



# School Inclusion

## Results from the German Report

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## School dropout in Germany – Current situation

Every year, almost 80.000 pupils quit school previously, meaning before school completion and without a graduation, certificate, or degree.

Currently, the drop out rate is approximately 8% and almost as high as 10 years ago (8.7% in 1996).

It varies from 6.9% in North-Rhine Westphalia to 11.8% in Saxony Anhalt.

The number of drop-outs is higher in boys and in youth with migration background.

Dropping out seems to be a bigger problem in secondary modern schools than in middle schools and high schools.

The Institute for German economy estimates that the drop-outs produce yearly costs of hundreds of million Euro.



## Main reasons and causes for leaving education

School drop out is a manifold phenomenon in **interaction between pupil, school, family and peers.**

- individual variables: age, gender, school anxiety, failure at school, self concept, attributions, intelligence;
- school variables: organisation, sort of school, school and class climate, teacher behaviour, excused or not excused absence, parent-teacher-interaction;
- family variables: living conditions, parents' attitudes;
- peer group.



## **Protective factors** seem to be:

- grown-ups who are encouraging;
- stability and continuity in the care of the child (at least one reliable interaction person);
- someone who supports and enduringly sets value on school achievement;
- friends who engage in school;
- constructive, satisfying, challenging leisure time activities;
- regular school attendance;
- writing and reading competences.



## National bodies in charge of the prevention of the problem

The **pivotal national bodies** in charge of the prevention of school drop-out are the following:

- German Association for Public and Private Care
- German Children and Youth Foundation
- German Department of Education and Research
- German Ministry for Family, Women, Seniors and Youth
- German Youth Institute in Munich
- Joint Board of the Federal Ministries of Education



## National policies implemented to combat early school leaving

In 2007, the head of the German Department of Education stated the political aim to cut the number of school dropouts in half by the year 2010 claiming an “**Offensive for the advancement of education**”.

One important strategy is the extension of the project „**Refusing school – The 2nd chance**“.

The project works with **case managers** who are constant companions and coaches and help pupils to go back to school on a regular basis.



This year, the number of sites will be extended from 73 to **200 sites** in Germany.



## Strategies to combat school tiredness, truancy and drop out

The number of projects carried out for truant pupils and drop-outs is great.

The projects take place within regular schools, special schools or other external institutions.

### Focus: Prevention

What can the school do in order to enhance well-being and satisfaction of as many pupils as possible?

### Focus: Intervention

What can be done in order to make it difficult for pupils to play truant?

### Focus: Rehabilitation

What can be done to reintegrate pupils or help them to graduate outside from regular school?



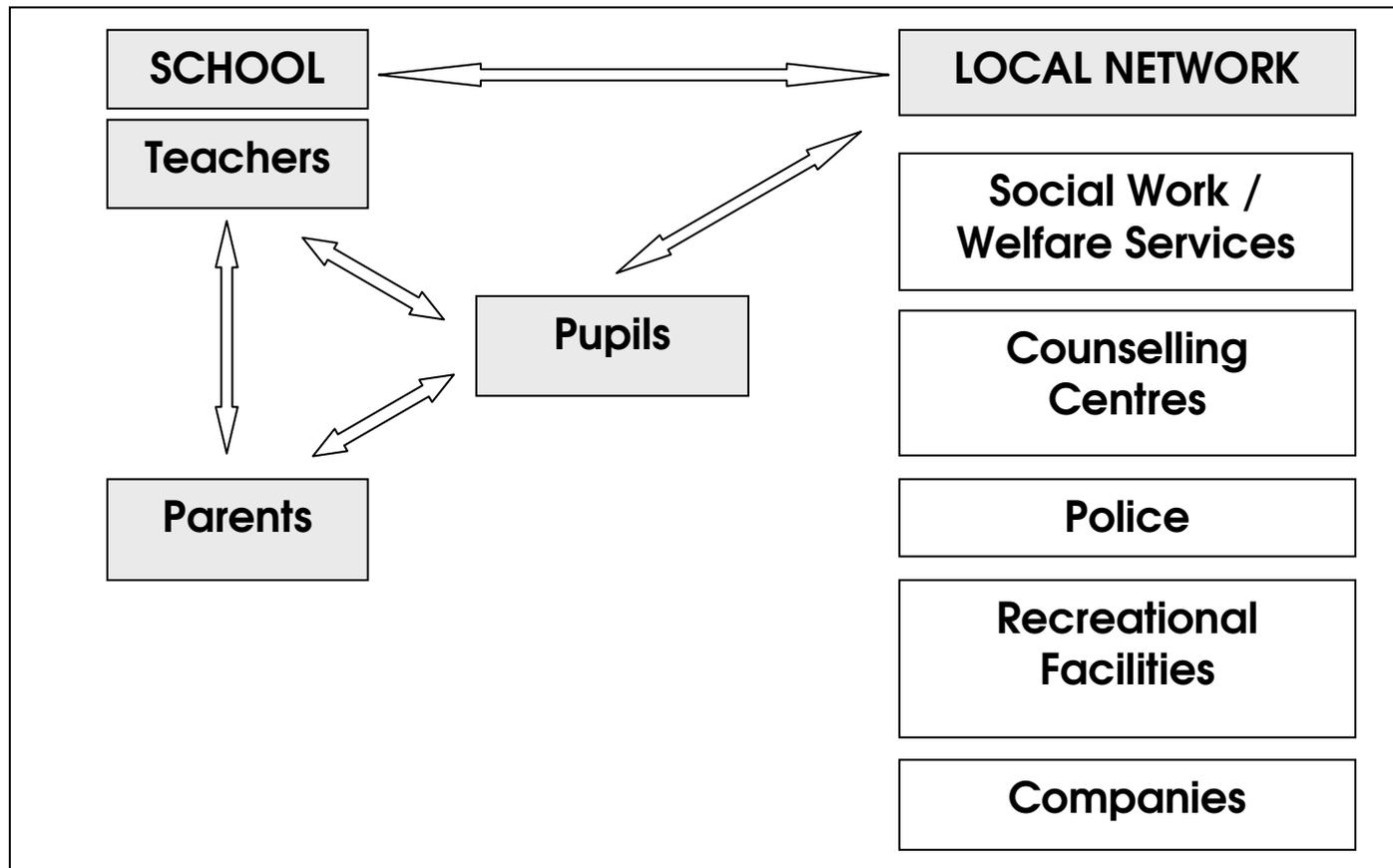
The experiences from the national, federal, and local projects indicate that activities to reduce school drop-out rates will be most successful if an effective cooperation between **school, pupils, parents, and local institutions** can be reached.

