

Rethinking education by and for the regions

The time for global, living, lifelong education has come

Osons les territoires" collective, autumn 2023

Introduction: Designing and leading the metamorphosis of the education and training system in the era of the second modernity

An education system is designed according to the society we want to build and the challenges it will face. In societies undergoing radical change, as is the case today, this anticipation is essential. Today's education system will be shaping the minds of children and young people who will be at the helm of society in 20, 30 or 50 years' time. It will inculcate in them ways of thinking, of relating to others, to society, to power, that will mark them for the rest of their lives. All thinking about the education system is forward-looking and prescriptive. *Forward-looking* because it requires an effort to anticipate what society may become in 50 years' time; and *prescriptive* because the way in which people's minds are shaped today will have a major impact on the society that emerges, opening up potential on the one hand and closing it on the other.

In the shorter term, at a time when everyone is well aware that our societies, from local to global level, need to embark on a multi-faceted ecological, social, economic, technical, cultural and political transition, we have to wonder how difficult it is for our societies to do so, as illustrated by our inability to tackle head-on the decisive issues of global warming and biodiversity. Our education system has been unable to anticipate these changes and prepare future citizens for them. Are we now in a position, as a matter of urgency, to train people capable of leading this change?

The education system we have inherited from past centuries, designed and implemented in line with the society we wanted to build and the challenges we wanted to meet at the time it was conceived and set up, is so inert that a gap has opened up between what it is preparing for and what the essential changes in our societies are. To sum up in broad strokes, humanity, through its technical, demographic and economic development, has entered a new era. The fact that human beings are leaving their mark on the entire planet, on the biosphere of course, but also on the lithosphere and the atmosphere, has led specialists to say that we have entered a new era, the Anthropocene, characterised by the fact that humanity has become capable of destroying, in the space of a few decades, the very conditions for its survival.

The fact that human societies have transformed their environment to the point of making it unsuitable for their own survival is nothing new. This has been the case at least since the agricultural revolution. The phenomena of deforestation and desertification bear witness to this. What is radically new, however, is that this phenomenon of potential self-destruction now extends to the entire human family. We are not

can imagine French society surviving a global catastrophe. The notion of the "human family", introduced in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, has gone, in less than eighty years, from a philosophical status, underpinning a universal right to dignity for everyone, to a socio-political status: a community united for better or for worse, with a common destiny. The enemy is no longer outside, but within each society, and indeed each individual.

How did we get here? We cannot avoid taking responsibility for the birth, in the West and particularly in France, of the "first modernity". Combining technical progress, the exaltation of individuals and their rights and a spirit of conquest, imbued with the feeling of superiority of the white race, the first modernity enabled the West to conquer the world, to mobilise its natural resources for its own benefit, and sometimes to subjugate entire peoples and continents. It also spread its values, its concept of progress, science, governance and the good life across the globe.

To understand the very nature of this first modernity, the industrial and technological revolution that was its consequence, the spirit of domination that is inseparable from it and the education system that resulted from it, it is essential to ask what is its DNA, what are its deepest motivations, what was the compass guiding its promoters on the path of what has been called progress for more than two centuries. This compass of early modernity, and what gave it its formidable operational effectiveness, was the art of separation and specialisation.¹

Firstly, the separation between humanity and the rest of the living world. From time immemorial, the relationship between humans and the rest of the living world has been between two poles: on the one hand, humanity is an integral part of the living world and, on the other, it has the capacity to exploit living resources for its own benefit. The hallmark of early modernity is that it tilted towards the second pole, reducing the rest of the biosphere to the status of a resource to be exploited. In the field of governance, operational efficiency was expected from the segmentation of institutions and public policies. In the economic sphere, we have based economic efficiency on competition and the specialisation of players, often with hierarchical organisations inspired by the army or mechanical automatons.

Science and technology have made lightning progress by subdividing into disciplines and, with the fascination exerted in the eighteenth century by the discovery of universal laws of mechanics, by prioritising the search for universal laws to the detriment of another, equally scientific approach, which consists of seeking solutions adapted to a complex and specific context. This emphasis on universal statements has had a profound effect on our education system.

1. The notions of first and second modernity are set out in detail in the proposals booklet. "Osons les territoires" ("Let's dare territories") broadcast in 2022 to coincide with the presidential and legislative elections; [https:// www.citego.org/bdf_fiche-document-2684_fr.html](https://www.citego.org/bdf_fiche-document-2684_fr.html)

Over time, it was inevitable that this emphasis on separation and specialisation would lead to a generalised crisis in relationships. First of all, there is the *crisis in relations between humanity and the biosphere*, of which climate change is one expression. Secondly, there is a *crisis in relations between people*, with the loss of social cohesion, mutual trust and solidarity, which is now being compounded by a crisis of trust between people and institutions. Thirdly, it is a *crisis of relations between societies*, with the inability of sovereign states, supposedly accountable only to their citizens, to manage the global commons. Finally, it is a crisis of relationships that affects each and every one of us, with the difficulty of reconciling our values, our convictions and our actions, our emotions and our thinking.

This crisis in relationships extends to the organisations themselves, both public and private. Mechanically inspired hierarchical structures, assigning each person a function and concentrating power, increasingly fail to respond to the need to adapt to changing and unpredictable contexts, as well as to the aspiration of each and every one of us to be something other than a cog in a centralised system that no longer satisfies our desire for meaning. Similarly, the divide between those who govern and those who are governed no longer corresponds either to our aspirations to participate in the direction of society or to the technical means available to us to do so. Do we want to ensure the survival of our societies by means of authoritarian governments or by a renewed democracy in which citizens who are aware of their responsibilities participate in inventing responses to the challenges facing society? The nature of the education system will not be the same depending on the option chosen.

We are entering the second modernity. A modernity that, without denying the progress made by the first, particularly in the scientific and technical fields, will seek to create or recreate relationships in all areas, to create the conditions for the democratic management of the multiple interdependencies that range from the local to the global. This is the compass of the second modernity. It implies developing everyone's ability to participate in the management of relationships, and giving priority to the scales at which these relationships can be discovered and managed, which is particularly the case for territories and catchment areas where multiple players come together and can learn to cooperate.

It is this compass of the second modernity that must guide the metamorphosis that has become unavoidable in our education system. Metamorphosis, because it is a question of reorganising all the elements of the pre-existing system by assigning it new objectives. The current system is out of breath. There are many players within it who are trying to innovate, often exhausting themselves by going against the current. Together, they bring together many of the ingredients for metamorphosis, provided they are placed in a coherent perspective. Conceiving this metamorphosis on the basis of these harbingers and emerging responses is the purpose of this Manifesto, the fruit of a reflection arising from the appeal launched in November 2022 by the "Dare to be Territorial" collective: *Rethinking the sphere of education and training from a territorial perspective.*²

Why "from the local level" when the economy is globalised and interdependencies are worldwide? Because, in all areas, not just education, but the whole of society.

2. https://www.citego.org/bdf_fiche-document-2982_fr.html

governance and the economy, the need to build or rebuild relationships of all kinds means relying on spaces and players capable of stimulating this reconstruction. And this is precisely the case with territories, understood as *ecosystems of players operating in a shared living space*, neighbourhoods, countries, living areas.

