

# Considering the new educational issues from an international perspective



Education  
researches and  
reconstruction  
of school and  
educational  
spaces



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France

## → Submission procedure

The closing date for submission will be **march 29, 2016**.

All presentations need to be done in English, in French, in Portuguese or in Spanish.

Format:

Paper summaries are a maximum of 5000 signs (including spaces) and must include a title, a summary of the paper, the subject of the research, the methodology, the author's name, surname, status, organization or institution and email.

Please specify the appropriate axis which corresponds to the proposal.

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## → Presentation

What transformations of schools and educational spaces has the XXIst century brought about? For which democratic project(s)? In most massified educational systems, the transmission of knowledge and the handling of educational issues are no longer effected solely by the school. Its ability to meet the democratic challenges assigned to it is questioned by the facts. Although school is being supported in its socializing functions and mentoring of the youth, even if the training level of new generations is increasing, though the aspirations for educational democratization are shared and have emerged as a major issue of economic or democratic development, no educational system manages to escape social and gender achievement inequalities, despite significant differences in performance in this area (Janmaat, Duru-Bellat, Green, & Méhaut, 2013). The statistical data on pupils' educational path reminds us of the weight of the social legacy in terms of academic achievement. The modes of accessing the different curriculums and degrees are highly differentiated and categorized according to gender, social class and race (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1970 Bernstein, 1975). It is therefore necessary to analyze the links between these different categories (Berani et al., 2008). While the distance that separates the pupils from the lower classes, especially boys, from the average academic standards does not seem to decrease, girls tend not to translate their academic success into professional achievement even as the diplomas and the university degrees have become essential on today's labour market.

At the same time, school and educational spaces seem to recompose around the mobilization of new actors, new forms of organization of school and educational activities, the transformation of the scales of intervention, the promotion of different practices and sometimes alternatives to a model school in difficulty (Ben Ayed, 2009; Seddon & Levin, 2013, Maurício, 2014). This transformation is accompanied by an international movement of recomposition of the school systems, characterized by an increased competition between schools which is supported by public policies with nuanced effects (Ball, 2008; Felouzis, Maroy & Van Zanten, 2013). We must be able to examine the effects of these policies in terms of spatial repartition of social problems in and around the school and link them to inequalities in terms of educational resources among the territories. Centralized models are recomposed in favour of new forms of educational organizations that form themselves around the sedimentation of regulation modes (Buisson-Fenet & Pons, 2014) and the proliferation of local systems. These are built to meet the heterogeneous public and to address local constraints perceived as specific (Barrère, 2013). Increased institutional autonomy has led to structure these programs around the supposed characteristics of the territories and the mobilization of local and regional authorities, community or nearby associations, popular education and empowerment movements. The involvement of these new actors in the management of school affairs probably calls for an evolution of the current analysing fields that cut across the strictly school centered frameworks. Previously engaged in other forms of youth leadership, these actors are

now strongly mobilizing to address singular difficulties that may be referred to as new educational issues.

These issues point to "public problems" (Cefaï & Terzi, 2012) that arise and evolve specifically in the school space. They disrupt or question the ordinary operation of the school and / or question its basic social functions. The way in which they are dealt with and anticipated challenges how the school organizes its traditional missions, which revolve around education, the transmission of knowledge and the construction of learning, with wider educational forms. The promotion of the specific difficulties posed by these issues in the public and scientific debate, and in the media, contribute to their definition and the mobilization of plural actors to handle them (Isambert-Jamati, 1985). Underachievement, violence at school, school dropout, ethno-racial and gender discrimination, and discrimination based on sexual orientation, are some of these new educational issues which remain to be analysed as well as the ways in which they are criticized and dealt with (Lemieux, 2009).

One can wonder about the conditions of their emergence in democracies in which educational systems are massified. Are they an inevitable effect of contemporary educational organizations? Do they reveal a weakening of the school in its socializing role, or rather a form of school treatment of the social issue which requires multi-angled ways of addressing difficulties? How do these difficulties aggregate to local contexts and their sociological markers? The forms in which these objects are designated, how they are dealt with, how they are perceived by the actors and what they reveal about the reconstitution of school and educational spaces, all of these issues will be at the heart of this conference. It should be an opportunity to compare fields and objects which can relate to forms of designation of these new educational issues, the terms of their management at local, national or transnational levels, and how these situations are recognized by the various categories of educational actors, including pupils. The conference must also be an opportunity to cross-examine different research on different national or regional contexts, while also supporting the putting into international perspective by comparative work on these issues.

