



# Éducation européenne



## The European Parliament hears the European Schools

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**GUDEE**

On 12 February, the Committee on Culture and Education of the European Parliament invited the stakeholders of the European schools to an information meeting.

This exchange of views had been requested by the Committee in order to provide it with an overview on the European Schools system. The background to the hearing was the continuing governance and financing problems with the European Schools system, the shortage of EN mother-tongue teachers, and the current plans to reform the secondary curriculum.

Members of Parliament who took the floor (especially, Mr Cavada and Mrs Honeyball, rapporteurs respectively for the Committee's 2011 and 2005 reports on the system) expressed their disappointment at the caution of the Member States' approach to what might have been a pedagogical example with much wider educational relevance.

The meeting was chaired by Ms Doris Pack (MEP – Christian Democrat group, former teacher). Those invited included Mr Kari Kivinen, Secretary General of the European schools, Mr Marco Morricca, Director, DG HR – Commission, Ms Marie Söder Higgins, Deputy Head of Unit, DG HR – Commission.

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### Creation of a "Secondary Campus" regrouping all the S6 and S7 pupils of the Brussels European Schools.

An important proposal is quietly but steadily advancing (towards implementation?) and we wonder if many parents of the Brussels European Schools are informed properly.

In the recent General Assembly of the School Brussels III ("Ixelles") last December (2013) was proposed to the representatives of the parents a motion giving the green light for an important change of our schools.

Until now, every proposal for a reform or a significant change was widely explained to the parents and we are used to have information meetings by the APEEE, discussions in the Education Councils, presentations to the parents in the "cantinas", meetings with the representatives of the office of the Secretary General Mr Kivinen, the opinion of the relevant unit of DG HR etc.

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## Pour le développement de l'éducation européenne



Nos écoles existent maintenant depuis plus de 60 ans. Près de 20 écoles de tous types ont ou auront la vocation de délivrer le baccalauréat européen.

Ce chiffre n'est pas extraordinaire pour une Union Européenne de plus de 500 millions d'habitants, mais il constitue une base significative pour faire vivre et promouvoir un paradigme éducatif prometteur.

Faire cohabiter des jeunes de différentes nationalités dans la même école, dans les mêmes cours, mais sans leur imposer l'intégration à une seule culture, crée, au-delà de l'apprentissage et de la pratique des langues de l'Union, un puissant sentiment de proximité, de compréhension mutuelle, d'enrichissement multiculturel.

Cela permet aussi de mettre en œuvre le principe de l'UE selon lequel l'unité de notre destin se construit sur la diversité de nos cultures mais aussi sur leur interaction féconde.

Si l'Union disposait d'un minimum d'intelligence en matière de politique extérieure, elle favoriserait la création de ce type d'école dans les principaux pays tiers, en lieu et place des lycées parrainés par nos pays les plus riches, vouées à la diffusion de leur langue. Quelle belle vitrine que ces écoles européennes face à un monde qui se déchire encore sur des différences nationalistes.

Malheureusement, l'enjeu majeur demeure la survie de ces écoles frappées par l'austérité budgétaire et par l'étroitesse d'esprit de nos gouvernants.

Ces écoles n'accueillent plus, faute de moyens budgétaires, que le tiers de la population qu'elle pourraient prétendre scolariser. Leur vocation était d'accueillir les enfants des agents des institutions européennes et internationales mais en favorisant la mixité sociale en s'ouvrant aussi aux en-

fants originaires des familles des pays d'accueil.

Aujourd'hui, la moitié des enfants des parents des institutions sont contraints de fréquenter une école nationale, faute de places dans les écoles européennes et hélas aussi à cause d'une réputation de qualité et d'accueil de ces écoles qui se dégrade rapidement sous les assauts de mesures d'économies excessives.

Même si les temps de "vaches maigres" ont parfois la vertu de favoriser des innovations, aujourd'hui, la faiblesse de leur dotation budgétaire les condamne à la médiocrité de leur enseignement et empêche leur développement. Certains modèles alternatifs pour créer de nouvelles écoles ne sont en fait que des pis-aller.

Financées dans le cadre de la rubrique 5 du budget de l'Union (budget de fonctionnement), elles pâtissent de l'austérité budgétaire et de la régression du budget européen pour 2014 /2020. De plus, les états membres considèrent que le montant déjà faible de cette rubrique ne constitue qu'un plafond à ne pas atteindre.

C'est dire que dans ces conditions, sans moyens additionnels, sans budget autonome identifié comme un investissement éducatif, l'avenir de nos écoles sera de plus en plus sombre.

C'est pourquoi, à l'occasion des élections européennes, nous prendrons l'initiative d'une lettre publique aux partis politiques et aux candidats aux élections, leur demandant, à l'occasion de la revue à mi-parcours du budget européen promise par le Parlement actuel, leur engagement sur l'octroi de moyens supplémentaires pour assurer non seulement le fonctionnement correct des écoles mais aussi leur essor, dans l'Union et à l'extérieur de l'UE.



# L'évolution de l'éducation de la femme en Europe

Si de nos jours l'éducation de la femme en Europe ne se heurte pas à des obstacles de société, il est fort connu que ça n'a pas été toujours le cas. Il est vrai que la femme de Sparte recevait la même éducation que les garçons, mais c'était essentiellement pour des raisons pratiques, les hommes étant fort souvent absents à faire la guerre. A Athènes, l'éducation était présente mais assez limitée et centrée sur la gestion de la maison et le bonheur de l'homme. Dans les siècles qui ont suivi les Grecs et les Romains, le schéma général (certes avec des exceptions) est resté le même. La femme était gardée en général loin de l'enseignement de l'époque et également de la politique et des postes de responsabilité. Il fallait être une Anna Komnène vivant dans le palais Impérial de Byzance pour pouvoir s'éduquer et oser par la suite devenir écrivain.

Le triomphe des religions monothéistes sur les anciens dieux a aussi bien en Europe qu'au Proche Orient contribué à garder la femme loin de l'éducation et à une position inférieure. (En effet Dieu est supposé être un « homme » et la femme comme sa créature, qui pour le malheur de tous, en cherchant la connaissance a apporté le mal au monde (« Woman is man's ruin »). Ainsi, les universités, longtemps dominées par le clergé, étaient fermées aux femmes.

Certes la Renaissance a apporté l'espoir et les femmes ont amélioré leur position sociale et leur accès à l'éducation mais cette évolution était limitée à une classe dirigeante tandis que la femme du peuple restait avec une éducation limitée, si elle en recevait. Le concept juridique « Impotentia Mullieribus » a imprégné la législation de bien de pays en Europe et parfois des lois et autres dispositions dégradantes considérant la femme comme citoyen de second rang ont perduré jusque aux années 1970.

Les philosophes étaient d'ailleurs unanimes. La femme ne devait pas être éduquée et en tout cas pas « trop ». Schopenhauer décourage les femmes de s'occuper des arts, Joseph le Maistre dit que la science est dangereuse pour les femmes. Molière dans sa fameuse pièce de théâtre « Les femmes savantes » montre à ses contemporains que la femme ne doit pas trop savoir. Même si certains philosophes comme Fénelon estiment que la femme peut être éduquée, ils précisent que c'est dans le but d'éduquer les enfants et gérer mieux les domestiques et la maison.

Rousseau, même s'il ne considère pas la femme comme une « Statue vivante de la futilité », estime que la femme est faible par nature et dépendante de l'homme, qu'elle apprendrait difficilement à lire et à écrire, étant destinée aux travaux domestiques. Diderot par ses écrits semble estimer que l'éducation de la femme doit se limiter « à la grammaire, la fable, l'histoire, la géographie, le dessin et la morale », donc pas de maths, pas de sciences.

Plus proche de notre ère, le Code de Napoléon (Année

1804, Article 1124) montre le ton et l'attitude d'une société « masculinisée » et précise que « Les personnes privées de droits juridiques sont les mineurs, les femmes mariées, les débiles mentaux et les criminels ». En conséquence, l'exclusion de l'enseignement secondaire et supérieur est devenue totale.

