

Key strategic and motivational considerations for working with socio-economically excluded groups

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Different kinds of approaches as a multifaceted approach to motivation and engagement:

- Humanistic
 - Constructivist
 - Existential
 - Beyond an individualist approach
 - Behavioural
 - Psychoanalytical
 - Cognitive
- Integrated with humanistic as starting point

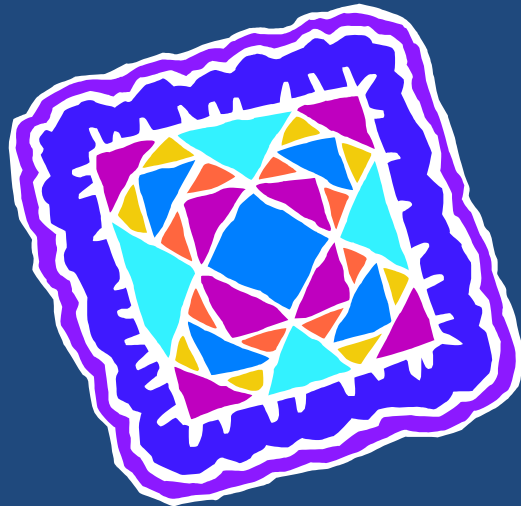
A. Different levels of need

B. Different strategies: Universal, selected, indicated prevention

The three widely recognized prevention approaches in public health are:

UNIVERSAL, SELECTED and INDICATED prevention (Burkhart 2004; Reinke et al., 2009).

**‘Beyond a patchwork’ (EUNEC 2013) approach of System
Fragmentation: Clarity on which Prevention Levels the Service is
Targeting**



- Clarity on which levels the education service is targeting: Three widely recognized prevention approaches in public health.
 - * **Universal** prevention applies to school, classroom and community-wide systems for all students – reform mainstream schools
 - **Selective** prevention targets specialized group systems for students at risk of early school leaving/early school leavers with strong potential for reentry to education
(Microlycee, France: Ecorys 2013 – colocation, common management structure/headship, specialist teachers but interaction with mainstream staff, same progression routes)
 - **Indicated** prevention engages in specialized, individualized systems for students with high risk of early school leaving/chronic need/multiple risk factors
(Fairbridge, Middlesborough, Ecorys 2013 – learn by doing, fishing, canoeing, cooking, outdoor activities for learning – expensive)

– **ALL 3 levels need to be focused on in a national strategic approach**

INDICATED prevention – chronic need – Requires more than afterschool homework support approach (Downes et al 2006), more than ‘mentors’ to more complex emotional and academic supports

INDICATED prevention engages in specialized, individualized systems for students with high risk of early school leaving and their families – Chronic need

The VaSkooli project in the Turku and Salo regions of South-West Finland acknowledges the ‘difficulties in reaching the youngsters and their families, who do not participate in any of the special services provided by the sub-projects’ (Ahola & Kivela 2007).

ALL 3 levels need to be focused on in a national and regional strategy

Humanistic approaches as a starting point

Unconditional positive regard (Rogers 1980)

Relational approach given experiences of alienation

Beyond categorisation/labelling as a dehumanisation

Beyond categorisation/labelling as a dehumanisation

Listening

Humanistic approaches as a starting point

A school principal from the Estonian national report:

“schools can create circumstances where unwanted students feel that they have to leave... and they do...” (Tamm & Saar 2010, in Downes 2011).

The secondary education system in Lithuania according to a school management representative: *“The attitudes towards students have to change and then they will feel better at schools. [...] at the moment students are selected under the criteria „good“ and „bad“ and those who get the „bad“ label do not want to stay at such school – they leave it”* (Taljunaite et al 2010, in Downes 2011)

A positive school climate can be created at classroom and school levels. In the classroom, teachers must be adequately prepared and motivated to meet students' needs through sensitive and responsive pedagogical interactions (Danielsen et al 2010).

Strategies and approaches to achieve a positive developmental atmosphere in schools are recommended for pre- and in-service teacher training (Jourdan et al. 2008).

