



Pioneering policies and practices tackling educational inequalities in Europe

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6000 Scholarships [28]

Country	Spain
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Name of the policy / practice	6000 Scholarships [28]
Short description and the main characteristics of the policy / practice	6000 Scholarships is an income transfer programme conditional on remaining in the education system. It is an initiative developed at regional level by the government of Andalusia (southern Spain). The measure offers financial resources to students in post-compulsory secondary education, either in academic or vocational training (for which there is no strong scholarship policy at national level). The objective of the measure is to compensate for the opportunity costs associated with remaining in the education system and not participating in the labour market. The measure aims to reduce early school leaving, which is particularly high in Spain. It aims to prevent students from economically vulnerable families from being faced with the dilemma of "further education or income generation" after completing compulsory secondary education. The amount of the grant is fixed at 6000 euros per academic year, divided into ten monthly instalments. Beneficiaries cannot be in employment or registered as a jobseeker. The maintenance of the grant is conditional on a minimum level of performance (passing all the subjects of each course) and on the absence of continuous absenteeism from classes.
Target group of the policy / practice:	6000 Scholarships are aimed at students from vulnerable families, defined in terms of income. The income threshold is set each year and is adjusted to the number of family members in the household. The criteria are demanding, so beneficiaries invariably belong to the lowest social strata. Since its implementation in 2009 and until the 2019-2020 academic year, the programme has undergone considerable expansion, especially from the 2016-17 academic year onwards, benefiting a total of 76,984 students (around 9,000 in the last academic year). Despite this increase, it is a program with demanding access criteria, and therefore its coverage is low in absolute terms. As for the characteristics of the beneficiary population, most of them are women, of Spanish origin, who study Baccalaureate and who come from rural areas.
Educational stage or transition phase of the policy / practice	6000 Scholarships can be received, if all the requirements are met, during the two years of post-compulsory secondary education, either in the secondary school, either in the Baccalaureate (a form of education that is made up of different branches and that different branches and aims to prepare students for access to higher education), or in the modality of the Intermediate Level of Vocational Training (oriented towards the

		acquisition of technical competences and technical skills, and allowing access to Advanced Vocational Training).	
Level of implementation		6000 Scholarships programme operates at regional level in Andalusia, a region with economic and educational indicators significantly below the national average. It is the regional government that sets the eligibility criteria, funds the programme and organises the application procedures. Secondary schools themselves have the role of informing about the existence of the programme and helping applicants with the procedures. Schools are also involved in monitoring the granted students, with a view to establishing the right to the continuation or, where appropriate, withdrawal of the Scholarship.	
MILC dimensions		6000 Scholarships is an income transfer programme, which does not try to influence school-related aspects, but we can establish some links with the MILC approach set out in the project: Multilevel: Although it is a measure aimed at macro level (conditions of access and continuity in formal education), it affects the micro level (informal education), as both are interrelated. The granting of the scholarship greatly modifies the educational expectations and strategies of the families of the students, increasing their aspirations and encouraging them to invest more resources in the school promotion of their children. Intersectionalities: The measure does not consider other axes of vulnerability than family income, but the data show a significant participation of immigrant students, as well as a higher female presence. The former can be explained by the higher proportion of immigrants within low-income families, while the latter is due to the higher proportion of women accessing post-compulsory studies. Life course perspective: It is a programme somewhat sensitive to the life course perspective, as it aims not only at the educational stage considered (upper secondary), but also at improving future opportunities for professional insertion and/or continuation towards tertiary studies.	
Key dimensions of the identification procedure			
CONDITIONS: Foundational premise level	<i>Comprehensive</i>	The measure does not contemplate inequality in a broad and holistic way, since the definition of the beneficiary population and the intervention focuses exclusively on income inequality. However, while the different vulnerability factors interact with each other, it has been shown that financial assistance to families contributes to mitigating other elements that influence educational inequality (related to family practices and attitudes).	Medium

	<i>Coherent</i>	It is an income transfer measure that is considered in isolation, without addressing other aspects related to school factors. However, it is coherent in relation to the established diagnosis: it starts from the fact that early abandonment may be due to the weight of opportunity costs in vulnerable groups, and it tries to compensate them by ensuring a minimum of economic stability.	Medium/High
	<i>Continuous</i>	The measure has remained stable over time since its implementation in 2009, and the number of beneficiaries has increased each year. Program evaluations point to a better understanding of the program, over the years, by potential beneficiaries. The program has been maintained despite the changes in the regional government, and everything indicates that it will continue in the long term.	High
ELEMENTS: Structural level	<i>Contextual</i>	The measure is implemented in a region with high rates of poverty and early school dropout, so we can consider it sensitive to contextual characteristics. However, the amount of the transfer is fixed if the criteria are met, and these consider only the income and the number of members of the family unit, so it is not a particularly case-specific measure.	Medium
	<i>Relational</i>	External evaluations and research on the development of the program have identified some limitations (especially regarding the role of schools in its dissemination) that have not been addressed in subsequent editions.	Low
TOOLS: Action level	<i>Autonomous</i>	As it is a policy of transfer of income with criteria set by the public administration, it does not give space to the schools to adjust or concretize their enactment.	Not applicable
	<i>Reflexive</i>	The program has been independently evaluated by several researchers, who have identified strengths (greater continuity towards higher stages and academic and noncognitive benefits among its beneficiaries) and weaknesses (inability to reverse very deteriorated trajectories and to avoid the abandonment of lower performing students). Although, the limitations found do not seem to be generating significant changes in the provision of the program.	Low/Medium

<p>Evidence backing the policy / practice:</p>	<p>We have several examples of research on the coverage of the program, its effects and limitations (Río Ruíz and Jiménez Rodrigo, 2014; 2023; Jiménez Rodrigo et al., 2015).</p> <p>The measure has been shown to have a positive impact on the academic performance of the beneficiaries: those who manage to receive the scholarship obtain academic results above those that would be required by the program, even surpassing their peers with higher family incomes. In many cases, scholarships improve the living conditions of families (usually very precarious) and make it possible to meet daily expenses, which improves the conditions of educability. There is also evidence that the scholarship raises the academic expectations of students and parents, contributing to the long-term commitment to education, and fostering attitudes of discipline, effort and motivation. It has been shown that this grant affects students differently depending on their previous trajectory, having a greater impact with intermediate achievers (since high-achievers are willing to continue studying with or without a scholarship, and low-achievers usually leave the program because they cannot meet the performance criteria).</p>
<p>Brief concluding analysis of policy / practice in the context:</p>	<p>The highlights of the programme are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The '6000 scholarships program' aims to reduce Early School Leaving, one of the main pending subjects of education in Spain, focusing on vulnerable groups and in a region where the phenomenon is prevalent. • The program covers a weakness of the Spanish education system, such as the lack of financial support for students in the post-compulsory secondary stages (since much of the scholarship budget is focused on higher education). • It affects not only the decisions and motivations of students, it has also shown important effects on their families, encouraging pro-school attitudes and raising educational aspirations and supportive behaviour.