Même si en France a été instaurée en 1881 l'obligation d'éduquer les filles, le peu d'éducation offerte à l'époque aura comme but principal de les soumettre et les faire mieux plier aux exigences d'une domination masculine omniprésente.

Il faudra attendre le début du 20<sup>ème</sup> siècle pour que cet état de choses commence à se modifier. Mais la vraie évolution (révolution ?) vint avec les deux guerres mondiales, qui ont mis par la force des circonstances les postes « des hommes » aux mains de femmes et ont fait tomber les obstacles à l'éducation et à la politique (Le vote des femmes a été établi en Allemagne en 1919, en France en 1945 et dans certains pays plus tard). Mais le vote seul ne signifiait pas encore une égalité d'accès à l'éducation. Seulement en 1970 les Françaises ont passé pour la première fois la porte de l'Ecole Polytechnique et trois ans plus tard celles de l'école de Hautes Etudes Commerciales (HEC).

En Rép. Féd. d'Allemagne, la constitution de 1949 a déclaré que les hommes et les femmes étaient égaux, mais c'est seulement en 1957 que le code civil a été modifié dans ce sens. Même au début des années 50, des femmes Allemandes pouvaient être licenciées de la fonction publique si elles se mariaient.

Malgré tout, l'année d'universitaire 1975-76, en Allemagne de l'Est, les femmes ont constitué la majorité des admissions aux universités (53 pour cent). Les progrès pour les femmes ouest-Allemandes a été plus lent. Il faut attendre les années 80 pour qu'elles accèdent aux universités dans la même proportion que les hommes. La grande pénurie d'hommes que connaissait l'Allemagne de l'Est peut expliquer en partie cette situation. Mais il n'est pas certain que les femmes ouest-Allemandes ont eu la volonté de rester au foyer ou de s'éduquer moins. Tout simplement elles étaient conscientes des difficultés de l'admission aux universités et la probabilité limitée d'un emploi valable par la suite. L'union des deux Allemagnes a contribué à rétablir, après une phase pénible d'adaptation, un équilibre qui peut être considéré comme satisfaisant.

De nos jours, les écoles d'ingénieurs et de médecine en Europe sont de plus en plus peuplées majoritairement de femmes et les études sociologiques commanditées par les autorités universitaires déclarent pudiquement (c'est le cas de l'Irlande par exemple) qu'elles n'ont pas d'explication pour ce phénomène « statistique ». Personne ne semble disposé à dire que les jeunes filles, quand des chances

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## Creation of a "Secondary Campus" regrouping all the S6 and S7 pupils of the Brussels European Schools.

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This proposal, to which I refer to, is the opposite. With no previous explanations, studies etc... we learned that already 2 APEEE voted in their General Assemblies motions asking the Schools to create instead of a full 5th European School in Brussels a kind of Campus regrouping all the S6 and S7 pupils of the Brussels European Schools (with Ixelles this makes 3 APEEEs).

We are a little puzzled with this course of events, but we consider useful before expressing a firm opinion on this matter, to submit to our readers the succinct rationale presented to the parents representatives.

These explanations given briefly pretty late in the evening of the Ixelles General Assembly (Brussels III) are as follows (in italics):

*“Due to continuous overcrowding of the European Schools in Brussels, a 5th school is scheduled for opening by 2019. The sites currently under discussion for such a 5th school are either the school in Berkendael (currently used for the nursery and lower primary of Uccle) or a new site in Etterbeek at Blvd. General Jacques/Av. de la Couronne (1.2 km distance from the Ixelles school). If Berkendael is chosen, the opening could happen earlier than 2019.*

*It is not yet clear how the 5th school will be used. It could be a classical full cycle school (from nursery to S7). The General Secretary of the European schools, Mr Kivinen, seems to favour a school offering additional space for nursery and primary pupils (where there is currently the highest demand). Some parents, notably from Uccle and Woluwe, advocate the creation of a secondary campus for all S6-S7 pupils of Brussels.*

*It is important to note that according to statistics provided by Mr Kivinen, there will be a lack of secondary class room space in the 4 current schools as of 2019, the time when the 5th school should open. In addition, this forecast is based on data reflecting the current overpopulation in Ixelles and not based on the official maximum capacity of 2 650 pupils for our Ixelles school.*

### **Advantages and disadvantages secondary campus**

**Positive:** *Reduction of overcrowding in Ixelles (and other Existing schools) Better choice of options in L1 (mainly for DE EN, ES, NE sections from Ixelles)*

**Negative:** *Separation of siblings, risk particularly for isolated sections located only in one of the Brussels schools that secondary teachers will be split between S1 – S5 and S6 – S7 (relevant for the EL and CZ section in Ixelles)*

**Other alternatives:** *A classical full cycle school (from nursery to S7) could contain a 5th FR, EN and DE section as well as a 3rd ES, a 2nd EL and new sections, at least the Slovak one with the*

*current Slovak SWALS from Ixelles. The need for such additional sections is questionable for EN, DE, ES and EL and could further reduce class levels and choice of options in L1 at Ixelles.*

*The European schools are currently also considering the merging of some secondary sections from the existing schools. Thoughts go in the direction of merging IT, ES and NE sections from Brussels (no details are yet available on which sections might be concentrated at which class levels and at which school). EN and DE sections are currently exempted from this consideration as a merge would create problems with the mother tongue teaching of SWALS from these sections, and as there is an agreement with the Belgian authorities that each European school in Brussels will include a linguistic section for the official Belgian languages (incl. DE).*

*Another possibility would be the organisation of joint classes among the BXL schools to keep the options without merging secondary sections – almost only for S6 and S7. Such options should be on Wednesday afternoon or on a half day reserved for this as agreed between the Brussels schools and, for such joint classes, the organisation of studies for S6 and S7 should be harmonised among the Brussels schools.”*

We can suspect - with a risk to be wrong - that behind this proposal are standing some parents panicking a little because of the coming reform of the secondary. They may consider that a grouping of S6 and S7 could possibly give the opportunity to secure more “options” for the subjects to be offered in the years S6 and S7. Others may envisage the opportunity to create new linguistic sections, say in the primary, taking advantage of the resulting space created by the "displacement" of the S6 and S7 sections.

Possibly such a scheme can offer some advantages. But we can express the fear that such a “Campus” school (regrouping only S6 and S7) will be so complex, that its governance will be a challenge to its managers.

It is also beyond reasonable doubt that a school where all linguistic sections are present, will create an interesting APEEE, where each section can be certain to be on the board. Remains to see how such an oversized APEEE could work efficiently, but if the Council of Ministers can work, there is still hope for the “super APEEE”.

We can also ask the question if this grouping plan is really within the current intentions of the Board of Governors. Until now no official information was given.

Are we certain that the advantages and disadvantages of this plan are really only the few lines given to the parent's representatives during the AG? As an example, does this

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reform means that most secondary teachers will work in 2 different schools? (Say in Ixelles or Uccle for S1 - S5 and in the "5th School" for S6 and S7)? What is the opinion of the teachers?

As a reminder, some years ago, a similar idea was proposed, i.e. the creation of a new school "Only secondary" with all years present (S1- S7). This proposal seems at first sight more reasonable. Possibly it will be even more difficult to put in place, needing even more careful planning and perhaps more space. But on the other hand, such a school (or schools) should permit real economies of scale

and the possibility to offer a very large spectrum of teaching options.

"European Education" considers that the office of Mr Kivinen and the relevant unit of DG HR of the Commission should clarify the issue with detailed information sent to the parents and the pupils.



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## Enrolments in the European schools in Brussels

On the 1 February the 2nd enrolment phase started.

It is recommended not to wait until this phase comes to an end (16 May 2014) and enrol your child as soon as possible. Your application thus will be dealt with during the second enrolment phase. As from 20 June 2014, the Central Enrolment Authority will notify applicants of its decision and applicants will be required to confirm by 27 June 2014 at the latest that they wish to accept the place available offered to them.

