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## **Schooling for Tomorrow**

### **Analysing and Understanding the "Demand for Schooling" - Country Reports**

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## ANALYSING AND UNDERSTANDING THE “DEMAND FOR SCHOOLING” – COUNTRY REPORTS

1. This note is a request for a country report to be prepared on “understanding the demand for schooling” as part of OECD/CERI’s project on *Schooling for Tomorrow*. CERI’s international Governing Board agreed that this should become an important component of the project in 2003, and gave further advice on how this might be done at its April 2003 meeting. This advice, and that of a small group working closely with the OECD Secretariat, have informed the formulation of this request.
2. This note provides:
  - Brief background information about the *Schooling for Tomorrow* project, including references to its main publications to date;
  - The aims and rationale for the focus on “understanding demand for schooling”;
  - The scope and structure of the request in broad terms;
  - A detailed outline request in five main sections attached as an Annex.
3. Countries are requested to nominate an expert and prepare a report. As research findings will constitute its main evidence base, this expert should normally be from a university or research institute. The report is expected to be approximately 25-35 pages in length, plus a bibliography. It may be longer where extensive research exists on the topics covered or shorter where research is lacking.
4. Some of the research findings will come from nationally representative studies and surveys. Many of the relevant studies, however, will be more regional, provincial or local in coverage; the presentation of findings will thus need to be qualified in terms of coverage and how generalisable they are for the whole country.
5. The country reports will represent a valuable source of analysis in their own right. They will also provide extensive source material for an international synthesis report, along with additional evidence from other OECD sources as appropriate. Even where there is not extensive research on these issues in a particular country, it will be useful for a country report to be prepared on those questions for which evidence exists.
6. It is the OECD’s intention that these country reports will be made publicly available once finalised and will provide documentation for future *Schooling for Tomorrow* events. The precise form the final country reports will take – as working documents accessible *via* the Internet, included in a larger paper-based or electronic publication, or both – has yet to be decided.
7. The completed report should be submitted in either English or French to **David Istance**. His contact details are: OECD/CERI, 2, rue André Pascal, 75775 Paris Cedex 16, France; tel: (33)-(0)1-4524-9273; e-mail [david.istance@oecd.org](mailto:david.istance@oecd.org). He will be happy to respond to any questions that may arise about its completion.
8. The deadline for submission of the report is **Friday, April 30th 2004**.

### **The OECD/CERI *Schooling for Tomorrow* Project in Brief**

9. One of the most prominent of the OECD's Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) on-going projects is *Schooling for Tomorrow*. This has created a forum for the international development of forward thinking in education, and has already produced a series of publications. Up to its new phase, of which this request constitutes an important element, the project has followed three main avenues: a) identification of key trends and the construction of schooling scenarios for the future (OECD/CERI 2001a); b) analysis of innovation and networks (OECD/CERI, 1999; 2003a); c) clarification of the role of information and communication technologies (ICT) in schooling (OECD/CERI 2000a; 2001b).

10. *Schooling for Tomorrow* has been developed in connection with other programmes within the OECD. Prominent among these is CERI work on knowledge management in education and in other sectors [OECD/CERI 2000b; OECD/CERI 2003 and 2004 (forthcoming)], which work has a particular focus on the role of educational R&D (OECD/CERI 2003b). *Schooling for Tomorrow* has also collaborated with the OECD's International Futures Programme - its broader analyses of the future of society and of governance are found in OECD/IFP 2000 and 2001.

11. The launch of a new phase of the programme was marked by the 1<sup>st</sup> Forum on *Schooling for Tomorrow* held in the Futuroscope Park, near Poitiers, France in February 2003. This phase has three inter-connected components:

- i. [Operational] – applying different approaches for forward-thinking, innovation, and change in the education systems of a small number of countries, with the aim ultimately to compile these into an international “Toolbox”;
- ii. [Methodological] – also in contribution to the Toolbox, continued reflection on conceptual approaches to forward thinking in education, including the scenarios;
- iii. [Analytical] – based on evidence on key aspects of schooling, especially to clarify “demand” and progress towards or away from the scenarios.

12. The work being launched through this note thus represents an important contribution to iii., while informing i. and ii. as well. These components will feed into future international *Schooling for Tomorrow* Forums in 2004 and 2005.