## Four axes are suggested for development and analysis.

### → Axis 1 The designation, the sort and the classification of the new educational problematics

School and its agents face difficulties which are more and more fragmented, this trend reinforces the idea that the educational institution is in a permanent crisis. This institution is perceived weaker and not able to sustain a democratic project which guarantees equality and equity. The heterogeneity of the pupils and the degree of their social proximity with school may contribute to the development of new provisions and programs which could be out of the traditional school environment. Some questions, usually affiliated to specific categories of pupils, are designated and treated as social problems which disturb school. What questions could be apprehended as new educational problematics? How could their emergence be understood? Which connection could be established between these issues and the school system in which they take place? Which links could we make with the designation of some specific public? These subjects may lead to the questioning of the social construction of these questions, how they gain this preponderance in the public debate and what their effects on the evolution of the educational areas are.

### → Axis 2 Policies about these new educational problematics: to fight and/or to prevent

We will question the definition, the characteristics and the effects measured of the policies about the new educational issues. Their configurations are different according to the school system and to the echelon at which they intervene. The set-up of national policies, of programs deployed from the local to the international scale, express the actors' commitment to resolve these difficulties. Which areas and echelons are mobilized? How are these policies or these interventions nationally and locally applied? For example, among other subthemes of research, we are interested in those that focus on these problematics through the educational priority policies, the compensatory education policies, the development of educational programs linked with school or with some specific supervision of pupils, or in research that focuses on the programs' effects on the educational areas.

## → Axis 3 Evaluation and judgment on the educational programs and specific provisions

The rankings and quantified indicators become progressively more frequent and gain importance in the educational debate. This progressive diffusion, linked with the democratization of education, has become massive and contributes to the hierarchization of the pupils and the schools, and contributes to measure some “educational performances” and compare them between countries. They are also driven to assess the efficiency and the impact of programs, management and treatment of the new educational problematics. This axis will offer the opportunity to question these evaluations and their presumed “objectivity”, the use of statistical surveys (like those about the school climate), but also the evaluation’s dynamic and the alternative judgments to these wide national and international surveys. It is about the judgment of educational actors, parents and pupils on school. The evaluation is understood with a wide meaning, as a practice which consists of “appreciating the sequence of the conduct, under the mutual supervision, and with his proper reason for taking action”, and is inherent to the human action (Cottèreau, 2012; Lamont, 2012). We may discuss about the instruments of the evaluation and the different methods, the concrete use of the quantitative evaluation and the effects of these instruments on the practices. This axis will be devoted to a critical reflection on the methodology to get more insight on the act of the evaluation.

## → Axis 4 Acting in school and inside the territories

We will seek to understand what are the important evolutions and the transformations in the programs, the management and the treatment of the new educational issues. Specifically, we will pay particular attention to the local specificity and to the effects on the professional practices. We may question the division of the educational work inside these programs and these new educational managements, the evolution or the continuity of the school form precisely on these questions. What are the effects of the social, sexual and spatial segregation inside school, in particular concerning pupils’ school path? How do pupils and their families perceive this spatialization of the social problem and what are the consequences of the competition logic between the educational areas? Who are the actors mobilized and with which legitimacy do they organize their actions? What actions, programs or supports do they promote or favour? We will question the construction of the margins, of the different ways of innovation and experiment dedicated to the management of the new educational problematics. How do these interventions deal with the sharing of education with parents and how do they support cooperation between professional and parents? Do the “educational alliances” (Gilles, Potvin and Tièch Christinat (eds), 2012) have a dedicated space between all the actors mobilized and how? We may question the manner of evolution of the educational spaces and we will explore the effect of the promotion of some new modes of collaboration on education, as we observe the development of some logic of externalization from school to manage these new educational issues.

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