There are currently four European Schools in Brussels. They offer language sections in English, German, French, Spanish, Italian, Dutch, Bulgarian Czech, Danish, Greek, Finnish, Hungarian, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian and Swedish.

Following heading V., article 2.8 of the Policy of enrolment in the Brussels European Schools for the 2014-2015 school year only one enrolment or transfer application per pupil may be submitted throughout the enrolment procedure for the given school year.

*Enrolment* means the application of a pupil who did not attend one of the European Schools located in Belgium and *transfer* means the enrolment of a pupil who attended one of the European Schools located in Belgium in the preceding school year and who wishes to continue his or her schooling in (another) European School in Brussels.

Such an application may be submitted only during the first enrolment phase, except in duly substantiated cases of force majeure.

In order to ensure the utmost objectivity in the handling of cases and on the other hand to meet as satisfactorily as possible the preferences expressed by applicants for enrolment, a random computerised ranking of all enrolment and transfer applications is applied during the first and second enrolment phases.

Special priority criteria are set out in the art. 5 and refer namely to the regrouping of siblings, return from assignment and return from a period of study abroad and other particular circumstances, duly justified and always in the pupil's interest. The geographical criterion is not relevant (due to the overcrowding but also the logistic constraints in the infrastructure of the schools) although a greater account to the wishes of applicants is taken into account and particular and diversified measures are put in place. The main objective for the Enrolment Authority is tough to be able to guarantee a place for all category I pupils in one of the schools in Brussels.



The whole text of the Policy on enrolments to the Brussels European schools is available here:

[http://www.eursec.eu/fichiers/contenu\\_fichiers2/1918/2013-12-D-3-en-3%20v2.pdf](http://www.eursec.eu/fichiers/contenu_fichiers2/1918/2013-12-D-3-en-3%20v2.pdf)

# Les examens de la Chine impériale

C'est en touriste qu'on peut visiter le Centre d'examen de la Chine impériale situé à Guilin, en Chine du Sud-Ouest. De ce centre, au bout du parc qui entoure le « Pic de la beauté solitaire », sont sortis quelque 585 « Jinshi », ces candidats admis aux examens nationaux, et même quatre premiers candidats aux examens impériaux de la dynastie Qing. Le visiteur parcourt les allées où se succèdent de petites cellules ouvertes sur l'extérieur d'un seul côté et modestement dotées d'une tablette amovible, tout cela en bon état. Les épreuves pouvaient durer de deux/trois jours à une semaine.

Le système des examens mandarinaux fut mis en place de manière complète sous la dynastie des Song (960-1127) pour recruter la bureaucratie d'état. Il visait à faire du gouvernement impérial une méritocratie, en lieu et place de la transmission du pouvoir aristocratique. Quand les concours étaient supprimés, ce qui arriva à plusieurs reprises en particulier sous les Mongols, les postes de fonctionnaires étaient tout simplement vendus, ce qui alimentait la corruption. Le système est à l'origine d'une élite d'érudits fonctionnaires au service du gouvernement, avec pour grade le plus élevé celui de « docteur » et, pour épreuve suprême, l'examen au Palais sous le patronage direct de l'Empereur. Les épreuves, sur copies anonymisées, portaient sur les principes confucéens et les textes classiques dans la culture confucéenne ; ils comportaient des épreuves de poésie, de calligraphie ou encore de tir à l'arc où les candidats démontraient leur maîtrise des comportements et des arts adéquats à l'ordonnement de l'univers.

Les lauréats, devenus mandarins, ne pouvaient se marier ou posséder des biens dans la région qui leur était assignée et dans laquelle ils ne pouvaient rester en poste comme gouverneurs locaux que trois ans. Leur langue distinctive, le mandarin, et sa version écrite, le chinois littéraire, sont à l'origine de l'actuelle langue officielle de la Chine. La stabilité quasi immuable des examens s'explique largement par leur enjeu, les réformes intervenant ponctuellement quand l'égalité des chances semblait sérieusement en danger, par exemple, quand les candidats du Sud réussissaient beaucoup mieux que ceux du Nord. La caste de hauts fonctionnaires lettrés ainsi créée eut un rôle essentiel pour cimenter l'identité nationale et pour renforcer le pouvoir central contre les clans aristocratiques locaux. Ministres, préfets, magistrats, gouverneurs, ils furent les intendants d'un Etat centralisé, interventionniste qui détenait le monopole du fer, du sel, du thé, du cuivre... et dont l'esprit était proche du capitalisme d'état.

Les examens impériaux ne furent supprimés qu'en 1905 et remplacés par des épreuves sur le « savoir occidental ». Il n'est pas rare dans l'Histoire de Chine que des individus d'origine modeste aient, grâce à ces examens, accédé à la prééminence politique. Mao Zedong est une illustration de

la tradition exemplaire du fils d'agriculteur besogneux qui s'élève par la seule vertu de son zèle pour l'étude. Pour sa génération, l'état d'instituteur ou de directeur d'école primaire fut un des substituts au titre de bachelier, premier degré des concours impériaux<sup>1</sup>. Ce grade permettait d'accéder au statut de lettré ou, comme le vocabulaire chinois a pris l'habitude de le nommer au cours du XXe siècle, le statut d'intellectuel. Ce qui, dans l'opinion générale à son époque, conférait un droit naturel à exercer le pouvoir.

La fascination qu'exerce ce Centre d'examen tient à son lien avec l'histoire de la Chine et avec la volonté politique, de dynastie en dynastie, d'unifier le pays. L'envers du décor, c'est la réalité de ceux qui ne réussirent jamais ces examens impériaux, point de passage obligé pour accéder aux postes administratifs tant convoités. A défaut de réussir les examens, les candidats peu chanceux devaient vivre de leur pinceau ou devenir des écrivains professionnels. Les recalés tentaient plusieurs fois leur chance, jusqu'à 5 fois, 10 fois au cours de leur vie.

La couche inférieure de l'élite lettrée, ces modestes clercs, convaincus par le confucianisme de leur supériorité intellectuelle, morale et sociale sur le commun, mais souvent très proches de lui par leurs conditions de vie, étaient prêts tantôt à servir de relais au pouvoir impérial, tantôt à diriger contre lui les mécontents locaux. Le million de bacheliers dispersés à travers campagnes et bourgades constituait ainsi pour les empereurs mandchous et leurs 20 000 fonctionnaires une ressource indispensable qu'il fallait savoir manœuvrer : instruments d'autorité sur la société locale aux échelons de base, ils pouvaient devenir aussi, à cause de leur instruction, les plus dangereux fauteurs de subversion. L'insurrection des Taiping, celle des Boxeurs ont été dirigées par des bacheliers<sup>2</sup>.

L'échec aux examens impériaux pouvait générer une masse de mécontents, à la source d'émeutes urbaines, voire de grandes rébellions : l'histoire garde la mémoire de Huang Chao, qui lança une immense rébellion de paysans rebelles et de bandits sous la dynastie Tang à la fin du 9e siècle. Originaire du Shandong dans l'Est de la Chine, il prit la tête d'une révolte qui allait ravager toute la Chine, alors en proie à la famine, et se proclama empereur avant d'être acculé au suicide.

Dans la cohorte des recalés, un personnage à l'origine de la guerre civile la plus meurtrière du pays, pourtant abondamment pourvu en la matière : Hong Xiuquan, un Cantonais quatre fois recalé mais convaincu d'être le frère cadet de Jésus Christ. Dans les années 1850, il fut l'instigateur de la révolte des Taiping contre les empereurs Qing qui coûta la vie à plusieurs centaines de milliers de Chinois. Il régna quelque huit années (1856-1864) sur un état séparé dont la capitale était Nanjing. Etaient bannis l'opium et les relations sexuelles ; guerre paysanne, elle était aussi empreinte

de modernisme et tenta de redistribuer les biens privés et d'admettre les femmes aux examens. La révolte des Taiping fut une des causes de la chute de la dynastie mandchoue.

