



Pioneering policies and practices tackling educational inequalities in Europe

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Second Chance Schools / New Opportunity Schools [31]

Country	Spain
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Name of the policy / practice	Second Chance Schools / New Opportunity Schools ¹ [31]
Short description and the main characteristics of the policy / practice	The New Opportunity Schools or Second Chance Schools (E2O) constitute a network of alternative schools managed by non-profit entities. They offer an original pedagogical model based on innovative training through personalised itineraries, reinforcement of basic and work skills, practical experiences in connection with the business world, and support in social demands giving special attention to the most vulnerable. The network is spread throughout the country, with a special presence in Madrid, Catalonia and the Basque Country. In Spain, the first pilot projects were carried out in Barcelona and Bilbao in 1996. In 1999, the first organisation was born with the aim of federating the various initiatives at the European level, and in 2015 the association was constituted at the Spanish level. This initiative stands as an effective resource for the prevention of early school leaving and promote the continuity of educational trajectories. The main objective is to offer an educational space that allows breaking the succession of failure situations ¹ (repetition, suspensions, expulsions, etc.) of adolescents who are excluded from the educational and social system, through an educational qualified proposal of alternation between training and work, that guides, accompanies and supports their transition to adult life.
Target group of the policy / practice:	Currently, there are 44 accredited schools in Spain, managed by 28 entities in 14 different territories. Overall, in the 2020-2021 academic year (latest available data) 7952 students have been trained in these schools, in which a total of 918 professionals work. These students are between 15 and 29 years old, are unemployed, do not have compulsory studies, come from environments of high social vulnerability and are in a situation of severe social and educational exclusion. A large percentage of these young people come from families of migrant origin. The majority of students access derived from formal school when they turn 16 years old.
Educational stage or transition phase of the policy / practice	These schools are designed as an alternative to the formal system. However, they have undergone a process of institutionalisation in recent years, largely thanks to the actions of the Spanish Association of Second

¹ Currently, some entities have decided to call themselves 'new opportunity schools' to avoid the negative connotation linked to the failure of the 'second chance' concept.

	<p>Chance Schools. Its priority focus is on the construction of training itineraries for the (more qualified) transition to the labour market. However, they also accompany and guide students who show a greater school commitment to 're-turn' to the formal education system. Thus, they can move between different training offers, from a personalised and flexible compulsory secondary education, to specialised Vocational Training.</p>
Level of implementation	<p>New Opportunity Schools combine the three levels of implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the macro level, the national network of second-chance schools has been established, which guarantees compliance with the fundamental principles of E2O in Spain and fights for recognition by the state, regional and local Administration. At the macro level, the network acts as a backup and serves as a 'safety net'. • At the meso level, the municipalities play a fundamental role by enabling a space in the educational ecosystem for these institutions, creating their own programs that articulate the offer of the 'new opportunities schools' with the territorial educational and labour needs and opportunities. It is important to note that this is the level where this policy 'arises'. • At the micro level, each institution develops its own 'school model' and is completely autonomous. The focus of the transformative action happens in the classroom and always from a relational logic and with the aim of (re)constructing ties. Also, decisions about specific practices are taken at the institutional level, a fact that causes each 'school' to have its own particular idiosyncrasy.
MILC dimensions	<p>There is a good fit with the MILC perspective. Specifically, the practice/model understands education in terms of processes, in line with a perspective close to that of the life course. On the one hand, because teaching is individualised by considering the students' previous trajectory (and their different forms of disengagement in the formal-traditional system). On the other hand, because the initiative is built with a view to the students' future opportunities, whether for access to employment or for incorporation into higher levels within the formal system. Secondly, the program pays attention to the intersection between different forms of inequality (especially those related to social class and origin or ethnicity). In this sense, they offer a space for understanding inequality from a multidimensional vision, allowing for different rates of development and without falling into deficit theories. Finally, the multilevel approach is present in the very construction of the training itineraries, since the program operates thanks to an alliance between the public administration and entities of the third sector, the academic world, the business world and the formal education system.</p>