We have come to the conclusion that the thinking and institutional frameworks inherited from the past no longer meet the needs of the society we are building - a society of responsible, caring citizens capable of designing and leading the transition to sustainable societies together - despite the tremendous services rendered to the nation. We are therefore *calling for a major democratic debate to rethink the education and training system*, and in this Manifesto we put forward analyses and practices drawn from a wide range of French and foreign sources, as well as a number of proposals.³

The education and training system in which we live was forged between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries. Like the other major ideological and institutional systems that govern governance, the economy, scientific research and the law, it is inspired by the "compass of early modernity". The metamorphosis we are calling for is inspired by the compass of the second modernity. We are not unaware of the difficulties involved. The first modernity gave rise to major institutions and social bodies that have their own logic and can be powerful factors of resistance to change if they are not themselves associated with the new perspectives. 1.2 million people are paid by the French education system. Whatever the nature of the metamorphosis to be undertaken, they represent an immense pool of experience and capacity for innovation, and will be key players in the new system. Many are fully aware of the inadequacy of the current system and no longer satisfy their desire for meaning, but it is within the system itself that they have been trained, sometimes formatted. The success of any reform will depend on the ability to manage this tension between the *desire for profound change* and the *attachment to the current system*. As we shall see, the broad outlines of our proposals create a tremendous space for innovation, and we invite all education and training professionals to invest in this space.

There are two parts to these proposals:

1. the education of children and young people up to the age of 16, the end of compulsory schooling;
2. Training for young adults and then throughout life.

3. Under the title "Rethinking the sphere of education and training from a local and regional perspective - Roadmap"; https://www.citego.org/bdf_dossier-916_fr.html, you will find access to the various documents used, classified by chapter.

1. The education of children and young people up to the age of sixteen, the end of compulsory schooling

1.1 A centralised education system, inherited from history, which is increasingly failing to meet society's needs

The schools of the Republic have reflected a vision of society: the construction of a "single and indivisible" Republic guided by the enlightenment of reason; a homogenous nation, imbued with its superiority, distrustful of intermediary bodies and of the regional, linguistic or cultural differences likely to divide it. This school has been able to keep pace with several major changes in our society, in particular the transition from a rural to an urban society and the successive transformations in the structure of employment, from agriculture to industry and then, after the Second World War, from manufacturing industry to tertiary activities. For a time, this maintained the illusion that, with each generation, the education offered to all would reshuffle the social cards on the basis of individual merit alone, as symbolised by the image of the "social lift".⁴

As part of the utopia of early modernity, which established a strict distinction between reason and emotion, between reflection and action, the school, by favouring abstract knowledge and individual abilities, neglected collective skills and the know-how and interpersonal skills derived from experience. It has claimed a monopoly on the top-down dissemination of true Knowledge, organised essentially into disciplines and held by teachers, relegating 'beliefs' to the private sphere.

Of the two equally useful ways of constructing science, on the one hand the search for "This is contrary to the essence of democracy, which is based on the joint search for solutions adapted to each context and enriched by the contributions of all.

This school responded to the needs of a society structured by hierarchical public and private organisations, inspired by the army or machines, in which every cog had to be in its place. Academic performance, of which grades and rankings were intended to be the objective translation, was used to justify the place assigned to each individual according to his or her ability to master abstract knowledge. The paradox underlined by all the recent debates on schools in France is that the emphasis placed on what is presumed to be 'fundamental knowledge' and the time devoted to inculcating it ultimately leads to the opposite result: a growing proportion of pupils entering the sixth form have a basic knowledge of the subject.

4. Third-year students, academic performance and future plans; https://www.citego.org/bdf_fiche-document-3217_en.html

very poor command of reading, writing and basic mathematics.⁵

The schools of yesteryear, for which many people are nostalgic, particularly in rural areas, were part of an *educational community* that brought together children, parents, teachers, local residents and youth movements in the same social space. This unity of place has often disappeared, leaving schools surrounded by physical or symbolic walls, with staff from outside the neighbourhood, a 'service' for which families are clients rather than partners. The fact that in official vocabulary the "educational community" refers only to the staff of the school system is a further illustration of this disconnect, as if everything else were secondary. The very vocabulary used to justify the obligation to send children to school at the age of three, with home schooling having to be specially justified, gives the impression of a headlong rush: the less the system works, the more urgent it is to extend it.

This divide between places and actors is compounded by the organisation of the day, week, month and year between school time and time spent out of school. This divide is reinforced by the concentration of school time over a significantly smaller number of days than in other OECD countries, but at the same time with very full school days.

As for the education system itself, it creates more and more gaps; the gap between primary school and a collège inspired by the old bourgeois lycées rather than the old upper primary school is one of the most problematic. *These multiple breaks make it difficult to think of children's development as a whole to which the different places, times, players and stages of schooling contribute.*

The system that was put in place was intended to be uniform, thus maintaining the illusion that the education system gave everyone the same chances of succeeding at school and finding the place in society that corresponded to their personal merits. It took France many years to recognise that the formal equality guaranteed by this centralised, uniform national system was in fact leading to greater inequalities than in most other European countries.⁶ The PISA surveys show this blindingly clearly. Comparisons of the place of foreigners in society in France, Germany, the UK and the USA all point in the same direction: formal equality generates greater inequalities and serves to justify them.

The confrontation between 'left-wing' discourse on social determinism and 'right-wing' discourse on individual gifts and merits has led to the ignoring of detailed analyses that show the reality of the situation.

5. https://www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2023/10/02/mathematiques-nouvelle-alerte-sur-le-niveau-des-e-leves-de-sixieme_6192027_3224.html

6. Evaluation of the performance of the French education system, extracts from the Court of Auditors' report of 2021. https://www.citego.org/bdf_fiche-document-3016_fr.html. Comment le système éducatif français aggrave les inégalités sociales ; https://www.lemonde.fr/campus/article/2016/09/27/comment-le-systeme-francais-aggrave-ineluctablement-les-inegalites-scolaires_5003800_4401467.html

much more subtle, where parents' relationships with schools, both in terms of cultural proximity and in terms of plans for their children, are decisive within each social group.⁷

We need to anticipate the consequences of increasingly "ordinary" migrations, which will multiply the number of cultures in the same classroom. Multicultural classrooms are already the rule in large cities. But for years we have been depriving ourselves of knowledge of the country's real sociological development: by giving up on developing indicators that enable us to be clear-headed and face up to reality, we have in a way broken the thermometer in order to bring down the fever, and our society is lying to itself and lying to those of its citizens who are not aware of what the system is not saying. For example, this situation keeps us in the dark about changes in the population of pupils w h o , a s soon as they are 'French', are considered and treated as stereotypes of typical pupils, characterised only by socio-economic data, helping to mask what they really are and the extent of school segregation that is manifested and amplified by the flight of the middle classes from state education to the inner suburbs.

"The virtues of social diversity are for the others. Repetition rates during primary education and then streaming at collège used to give an idea of the difficulties faced by certain groups at school, but these indicators have disappeared. As for the baccalaureate, which was supposed to measure aptitude for higher education and guarantee access to it, its pass rate has become a political objective: the methods of selection for courses that are effectively valued on the labour market therefore ignore it superbly. The gap between the aspirations raised by obtaining a degree and the actual structure of jobs has continued to widen, fuelling frustration.

Parents, by far the most important educators, are ill-prepared for the responsibilities they often have to face alone, whether they are parents of foreign origin unfamiliar with our school system, parents who do not benefit from the experience of the extended family, or heads of single-parent families overwhelmed by material tasks or faced with precariousness. There is no collective space like the Centres communautaires québécois,⁸ where parents and children can get together for joint activities, introducing parents to their role in awakening and socialising. And some families feel all the more helpless because the exercise of authority over their children, as they see it, is repudiated by society, giving rise to a feeling of powerlessness in the face of a system they know or understand little about and children who are beyond their control.

Teachers long ago lost their monopoly on the transmission of knowledge and the prestige that went with it. The social image, income and working conditions of teachers have been steadily eroded, contributing to a vocational crisis. The massive use of contract teachers with no pedagogical training is just the latest stage in this trend.