*Plusieurs états occidentaux se sont inspirés de ce modèle, notamment la France et l'Angleterre. La fonction publique européenne reste inspirée du système méritocratique, même si le faible nombre des postes disponibles et les contraintes budgétaires ont inspiré l'émergence de catégories multiples d'agents de l'Union européenne.*

*On peut s'interroger sur les défis que représentent le grand nombre de ceux qui n'ont pas réussi ou de ceux qui ont réussi, mais en deçà de leurs espérances ou de leurs qualifications. Un défi que l'UE tente de gérer par les statuts d'agents contractuels et d'autres formules; heureusement, l'UE ne pratique pas la vente des postes.*

*Mais il existe des populations de candidats qui n'ont pu accéder aux concours. L'incompréhension, parfois la mauvaise foi, crée des mythes sur le statut des fonctionnaires européens, leurs salaires, leur imposition. Le ressentiment semble bien plus vif chez ceux qui estiment avoir un droit naturel à accéder à ce statut. Des campagnes d'information objective pourraient être plus systématiques et une réflexion*

*sur la création d'un réseau transparent associant les fonctions publiques nationales respectueuses du principe méritocratique – principe de base pour toute société démocratique – pourrait être menée.*

*Nul doute aussi qu'une réflexion sur la nature des épreuves serait une piste utile, car les tests de raisonnement verbal et numérique, qui ne se justifient que par l'impossibilité de gérer le grand nombre de candidats, constituent une insulte à l'esprit de tout évaluateur et sans doute aussi des candidats.*

*Voici quelques pistes pour mieux gérer les psychodrames périodiques (tous les 7 ans) que sont les négociations des perspectives financières de l'UE, qui sont l'occasion d'attaques contre la réputation des fonctionnaires européens et l'existence d'une fonction publique européenne.*



1 - Les autres grades sont celui de licencié et de docteur.

2- Mme Marianne Bastid-Bruguère, séance du lundi 3 mars 2003, Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques 2003, <http://www.asmp.fr/travaux/communications/2003/bastid.htm>

Source : Contributeurs de Wikipédia, "Examens impériaux," Wikipédia, l'encyclopédie libre, [http://fr.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Examens\\_imp%C3%A9riaux&oldid=100300027](http://fr.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Examens_imp%C3%A9riaux&oldid=100300027) (Page consultée le février 19, 2014).

## 25 Student Productivity Tips

*The following article was originally published on the website of Oxford Royale Academy, Oxford's premier summer school. ([www.oxford-royale.co.uk](http://www.oxford-royale.co.uk))*

A lot of us follow courses either for professional reasons or for fun and often we ask ourselves what kind of advice we can give to our children in order to help them to study in a more efficient way. So if you wish to study more productively, check out these 25 tips coming from the well-known Oxford Royale Academy.

### **Create the right working environment.**

It's difficult to be productive if you're physically uncomfortable and can't find anything when you need it. Let's start with some tips for creating a comfortable working environment so that you can get your year off to a good start.

1. Invest in good furniture. An uncomfortable chair not only makes it harder to concentrate on your studies, but it can also do long-term damage to your back. If you can, buy a comfortable one with lumbar support so that your posture doesn't cause problems. If you have the space (and the money), don't make do with a tiny desk – you need enough space to spread out your study materials.

2. De-clutter and tidy. Mess creates stress, and a disorganized study area does not make for a productive student. Get rid of unnecessary clutter and tidy up what's left, as you'll be better able to order your thoughts if your surroundings are neat and orderly as well.

3. Buy nice stationery. Invest in some nice stationery that you enjoy using – pens, pencils, notepads, folders and paper, even things like coloured paper clips or Post-It notes. You're more likely to want to study if you have the materials you like, and there's nothing so satisfying as a good set of stationery.

### **Eliminating distractions**

Now that you've created a pleasant working environment, the next step is to eliminate distractions. In the digital age, we know that that's easier said than done!

4. Find some peace and quiet. You're not going to be able to study productively if somebody is screeching away on a violin in the room next door, or if various family members (or friends) are constantly distracting you with chatter, arguing or trying to get you to help with the household chores. So lock yourself away with the door shut and put a

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# L'évolution de l'éducation de la femme en Europe

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égales leur sont offertes, sont plus assidues (plus intelligentes ?) que les hommes. Certes cela serait politiquement incorrect.

Pour la première fois en Europe, après des millénaires, l'accès des jeunes filles à tous les niveaux de l'éducation est une réalité, bien que l'accès à l'emploi et le niveau des rémunérations continuent à poser des problèmes. Beaucoup reste à faire pour l'égalité des chances, quand on constate que les postes à responsabilité restent majoritairement dans aux mains des hommes, malgré la présence sur le marché du travail de femmes tout aussi qualifiées. Malheureusement, malgré les beaux discours et l'élaboration de directives européennes, le *plafond de verre* reste un fait.

Le libre accès des jeunes filles et des femmes à tous les niveaux de l'éducation, semble bien définitivement acquis en Europe, mais la partie n'est pas gagnée pour autant. Les « Macho men » de l'extrême droite montante s'expriment avec mépris pour la femme et dans leurs discours ils évoquent sous cape ou même parfois ouvertement comme modèle de société le fameux « KKK - K » qui limite le rôle des femmes aux *Kinder, Kirche, Küche - Kleidung* (Enfants, Eglise, Cuisine, Habillement) tandis que la burqa, symbole d'oppression et d'exclusion, tente de s'imposer non seulement en Orient mais aussi dans nos cités.

Le retour vers des pratiques d'oppression de la femme est un défi pour les forces de progrès, qui ne doivent accepter aucun recul en cette matière. Au contraire, l'UE a comme obligation morale d'œuvrer pour que les libertés acquises avec difficulté en Europe puissent bénéficier aux millions de femmes dans le reste du monde, dont la plupart sont en ce moment exclues des systèmes d'éducation.



*Education européenne* publie cet article pour la journée internationale de la femme du 8 mars.

## Resources

1. Women on boards, EUROPEAN COMMISSION – DG JUST <http://pubaffairsbruxelles.createsend1.com/t/t-l-gwhdt-nhhthah-z/>

The role of the Directorate-General for Justice of “DG Just” is to ensure that the whole European Union is an area of freedom, security and justice

2. Women in ICT, European Commission – DG CONNECT <http://pubaffairsbruxelles.createsend1.com/t/t-l-gwhdt-nhhthah-v/>

The Directorate General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology or “DG Connect” is responsible for managing the Digital Agenda

3. Women, men and working conditions in Europe, EUROFOUND <http://pubaffairsbruxelles.createsend1.com/t/t-l-gwhdt-nhhthah-e/>

The European Foundation for the improvement of living and working conditions (Eurofound) is a tripartite European Union agency, whose role is to provide knowledge in the area of social and work-related policies

4. Publications, EUROPEAN INSTITUTE FOR GENDER <http://pubaffairsbruxelles.createsend1.com/t/t-l-gwhdt-nhhthah-s/> EQUALITY <http://pubaffairsbruxelles.createsend1.com/t/t-l-gwhdt-nhhthah-g/>

IGE is a European Union agency which supports the EU and its Member States in their efforts to promote gender equality, to fight discrimination based on sex and to raise awareness about gender equality issues

5. Diversity, HOGAN LOVELLS dedicated pages <http://pubaffairsbruxelles.createsend1.com/t/t-l-gwhdt-nhhthah-w/>

Hogan Lovells is a global legal practice that helps corporations, financial institutions, and governmental entities across the spectrum of their critical business and legal issues globally and locally

6. Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, EPP Group dedicated section <http://pubaffairsbruxelles.createsend1.com/t/t-l-gwhdt-nhhthah-yd/>

The Group of the European People's Party brings together centre and centre-right pro-European political forces from the Member States of the EU)

7. Get Women On Board, The GREENS/EFA campaign <http://pubaffairsbruxelles.createsend1.com/t/t-l-gwhdt-nhhthah-yh/>

The Greens/European Free Alliance is a political group in the European Parliament made up of Green MEPs and MEPs from parties representing stateless nations and disadvantaged minorities

8. JUMP <http://www.blogjump.eu/>

The JUMP blog is a multilingual portal for advancing women in the workplace



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'Do Not Disturb' sign on the door. Let your family or friends know whenever you're studying so that they can try to keep the noise down. Alternatively, go and study in a library at school or university.