No sunlight ! (Downes & Maunsell 2007)



“I can’t wait to leave, I would leave tomorrow if I had the choice because I get picked on by a teacher”

“No some[teachers] think they own the school”

Downes' (2004) student centered research in Ballyfermot, Dublin, 12 focus groups and 173 questionnaire responses from secondary students:

“Have anger management courses for teachers” (female, focus group):

“The teachers shouting at you. That makes me really, really down” (Age 13, F)

“If the teachers didn't roar at you” (Age 13, F)

“Have an equal teaching system and sack ignorant snobby teachers...very harsh teachers usually make me stay out of school” (Age 16, M)

Humanistic approaches: Avoiding
Undifferentiated Categorizing
Beyond simple categorizing of students:
Not '1 early
school leaving problem' – a behaviour
with a vast range of
underlying motivations and factors

Not '1 size fits all' solutions for generic
categories but
there can be better models than others
for key aspects
Beyond simple categorizing of 'NEET's':
Reengagement involves a range of
strategic approaches and models
rather than a single intervention approach

Humans not deindividualised objects

- Different developmental needs and interests of parents with younger (e.g., language development, attachment, nonverbal emotional therapy) compared with older children
 - Different developmental needs and interests of parents based on *their* own age differences
 - Gender differences for parental involvement and lifelong learning classes
 - Parents with chronic needs such as intergenerational drug abuse
 - Single parents
- Recognise sharing of good practice involves analysis of strategic gaps

Constructivist approaches

Beyond information based outreach approaches

Construction of meaning (Bruner 1990) and active learning

Identity change through public ceremony

Cultural relevance

Emotional bridge to relevance (Glasser 1969)

2) The need for more proactive outreach strategies to marginalized groups than simply information based ones



Outreach to marginalised groups is a strong feature of Citizienne, Flanders:

- **Within communities**

According to the staff interviewees, it is critical to ensure various learning opportunities as close as possible to the adults. Both interviewees accentuate that one can not expect all participants to come into a classroom. The educational activities should be 'home delivered'. Therefore the organisation makes efforts in providing education within the communities, decentralised all over Brussels (in mosques, sports clubs, pubs, etc.) (Vermeersch & Vandenbroucke 2010).

- Beyond information processing to construction of meaning (Bruner 1990)
- Public ceremonies to recognise achievement and create new stories about people's lives (Hegarty 2007; Ecorys 2013)



Cultural competence and staff from stakeholder groups

Lieberman et al (2011) note that, 'The shortage of infant mental health providers from minority groups has a particularly negative impact on immigrant and minority children and families, who need interventions that are provided in their native language by practitioners who understand their cultural values and childrearing practices'

Key Principles for Engaging Marginalised Groups

Assumed Connection: Start where the person is at

Meaning and Control: Beyond Information based approaches to Active Outreach

‘The emotional bridge to relevance’ (Glasser 1969)

Build on strengths of the learner

Developing mediating spaces for engagement: Attention to location

Cultural competence and communication skills of teaching staff

Holistic view of needs

Student voices being central

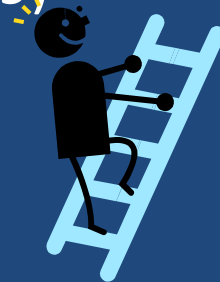


Embedded learning through doing – Fairbridge, Middlesborough;
Youthreach, Dublin,

Gardening – kinaesthetic learning



Embedded learning through emotional engagement - ‘The
emotional bridge to relevance’ (Glasser 1969)



Existential approaches

Fear of freedom

Fatalism: Pathway for hope

Challenging Fatalism and Substance Abuse

Need for strategies to challenge fatalism which is a risk factor for drug use and other self-harming behaviour, including a fatalism associated with early school leaving (Kalichman et al. 2000, Downes 2003; Ivers, McLoughlin & Downes 2010)

O'Connell & Sheikh (2009) explored non-academic (non-cognitive) factors in early school leaving and found strong correlations with smoking and with lack of daily school preparation for early school leaving in a sample of over 25,000 8th grade US students from over 1,000 schools

Beyond an individualist approach

Cohort Effects

Peer support

Interpersonal social aspect

Word of mouth to 'catch fire' among a group

**Lifelong learning as community development
(Freire 1972) and as recognition of prior learning
for community leaders**

4 'Quick Wins' - Inexpensive

- Build in a social aspect – meet new friends (LLL2010 sp3)
- Staff and students eat together/drink tea together (Ecorys 2013, Youth School Lithuania; Youthreach, Harmonstown, Dublin 2013)
- Staff exchange between education sites – more than isolated individuals (Ecorys 2013)
- Festivals, Slovenia (Downes, 2011a)