7. The determinants of educational delays and the possibility of compensating for them: results that take the wind out of sails; h https://www.citego.org/bdf_fiche-document-3216_fr.html

8. <https://www.google.com/search?channel=fs&client=ubuntu&q=centres+community+that%C3%A9bec>

a teacher training curriculum that places ever greater emphasis on subject knowledge and books, to the detriment of educational skills.

Career management and the nature of hierarchical authority contradict the idea of a collective project at school level that is constantly extolled in high places. The situation is exacerbated by the overlapping of administrative responsibilities, with school management responsibilities exercised by municipalities and départements, and teaching responsibilities remaining in the hands of the State.

Faced with all these challenges, the Ministry of Education, aware of the widening gap between society's new skills requirements and the nature of teaching, is issuing more and more directives and injunctions while ignoring, whether deliberately or inadvertently, teachers' constraints. This reinforces the mutual distrust between the administration and those on the front line, teachers and administrators, and increases the number of administrative tasks to the detriment of the primary task of serving children and young people.

This does not prevent elite teachers from leaving their mark, through their dedication and skill, on entire generations of children and passing on to them a taste for "joyful learning", critical abilities and a sense of community, or exceptional school heads from instilling a team spirit, but the role of an institutional system is not to glorify these exceptions,⁹ The role of an institutional system is not to glorify these exceptions, but to turn *all those* involved with children and young people into a collective that helps them to grow and prepare for their role as future citizens. Paradoxically, the unconditional commitment of some teachers blurs the diagnosis when it is formulated from outside the environment: firstly, because they feel blamed when it is the system that is being blamed; and secondly, because their actions seem to belie the assertion that the system is no longer working.

The centralised state will never be able to achieve this: a broad, supportive educational community, continuity in the child's development process, complementarity between formal and non-formal education, a collective of educational staff, whether teachers or not, united by a coherent school project. OECD surveys show that state centralism is an exception in France.¹⁰ *Even when funding comes from the State to ensure redistribution, in practically all systems, in any case in all those whose quality is praised, it is the local authorities that are in charge.* So we need to reverse the perspective and make the local level the building block of a completely overhauled education system.

1.2 Towards a system conducive to the overall development of children and young people under the age of sixteen, in harmony with the needs of society

The current education system no longer corresponds to the reality or needs of society. The disconnection has been gradual. The urban riots at the beginning of the summer

9. Testimonial from a school principal; https://www.citego.org/bdf_fiche-document-2994_fr.html

10. Some lessons from the OECD report, "Education at a Glance 2022"; https://www.citego.org/bdf_fiche-document-3017_en.html

The events of 2023, which saw some schoolchildren in working-class suburbs burn down the schools in their own neighbourhoods, a symbol in their eyes not of the means to their emancipation but of a State that ignores or despises them, are a violent symbol of this. May this message, which defies our understanding, provoke a collective reaction.

The education system to be rebuilt must meet two complementary requirements: to *meet the needs and conditions for the full development of every child and young person*, as a person, as a social being, as a future adult and as a fully-fledged citizen; and to *prepare them to meet the challenges of today's society* and, even more so, tomorrow's, to enable them to make a positive contribution wherever they are, in the environments in which they will live, in the largely unpredictable historical conditions through which they will pass.

To achieve this, it must pursue six objectives:

* *peace education*

The next generation will have to contribute to the peaceful management of a radically interdependent world. This peace education takes place at different levels, from peaceful relations with neighbours and classmates to respect for the many diversities of the world and its cultures.¹¹ The cultural diversity of French society itself should be seen as an asset. Relationships between classes and schools in different countries, facilitated today by the Internet and automatic translations, and possibly linked to twinning between territories, deserve to be generalised, including through debates on how to meet global challenges such as overcoming resentments born of history, global warming, biodiversity or water.

* *education for cooperation*

In all ecosystems, competition and cooperation coexist, but life is above all based on cooperation. Today's schools, like society as a whole, favour competition as the driving force behind progress and innovation. We can see where this is leading. The future lies in cooperation, and this will be the backbone of tomorrow's education, a cooperation that will also make the most of the diversity of children's talents instead of imposing a one-dimensional hierarchy.

**education for democracy*

This is irreducible to the political forms of representative democracy. In essence, it means renouncing the use of violence to resolve disagreements and building consensus around shared projects, while respecting differences. This means that everyone must be able to form their own opinion, including through a critical view of the knowledge that is being passed down, and that the group must be able to listen to each other and take decisions that take the best possible account of the interests and sensitivities of all parties, as opposed to majority systems where the winner takes all.

11. Manifesto for global citizenship education; https://www.citego.org/bdf_fiche-document-2991_en.html

**an education in sharing*

Even before being a moral value of fraternity, it is today an imperative for survival in the face of the finiteness of the biosphere and the resources we can draw from it: it is also an opportunity from childhood to move away from the consumerist model by practising the fair sharing of limited resources, the management of the commons, the development of goods that multiply as they are shared, of which the sharing of knowledge and experience is the best example.

**education in systemic approaches*

We have inherited compartmentalised approaches, both at the level of branches of knowledge and at the level of players and policies. The next generation, on the other hand, will be faced with a systemic transition, and the ability to establish links between seemingly separate issues will also be a prerequisite for survival.¹²

**education that is open to the diversity of sources of knowledge*

The dominant scientific approach, which is supposed to embody Knowledge par excellence, inherited from early modernity, favours the search for universal laws such as the law of gravity, and encourages the teaching profession to play down other sources of knowledge, leading to reverence for the word of experts and disdain for the many other sources of knowledge. Yet it is all these sources that we will need.

These six aims of education, which reflect the society to be built from the local to the global level, are not taught through moral or even moralising speeches, but through real-life situations, prefiguring from the earliest age and in the context of education the society that today's children will have the onerous task of building.

1.3 Educational continuity for the overall development of children and young people

This continuity must be viewed from three equally important angles: educational communities involving a wide range of players; continuity between school and non-school time; and continuity between the different stages of development of children and young people.

** Recreating wider educational communities*

Teachers and extra-curricular staff are, of course, major players in the education system, but they are not the only ones. Many others contribute, often in an even more decisive way, to the intellectual, moral and social development of children and young people. Getting all these players to work together and forming wider educational communities is a decisive challenge, and it will be the major role of the regions to achieve this.

The main players are parents, many of whom are isolated and at a loss when it comes to what is expected of them at school, with material resources that are hardly conducive to the serenity that is conducive to academic performance. For many parents, the world of school and its codes are

12. Young Europeans' proposals for climate change education; https://www.citego.org/bdf_fiche-document-237_en.html

The situation is even more serious when the parents' own experience of their school career has been traumatic. Parents' plans for school play a decisive role in their children's development, including their purely academic success. Even 'average French' parents, often torn between the contradictory injunctions of experts, no longer know which way to turn and what attitude to adopt to help their children succeed in the school system.

It is at the level of schools, which are themselves rooted in their local area, that parent groups can be formed, including "day parents and grandparents", and external resources (child psychiatrists, social workers, etc.) can be mobilised, to allow the word to get out beyond the activities of "parents of pupils" centred on the relationship between school and parents and to offer parents a collective reflection on the education of their children, of which the relationship with the school system is only one part. Experience has shown that allowing parents of immigrant origin to come and talk about their culture in the context of teaching is likely to change the way children look at their parents and the culture they come from.

Other players, both private and public, who can bring "real life" into educational establishments or into the school curriculum, can also play a decisive role. This was natural in a rural environment, but it is no longer the case in our societies. The local area has a decisive role to play in ensuring that all the players in society play their part in opening schools up to life.

** pedagogical continuity between the different stages of a child's development*

Two forms of continuity should be emphasised: continuity of forms of teaching throughout compulsory schooling; and continuity of school and non-school time.