5. Music might help. Not everyone can concentrate with background music on, but many people find that listening to music can help increase their productivity and concentration levels. What's more, music can also be effective at drowning out the background noise of family members or friends elsewhere in the house. Some kinds of music are admittedly more appropriate than others; heavy metal may be less conducive to concentration than some relaxing orchestral music! If you're really serious about boosting your productivity, you could always try listening to some Mozart, which, it is claimed by some, makes you smarter...

6. Make your phone off limits. There are few things more distracting than the constant receiving of text messages or phone calls from your friends, so for the duration of each study period, your phone should be off limits. Switch it off and put it somewhere where you can't see it. If you're at home, you could even give it to your parents to look after for you so that you don't succumb to the temptation of switching it on every few minutes just to check whether anyone's tried to contact you.

7. Switch the TV off. No matter how well you might think you can work with the television on, the fact of the matter is that you will be far less productive if you try to get some homework done in front of it.

8. Stay away from Facebook. If you're doing some work on your computer, or worse, the internet, the lure of Facebook can be irresistible. One solution is to deactivate your Facebook account for periods of intense study, but a less drastic answer to this problem is to install some software on your computer to create a distraction-free digital environment. Dark Room is one such programme, which fills the computer screen with your text document so that you can't wander off to Facebook every five minutes. Another option is to use the Facebook Limiter to block your access to Facebook between certain times, allowing you to study.

### **Get organised.**

Being organised is immensely important if you want to study effectively and increase your productivity. You need to know where to find notes quickly on a particular subject and you need a sensible way of storing all your study materials – your textbooks, notes, essays and anything else you may need when it comes to revision time. What's more,

you'll need to be organised in how you plan your study time. Here are some ideas that will help.

9. Intelligent filing. Keep your notes organised by having a folder for each of the subjects you're studying. Within each folder, use dividers to segregate your notes and essays for each of the topics you cover. For instance, an English literature folder might contain dividers for World War I poetry, William Blake's poetry, the Shakespeare play you're learning about and a novel you're studying. Organising everything in this way means that you'll always know where everything is, and all your notes and essays on each topic are kept in the same place. You'll be very grateful for this organisation when it comes to revising!

10. Mirror your filing system on your computer. If you do a lot of your work on the computer, it's just as important to file things intelligently so that you can find them quickly. Mirror your offline filing system on your computer, with a folder for each subject, and within that a folder for each topic. You could even divide topic folders up further, with a folder for essays and a folder for notes, for example. Alternatively, you could use Evernote to help you organise your computer-based notes.

11. To Do Lists Stay on top of your various homework assignments by maintaining a To Do list that includes deadlines. Nothing increases productivity like the motivation of being able to tick things off a list, and it'll mean you never miss another deadline.

12. Try a Trello board. Trello is a project management tool used extensively by businesses, but it could just as easily be used to help you manage your day-to-day studies. The way it works is that you have several columns representing different stages or areas of the project – so for example, you could have a board with columns for each of your subjects – and within each column you have cards representing tasks that need doing. You can assign deadlines to each card and add additional information onto the card. For example, one of your columns might be Geography, with cards such as 'Essay on rivers' and 'Notes on glaciers', each with deadlines imposed by teachers and details on what exactly is required of you. Once you've finished each task, you can drag and drop the card into a new column marked 'Complete'. After using Trello for a while, you'll wonder how you managed without it!

### **Time management**

We now move on to one of the most fundamental aspects of increasing productivity: time management. One of the

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secrets to productive study is to make maximum use of the time you have available, so our next set of tips covers how to manage your time effectively.

13. Set study times Set aside certain periods of time each day during which you will focus exclusively on studying. For instance, you might decide to get up early and fit in an hour's study before school, and then another hour when you get back from school or work, and another three in the evening. Draw up a daily timetable for yourself and stick rigidly to the prescribed study times, but don't forget to schedule in breaks as well.

14. Stop procrastinating We know it's easier said than done, but in order to boost your productivity, you're going to have to stop procrastinating. Don't put off till tomorrow what could be done today; don't think to yourself that you'll just check Facebook one more time before you start studying. Grasp the bull by the horns, implement the Facebook Limiter we mentioned earlier, and force yourself to knuckle down to your work.

15. Don't bite off more than you can chew Don't try to tackle too much work at once – break work into small, manageable chunks that you can comfortably handle during a particular study session. It's demoralising and overwhelming if you have a huge amount of work sitting in front of you, so break it down into stages – for example, rather than setting yourself an entire essay to research and write in one go, break down the work into the preliminary research and notes, then the actual essay.

16. Don't leave everything until the last minute Even if you work better under the pressure of a looming deadline, it's never advisable to leave any work until the last minute. Plan to complete work with plenty of time to spare to allow for any unexpected delays, such as taking longer to read something than expected, or longer to understand it. Finishing in plenty of time also then frees up more time for working on other things.

17. Work while you're commuting If you have a commute to school or university or work, make the most of your travel time by listening to audiobooks, or reading while on the train or bus. Not only will this heighten your exposure to the things you're studying, but it will also help you absorb more information that will be of use when you come to sit down for a proper study session.

### **Physiological ways to improve productivity**

We've now covered organisation, time management and working environment. But there are two other important ways in which you can boost your productivity: physiologi-

cal factors and psychological factors. Let's look at biological considerations first.

18. Eat well. What you eat can have a huge impact on your productivity; for example, certain foods make you lethargic and not eating enough will affect your concentration. Start the day with a hearty breakfast, preferably something that releases its energy slowly, such as porridge. This will keep you going for the whole morning. Get your 'five a day' by drinking fruit juice, snacking on fresh or dried fruit and having at least one or two portions of vegetables with dinner. Try not to snack on unhealthy foods such as crisps and chocolate, and never underestimate the power of 'brain food' (particularly the so-called 'super-foods', such as fish or blueberries)!

19. Drink plenty of water. Nothing kills concentration like dehydration, which makes you sluggish and headachy. Have a bottle of water with you at all times (or take regular breaks for water if you're in a library and can't have a bottle with you), and sip throughout the day.

20. Get a good night's sleep each night. Try to get at least eight hours' sleep every night. That means not staying up too late each night studying! Sleep plays an important part in converting information from short-term to long-term memory, so it's actually helping you to learn!

21. Exercise. Exercise boosts your well-being and releases endorphins – known as 'happy hormones' – the same chemical we get from eating chocolate. Experts recommend at least 20 minutes of brisk exercise each day; that's enough to get your heart pumping and break out a sweat.

### **Psychological ways to improve productivity**

Every bit as important as the physiological factors we've just discussed is psychology. In this final section, we look at some methods for improving your productivity by harnessing the power of the mind.

22. Adopt a positive mental attitude. It's difficult to overstate the power of a positive mental attitude. Adopt a positive outlook on your studies, try to see the interest in everything and envision a favourable outcome to each bit of work (for example, imagine how pleased your teacher will be with your essay after all the hard work you've put in).

23. The power of routine. Getting yourself into a routine of eliminating distractions and studying at set times of day will help high levels of productivity become habit, making it less effort. If your brain expects to be studying at a particular time of day, you'll find it easier to get into the right

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# The EP hears the European Schools

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Also representatives of the Parents associations were present (Ms Sarah Coners Barber, President of Interparents, and Interparents' representatives of the APEEES of a number of schools, notably Ms Ana Gorey, and Ms Jutta Weber from Culham (Oxford), UK).