Behavioural approaches

Systematic desensitisation – Walk before run:

Routinised day, sleep patterns

Behavioural contract: Individual education plan

Not one early school leaving problem

Not one motivation or set of motivation strategies:
a differentiated approach needed

Psychoanalytical approaches (Indicated prevention: Chronic need level)

Trauma

Depression, mental health

Defence mechanism of system inertia

Cognitive approaches

Fear of failure

Fear of success

Fear of failure – Internalising a failure identity – Need emotional supports and public ceremonies to recognise achievement (Hegarty 2007; Ecorys 2013)

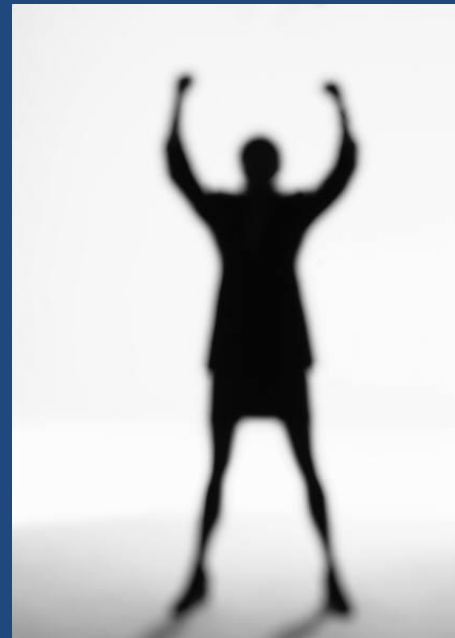
Fear of failure – Internalising a failure identity

A wide range of educational theorists and educational psychologists recognise the danger of labelling students as failures (e.g. Merrett 1986; Glasser 1969; Warnock 1977; Handy & Aitken 1990; Jimerson 1997; Kellaghan et al 1995; MacDevitt 1998; Kelly 1999; Downes 2003)



Fear of success (Ivers & Downes 2012)

Ivers, J. & Downes, P (2012). A phenomenological reinterpretation of Horner's fear of success in terms of social class. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, Vol 27, Number 3, 369-388



Cognitive approaches

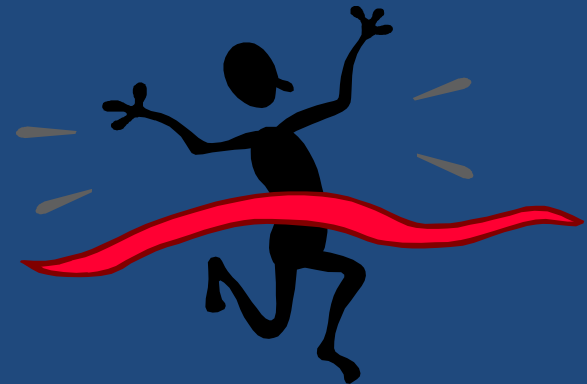
Active control

Build on strengths

Starting point Humanistic...



... Humanistic AGAIN!



Key questions for Business in the Community staff:

A. Which approaches ARE and which ARE NOT being used by you for engagement of those not in education, training or employment or at risk of ESL ?

- Humanistic
- Constructivist
- Existential
- Beyond an individualist approach
- Behavioural
- Psychoanalytical
- Cognitive

Key questions for Business in the Community staff:

B1. At which level(s) of prevention is your strategy working – UNIVERSAL, SELECTED, INDICATED?

At which levels of prevention is your strategy NOT working?

B2. Is there collaboration with key target group members (i.e., involvement in design, strategy, decision-making, leadership roles, employment of them) or merely information to be consumed by them?

B3. At which level of system change is your strategy working?

-Individual only

-School system

-Family system

-Community system (e.g., Gijon festivals)

-Links between some of these ? (Antwerp transition primary-postprimary ?)

-Which of these system levels are NOT being targeted in your strategy and need to be ?