Continuity of teaching methods. The current narrow vision of school performance means that nursery school is the antechamber to primary school, primary school is the antechamber to collège and collège is the antechamber to lycée, which in turn is the antechamber to higher education. However, the fundamentals of schooling, the "reading, writing and arithmetic" beloved of our teachers in the past and of many parents even today have little to do with the six dimensions of education in the service of the society to be built. Finnish education, rightly presented as a major source of inspiration, is based up to the age of seven on play, interaction between children and creativity. The development of all the skills acquired in this way will, in time, make it easier to assimilate these famous "fundamentals". It is therefore primary school as an extension of nursery school that should be envisaged, rather than nursery school as an antechamber to primary school.

The relationship between primary school and collège is similarly inverted. For many children and young people, the emotional connection and security provided by a single teacher is essential, but both suddenly disappear when they start secondary school.

collège, where young people have no premises or teacher assigned to them and where they move from one subject to another in short sequences with teachers who are not in a position to know them all. It would probably be preferable, at least until the end of the fifth year, to keep a teaching formula close to that of primary school, with the last cycle, fourth-third, being able to introduce subject-based courses. This would require multi-skilled teachers such as those in the Section d'enseignement général et professionnel adapté (SEGPA) and, as is the case in primary school, the support of more specialised educators in areas such as music and sport. What's more, teachers now have video training that they could use to good effect in specialised areas, without having to abandon the role of the teacher, who would focus on his or her educational role of providing stimulation and support. It will probably be necessary to leave it up to local establishments to decide on the type of transition they wish to see between primary and lower secondary school, the only common requirement being that this transition be genuinely debated and organised; there is no reason to argue in favour of national uniformity.

*Continuity of *school and non-school time*. International comparisons are well known, as is the diagnosis. France stands out for having much longer teaching days than the average, but fewer school days. So we lose out on both counts: children who are incapable of concentrating for so long, *a fortiori* in a position of passive listening; and, in environments far removed from the school culture, long periods of time away from education, where learning is lost because it is not nurtured. In the future, it will be necessary for local authorities, which have the capacity to organise the complementarity between different time periods, to adopt an inclusive education policy that integrates school and non-school time during the year and educational provision - and this notion has a very broad meaning - during the holidays.

1.4 A pedagogy in line with the aims of education

The six common aims of education should serve as a guide for each region in defining, in the light of the best national and international experience, the practical ways in which to support the development of each child during compulsory education. There are a number of points in common:

* *putting knowledge, know-how and interpersonal skills on an equal footing, ensuring that everyone learns to get their hands dirty*

At the heart of the development of children and young people, it is ultimately a question of knowing how to live; knowing how to live in society, assuming responsibilities within their means, making a positive contribution, whatever the status of that contribution, and knowing how to give meaning to their lives. In the past, schools were complemented by youth movements such as scouting, which emphasised collective life, but these have largely disappeared in favour of more consumerist 'leisure' activities which, moreover, only marginally affect young people at secondary school. Based on international experience, it would appear that project-based teaching, aimed at the collective production of a useful work, is the most effective method, including for stimulating the desire to learn more theoretical knowledge when it reveals its concrete usefulness. It is also the way to erase the

France's typical hierarchy between knowledge and know-how. The "La main à la pâte" association has demonstrated its interest in scientific subjects. By taking the education system out of the classroom and giving it a new lease of life, local areas will be able to experiment and innovate. We need to give priority to an education based on experience, which is also a prerequisite for democracy, because democracy is itself, by its very nature, an ongoing collective experience.

**Escape from the tyranny of screens, at least in schools*

The digital revolution is overturning the conditions of access to information and knowledge. Teachers have long since lost their monopoly on the transmission of knowledge. New educational opportunities are opening up. On the other hand, this revolution has its downside. Screens have invaded everyday life, including schools. The Internet, mobile phones and digital social networks are becoming a veritable prosthesis for children and young people, a substitute for socialisation, imposing their ultra-short sequences to the detriment of the ability to concentrate. No matter how loudly specialists denounce the harm they are doing,¹³ how can parents themselves, addicted to these new masters of our time, forbid their children to use them? These questions should be on the agenda of discussions between parents. In the meantime, we need to put an end to the current paradox, in which schools seem reluctant to allow the real players in social life to penetrate their walls, but on the contrary tolerate the omnipresent penetration of these virtual players. It is at school level that the rules, which may differ from one context to another, for the proper use of screens can be established.

** Diversifying the educational offer within the public education system*

Within the French education system, there has long been a strong current of active pedagogy, inspired in particular by the work of Ovide Decroly, Célestin Freinet, Fernand Oury, Lorenzo Milani, Janusz Korczak and Maria Montessori, not to mention youth movements such as scouting and popular education. While many teachers in the public sector are interested in these methods and draw inspiration from them in the way they run their classrooms, they have remained on the fringes of the mainstream,¹⁴ these methods have remained on the fringes of traditional teaching, no doubt due to a lack of capacity to agree collectively on school projects. Parents who want their children to flourish in an active teaching environment have to opt for the private sector, which is often more inclined to define and implement a school project. If schools and regions are given the freedom to choose the methods that are most appropriate for them and their parents, it will be possible to diversify the educational offer within the state education system.

**Training teachers in their primary role as educators and awareness-raisers*

Before being a transmitter of specialised knowledge, now accessible from a variety of sources, the teacher is an awakener and an educator.¹⁵ The

13. Philippe Bihoux/Karine Mauvilly; Le désastre de l'école numérique. Plaidoyer pour une école sans écrans.

14. Educational innovation in 20 concepts; https://www.citego.org/bdf_fiche-document-3018_fr.html

15. Reading guide: Growing up human - A free commentary on school and education; https://www.citego.org/bdf_fiche-document-3006_fr.html

The Finnish system, which is often cited and rightly so, has succeeded in maintaining the prestigious status of teachers through training that is genuinely focused on their real profession and their irreplaceable added value.¹⁶ The transfer of responsibility for teacher training to the regions will be the only way to move away from inappropriate curricula, and each region will be invited to define new curricula, within the framework of common guiding principles and benefiting from the great diversity of international experience. These should include a large element of in-service training, both compulsory and part of working time, based essentially on the exchange of experience between peers.

**Take into account the relational space and heterogeneity of the pupils in the number of pupils per class.*

The issue of class size is regularly raised in debates on the education system and, among OECD countries, France has the largest class sizes. But any general, national debate on the subject conceals the obvious fact that the problem does not arise in the same terms for homogeneous classes of children from backgrounds familiar with school as for heterogeneous classes where a majority of children need a personal relationship with the teacher. Moreover, the number of pupils per class can only be considered in relation to the teaching approach adopted by the school. If we want to make the classroom a place where children can express themselves freely, where there are groups of pupils at different levels and where learning is individualised, it is inevitable that class sizes will have to be reduced, particularly in nursery and the early years of primary school. The choice of how to allocate human resources, including the mobilisation of volunteers, must be made at local level, depending on social realities and pedagogical choices.

Exchanges between children, exchanges with the teacher, noise levels, physical space, classroom layout, pupils' frustration with a teacher who 'flits about', the dominant role taken by the most advanced and fastest learners.

** Renew assessment methods to bring them into line with the objectives being pursued*

Current assessment methods stem from the traditional conception of teaching, to ensure at all times that the content of the knowledge imparted has actually been received, or dare we say assimilated, given that children, like computer memories, are so good at deleting messages as soon as they have acknowledged receipt of them. The PISA international comparisons have enabled us to make some progress by shifting the focus from knowledge itself to how it is used. But the focus is still on individual skills, in contradiction with the six aims of education. The overall assessment periods should be spaced out, one at the end of primary school, the other at the end of collège. The skills acquired in terms of know-how and interpersonal skills, collective skills, cooperative skills and democratic reflexes should be the subject of special "situation" tests. It's up to the regions and local authorities to come up with their own.

