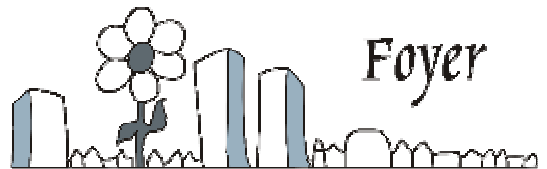




**European Forum for
Freedom in Education**

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the 32nd effe-Colloquium

From early childhood curiosity to early school leaving

Compulsory Education Giving *all* young people a future

Tuesday 13 – Thursday 15 May 2008, Brussels

Venue and co-organiser: vzw Foyer asbl
Werkhuizenstraat -25- rue des Ateliers
Brussel 1080 Bruxelles

This Colloquium addresses one of the five benchmarks of the EU "Education and Training 2010" work program, namely the problem of early school leavers. One in six young people in the 27 countries of the European Union leaves school with no more than lower secondary education and does not participate in any kind of education or training after this point.¹

This statistic suggests that those young people have somehow lost interest in learning or at least in formal learning. At the same time it is known that children are born learners and are keen to discover new things. So at some time during their school careers something seems to happen that obstructs this curiosity and impedes their willingness to learn within traditional school structures and subject areas. And as dropping out of school is an active way of showing disaffection, the number of early school leavers may just be the tip of the iceberg.

Evidence from international surveys (PISA, TIMSS and PIRLS) shows that family background, for example parental education, parental occupation, family structure or migrant background, are factors which significantly influence the achievement of pupils in schools in the EU. However, there is also evidence that some education and training systems manage to counteract such factors and thereby positively influence pupil performance.² Surveys also indicate that over a third of the variation in pupil performance is attributable to differences between schools. This shows that the quality of the context (school, class, teaching) in which pupils are educated has a bearing on their progress, especially that of the weakest pupils.³

Disaffection is not just a problem with teenagers; it can start in the early years. It is also not just a problem for state schools. Independent schools are more able to select or reject children and young people and their cooperation with the parents is often more distinctive than at state schools. They are better able to respond individually and help more directly in cases of disaffection. But independent schools also have to deal with this problem and they too are searching for ways to support children and young people in crisis and to avoid early school leaving.

The *effe*-Colloquium will concentrate on how school should be organised to give pupils the best chance - regardless of family or migration background - of maintaining their natural interest in learning. The Colloquium will follow the progression of compulsory education, reflecting on the

¹ The best performers are the Czech Republic, Austria, Poland, Slovakia, Finland and Norway with school leaver rates less than 10%. The situation is serious in Portugal and Malta (41,7% and 39,2% resp.). Countries with a rate over 20% are Italy and Spain, but also Iceland and Turkey, at http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/progress06/equity_en.pdf, p. 29

² For example: Ireland, Luxemburg and France are more successful in limiting the negative impact of the foreign background of pupils on their performance at school; parents' occupational background is relatively less important for pupil performance in Finland, Iceland and Latvia; mother's educational status is relatively less important for pupil performance in the Netherlands, Iceland and Norway, *ibid*, p.50,45.

³ Furthermore, research indicates that the distribution of effective contexts is not a matter of chance: in practice, working-class pupils find their way into the least effective schools/contextes, Duru-Bellat, M. (2004), social inequality at school and educational policies.

following questions:

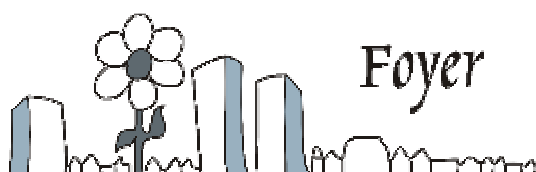
- At what point do some children stop being eager to learn and why?
- How can curiosity be developed so as to encourage the child to become a lifelong learner
- Are teachers and schools prepared in the best way to foster children's natural curiosity?
- What kinds of changes do schools need to make?

The aim of the colloquium is to provide an opportunity for people who are active within education to meet policy makers and vice versa. Through a **"market of possibilities"** where everyone can discuss their thoughts and visions on this theme we want to ensure a vibrant exchange of ideas.

Furthermore, preliminary to the Colloquium the *effe* will set up a sms-project **"pupil day X in Europe"** at the beginning of March. The idea is to involve young people from across Europe in taking part in this conference through the medium of mobile telephones by reporting on one normal school day in Europe from their point of view. This project will enable us to share their experiences, feelings and attitudes. It is not a scientific project, but we do hope for insights and stimuli – and who knows - even literary pleasure.

Languages used at the Colloquium: German and English

The venue of this Colloquium is



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 Email: foyer@foyer.be www.foyer.be

Foyer is the regional integration centre for the city of Brussels. The aim of Foyer is to advance the emancipation of migrants. The centre organises sport, healthcare, education and training and employment activities in Brussels. Refreshments and meals will be taken at Foyer with the exception of dinner on Wednesday 14 May.

