the model in an international context with a two - year duration, from 2014 to 2016. The Practice Enterprise training method proved to be really motivating and keeping students at school and in class. In 2015, a third Practice Enterprise "Village Bakery" was established. Despite the varied group of the students, of Bulgarian, Roma, Bessarabian origin, they put lots of efforts and worked hard to strengthen the position of SU "Assen Zlatarov" among other schools and proved that it had a lot to give its students in the direction of professional training. So, in "Assen Zlatarov" Secondary School, from September to June, there was a large-scale awareness campaign among parents and pupils finishing primary education, why to choose this school and what skills and experience they would acquire as knowledge. Organising parents' meetings, general and individual conversations with teachers in vocational subjects, going over the class rooms, answering questions, doing inquiries. Each year, in April, in "Assen Zlatarov" school "Profession Days" event is held. The event is organised by students from the X, XI, XII classes. They use presentations, video films, stand construction to



demonstrate to pupils from VI and VII classes, teachers, parents and the public what they have studied, with an emphasis on the students' work and achievements, in the Practice Enterprise over the years. The career guidance of the students at the municipal level is also carried out through the Centre for Career Guidance - Dobrich. In connection with their transition from one education level to another and from education to the labour market, the Centre provides information on the types of training in the secondary and higher education system as well as on the characteristics of the professions and profiles in the school system. Individual and group work is carried out with students of all levels of school education.

COMPETENCE AND SKILLS OF TEACHERS

- Motivation of teachers for further work on the prevention of dropping out;
- Skills for working with young people at risk of dropping out;
- Increased sensitivity and competence of teachers to counteract interpersonal conflicts in student groups;
- Skills for effective communication with parents and other interested parties;
- Skills to work with different generational patterns of behaviour;
- Sharing experience and work in interdisciplinary teams;
- Good knowledge of the reasons for dropping out of school in the particular school, in the settlement.

In the long run, a targeted policy is needed in the direction of training teachers at school and region level to address and tackle the problem of dropping out of the school system.