### **The Importance of “Understanding Demand” for *Schooling for Tomorrow***

13. Better understanding “the demand for schooling” is a critical component of the *Schooling for Tomorrow* activity:

- i. It has become common within the educational policy discourse in many countries to identify the critical shift from traditional models of the past to dynamic ones of the future to be defined by the change from “supply-dominated systems” - operating to procedures laid down primarily by educational authorities, schools and teachers - towards more demand-sensitive arrangements. Such a direction for change has both social (“education must be more responsive to the expectations of society”) and individual (“it must be more learner-centred”) connotations. There is a dearth of rigorous examination of these terms and developments, still less close empirical analysis. This international study aims to address this lack (along with parallel *Schooling for Tomorrow* analysis of the “personalisation of learning”).
- ii. The *Schooling for Tomorrow* scenarios are distinguished in terms that are among the most difficult to pin down with precision: public attitudes towards educational investments, beliefs about the main goals that schools should aspire to, satisfaction (or not) with their achievements,

broad participation (or not) in education, different modes of governance. This study will extend the international knowledge base in just these areas. It will help to strengthen the analytical basis for understanding whether OECD countries are moving towards or away from the different scenarios.

- iii. In an environment of growing diversity and rapid change, often accompanied by worries about social fragmentation and insecurity, there is an increasing desire to address the moral foundations of education, not just the narrowly instrumental. It is controversial terrain. On the one hand, strengthening an emphasis on values in education immediately raises legitimate concerns about promoting orthodoxies and indoctrination. On the other, a focus on values may be sought precisely as a counterweight to what some see as a trend to excessive educational consumerism. Better understanding “demand” gets into these complex issues.

14. “Demand” defines a multi-layered set of issues, not a single dimension. The coverage of the attached request has been defined, not to be exhaustive of all possible dimensions, but to respond to important questions that are amenable to clarification through empirical evidence. Outcomes reflect complex interactions between “demand”, “supply” and contextual factors, rather than are pure expressions of any one of these.

15. It is thus not supposed that the evidence compiled and analysed for this study will be revealing of “demand” abstracted from “supply” and context. It is expected that it will provide a valuable balance to educational policy analysis that tends to be heavily weighted in favour of the latter two.

### **The Scope of the Country Report**

16. The report framework is structured around the following sections, each addressing a different set of questions:

1. *Demand and Views about Schooling in Society* – How does demand feature in educational debate, how are schools regarded by society, and how well are expectations met?
2. *The Attitudes and Expectations of Parents* – what do parents expect of schools and how satisfied are they?
3. *Participation in Decision-making in the Schooling Process* – How open to external influence is decision-making in schooling - in local governance and day-to-day influence - and who exercises such influence?
4. *Pupil Choices and Values* – what do we know about the aspirations and expectations of young people themselves, and how well these are met through schooling?
5. *Diversity in the Structure of School Systems and Influence over the Curriculum* – how is diversity of demand recognised in the “supply” of schooling and how broad is the influence over the contents of formal school education?

17. To reflect this multi-dimensional nature, each section of the attached detailed framework begins by describing the particular dimension of demand it addresses, and its relevance to the overall picture.

18. This study refers both to the primary and to the secondary stages/ages and the findings reported should cover both. It relates primarily to the years of compulsory schooling: the student choices and options beyond the end of compulsory education possess their own dynamics and are the subject in many countries of an extensive literature and sets of policies. Findings relating to upper secondary levels/ages may also be included if it will assist comprehension of developments, making clear that they refer to young people of an older age group.

19. This exercise is intended, first and foremost, to enhance understanding of the current situation in countries. Where information exists that allows through-time comparisons, this will offer a valuable additional perspective for the national report. It will be especially useful to know whether there has been marked change in recent years in any of the areas covered by the study.

### **References**

OECD/CERI (2004, forthcoming), Knowledge Management in the Knowledge Economy: Implications for Education and Learning, Paris.

OECD/CERI (2003a), Networks of Innovation: Towards New Models for Managing Schools and Systems. Paris.

OECD/CERI (2003b), New Challenges for Educational Research, Paris.

OECD/CERI (2003 forthcoming), Measuring Knowledge Management in the Business Sector: First Steps, Paris.

OECD/CERI (2001a), What Schools for the Future?, Paris.

OECD/CERI (2001b), Learning to Change: ICT in Schools, Paris.