**Self-reflection tool for policy makers
to identify the strengths and
weaknesses of policies put in place**

Cedefop Policy Learning Forum: VET as a
Solution to Leaving Education Early

Self-reflection structural indicators tool

- Not one early leaving problem from VET
- Not one size fits all –magic bullet cause – solution
- Focus on systems and system responsiveness to individual needs - not simply a focus on individual
- System supports can make a big difference !
- Developed in dialogue with Cedefop expert group as first step towards a comprehensive systemic approach

Self-reflection tool for policy makers

- Systemic focus of Structural Indicators – including focus on system *blockage* (Downes 2014)

to go beyond Bronfenbrenner (1979)

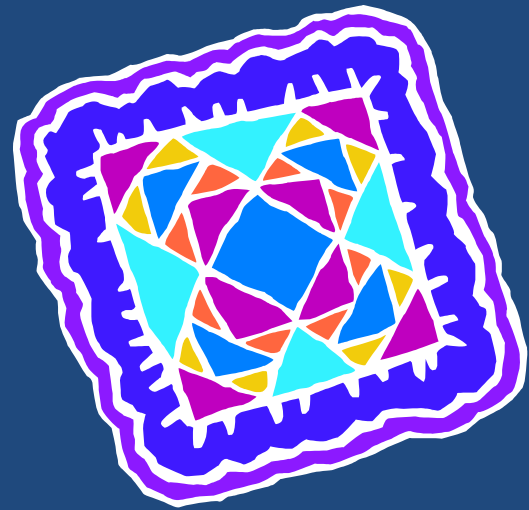
- Downes, P., Nairz-Wirth, E., Rusinaite, V. (2017). *Structural Indicators for Developing Inclusive Systems in and around Schools in Europe*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

* **Cedefop Structural Indicators Toolkit is VET Specific**



- STRUCTURAL INDICATORS OF A SYSTEM FOR TRANSPARENCY: YES/NO ANSWERS BY ANALOGY WITH UN RIGHT TO HEALTH (DOWNES 2014)
- Structural indicators (SIs): Generally framed as **potentially verifiable yes/no answers**, they address whether or not key structures, mechanisms or principles are in place in a system.
- As relatively enduring features or key conditions of a system, they are, however, **potentially malleable**.
- They offer a scrutiny of State or institutional effort (Downes 2014, see also UN Rapporteur 2005, 2006)

- Address whether or not key structures, roles, mechanisms or principles are in place in a system – like an X-ray
- Used here for self-evaluation purposes to guide policymakers and practitioners
- Offer strategic direction as to *what* issues are addressed at system level, while also offering flexibility at local or national level as to *how* to address these issues.
- NB – combines central strategic direction with local autonomy



Key Areas Selected by Cedefop Expert Group: Informed by Cedefop Report, Other International Research and EU Policy Documents

- * Identification of learners at risk of early leaving**
- * Identification and Monitoring of early leavers**
- * Flexible learning pathways**
- * Improving the image of VET and its attractiveness**
- * Second chance measures**
- * Motivating young people to re-discover their interest in learning**
- * Comprehensive support to young people with complex needs (case management)**
- * Guiding young people to make the right choices**
- * Providing professional counselling to address barriers to learning**
- * One-to-one support for young people through coaching or mentoring**
- * Tailoring learning pathways to young people's interests and learning styles**

Key Areas Selected by Cedefop Expert Group: Informed by Cedefop Report and Other International Research (continued...)

- * Helping learners understand the practical application of theoretical courses**
 - * Developing employability skills**
- * Providing work-based learning and close-to-real simulations**
- * Involving the entire community in the prevention of early leaving from education and training**
 - * Fostering inclusive and supportive work-based learning environments**

Identification of learners at risk of early leaving

Do you have the following policies or measures in place to tackle early leaving in VET in your country?

1. A large majority of VET providers have an early warning system in place to detect the early signs of learners at risk of early leaving.

Yes/ No

Flexible learning pathways

Do you have the following policies or measures in place to tackle early leaving in VET in your country?

6. A national strategy which provides opportunities for learners to change to a different type of institution if needed (for instance, from a VET school to another type of school or an entity providing apprenticeships). Yes/ No

8. Individualised support to learners in transition phases (between education and/or into employment) in the large majority of VET providers. Yes/No

Improving the image of VET and its attractiveness

Do you have the following policies or measures in place to tackle early leaving in VET in your country?

9. Concrete actions (at least once a year) to raise awareness about VET opportunities (e.g. campaigns, VET weeks, skills competitions, national awards, VET schools open days). Yes/No

Motivating young people to re-discover their interest in learning

Do you have the following policies or measures in place to tackle early leaving in VET in your country?