Program

From early childhood curiosity to early school leaving Compulsory Education Giving *all* young people a future

Tuesday 13 May 2008

15:00-17:00	Arrival and registration
17:00-18:30	Welcome by FOYER Opening Lecture: Robert Bell - former vice-President <i>effe</i> and Lies Feron - European affairs manager <i>effe</i> (GB/BE) Lecture: <i>early school leavers in Europe</i> – European Commission, DG EAC (N.N.) Brainstorm: <i>Why do young people leave school early?</i>
18:30-19:15	Dinner
19:15-19:30	Cultural Program – FOYER
19:30-21:00	Lecture: <i>Slovenian experiences on early school leaving</i> – Slovenian EU-Presidency, Mirko Zorman (SI) Lecture: <i>Brussels and the problem of truants</i> – Guido François, director of vzw Katholieke Opvoeding en Cultuur Brussel (KOCB) (BE) Lecture: <i>Compulsory education, the nature of the problem</i> – Open Society Institute, Bardhyl Musai (AL)

Wednesday 14 May 2008

- 09:00-10:45 **Ideas and Examples** – Lectures
Good results in the Czech Republic – Karel Rýdl (CZ), *effe*-President and Consultant to the Czech Education Ministry
What brain research tells us about children's learning– Kees Vreugdenhil, education consultant (NL)
Film: *SPATZ, a school dealing with early school leavers* (DE)
Stadt-als-Schule Berlin, Hartmut Glänzel (DE)
Presentation of the work of FOYER (BE)
- 10:45-11:00 Coffee Break
- 11:00-12:30 **First Working Groups - topic:** What can go wrong for young people at school? Working Groups dedicated to different sorts of school leaving and the consequences
- 12:30-13:45 Sandwich Lunch
- 13:45-15:15 **Ideas and Examples** – Lectures
Bishops Park College, Mike Davies (GB)
Efterskole and the Danish Monitoring Program, Troels Borring (DK)
Dance as Education, Royston Maldoom (GB/DE)
- 15:15-16:30 **Second Working Groups - topic:** What are the consequences of disaffection? What can be done? What can schools as organisations do? What can teachers, school heads and other staff do? What are the limits?
- 16:30-17:30 Coffee Break - Working on the results of the working groups
- 17:30-18:45 **Presentation** of the results of the working groups (5min/group)
Discussion
- 18:45 Leaving together for Dinner in town (Grand Place)
Free Evening Program

Thursday 15 May 2008

- 08:30 Leaving together from FOYER to visit local Market
- 09:30 Leaving together from FOYER for the European Parliament
- 11:00-13:00 **Hearing in the EP (requested)**
Presentation of the *effe* sms-questionnaire with young people
Presentation of the results of the Colloquium – prospect of *effe*-work on this theme
Roma and Early School Leaving, Roma Education Fund, Mihai Surdu (RO)
Questions of the MEPs
- 13:00-14:30 Sandwich Lunch at FOYER
Colloquium Ends

Please note that this colloquium is recognized as in-service training!



Your way to Foyer:

- *By plane:*
 - Up to four trains an hour connect the airport to the Brussels North, Brussels Central and Brussels Midi stations
- *By train:*
 - Brussel-Centraal/Bruxelles-Centrale and then take Metro Line 1 (direction Koning Boudewijn/Roi Bauouin – Bizet)
 - Brussel-Zuid/Bruxelles-Midi and then take Metro Line 2 (direction Simonis)
- *By bus*
 - All busses from Brussel-Noord/ Bruxelles-Nord in direction of Saintelette
- *By metro*
 - Metro station: IJzer/Yser or Ribaucourt (Metro Line 2)
 - Metro station: Graaf van Vlaanderen/ Comte de Flandre (Metro Line 1)
- *By car:*
 - Drive to the centre of Brussels. Place Saintelette is part of the „little“ ring (petit ceinture – R20 – north side) around the centre of the city. The Place Rogier, where Hotel des Colonies is, lies also on that ring.

Please note that accommodation is to be booked separately.

You can find information about accommodation at: www.hotelclub.net/hotel.reservations/Brussels.htm - www.all-hotels.com/brussels-hotels.htm - www.hostelworld.com/

You can find tourist information about Brussels in eight languages on www.ilotsacre.be/

Application Form for the *efe*-Colloquium

Registration fees:

<input type="checkbox"/>	All meals included Colloquium fee: 223,00 €/Person For <i>efe</i> -Members: 162,00 €/Person
<input type="checkbox"/>	All meals included, <i>except the dinner at the Grand Place</i> Colloquium fee: 205,00 €/Person For <i>efe</i> -Members: 140,00 €/Person
<input type="checkbox"/>	Participants from Eastern Europe Colloquium fee: 150,00 €/Person For <i>efe</i> -Members: 110,00 €/Person
<input type="checkbox"/>	I will attend the <i>efe</i> -General Annual Meeting, which will take place Tuesday 13 May, 13:30-15:30
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am a vegetarian
<input type="checkbox"/>	I will participate in the „Market of possibilities“
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fees should be paid into following account: 433813, BLZ: 45250035 Sparkasse Witten IBAN: DE50 4525 0035 0000 4338 13; SWIFT-BIC: WELADED1WTN

I would like to make a firm booking:

Title: _____ Surname: _____ First Name: _____

Profession: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

I understand and speak (please indicate):

German AND English: _____ ONLY German: _____ ONLY English: _____