

## **Tackling Drop-Outs Through Systematic Student Screening (TeSTED) Project:**

### **Dropout Risk Assessment Tool Summary (Socioeconomic perspective)**

#### **Quick Overview of the Tool**

The TeSTED Dropout Risk Assessment Tool is an innovative, confidential, and user-friendly online questionnaire designed to help students, teachers, and counselors identify factors that might increase a student's risk of dropping out of Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses.

- Goal: To enable tailor-made support, counseling, and training activities based on an early, systematic understanding of each student's personal situation and background.
- Developed by: The Erasmus+ project TeSTED, co-funded by the European Commission, with partners from Germany, Greece, Romania, Austria, and Bulgaria.
- Access: Available online at <https://tested.bizexaminer.com/> (requires profile creation with the help of a teacher/counselor).

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#### **What the Tool Measures: Key Areas of Assessment**

The Assessment questionnaire comprises approximately 23 questions that explore various dimensions proven to influence a student's likelihood of course completion. The questions are grouped into five main areas:

##### *1. Socio-Demographic and Background Factors*

- Examples of Data Collected: Age, gender, native language, literacy in the training language, living situation (e.g., alone, with parents), and financial responsibilities (e.g., children).

##### *2. Financial and Economic Situation*

- Examples of Data Collected: Stability of financial resources, independent income, and the overall household income (estimated against the national average).
- Relevance: Financial strain is a significant known risk factor for school abandonment.

##### *3. Prior Educational and Vocational Experience*

- Examples of Data Collected: Completion of compulsory schooling, acquisition of post-compulsory degrees, and previous completion of apprenticeships or training courses.
- Key Question: Whether the student's registration for the current course was their own choice or someone else's.

##### *4. Motivational, Health, and Social Well-being Factors*

- Examples of Data Collected: Personal motivation to finish the course (assessed on a scale of 0 to 5), perceived likelihood of finding a good job after completion, and physical and mental health status (assessed on a scale of 0 to 5).
- Relevance: Focuses on the student's inner drive and capacity to engage in the course fully.

### 5. *Risk and Supportive Factors*

- Examples of Data Collected: Concerns about experiencing discrimination or mobbing/bullying (assessed on a scale of 0 to 5), level of family support, and thoughts about dropping out.
- Key Indicator: A direct question assessing if the student would drop out for a new or better job right now.

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### **Confidentiality and Data Usage: What You Need to Know**

The TeSTED project places the highest emphasis on student confidentiality and adherence to EU data regulations.

- Confidentiality: The data and information (your answers to the test items) are kept absolutely separate and confidential from your user profile.
- Data Analysis: Your answers are analyzed internally by the automated online tool. They are not shared in any form with teachers, trainers, counselors, or any other person.
- Purpose of Analysis: The data is used only to gain insight into your likely dropout risk factors as an individual, allowing the counselor/teacher to offer the right support.
- Data Storage: Data is stored in accordance with EU GDPR and will be deleted within 365 days of you taking the test.

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### **How to Use the Results (For Teachers/Counselors)**

The tool provides an objective, data-driven starting point for counseling.

1. Systematic Screening: All students in a VET cohort can be screened early in the course.
2. Risk Identification: The tool automatically processes the answers to identify which of the five key areas (listed above) pose the greatest risk to a student.
3. Targeted Intervention: Based on the results, teachers/counselors can:
  - Initiate discreet, supportive conversations with at-risk students.
  - Refer students to specialized services (e.g., financial aid, mental health support).
  - Adjust teaching methods or provide extra tutoring for students struggling with course content.

In summary, the TeSTED tool moves dropout prevention from reactive guessing to proactive, evidence-based intervention.

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