16. Finland and the education system of a society apart; https://www.citego.org/bdf_fiche-document-3028_en.html. Education in Finland: the secrets of an astonishing success story; https://www.citego.org/bdf_fiche-document-2988_en.html

be closer to the tests devised by youth movements than to old-style examinations.

1.5 A decentralised education system based on the principle of active subsidiarity

1.5.1 The metamorphosis of the education system is part of the wider metamorphosis of governance

The centralised system we know in France is, by its very nature, incapable of taking charge of the aims of the education system and of recreating all the relationships we have just described: between knowledge and action, between knowledge and values, between individual skills and collective skills, between disciplines, between school and non-school time, between players in the wider education community. *The experience of recent decades has amply demonstrated that no fundamental reform can succeed in the desired direction without a genuine institutional revolution.*

The overhaul of the education system is an integral part of the overhaul of governance in France. It is based on the concept of multi-level governance and its fundamental principles.¹⁷

- The art of governance is the art of managing relationships and the art of reconciling diversity and cohesion in the best possible way.

- None of society's real challenges can be managed by a single level of governance, and it is no longer a question of attributing exclusive powers to each level but, on the contrary, of organising cooperation between the different levels in the service of common objectives: this is the definition of multi-level governance.

- The implementation of this multi-level governance is based on the principle of active subsidiarity, according to which overall cohesion is ensured by the definition of guiding principles drawn up jointly on the basis of accumulated national or international experience and recognised as the best way of achieving the objectives pursued. It is then up to each level of governance, down to the most local, to devise the best way of translating these guiding principles into practical action, according to its particular context.

1.5.2 The new education system is based on four levels: the school, the territory, the region and the State.

**the schools define and implement the collective educational project*

Schools must have the capacity to build a sustainable educational project, organise relations between teachers and with parents, and link up with activities taking place outside the school. The new Autonomous Territorial Establishment should include the pre-primary, primary and lower secondary cycles in an area. It is placed under the authority of an enlarged board of directors made up of representatives of teachers, parents, the Ministry of Education and local authorities. The school heads, appointed by their Board of Directors, are responsible for

17. Managing relations between levels of governance and the principle of active subsidiarity; https://www.citego.org/bdf_dossier-128_fr.html

responsibility for involving their teams and other members of the wider educational community in defining this project. The school will be responsible for choosing job profiles and hiring the teaching team, teachers, specialised professionals, as well as all school staff and organisations involved in school partnerships. If necessary, he or she will provide additional ongoing training in the methods defined in the educational project.

**the region is the place where relations between all the players are organised and where a framework for discovery and learning is created for young people*

The territory, understood as a catchment area, a concrete space for relations between players of all kinds, a place of concrete investment in society, bringing together the inter-communal bodies that represent it, organises the distribution of schools and budgets between them, designs the educational continuity between what happens in schools and during school time and what happens outside these spaces and times, particularly for families who do not have the cultural background and resources to ensure this continuity on their own.

The region also has a decisive role to play in ensuring that discovering and understanding society is part of the development process for children. It is also through being rooted in a territory and a society that human beings become part of history and help to write it.

Neighbourhoods, as such, are places where children learn. Its dangers, linked in particular to car traffic and the fact that neighbours sometimes don't know each other very well, make it a threat, real or imagined, whatever the case may be, leading parents to deprive their young children of any socialisation outside the walls of the school, where they can learn to manage risk without putting themselves in danger. However, the porous nature of the school environment and the neighbourhood, and the opportunity for reasoned autonomy, starting with journeys to and from school and the use of school recreation areas outside school hours, are just as important as formal education. There is an urgent need to rethink "the city, the neighbourhood, the village, even the canton, at the level of the child".¹⁸

** The Region is responsible for training teachers and extra-curricular staff*

Each region sets up a common core of teacher training for all teachers, taking into account the best of French and foreign experience, and ensures their ongoing training, giving priority to the direct exchange of experience. Teachers have the status of local civil servants.

** The national level is the guarantor of the aims of the education system*

The national level, on the basis of a democratic debate involving the various driving forces of the nation, defines the common goals for the development of children and young people under the age of sixteen, ensures the redistribution of education funding, establishes the conditions for equivalence of educational curricula to allow teacher mobility from one region to another. It coordinates assessment procedures in line with the

18. "The city from a child's point of view"; https://www.citego.org/bdf_fiche-document-2903_fr.html

It also participates in international exchanges with a view to harmonising international tests for evaluating the effectiveness of school systems, such as PISA, with the new aims of the education system. This is no longer a regalian function equated with the dissemination of eminent knowledge, but a function of leadership, of comparing experiences with a view to identifying, in accordance with the principle of active subsidiarity, common guiding principles, it being up to each region, territory and establishment to define the practical arrangements for implementing these guiding principles.

The exchange of experience therefore plays a central role. We cannot fail to be fascinated by the mass of analytical work available on both child development and school system reform. What is missing are the experimenters, those who dare to leave the beaten track, even at their own risk, in all social and political contexts. And what we don't really talk about are the concrete experiments that abound around the world. What do we know about their longevity, if any, their successes, even if interrupted, and their failures? The classic model for disseminating innovation in centralised systems, typical of the French model, where experimentation is always a tolerated exception from which the State claims to generalise experiments deemed conclusive, is being replaced by a system where, as with children themselves, experimentation is the rule, enabling everyone to learn from it for their own context.

2. Training for young adults and then throughout life

After compulsory education, the education system continues throughout life, with the dual aim of enabling each individual to achieve their full potential and meeting the needs of a society faced with the need to reinvent itself in response to the challenges it faces. This imposes a dual horizon on us: a short-term horizon to meet the urgent needs of society; a long-term horizon corresponding to the life course of new generations.

As in the case of compulsory education, there is a twofold need for continuity: the need to *build skills throughout life*; and the need to build *bridges between the different educational pathways*. Hence the desire to approach the education system as a whole, without considering, for example, the organisation of higher education and popular education as unrelated issues.

We will therefore look successively at: the skills needed in the Anthropocene era; the opportunities offered by the digital revolution; the diversity and complementarity of training pathways; the reform of higher education; continuing education and lifelong skills-building itineraries; the renewal of popular education; and the national emergency programme to equip territories with the skills needed to design and lead the transition.

2.1 The skills needed in the era of the Anthropocene

We have entered a new era, the Anthropocene, in which we will have to fully accept the irreversible, radical nature of the interdependencies between societies and between humanity and the biosphere. This implies both the intellectual and professional retraining of adults who have been trained in economic competition and specialisation, so as to enable them to commit themselves to the transition towards a sustainable society, and the reorientation of the training of young people to prepare them to lead the formidable changes that await them. This implies, whatever the profession and position in society, the acquisition of a foundation of seven skills¹⁹ :

1. *understanding the new 'state of the world' that is the Anthropocene*, including the major processes by which the biosphere functions and the social logics that underpin humanity's place in the biosphere;
2. *understanding the causes of this radical change in the world*, which includes a critical reflection on the origin and inertia of the conceptual and institutional systems that led to it, and which have been called here the compass of early modernity ;
3. *the discovery of the conceptual framework and actors of the second modernity* and the conditions of their effective emergence, in particular the revolutions in the making in terms of governance and the economy, with what this implies in terms of the dynamics of change;

19. Specifications for a humanities degree; https://www.citego.org/bdf_fiche-document- 2985_en.html

4. *exploring the rapidly changing world of technology* and the opportunities and risks it presents;
5. *the ethics of the second modernity* and the resulting metamorphosis of responsibility ;
6. *the ability to think systemically* and to integrate the possible contributions of knowledge from different disciplines into this thinking;
7. *the exploration of alternative scenarios for the development of our societies*: the threatening scenarios of collapse, the establishment of authoritarian regimes capable of imposing the sacrifices arising from the new state of the world, and deadly rivalry between regional groupings trying to appropriate scarce resources; the more cheerful scenario of a renewed democracy that presupposes informed, lucid, cooperative, responsible and supportive citizens, whose training is the very challenge of the education system.