OECD/CERI (2000a), Learning to Bridge the Digital Divide, Paris.

OECD/CERI (2000b), Knowledge Management for the Learning Society, Paris.

OECD/CERI (1999), Innovating Schools, Paris.

OECD/IFP (2001), Governance in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Paris.

OECD/IFP (2000), The Creative Society of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Paris.

## ANNEX

### THE DETAILED FRAMEWORK OF QUESTIONS FOR THE COUNTRY REPORT

#### Overview

Each report should be structured as follows:

1. Demand and Views about Schooling in Society;
2. The Attitudes and Expectations of Parents;
3. Participation in Decision-making in the Schooling Process;
4. Pupil Choices and Values;
5. Diversity in the Structure of School Systems and Influence over the Curriculum.

Sections 1-4 will rely primarily on research evidence, along with some interpretation of broad trends by the expert. Section 5 – “Diversity in the Structure of School Systems and Influence over the Curriculum” – will draw substantially on legislative and curricular framework documentation and system-level statistics, as well as research evidence.

#### 1. Demand and Views about Schooling in Society

**How does demand feature in educational debate, how are schools regarded by society, and how well are expectations met?**

This section seeks to clarify whether and how the notion of “demand” features in public debate on education in each country, and more generally how schooling is regarded in the public arena, especially the media. It also addresses “demand” through the ways that schools meet or not the expectations of society at large and of different groups within society (parents specifically are the focus of Section 2). It seeks to draw together survey evidence relating to views on education, distinguishing between different aspects of education (priorities, satisfaction levels) and different groups in society (defined in such terms as political affiliation, age, gender, and cultural and ethnic background). It will also be useful to know how, if at all, these views contrast with those held by teachers and school leaders.

Commentary may usefully be added on the broad context of debate on public services. Commentary might also refer to the robustness of the surveys referred to and if/how the results of such surveys are used.

**Questions:**

- **1.1** Does the notion of “demand” feature in policy discourse and public debate in your country? How commonplace is it now to propose that schooling should be more “demand-sensitive” - by whom, and what is that taken to mean? How important are the distinctions between “social”, “individual”, and “private” demand?
- **1.2** Have studies addressed changes in the way schools and education in general are presented and discussed in the media? What do such analyses show about the nature of public debate on education?
- **1.3** What is known about how society values the different aims of education? Are there major differences between different sections of society, defined in terms of political affiliation, age, gender, and cultural and ethnic background? What evidence is there to suggest how society in general, and different groups in society, believe that these aims are achieved?

**2. The Attitudes and Expectations of Parents**

<b>What do parents expect of schools and how satisfied are they?</b>
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This section addresses “demand” through the views of a pivotal section of society with demands to make on schooling – parents. It addresses issues of satisfaction with schools, as well as perceptions of what they are for and how well they meet their goals. It also focuses on particular groups of parents, and whether the functioning and outcomes of schooling is perceived to be fair. Where the question refers to “different groups of parents”, these are distinguished in terms of criteria such as age, socio-economic status, cultural and ethnic origin. If data permit, it may be useful to distinguish between mothers, fathers, and other close family members; single parents and those living together. Where possible, distinguish between primary and secondary schooling.

**Questions:**

- **2.1** What is the evidence relating to levels of expressed parental approval of/satisfaction with what is achieved by:
  - a) schools in general;
  - b) those which their children actually attend.
- **2.2** What evidence exists on the priorities held by parents in general, as well as different groups of parents, about the main aims of schooling and on how well they assess that these priorities are actually achieved? Is anything known about parental satisfaction with the demands made on their children by the school system?
- **2.3** Is there any basis to the assertion that parents tend to the conservative as regards their children’s education? Is anything known about the extent to which parents regard schools as a “public good” or instead as a “private consumer good”?
- **2.4** How well do particular groups of parents feel they are served by the school system? How equitable do different groups of parents believe the system to be - in general and in relation to their own children?

### 3. Participation in Decision-making in the Schooling Process

**How open to external influence is decision-making in schooling - in local governance and day-to-day influence – and who exercises such influence?**

This section addresses “demand” through the room for local influence over schooling, by students’ families and others in the community other than those on the educational “supply-side”. This section covers decision-making related to day-to-day influence over the education of the young and to involvement in the general management of schools. It also addresses the sometimes controversial issue of the exercise of parental choice over which school children attend. Attention should be given both to the extent of such influence and, where possible, differentiate between the characteristics of those who exercise it, in such terms as socio-economic background, ethnic and cultural origin, position in the community and residence.