In addition, members of the Board of Governors (BoG) of the European schools took part: Mr Johan Geentjens (Flemish Community-BE) , Ms Catherine Roba Ravier (French Community-BE -BoG), Ms Catherine Chazeau – Guibert (Ministry of Education, France- BoG) and Ms Daniela Ehlbeek (Federal Ministry of Education, Germany -BoG), Ms Silvia Costa, Mr Hannu Takkula, Mr Milan Zver, Ms Daniela Ehlbeck (BoG).

Mr Cavada, MEP, took the floor and recalled that in his 2011 report on the system, he highlighted four main problems:

- ◆ The Financing of the European Schools
- ◆ The secondment of the teachers
- ◆ The overcrowding of the schools
- ◆ The value of the European Baccalaureate (recognition from the Universities)

All these problems persist to varying degrees.

Regarding the overcrowding, the chair asked if a fifth school in Brussels could solve the problem. Questioned on this point by the chairman, the Belgian representative answered that it is the Schools (Board of Governors, BoG) who are asking for a fifth school and not Belgium (sic). Seemingly as BE is in a pre-electoral period, no decisions can be made.

The chairman wanted also a clear answer on the financing and the “cost sharing” issues but the members of the BoG showed little ability or willingness to explain.

In order to ease the dialogue, Mr Kivinen took the floor and described the current situation.

In September 2011, the European Parliament adopted Mr Cavada's report on the European school system. The report comprised 50 points concerning a wide range of aspects concerning the European Schools system. An overview document was presented to the Board of Governors in April 2012. Extensive action has been taken since.

## **Organisation and recognition of the European Baccalaureate**

Based on the proposal of an ad hoc working group, the

Board of Governors (BoG) decided about the reform in 2012. The decisions are entering into force step by step. The decisions have made it possible to open the European Baccalaureate to the Accredited European Schools. Last year, the European school of Helsinki, and the Ecole Internationale de Provence Côte d'Azur had their first European BAC. In 2014, it will be the turn of the European School of Strasbourg. The number of accredited schools is increasing every year and the 9th Accredited School opened its doors in Tallinn. The other accredited schools are in Dunshaughlin (IRL); Parma (IT), Heraklion – Kreta (GR), Strasbourg (FR), Manosque (FR), Helsinki (FI), Den Haag (NL), RheinMain (DE), Copenhagen (opens 2014). Very soon the European Schools in Culham (Oxford) UK, Brindisi (IT) and Zagreb (Croatia) will be also accredited.

## **The autonomy of the Schools**

The Board of Governors (BoG) have given more decision making power to the Administrative Boards of the Schools. In this way, the annual and multiannual plans of the Schools are discussed in the Administrative Boards. The Boards can decide about the derogations and within certain limits for the school fees.

## **The Syllabuses / Quality of teaching**

There has been a profound syllabus reform in the European Schools during last three years. This winter, the Joint Teaching Committee will decide about the revision of 9 syllabuses (ICT, Latin, L3, Geography, Letton language). Also, the early Education Curriculum was deeply revised. Regarding the quality of the teaching in the EUR schools, Mr Kivinen mentioned a pilot study of OECD, showing that the pupils of the EUR Schools are exceeding the attainment of counterparts in similar UK schools, and internationally are competing with children at the top schools of Shanghai with a rating very high in international studies.

## **Enrolments and transfers**

The situation in Brussels is difficult in spite of the new EUR School in Laeken. The annual population increase in Brussels is around 350-400 additional pupils for our schools. The enrolments for September 2014 (first phase) has just finished. The Schools received a record number of enrolments (more than 1600). Transfers are in general difficult because of the overcrowding in Brussels II and III. The transfer policy for 2014 is more liberal than in the past years. The total capacity of the schools in Brussels is 11.400 pupils, and the forecast shows 11.361 for 2014, 11.745 for 2015, 12.129 for 2016 and the forecast is still

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# The EP hears the European Schools

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increasing and goes up to 13.281 for 2020. This means a 5th school is necessary in the near future.

## Budget

The budget situation of the European Schools remains very difficult. The increase of the numbers of Cat I pupils results in that the number of pupils paying school fees is decreasing (The fees have increased since 1.09.2013).

The contribution of the Member States is decreasing because of the economic crisis, and the contribution of the Commission remains the same in spite of the pupil increase.

To face this problem, very serious salary cuts measures have been taken, and the organisation of the classes and groups was rationalised. The solidarity levy is 6% on all salaries since the first of January and the foreseen salary increases for 2011 and 2012 are still pending.

The total number of pupils for the current year 2014 is 24.702 (incl. 16.411 Cat I pupils) and their cost is an average of 11.562 € / pupil. Compared to last year, we have 422 more pupils and a cost reduction per pupil of approximately 3%. The EU contribution for each Cat I student is 10.302 € (- 6,13% compared to 2013). The fees increased since 1.09.2013.

In spite of the financial difficulties, the number of pupils with special needs and the pupils receiving support has increased. Currently we have 792 pupils with “special needs”, circa 3,2 % of the total population. The SEN Budget is now 4.7 M€ (increase of 570.000 euros).

## Cost sharing

After four years of negotiations, the BoG agreed on the cost - sharing principles between the Member States (MS) in December 2013. The target level of seconded staff per Member State will be calculated annually based on four elements.

- (a) The number of pupils by nationality,
- (b) The number of seconded staff by nationality,
- (c) the language section structure of the system,
- (d) the average annual national salary costs of seconded staff from each MS.

The MS are encouraged to exceed these target levels on a voluntary basis and second more staff. The total actual number of seconded staff will be shared between the Member States based on their share of pupils in the Euro-

pean School system.

For some MS, the actual number (share) of seconded staff exceeds their share of pupils; for others, there is a shortfall in posts compared to their share of pupils in the system.

The shortfall in number of posts of individual MS compared to their number of pupils and the average national salary rates of MS are used to calculate the total financial contribution which forms the basis for defining the additional financial contribution of those MS.

The number of unfilled posts has increased until this school year. There are clear indications that the number of posts will decrease radically starting from September 2014.

## New language sections

Despite the financial difficulties, new language sections have been created in Brussels. The Romanian section, created in Brussels IV (in 2012). The Bulgarian section, in Brussels IV (in 2013). There is discussion on the creation of an Estonian section and the next ones will be Latvian and Slovak sections.

## Reorganisation of the secondary

There has been a very lively discussion about the future reorganisation of the secondary studies. Finally it was decided that the reorganisation of the years S1 to S3 will be implemented starting from 1.09.2014. For the years S4 to S7 the BoG decided to make an external assessment. The call for tender will be made public in spring 2014.

## School failure rate

Finally, Mr Kivinen referred to the school exam failure rates. The Joint Teaching Committee decided in October 2010 on a group of measures aimed to avoid repeating. The measures have been taken and the total number of repeating pupils decreased from 2,7% (529 pupils) to 1,2% (282 pupils) in three years.

The intervention of Mr Kivinen was followed by a discussion. Ms Gorey considered that the current intergovernmental approach is responsible for most of the problems of governance and leadership of the European schools.

Mr Moricca confirmed what was said by Mr Kivinen and added that the agreement regarding the cost sharing seems not an ambitious one and it remains to be seen how it will be implemented in practice.

The debate was closed by Mr Cavada MEP, who said that

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the “Actes d’adhésion” of each new MS should have the necessary provisions referring to the obligation of each “newcomer” to respect the treaty governing the European Schools and endorse the cost.

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frame of mind for working productively.

24. Strength in numbers. From time to time, organise study groups with your friends who are studying the same subjects as you. Not only will you learn from each other by comparing notes and interpretations, but it also eases your burden because you do not always have to motivate yourself to study alone.