If the interdependence between societies and with the biosphere imposes a community of destiny for humanity, and therefore a radically global perspective, the territories, all of which are traversed by these planetary dynamics, form a reduced model and are, par excellence, the spaces where these different skills can be built and embodied: to learn to think globally in order to act both locally and globally.

2.2 Opportunities and threats of the digital revolution

The digital revolution is radically changing the way we access knowledge. Wikipedia, online courses delivered by the best specialists, digital social networks, the equating of truth and lies, the invasion of businesses and public services by artefacts that replace human activity, and of which artificial intelligence is the new face, are all overturning teaching methods and the future nature of professions, with the paradoxical effect of showing that relationships are the very essence of human activity.

In terms of teaching, this revolution is transforming the role of teachers, reinforcing their role as educators, as teachers in the strongest sense of the term, to the detriment of their role as transmitters of codified knowledge, rediscovering the meaning and nobility of the profession, but going against the trend seen in universities with the massification of students. Secondly, it shifts priorities, from the acquisition of codified knowledge to its application, from disciplinary approaches to their integration into a global vision, giving priority to work-linked training which allows the back and forth between the acquisition of theoretical knowledge and its mobilisation in concrete situations. Thirdly, it highlights the importance of exchanging experiences as a fully-fledged source of knowledge.

2.3 A real choice of training pathways for young adults and throughout life

Thinking about the construction of individual and collective skills throughout life should put the initial successes in the first twenty-five years of life, when the family's cultural capital plays a decisive role, into perspective and offer greater diversity.

of life paths, giving a greater role to the skills acquired, not only intellectual but also social and professional. Today, with its strict hierarchy, reflected in Parcoursup, between grandes écoles, prestigious universities, IUTs, lesser-rated universities and vocational education, France is still stuck in a school system that gives priority to initial training, establishing a hierarchy between knowledge and know-how and justifying everyone's social and professional position by their ability to master abstract knowledge. The fear of seeing the education system subservient to the short-term needs of companies has maintained a disconnect between the education system and the economic world. Only a renewed approach to the relationship between education and the region can overcome this historical legacy.²⁰

In contrast to the French system, the Swiss and German systems offer several routes, none of which is looked down upon.²¹ This is particularly true of apprenticeships, which can lead to technical colleges and engineering professions. Why has it never been possible to emulate this in France? Not least because of the centralised nature of the education system. Hautes écoles techniques are generally created by a partnership between local authorities and companies, closely following the "local production system" and contributing to the creation of new jobs.

"These clusters bring together training, research and production. The career campuses that are beginning to develop, particularly in Brittany, are in the same vein of inspiration. They provide alternating training in trades, combining scientific and technical knowledge with experimentation and testing in the workplace. These campuses, like the one in Redon, continue to encounter resistance from the national education system, the university system and even local authorities, which are still convinced of the "superiority" of established knowledge and its institutions.

In this way, the company is able to take advantage of "legitimate" knowledge over more systemic knowledge acquired through contact with real-life situations.

As long as there is no such thing as a "route to the top", as long as they are not recognised as courses of excellence, vocational courses will remain the poor relation of the education system and, despite repeated statements by national leaders, apprenticeships will remain a default choice.

We are already seeing that, even within higher education, it is work-linked training courses that are the most attractive, both because they allow for better professional integration and because they put knowledge into practice, break with strictly disciplinary approaches and recreate the link between thinking and acting. This also means recognising that training is not the monopoly of specialised bodies, teachers or professional trainers, but is a collective vocation of society and organisations, helping to strengthen the thinking skills of all those involved.

20. https://www.la-fabrique.fr/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/c27_penurie-de-competences-et-reindustrialisation_web.pdf

21. The dual formation of Germany and Switzerland: surprising and disconcerting features from a North American perspective; <https://oce.uqam.ca/la-formation-duale-de-lallemagne-et-de-la-suisse-caracteristiques-that-surprise-and-disconcert-from-a-North-American-point-of-view/>

From the age of 16, the post-compulsory school years are the years when young adults, although legal minors, have humanly acquired the capacity to take on responsibilities if the education system and society encourage them to do so, in particular by enabling them to reinvest the knowledge they acquire in collective projects.²² Society must welcome them as "soon-to-be citizens" and allow them to choose and experiment with their own path. The education and training system must enable them to take unique and rewarding paths throughout their lives, by choosing, according to their tastes and the area in which they live, specialisation in conceptual subjects and experience of professional know-how. This means that general and vocational secondary schools will have to include real co-tutoring services both inside and outside the school, so that young adults no longer have to endure years of "Pass your baccalaureate, you'll see later", provided that they can return to training courses leading to qualifications at any point in their lives.

It is a major role of the Regions, in partnership with their territories and their economic and social fabric, to organise the conditions for a new social contract between educational establishments and society, from secondary school onwards, and to structure a diversified range of initial training routes, designed as the first stage in a lifelong education that benefits from multiple gateways between training streams.

2.4 A new social contract between higher education and society

The general unease with the education and training system has symbolic implications: the destruction of their schools by a few young people during the riots of July 2023 was echoed, at the other end of the educational spectrum, by the protest in 2022 by young people from the most prestigious schools against the training they received there, which they say does not correspond to the needs of society and the challenges they will have to face.

Our current university, as much and more than the École, is a legacy of history and early modernity. Its main characteristics date back to the beginning of the nineteenth century and, like the École, it has given rise to social bodies and doctrines that are powerful obstacles to its metamorphosis today. This is rapidly becoming apparent as soon as we try to change it to meet the urgent need to prepare professionals capable of dealing with the challenges of transition: the compartmentalisation of faculties, the independence of each teacher and his or her reluctance to take part in any collective project, the multiplicity of constraints to which each is subject are all obstacles to an in-depth overhaul of programmes and methods.²³ The parallel with the school system is striking here too.

22. See for example "Éducation au développement durable et territoire local: projets éducatifs menés dans un lycée de Seine-Saint-Denis (France)" ; http://www.citego.org/bdf_fiche-document-175_fr.html ; L'école comme terrain d'expérimentation pour l'engagement des jeunes dans des expériences de développement durable à l'échelle locale, https://www.citego.org/bdf_dossier-123_fr.html ; L'ancrage territorial de l'éducation: une condition majeure de transformation des systèmes éducatifs et des territoires ; https://www.citego.org/bdf_fiche-document-234_fr.html

23. https://campus-transition.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Rapport_Campus-de-la-Transition_CY_20230522.pdf

Higher education is currently conceived as a national system, detached from the regions. Admittedly, the employment markets for professionals are not only local but also national, European and global, implying diploma equivalence and student mobility within the European area, but does this mean that education is not based on the land, with a strong disciplinary bias? Can students, who have access to codified knowledge via the Internet, remain passive and individual consumers of teaching broken down into modules and delivered by professors without appropriate pedagogical support for each student? Is there a risk that the relationship between the academic world and the professional world will make training courses subservient to the short-term needs of the economy? Will relations with the regions in which higher education establishments are located restrict students' career prospects? Obviously not.