#### *Questions:*

- **3.1** What light does research shed on the *level* of involvement of parents and other members of the community in the directions taken by schools in the:
  - a) day-to-day directions taken for the education of different classes and pupils;
  - b) local governance of schools as institutions?
- **3.2** Are there clear *patterns* relating to which groups of parents or other members of communities tend most to be involved and which least involved, and in what kinds of decision-making? What does the evidence show about *who* exercises available choices over school enrolment [Question 5.2 relates to legislative and constitutional entitlements rather than how this is exercised in practice]?

### 4. Pupil Choices and Values

**What do we know about the aspirations and expectations of young people themselves, and how well these are met through schooling?**

“Demand” here is addressed through evidence of what young people themselves want and aspire to - as revealed by their behaviour and their own reports - and how this aligns with what schooling provides. Any study of “demand” must take account of the views of children and young people but this is not to suppose that such evidence is simple to interpret [“demands” may be inconsistent or ill-formulated, and demand-sensitivity cannot be equated simplistically with either a curriculum “smorgasbord” or “edutainment”]. Choices made by young people may as much reflect parental or social influence as their own attitudes. Where available, the findings should be reported on different sections of the pupil/student population - by e.g. age; gender; urban/rural; social, cultural or ethnic background.

#### *Questions:*

- **4.1** What do young people think about their schooling – its relevance and quality? What is known about what motivates them to study, in particular the balance between intrinsic interest and seeking extrinsic reward? How do the views of young people match with the views of others, including their parents and teachers, about what is important in education?
- **4.2** What are the rates of absenteeism from compulsory school and how does this vary from the beginning of the primary cycle to the end of the lower secondary cycle? What are the

characteristics of those who are most persistently absent? Is there evidence about boredom among the young?

- **4.3** What is the room for students and their parents to choose different programmes of study, and how far are these primarily in the hands of schools and the education authorities? How far do young people participate in the decision-making of schools? Is anything known about such influence or participation by young people in any of different types of schools referred to in 5.1?

## **5. Diversity in the Structure of School Systems and Influence over the Curriculum**

<b>How is diversity of demand recognised in the “supply” of schooling and how broad is the influence over the contents of formal school education?</b>
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This section addresses how different forms of demand are recognised at the system level, both in terms of structures and in terms of influence over the formal content of schooling. It will also provide valuable contextual information through which to interpret the findings reported in the previous sections. This section addresses the breadth of influence over curriculum contents. It also asks for information on areas other than disciplinary and knowledge fields, in particular how values, citizenship and religious education are treated in curricula, hence relating to certain “demands” from the broader society or from particular groups within it. The greater room to exercise choice over the type of school a young person attends is not automatically assumed here to be an indicator of demand-sensitivity, and other questions provide detailed information through which to qualify the material reviewed here.

### ***Questions:***

- **5.1** What formal distinctions, if any, are there between types of school distinguished in terms of such factors as ability/selectivity of the student intake, public/private, religious affiliation, or specialisation based on linguistic or curriculum grounds? What is the scale of participation in private schooling and what does “private” mean? Is “home-schooling” legal and under what conditions? Where such alternatives exist, what proportions of the child and youth cohorts are involved in each?
- **5.2** What are the legal/constitutional possibilities for the exercise of choice by parents and students, as regards attendance at, or foundation of, the different types of school described in 5.1, or enrolment at different public schools of the same type?
- **5.3** In what way, if at all, are groups representing civil society and parents involved in defining the school curriculum? Is their influence on curriculum guidelines and the contents of schooling significant?
- **5.4** Are values explicitly treated in curriculum guidelines and in what way? Is there explicit reference to citizenship/citizenship education? To different philosophical or religious beliefs?

## **6. Bibliography and Additional Tables**

The bibliography is an important element of the national reports as it will provide a useful source for the available knowledge base. If the author chooses, the bibliography may be longer than works actually cited in the text. Where the cited sources are in languages other than English or French, it will be useful for a translation of the title to be included in parenthesis with the reference.

If the country author wishes to include additional tables or report extracts as appendices to the main report, these may be attached at the end.