25. Reward yourself. Don’t forget to reward yourself for all that hard work at regular intervals during study periods; for instance, you can have a bite to eat at the end of a chapter. This gives you something to look forward to and helps strengthen your motivation to work productively. Hopefully these tips will help transform you into a super-productive version of yourself this year, and to keep up the momentum throughout the year.

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## Réunion de réflexion du GUDEE

### 10 avril 2014: Education européenne et le Gudee vous invitent à une réunion de réflexion

Nous proposons aux collègues intéressés par le développement d'une éducation européenne de se joindre à nous lors de la réunion de réflexion du GUDEE du

**10 avril 2014, 12h45, salle loi 80 2/206.**

Des sandwichs et des boissons sont prévus.

Le but de cette réunion est de faire le point sur le budget des écoles, les perspectives offertes par la réforme pédagogique, le développement des écoles de type 2 et 3, la création de nouvelles écoles de catégorie 1, etc...

Dans un second temps, nous discuterons des propositions à faire dans ce domaine et des initiatives à prendre en relation avec les APEEE et les comités du personnel des institutions communautaires.

Merci de nous confirmer votre venue: [contact@gudee.eu](mailto:contact@gudee.eu) .

# Impact of budget cuts in education in Member States.

Sixteen Member States of the European Union decreased their spending on education between 2008 and 2011, with six showing further significant budget decreases in 2012 (Greece, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Portugal, United Kingdom), according to the latest Education and Training Monitor released end of October 2013 by the European Commission.

The 2013 Education and Training Monitor provides a picture of each country's progress in relation to specific benchmarks and indicators, and highlights the latest policy developments and analysis.

The report confirms a recent fall in the employment rate of young people with at least an upper secondary education qualification: only 76% are now finding jobs compared with 82% in 2008. In addition, 20% of the EU working population with higher (university, etc.) qualifications are in jobs that usually require lower qualifications. This suggests a worrying mismatch between the skills delivered by education and training systems and those required by the labour market.

The key findings of the Education and Training Monitor include:

- **Inequality** is still a feature of many education and training systems in Europe,

Evidence suggests that many education and training systems in Europe are marked by inequalities, reflected by strong disadvantages in the skills and qualifications of social groups such as young people with a migrant background. There is also wide variation between different Member States in their success at addressing the problem. These inequalities have severe consequences for individuals, for economic progress and for social cohesion

- **Only half of the EU population aged 15 years and above agree that their school education helped them to develop entrepreneurial competences.**

Virtually all countries that show an above-average performance in entrepreneurial attitudes also have above-average percentage participation, at school or university, in courses or activities concerning entrepreneurship. Efforts to develop entrepreneurial skills are needed as a tool to drive the economic benefits of education.

- **Europe is lagging behind in the development of Open Educational Resources (OER) (\*) and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). (\*\*)**

Although digital technologies are fully embedded in the way people interact, work and trade, they are not being fully exploited in European education and training systems.



(\*) Open Educational Resources (OER) are freely accessible, openly licensed documents and media that are useful for teaching, learning, educational, assessment and research purposes. Although some people consider the use of an open format to be an essential characteristic of OER, this is not a universally acknowledged requirement.

(\*\*) A Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) is an online course aimed at unlimited participation and open access via the web. In addition to traditional course materials such as videos, readings and problem sets, MOOCs provide interactive user forums that help build a community for students, professors, and teaching assistants (TAs). MOOCs are a recent development in distance education. (Source: Wikipedia).

More information:

<http://invest-in-education.eu/>

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/progress\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/progress_en.htm)

## In search of a soul for Europe

At "*A soul for Europe*" conference in Berlin (3 March 2014), German movie director Wim Wenders declared "Europe projects coldness, projects administration, not my childhood dream of a united Europe. The EU started as a financial union, which had its justified reasons. But it stayed that way and culture was always just the icing on the cake, never part of the cake or the cake itself. You need to change that recipe".

Mr Schulz, who is running as lead candidate for the Social-Democrats in the next European election, lamented: "What is a soul for Europe? I cannot give a single coherent answer. And I am also sceptical about a new EU narrative."

Well, gentlemen, if you look to a shining example of what the EU can deliver to its children, don't go too far and look to the European Schools, the ones that you are slowly strangling with your austerity measures. And start to align your acts with your words.



# International survey on adult skills

One in five adults in Europe have low literacy and numeracy skills, and even a university degree in the same subject is no guarantee of the same level of skills in different countries, according to the international Survey of Adult Skills published recently by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the European Commission.

The survey was implemented by:

- ◆ Interviewing adults aged 16 to 65 in their homes – 5000 individuals in each participating country.
- ◆ Answering questions via computer, although the survey was also implemented via pencil-and-paper.
- ◆ Assessing literacy and numeracy skills and the ability to solve problems in technology-rich environments
- ◆ Collecting a broad range of information, including how skills are used at work and in other contexts, such as the home and the community.

The survey assesses the literacy, numeracy and problem-solving Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills.

These are considered to constitute “key” information processing skills in the sense that they provide a foundation for the development of other, higher-order cognitive skills and are prerequisites for gaining access to and understanding of specific domains of knowledge. In addition, these skills are necessary in a broad range of contexts, from education through work to everyday life.

The survey took place in 17 EU member states (Belgium (Flanders), Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Cyprus, The Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom), as well as in Australia, Canada, Japan, Republic of Korea, Norway and the United States.

In a second phase, the survey will be conducted also in Chile, Greece, Indonesia, Israel, Lithuania, New Zealand, Singapore, Slovenia.

The findings of the survey, also known as the “Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)”, underline the need to target investment at improving education and training to increase skills and employability in European countries.

The survey's key findings are:

- ◆ 20% of the EU working age population has low literacy and numeracy skills: the figure is higher among the unemployed;
- ◆ 25% of adults lack the digital skills needed to effectively use ICT;
- ◆ There are striking differences between countries in skills provided through formal education;
- ◆ Lifelong learning policies must aim at sustaining skills over time.

More information:

<http://www.oecd.org/site/piaac/surveyofadultskills.htm>

## Le GUDEE cherche des volontaires

Vous êtes parent d'élève ? Vous êtes professeur ou agent des Ecoles Européennes ?

Vous voulez aider à faire connaître le point de vue des usagers et des personnels des Ecoles Européennes ?

Le **Groupe Unitaire pour le développement des Écoles Européennes** (GUDEE) est l'enceinte dans laquelle tous peuvent se rencontrer pour influencer sur les décideurs :

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# Reorganisation of the secondary studies in the European schools

During the first week of December 2013, the meeting of the Board of Governors (BoG) of the European schools took place. One main point of this meeting was the approval of the reform of the secondary (Regarding the changes to be made to the secondary studies under this reform, please consult the previous issue of European Education).

The parents' associations expressed worries regarding this reform, fearing that it could have unforeseen consequences on the teaching and the acceptance of the European Baccalaureate by the Universities. Two Petitions have been put forward, one from the English section of the European School III (Ixelles) and another covering a wider criticism, by the parents' associations (APEEEs) of the Brussels European Schools. The latter was endorsed by circa 5000 signatories.

The group GRASPE ([graspe.eu](http://graspe.eu)) organised two meetings with the office of the Secretary General of the European Schools, Mr Kivinen, where the Deputy Secretary general of the European schools, Mr Marcheggiano, explained to the parents in detail the envisaged reform. The conferences attracted a large audience and helped the parents to form a clearer view on the proposed reform.

More information sessions have being organised by the Commission (Unit of the DG Human Ressources of the Commission dealing with the European Schools, Mr. Moricca and Ms Sodder-Higgins - DG HR) together with the office of the Secretary General.

In parallel, the Representatives of the Local Staff Committee of Brussels, the Chairs of the APEEEs of Brussels, the Unit of Mr. Moricca, and Mr Marcheggiano met prior to the meeting of the BoG, and summarised the concerns of the stakeholders in order to inform the BoG regarding their specific demands on this matter.