**School work** includes the identification of

- risk factors and pupils at risk,
- individual help and training,
- new ways of instruction and
- improvement of the atmosphere in class and the learning group climate.

Essential is furthermore the efficient cooperation with the **parents** and **networking** with institutions of youth welfare, social work, police, counselling centres, recreational facilities, and companies.

## Main agents in the prevention of school drop out





## Conclusions of the interviews carried out

The interviews underline the fact that school drop-out is a **very individual process** that has to be dealt with sensitively in cooperation between the pupil, schools, parents and external institutions.

Very important for a **successful integration and/or reintegration** seem to be:

- the appreciation of the pupil,
- forcing his/her strengths,
- good peer, family and teacher relations,
- practical experiences and
- personal and vocational perspectives.



## OUR RECOMMENDATIONS:

### Recommendations for public education authorities:

- Support the establishment of absenteeism prevention and intervention programs.
- Develop standard forms for the documentation of school absenteeism.
- Develop a standard registration strategy for school absenteeism.
- Develop a standard strategy for sanctioning school absenteeism.
- Support the development of guidelines and materials for schools in order to prevent truancy and drop out.
- Promote the subject in education and further education of teachers.
- Create conditions to reduce the drop out rates (e.g. special education, low numbers of pupils in classes, involvement of school social workers).
- Develop guidelines for networking with other institutions (youth welfare, social work, police, project partners).
- Develop guidelines for the interaction with pupils at risk .
- Develop guidelines for the interaction with the parents of pupils at risk .



## Recommendations for head masters:

- Recognize the (potential) problem.
- Get information about the problem.
- Develop guidelines to handle absenteeism within the school quality management.
- Talk about the problem openly and regularly with the staff.
- Support exchange about the problem within staff.
- State rules handling school absenteeism for teachers.
- State rules handling school absenteeism for pupils.
- State rules handling school absenteeism for parents.
- Get and disseminate information about further education activities for teachers .
- Support participation of teachers at further education regarding school absenteeism prevention.



## Recommendations for teachers:

- Recognize the (potential) problem.
- Get information about the problem.
- React to truancy immediately.
- React consciously, consequently, and sensitively.
- Create a positive learning climate including social learning.
- Enhance social learning amongst the pupils.
- Support every pupil individually, especially in case of problems.
- Design instruction practically and life-centered.
- Identify and promote strengths of any individual pupil.
- Seek interaction with parents.
- Work closely together with school psychologist(s) and social worker(s).
- Work closely together with companies .
- Build up a network with external institutions.



## Recommendations for parents:

- Recognize the (potential) problem.
- Get information about the problem.
- React to truancy immediately.
- React consciously, consequently, and sensitively.
- Talk to the child - find out the reasons for truancy.
- Support school learning and social learning.
- Be interested in the child and support it emotionally and practically, especially in case of problems.
- Create a positive family climate.
- Seek interaction with school.
- Develop a common strategy to prevent truancy – with the active involvement of the child and the school.
- Look for support from external institutions or other persons if necessary.



**Thank you very much  
for your attention!**