Let's look at the long history of this issue. *In the past, there was an implicit social pact between the institutions and players in higher education and the rest of society: "Give us your financial support, leave us the academic freedom to teach within our discipline under the sole gaze of our peers and we will produce the future professionals and elites that society needs".* This pact is outdated. The most recent World Conference on Higher Education, organised by UNESCO in 2009, recognised that "faced with the complexity of current and future global challenges, higher education has a social responsibility to improve our understanding of, and ability to address, multifaceted problems with social, economic, scientific and cultural dimensions [...], and, to this end, higher education institutions, through their essential functions performed in the context of institutional autonomy and academic freedom, should strengthen their interdisciplinary orientation and promote critical reflection and active citizenship [...], not only imparting sound skills for today's world and tomorrow's, but shaping responsible citizens".

UNESCO continues to defend the autonomy of institutions and academic freedom, two historic achievements that it does not want to lose, while inviting "higher education", an abstract entity for which no one is responsible, to serve the new challenges of society. This timidity is no longer in season. *We need to take the plunge and outline a new contract between higher education and society.* A contract that fully embraces the challenges of education in the age of the Anthropocene and the age of the Internet and artificial intelligence, that recognises the eminent and collective responsibility of institutions for acquiring the interdisciplinary skills needed by all students, that anchors the training of future professionals in the social, economic, civic and ecological realities of the territories in which educational establishments are physically embedded. The idea is always to think locally in order to act locally and globally.

This new social pact is based on the recognition of the eminent responsibility of higher education institutions towards society, in return for the support they receive from it.²⁴ It implies several major orientations:

- as is the case for undergraduate schools, the *ability to define a collective project for each university*, involving all teaching staff;
- *identifying the needs of local society* in terms of professionals to manage the transition and setting up training courses to meet these needs;
- *the creation of a core curriculum common to all courses*, a true twenty-first century "humanities degree", corresponding to the acquisition by all of the seven core skills of citizens in the age of the Anthropocene and the Internet, as defined above;
- *the joint participation of the various disciplines in concrete territorial projects*, a real practice of interdisciplinarity and the relationship between knowledge and action;
- *the development of participatory research* in partnership with local stakeholders, enabling the discovery of cooperation between stakeholders and the diversity of sources of knowledge that can be mobilised;
- *A territorial civic service for students* to support younger pupils in difficulty or lifelong learning;
- *a renewal of teaching practices* to enhance the role of teacher support and create spaces for critical reflection and debate that contribute to the democratic and civic education of students.

2.5. Lifelong learning

The first laws on the right to lifelong learning were passed over fifty years ago, and this right has been reaffirmed ever since. Unfortunately, reality is cruel and comparative studies by the OECD force us to face it head-on.²⁵ In all the member countries, we see that the more people are educated, the more they continue to educate themselves, widening the gap between social classes over time, even though some countries, those with the most effective initial education, manage to break the vicious circle. And France is at the bottom of the league in terms of the proportion of the population actually engaged in lifelong learning.

Governments are aware of this, as evidenced by the Law of 5 September 2018 on the freedom to choose one's professional future which, with the widespread introduction of the Personal Training Account (CPF), moves from a segmented view of training courses to the recognition of a long-term educational pathway. This account, which has been a resounding success, with 3.5 million people enrolled by 2022, is based on the obligation for employees to

24. Charter for Responsible and United Universities; https://www.citego.org/bdf_fiche-document-2984_en.html

25. La formation continue "reste un parent pauvre en France", (Regards sur l'éducation 2014, OCDE) ; <https://www.aefinfo.fr/depeche/486397-la-formation-continue-reste-un-parent-pauvre-en-france-regards-sur-l-education-2014-ocde>

companies to contribute to the training fund, enabling employees to exercise their right to training during working hours. Jobseekers also benefit through unemployment insurance. This overall concept of the training pathway makes initial training itself part of the overall project to build a skills-based society. It also recognises the validation of acquired experience, including the development of apprenticeships, a bridge between training systems and companies, with full recognition of on-the-job training.²⁶

Initially, this huge market certainly created a windfall for training organisations and gave rise to a profusion of independent trainers capable of designing tailor-made courses, which is an asset. Quality standards are gradually being introduced. The widespread use of the Internet is changing the role of the trainer, who is moving away from the delivery of knowledge to that of a facilitator of the learner's thinking. All this calls for a collective effort to redefine pedagogical engineering, from the transmission of the knowledge needed in the Anthropocene era to the evolution of work.

The gap between training systems and companies cannot be bridged overnight. The latter must be seen not only as the outlet for trained people but also as an essential source of training. There remains a contradiction between the desire to subject the multitude of training courses to quality criteria and the risk that these criteria, contrary to the intentions of the law, will lead back to the old, modular conception of training. The fact that the scope of orders from principals is still limited to the here and now, and that trainers are remunerated on a "per act of facilitation" basis, means that they are unable to undertake a real transformation of their expertise and practices by placing them in a global perspective of training learners, taking into account where they have come from and where they are going.

In addition to the "skills passport" at national level, which reflects the desire to build skills throughout life, it is at regional level that consultation between society, training bodies and companies or administrations should take place. It is at this level that we can encourage companies to assume their own role in training, in the context of work situations, promote the involvement of experts rooted in professional practice and encourage joint reflection by all players on the development of professions.

Traditionally, lifelong learning ended with retirement. However, as our society ages and the length of time spent in retirement increases, there has been a growing demand for training from retired people. This has been met by the development of universities for the third age, intergenerational universities that often focus on cultural activities and personal development. It is undoubtedly time to open up new perspectives, more oriented towards the needs of society, training courses aimed at "retired professionals" to use Pierre Caro's felicitous expression. Senior citizens" with twenty to thirty years of retirement in good intellectual and physical health are no longer the exception.

26. Training and career transition; https://www.citego.org/bdf_fiche-document-2980_fr.html

Most municipalities and associations would not function without them. How could our society do without their contributions and skills, beyond the framework of the extended family where they often play an essential role in supporting their children and grandchildren, at a time when it is so essential to take care of both society and the planet? How can we fail to see that the social isolation from which many retired people suffer could also be addressed through a new kind of collective training and the involvement of its beneficiaries in functions, including educational ones, in the service of society? Once again, the training of our millions of potential "retired professionals" can be organised at local level, where socialisation takes place and where training opportunities, individual and collective availability and needs to be met all come together.

2.6 The revival of popular education

In France, there is a long tradition of so-called "popular" education, born of youth movements and the desire to help train and emancipate people at the bottom of the social ladder. It is also within this tradition that so-called "active" teaching methods have been developed. After being eclipsed by more formal and consumerist ways of responding to individual needs, they are now set for a profound revival. By breaking with the top-down delivery of knowledge, from teacher to student, and reinforcing an ideology of progress through (academic) knowledge, (overarching) science and technology, implicitly centred on economic growth, popular education foreshadows what we need today: the development of the *collective* capacity of an ever-changing society to face up to new challenges.²⁷

The word "collective" is essential here. This renewal of popular education, thought out on a regional scale, echoes the recommendation of one of its illustrious ancestors, Comenius²⁸ *Anyone who does not wish in his heart that all humanity be well (and today it would be enough to include the biosphere in humanity), is in fact mistreating it! For he is not even a good friend to himself who wishes to live in good health among the sick, as a wise man among the fools, as a just man among the wicked, or as a happy man among the unhappy".*

If lifelong learning is to take root in a given region, this does not mean abandoning all training aimed at individual promotion or professional retraining, but rather introducing an essential complement, the development of personal and collective skills in the service of a living democracy and a changing society.

The first stage is *the transition from knowledge to skills*, through simulations in which the person concerned mobilises their potential and the resources at their disposal.

²⁷. Lifelong learning and a vision of tomorrow's popular education! (Syn- th èse des réflexions du groupe de travail dédié à ce thème).