Key dimensions of the identification procedure			
CONDITIONS: Foundational premise level	<i>Comprehensive</i>	The 'schools of new opportunities' represent a model characterised by a comprehensive, holistic and inclusive understanding of the purposes of education and the premises of the educational system in question in terms of improving educational equity. In fact, under a social economy model, guidance and subjective support services are based on a firm commitment to social justice.	High
	<i>Coherent</i>	In recent years, the model has increased its level of coherence in the systemic whole in which it is developed, mainly thanks to the recognition work carried out by the 'national network'. Although at the beginning they were more isolated and disconnected devices, they are currently much more integrated. In any case, the role played by the 'new opportunity schools' is essential to balance the local educational ecosystems and contribute enormously to the educational development of the territory and to the reduction of social and educational exclusion.	Medium/High
	<i>Continuous</i>	The construction of unique and tailor-made educational and training itineraries in mixed scenarios that integrate training and work is the fundamental pillar of the model. For this, the formative proposal exceeds the (pre)established limits in formal education and contemplates the formation of the student in an integral way. It does not matter what training is carried out, how old the student is, etc., the important thing is to build an itinerary that allows to extend the professionalisation training and generates added value in the young person (in terms of employability).	High
ELEMENTS: Structural level	<i>Contextual</i>	The 'new opportunities' model is highly sensitive to contextual issues and as a result constantly reformulates its premises and structures to suit the students' needs (educational, cultural, social and economic). As an example, in several of the inter-viewed schools it is observed how their training offer has been substantially modified based on two criteria: the needs of the territory (mainly demands of the local labour market) and the more structural social changes (for example, the growing importance of the digital	High

		dimension). This allows them to always be one step ahead of the institutions in the field of formal education.	
	<i>Relational</i>	We can affirm that the 'new opportunity schools' are, within their wide internal variability, a reflection of the professionals who constitute them. In this sense, this particular educational commitment is made up of teachers, social educators, psycho-pedagogy professionals and workshop leaders directly linked to the local labour market, in constant and close relationship with professionals from formal schools, public administration personnel and other business and educational agents of the territory.	High
TOOLS: Action level	<i>Autonomous</i>	Although the association exists at the national level, each of the entities works autonomously and in collaboration with local authorities on a daily basis. In this sense, within the autonomy of each institution to develop its own model of itineraries, professionals (tutors and workshop leaders) have a very wide margin to make those decisions that they consider most relevant and can make the adjustments that they consider necessary in the concrete enactment in its context. In fact, the level of autonomy and flexibility is so high that within the same group-class, professionals usually develop different actions according to the needs of each individual or educational moment.	High
	<i>Reflexive</i>	The malleable model of 'schools of new opportunities' requires constant reflection to introduce modifications in its design and implementation. In the last 10 years, the organisational and pedagogical structure (structure of the itineraries and available offer) has been constantly transformed based on the reflections made by the teams, the evaluations carried out and the evidence obtained. To do this, professionals constantly meet in commissions that suggest modifications, alternatives or improvements. In addition, constant evaluation and self-evaluation processes are carried out with the aim of constantly improving its model.	High
Evidence backing the policy / practice:		There is multiple evidence on the design, implementation and results of the 'new opportunity schools' model in Spain. In the first place, the national network prepares an annual report where it includes all the activities of the institutions that constitute it. In addition, academic studies are regularly commissioned to	

	<p>'evaluate' the model and its effects. The following repository contains some examples: https://www.e2oespana.org/biblioteca/publicaciones/ On the other hand, each entity is autonomous and decides its own (self)assessment products. For example, in 2021 an external evaluation of the seven Catalan schools was carried out at their request (link: https://acciosocial.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/estudi_noves-opportunitats_UAB_2021-1.pdf) Finally, each school carries out its own periodic self-evaluation, collecting indicators of access, process and result, as well as establishing dynamics for reflection and improvement.</p>
<p>Brief concluding analysis of policy / practice in the context:</p>	<p>The main aspects of the 'new opportunity schools model' are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 'new opportunities schools' play a promising role in the fight against educational exclusion and Early School Leaving, one of the main pending issues of education in Spain (with a rate well above the European average). Acting on ESL is also key in tackling educational inequalities, as it is disproportionately concentrated in the most vulnerable sectors. This model can be a powerful alternative in the Spanish context, with an educational system dominated by academic knowledge and official pathways, with a relegated and underfunded Vocational Training and with few opportunities for those who do not complete compulsory education. • The added value of this initiative is that they offer an original pedagogical model based on innovative training through personalised itineraries, reinforcement of basic and work skills, practical experiences in connection with the business world, and support in social demands giving special attention to the most vulnerable. • The 'new opportunity schools' combine the three levels of implementation: the macro level (the national network of second-chance schools, which guarantees compliance with the fundamental principles and fights for formal recognition), the meso level (the municipalities play a fundamental role by enabling a space in the educational ecosystem for these institutions), and the micro level (each institution develops its own 'school model' and is completely autonomous). • Although the only formal entry requirement is age (16-29), in practice its students come from vulnerable groups. The program pays attention to the intersection between different forms of inequality. In addition, its location on the outskirts of the educational map-on the way between formal and informal education-offers us a privileged point of intervention.