Summarising a complex issue, the stakeholders asked the BoG to take all necessary measures in order to handle this reform with all the necessary precautions. The group agreed to insist on the need for an independent Impact Assessment Study (IAS) to be made by relevant experts, covering all the years of the secondary. The IAS should examine also the impact of the modification of the marking system and the consequences of the reform in relation to access to the Universities.

As expected, the BoG did not adopt all the proposed points, but nevertheless took on board the most important ones, but to a lesser extent than wished by the stakeholders.

In these terms, the BoG adopted the reform for the S1 to S3 levels (to enter into force from September 2014) but not for the levels above. The BoG agreed to an Impact Assessment Study (IAS) to be performed for levels 4 to 7, responding to the concerns of the parents. The IAS Study will include also the changes to the marking system.

De facto, the reorganisation is postponed for years 4 and 5, and the Impact Assessment Study will now cover also these levels (In the first proposal, the IAS was covering only the Levels 6 and 7).

Currently the stakeholders, the Schools, the Commission services, the APEEEs, the Staff Committee and, last but not least GRASPE, still have work to do on this issue, for instance, to ensure that the Impact Assessment Study will be exhaustive and fair, and be extremely careful about the impact of this reorganisation on the access of the pupils to third level education system.

The position of the parents is that the study should meet the standards set by the Commission for its Impact Assessments.

A subgroup of the original "Organisation of secondary studies" working group started working on 17 of January 2014 in order to set guidelines/terms of reference for the upcoming Impact Assessment Study.

The APEEEs and Staff Committee requested that a formal steering group representing all the main stakeholders be set up in order to prepare the terms of reference and to oversee the study.

The Steering Group should be chaired by the Secretary General, report directly to the Board of Governors, be open to the participation of parents appointed by the APEEEs, the Staff Committee and to representatives of other institutions such as the European Parliament. Board members who proposed the original reform should not be part of this formal steering group but should be available for consultation/expertise, in other words, as experts in order to clarify pending issues.

This demand was ignored and now the Schools proceed without taking into account the above opinions of the parents and the Staff Committee.

GRASPE wishes to take this opportunity to warmly thank all parents who have supported our actions in relation to the secondary reform. We will continue to keep you informed on any significant development regarding this important issue.





## Training opportunities under the "Horizon 2020" Programme

The Commission announced on 11 December 2013 calls for projects under Horizon 2020, the European Union's € 80 billion research and innovation programme. Worth more than € 15 billion over the first two years, the funding is intended to help boost Europe's knowledge driven economy, and tackle issues that will make a difference in people's lives.

This includes 12 areas that will be a focus for action in 2014-2015, including topics such as personalised healthcare, digital security, and smart cities.

For the first time, the Commission has indicated funding priorities over two years, providing researchers and businesses with more certainty than ever before on the direction of EU research policy. Most calls from the 2014 budget are already open for submissions, with more to follow over the course of the year. Calls in the 2014 budget alone are worth around € 7.8 billion, with funding focused on the three key pillars of Horizon 2020:

1. Excellent Science: Around € 3 billion, including € 1.7 billion for grants from the European Research Council for top scientists and € 800 million for Marie Skłodowska-Curie fellowships for younger researchers with 4 foreseen actions the most directly linked is the Innovative Training Networks (ITN) which aim to train a new generation of creative, entrepreneurial and innovative early-stage researchers, able to face current and future challenges and to convert knowledge and ideas into products and services for economic and social benefit.

ITN will raise excellence and structure research and docto-

ral training, extending the traditional academic research training setting, and equipping researchers with the right combination of research-related and transferable competences. It will provide enhanced career perspectives in both the academic and non-academic sectors through international, interdisciplinary and inter-sector mobility combined with an innovation-oriented mind-set.

ITN supports competitively selected joint research training and/or doctoral programmes, implemented by partnerships of universities, research institutions, research infrastructures, businesses, SMEs, and other socio-economic actors from different countries across Europe and beyond. Partnerships take the form of collaborative European Training Networks (ETN), European Industrial Doctorates (EID) or European Joint Doctorates (EJD).

The other pillars of "Horizon 2020" are :

2. Industrial Leadership: € 1.8 billion to support Europe's industrial leadership in areas like ICT, nanotechnologies, advanced manufacturing, robotics, biotechnologies and space;

3. Societal challenges: € 2.8 billion for innovative projects addressing Horizon 2020's seven societal challenges, broadly: health; agriculture, maritime and bio-economy, energy, transport, climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials, reflective societies; and security.



More information:

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html>

## Le réseau des anciens des écoles européennes

### Alumni Europae

Alumni Europae wants to unite and reunite former students, as well as parents, teachers and staff from all European Schools, by putting like-minded people in touch on a social and professional level.

<http://www.alumnieuropae.org/>

# European Student Conference in Mathematics EUROMATH 2014

## First Announcement Call for Abstracts and Registration

<http://www.euromath.org>

The Cyprus Mathematical Society and the Thales Foundation, in cooperation with the Le-MATH Project, the European Mathematical Society and the Mathematical Society of the South Eastern Europe is announcing the organization of the

### "European Student Conference in Mathematics- EUROMATH 2014"

#### "Creativity and Innovation from early age" "Tomorrow's Inventors: Create-Exchange-Grow"

At this stage, students of age 12-18 from any European or International school who may be interested in attending the conference with or without a presentation, should proceed with the registration process.

The Conference will consist of several workshops and sessions covering multiple themes. Students are encouraged to present work or projects in mathematics in the following themes but not limited to.

Group presentations are welcome. Full audiovisual technology will be available.

The official language of the conference is English.

The themes of interest are:

Applications of Mathematics, Mathematics and Sciences, Mathematics and Life, Mathematics and Technology, Mathematics and Social Sciences, Mathematics and Space, Fractals and Geometry, Mathematics and Economy, Mathematics and Literature, Mathematics and Nature, Communication of Mathematics, Mathematics and Music, Mathematics and Law, Mathematics and Statistics, History of Mathematics, Mathematics and Society, Mathematics and Europe, Mathematics and Philosophy, Mathematics and Computer Science, Mathematics and Theatre, Famous Numbers, Mathematics and Sports.

Proposed Workshops, Symposiums, Sessions or Exhibitions within the Conference are welcome.

Please send your abstracts/proposals at [info@euromath.org](mailto:info@euromath.org) to the attention of the Programme Committee

### Important dates & deadlines

Send abstract / summary  
14 March 2014

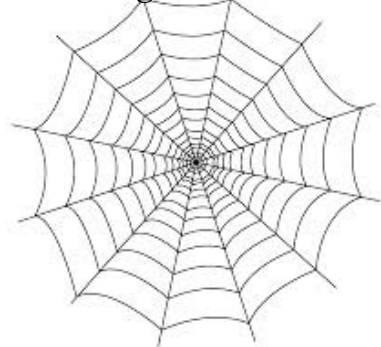
Notification of acceptance of abstract  
28 March 2014

Registration deadline  
1 April 2014



We are on the web !

[gudee.eu](http://gudee.eu)



*éditeur responsable : Georges Vlandas - responsables de la rédaction : Georges Spyrou, Trémour Denigot  
site web : Jean-Paul Soyer.*

*rédaction : Ana Gorey, Joëlle Salmon, Daniella Pedroni, Michael Stenger, Philippe Le Guay, Raffaele Napolitano, Michel Parys, Hélène Chraye, Ute Bolduan, Jacques Steiner, Carmen Zammit, Maria Glowacz-de Chevilly, Jean-Paul Soyer, Tomas Garcia-Azcarate, Sylvia Dastis, Ignazio Iacono, Carine Lingier, Karin van Vrede, Timothee Vlandas, Eulalia Claros, Andrea Mairate, Anna Maria Silvano, Augustino Manna, Gérard Hanney Labastille, Marie-Claire Simon, Bea Postiglione, Jean-Albert De Haan, Thomas Fairhurst, Ben Montgomery, Karl Sexton, Alexander Zammit, Katarzyna Horemans, Catherine Vieilledent*

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