11. Opportunity for a large majority of VET learners to engage in motivational activities (e.g. sports, arts, active citizenship).

Yes/No

Comprehensive support to young people with complex needs (case management)

Do you have the following policies or measures in place to tackle early leaving in VET in your country?

12. Multidisciplinary support team (e.g. social workers, health professionals, family support workers, youth workers, outreach care workers) available to a large majority of VET providers for at-risk students. This can include VET school staff and/or other professionals through cooperation with relevant external services. Yes/No

Providing professional emotional counselling to address barriers to learning

Do you have the following policies or measures in place to tackle early leaving in VET in your country?

17. Counselling is universally available for all VET learners who seek it.

Yes/ No

18. More intensive and targeted counselling is available to at-risk VET learners in a large majority of VET providers or through local health/social services. Yes/ No

**One-to-one support for young people through
coaching or mentoring**

Do you have the following policies or measures in place to tackle early leaving in VET in your country?

19. Coaching and mentoring schemes targeted at those most in need is available in a large majority of VET providers or through local youth/social services. Yes/No

Tailoring learning pathways to young people's interests and learning styles

Do you have the following policies or measures in place to tackle early leaving in VET in your country?

21. Frequent one-on-one feedback/reflection meetings between VET staff and learners to review their individual learning plans and discuss issues related to their learning, etc. in a large majority of VET providers. Yes/ No

Tailoring learning pathways to young people's interests and learning styles

Do you have the following policies or measures in place to tackle early leaving in VET in your country?

24. In the case of habitual absenteeism, a plan is written up with the learner on how to make up for lost learning in a large majority of VET providers. Yes/ No

25. Alternative arrangements to suspension/expulsion from school (where this practice exists) in a large majority of VET providers. This might include onsite support with multidisciplinary teams for example. Yes/ No

Helping learners understand the practical application of theoretical courses

Do you have the following policies or measures in place to tackle early leaving in VET in your country?

28. Active learning to make the teaching of theoretical content more engaging is used by a large majority of VET providers. Yes/No

Developing employability skills

Do you have the following policies or measures in place to tackle early leaving in VET in your country?

29. Targeted support to develop learners' basic skills in a large majority of VET providers. Yes/ No

30. Commitment in a large majority of VET providers to develop life skills, including communication skills, social and emotional skills, and conflict resolution skills in learners. Yes/No

**Involving the entire community in the prevention of
early leaving from education and training**

Do you have the following policies or measures in place to tackle early leaving in VET in your country?

32. In a large majority of VET providers, clear processes are in place to invite learner feedback on the existence or not of a welcoming environment (both at the VET school and during apprenticeships or in-company training periods). Yes/
No

Involving the entire community in the prevention of early leaving from education and training

Do you have the following policies or measures in place to tackle early leaving in VET in your country?

35. Professional development is available for a large majority of VET staff on conflict resolution skills, bullying prevention and diversity awareness in a large majority of VET providers. Yes/ No

36. National outreach strategy to individual families at home to support learners with high levels of need (mental health issues, high non-attendance at school). Yes/ No

Fostering inclusive and supportive work-based learning environments

Do you have the following policies or measures in place to tackle early leaving in VET in your country?

38. A large majority of VET providers have produced a written code of expectations on the treatment of apprentices. Yes/ No

39. Standardisation of application procedures for apprentices to prevent discrimination is in place in the large majority of VET providers. Yes/ No

41. Written agreement between the education provider, the company and the learner specifying the programme, activities and working conditions (incl. working hours) in a large majority of VET providers. Yes/ No

Inclusive systems in and around schools

- A focus on a supportive, quality learning environment
- A welcoming and caring school and classroom climate,
- Addressing holistic needs of students, whether emotional, physical, cognitive or social, and recognising their individual talents and voices,
- Preventing discrimination
- Open to the voices and active participation of parents and wider multidisciplinary teams and agencies.
- A particular focus on the differentiated needs of marginalised and vulnerable groups, including those at risk of early school leaving and alienation from society.