²⁸. Comenius (1592-1670) was a Moravian philosopher, grammarian and educationalist. A member of the Protestant Czech Brethren movement, he spent his life working to improve teaching methods.

building your own path. This implies: putting formal knowledge on an equal footing with "bushcraft knowledge" forged through individual experiences; overcoming the opposition between skills holders and trainers, creating continuity with the exchange of knowledge; revaluing the relationship between master and apprentice.

The second stage is *the transition to the collective*. Shared skills are *goods that multiply as they are shared*. They form a "common pool" that is radically independent of market logic. They are the fruit of a learning process centred on the development and implementation of shared goals. This is what the idea of

This "power to act" involves all the players in a process of transformation that is both local and global, where everyone can become both a player and the author of today's society, and the inventor of tomorrow's society.

This dynamic of lifelong learning, training in the peaceful exchange that is the foundation of democracy and cooperation around a common project, constitutes *the long-term intangible capital of the regions*, which is decisive, particularly when it comes to coping with crises. This intangible capital is made up of the presence, in the same area, of four or even five generations, each sensitive to different aspirations in life.

A network like the Mouvement des Réseaux d'échanges réciproques de savoirs^{®29} symbolises this renewal of popular education, as its name illustrates. What are its distinctive features? :

- It combines learning about socialisation, living and working together, and learning about democracy;
- It emphasises cooperation, the sharing of knowledge, know-how and experience, and reciprocity;
- It recognises the individuality of each person, their history, knowledge and skills;
- it affirms the legitimacy of each individual to think and act, to desire and to commit; diversity is seen as a source of wealth;
- it is based on an ethic of responsibility and mutual recognition;
- it promotes a back-and-forth between action and reflection: the emphasis on action must not obscure the need to give everyone the opportunity to reflect and gain perspective.
- There are no 'knowers' on one side and 'non-knowers' on the other. What's being exchanged is not just knowledge, it's another way of thinking, another way of looking at our society.

The idea of a "learning territory" sums up these different dimensions: a space where we learn from each other; a unique space to which we feel we belong; a place where we can learn from each other; a place where we can learn from each other.

29. Created in Orly in 1971 by Claire and Marc Héber-Suffrin, the Réseaux d'Echanges Réciproques de Savoirs[®] (RERS) are networks of people whose members exchange knowledge and know-how. There are several hundred such networks in France, united in an educational and civic movement. See bibliography, citego.org

A collective capacity to learn and a shared knowledge base that will enable the region to play an active role in its own future and in the development of society as a whole.

2.7 An emergency national programme: equipping regions with the collective skills needed to design and manage the transition

The various strategies described above are long-term, based on an ambitious reform programme that will arouse a great deal of opposition and require a major democratic debate. But the crisis situation is such that this programme needs to be supplemented by a more modest one, aimed at a shorter timeframe to meet the needs of the territories for a new type of human resources and skills. This emergency programme, resolutely national in scope but based on actions defined at local level, could have three components: giving local authorities the capacity to steer the transition; building local capacity to implement the energy transition; giving the local economic fabric the capacity to think and act to transform sectors.

Giving local authorities the capacity to manage the transition

All local authorities have sustainable development initiatives: local authority energy audits, positive energy neighbourhoods, promotion of soft mobility, housing energy renovation policies, development of renewable energy, circular economy, etc. On the other hand, there are still very few areas that have a comprehensive, multi-stakeholder transition strategy. What's more, even if it claims the opposite, the State, which favours a project-based approach and expects local authorities to implement policies defined in Paris, does not help them to do so, reserving its support for local engineering for this implementation.

Without permanent teams of experts within local authorities with a solid status and adequate means of investigation, proposal and evaluation, placed directly alongside the executive, and without a national and European network of these teams to compare and develop experiences over time, the current gap between the potential of the territories and the reality of their operation will remain yawning. *Each catchment area should have, co-financed by the local authorities and the State, a*

"A "local economic agency"³⁰ to assess the ecological footprint of local society in all its components, to document the metabolism of territories, to organise the management of common goods such as water, soil and biodiversity, to build and develop the intangible capital of territories, to bring together players united by a common project, to prepare applications for co-financing with the State and the European Union.

This means combining three types of action: the redistribution of human resources currently centralised in State agencies across the territories; a dedicated continuing education programme within the CNFPT and in particular the INET, based on a three-year sandwich course; and regional master's degrees in managing territorial transition.

30. Providing territories with appropriate tools for knowledge and action: the concept of a Territorial Economic Agency; https://www.citego.org/bdf_fiche-document-109_fr.html

Building local capacity to implement the energy transition

The gap between rhetoric and reality when it comes to the ecological transition is due to a number of obstacles that create a vicious circle of powerlessness: insufficient awareness, low profitability of projects, insufficient funding or funding that is difficult to mobilise, lack of experience in getting public, private and voluntary players to work together, lack of qualified staff to design and run projects, for example in the field of major housing renovation or the conversion of the local agri-food system. Training is not enough. The profitability of projects is crucial and depends on changes in energy policy. We must resolutely anticipate a political reform aimed at reducing the ecological footprint of our regions by 6% a year, as this is the only way of meeting our international commitments. If this happens, a large number of projects will become essential and highly profitable, and the lack of trained personnel will become the main obstacle. On this basis, each region will be asked to identify its needs in terms of qualified personnel, and training resources will be organised at regional level to meet these needs. These needs are not limited to technical skills, but also extend to the ability to organise cooperation between players on joint projects.

Equipping the local economic fabric with the capacity to think and act to transform sectors

For a long time, the departments responsible for promoting sustainable development within companies were closer to communication policy than to strategy definition. Things are gradually changing, particularly under the impact of regulations, which require the recruitment of managers responsible for ensuring compliance with these regulations - what the English-speaking world calls "compliance officers". But if we also anticipate a policy of annual reduction in the ecological footprint of territories, and therefore of consumption and public services, a comparative advantage will go to those industries that are able to decarbonise quickly, either by optimising processes or by developing a policy of functionality (replacing a good by a service), or by reterritorialising industries. This presupposes that companies have professionals capable of designing and implementing such innovations.

Conclusion

The individual and society, two inseparable facets of the education system: enabling each individual to build his or her life and enrich it to the end, giving it meaning; building a plural, responsible and supportive society, a democratic society enriched by dialogue between all and capable of meeting the major challenges common to France and humanity.

This approach must be inspired by the compass of the second modernity, which invites us, in all areas, to build or rebuild relationships, in contrast to the first modernity, which drew its operational effectiveness from specialisation and separation.

The education system to be rebuilt must emphasise two continuities: the continuity of educational pathways and the continuity of the education system's involvement in the community. Firstly, continuity of educational pathways: from birth to the end of compulsory schooling, between the different vocational training streams and then with lifelong learning, enabling each individual, in the image of skills passports, to build, brick by brick, the edifice of skills acquired through education as much as through experience. Secondly, the education system must be part of the community, bringing together the knowledge dispensed by training institutions and the knowledge acquired through experience and commitment to the community.

Is it possible to achieve this by successive touches, by multiplying innovations within the centralised system as we know it today, and by encouraging multiple consultations between regional and local players? We don't think so. The scale of the system's crisis is so great, and the proliferation of national directives reveals such institutional panic, that we need to start afresh on a completely new basis, putting the region at the centre of the new system. This does not mean depriving ourselves of the skills, experience and infrastructures we have built up over the years, all of which are invaluable. However, given that the current institutional configuration no longer meets the needs of individuals and societies, we need to reorganise them into a new configuration.

What is marginal today, the territory, is becoming central, and what is central today, the national level, is changing its role and nature, becoming a means of sharing experiences and developing the common lessons that emerge from them.

Yes, let's put our trust in collective creativity, in the ability of individuals and institutions to learn from each other, in the capacity to combine unity and diversity.

Let's dare to be
democratic. Let's
dare the territories.