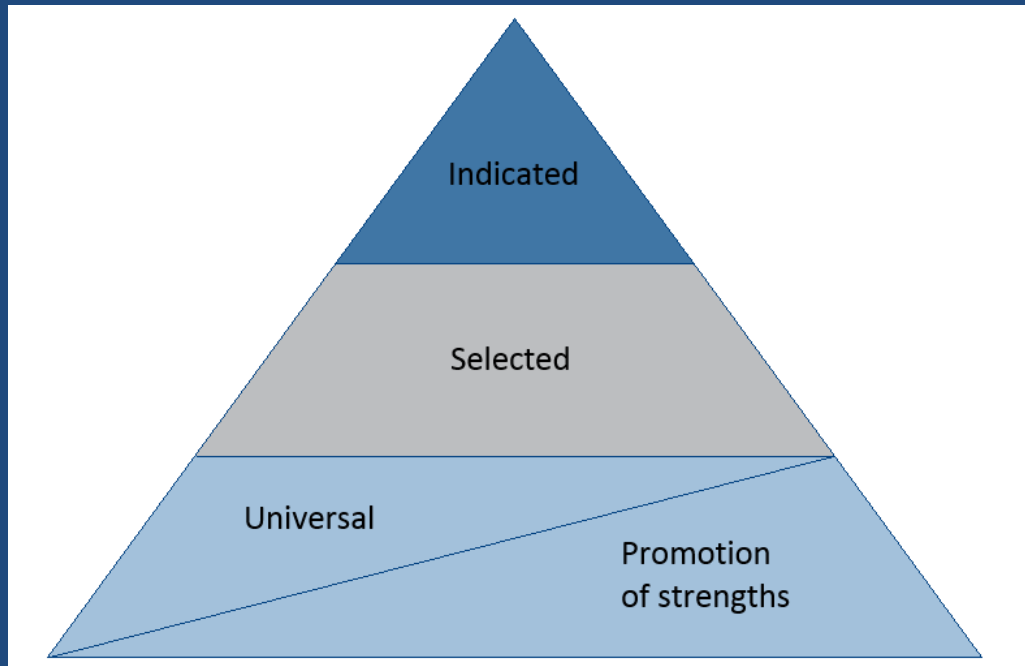


Ten Key Principles for Inclusive Systems in and around Schools

1. SYSTEM WIDE FOCUS	Schools, agencies and families are distinct and connected systems bringing sets of relationships and mutual influences upon the individual – both system blockages as barriers and system supports
2. EQUALITY AND NONDISCRIMINATION	<p>-Substantive equality involves a commitment to educational success for everyone irrespective of social background; to achieve this, different groups may need additional supports.</p> <p>-Nondiscrimination includes a right to equality of concern and respect in a supportive environment free of prejudice.</p>
3. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS TO EXPRESSION OF VOICES AND PARTICIPATION AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS	Children's voices have a right to be heard on issues directly affecting their own welfare, with due regard to their ages and maturity
4. HOLISTIC APPROACH	A holistic approach recognises social, emotional and physical needs and not simply academic, cognitive ones of both children/young people and their parents
5. ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF PARENTS IN SCHOOL, INCLUDING MARGINALISED PARENTS	Parental input into school policy and practices, as well as their children's education involves both a general strategic commitment, as well as a distinctive focus on marginalised parents' involvement

6. DIFFERENTIATION IN PREVENTION APPROACHES

Different levels of need require different strategies, including for students and families experiencing moderate risk and chronic need



Indicated Prevention (Chronic need – Individual Intensive)
Selected Prevention (Moderate risk – Some – groups) Universal –
All in a school or area

7. BUILDING ON STRENGTHS	Promoting strengths challenges negative deficit labels of vulnerable groups and seeks to promote growth rather than simply prevent.
8. MULTIDISCIPLINARITY AS A MULTIFACETED RESPONSE FOR STUDENTS WITH COMPLEX NEEDS	A range of actively collaborating professionals is needed to address complex, multifaceted needs of marginalised groups
9. REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION OF MARGINALISED GROUPS	Marginalised groups include those experiencing poverty and social exclusion, risk of early school leaving, those experiencing bullying, mental health difficulties and/or special educational needs, as well as some groups of migrants and ethnic minorities. Such groups need a distinct focus on processes and structures for their representation and participation.
10. LIFELONG LEARNING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - educational focus on active citizenship, personal and social fulfilment, intercultural dialogue across communities, as well as on poverty and social inclusion, and employment - informal learning, as well as nonformal and formal education classes relying on active learning methodologies.

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