



The new school in 2030: how can we make learning and working attractive?
Possible futures for education in Flanders - Report of a joint exploration

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Report of a joint exploration

This report was developed within the framework of the forward-looking project on learning and teaching in Flanders in 2030, a joint initiative of the Department of Education and Training, the Flemish Education Council and the King Baudouin Foundation. The report is the result of the learning and redesign lab addressing the future of education in Flanders [Landen, 24-28 August 2013]. It integrates elements from the briefing papers from the first stage of the project.

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1 Introduction

1.1 The learning and redesign lab

This document is the result of an intensive and productive learning and redesign lab. A creative team of ten people from home and abroad, with a variety of expertise as well as a passion for learning and teaching gathered for five days to talk to each other, to (other) experts and to people who are actively engaged in education. Together, they reflected on 'desired futures' for education in Flanders. Their passionate discussions, learning moments, design ideas and action proposals are summarised in this document. Some forward-looking concepts are building on what is already in place, but is still insufficiently recognised and acknowledged. Others are challenging and question the existing frameworks.

Two key questions and assignments occupied centre stage in the learning and redesign lab:

1. How do we turn 'the school' in 2030 into an attractive place to learn and work?
Assignment: envisioning desired futures; sketching provocative proposals.
2. What do we have to do in order to make it happen?
Assignment: defining levers and a strategy for change.

The forward-looking concepts that were developed want to go beyond stereotypes and inspire the social debate about the goal, the role, the organisation and the management of our education. In other words, they invite us to enter into discussion. They are a work in progress and can be enriched, adjusted or even called into question. It is thus not about being right or wrong.

Lingering over the concepts is a way of evaluating what we currently believe, questioning the present and fine-tuning our assumptions about what may or may not happen. We indeed too often forget that our current choices and actions define the future.

LEARNING AND REDESIGN LAB?

Laboratories and studio-like formats are becoming increasingly popular for addressing important social issues. They are based on a multidisciplinary contribution and voluntary choices. '*Paralysis by analysis*' is making way for the willingness to design practical and feasible solutions to complex, macroscopic challenges.

In this case, the studio concept developed by the Helsinki Design Lab was used as process template.¹ It takes five days. During the first few days a process of internalisation, observation and hypothesis building is started. Halfway this period it switches to vision

¹ B. Boyer, J.W. Cook, M. Steinberg, *In Studio: Recipes for Systemic Change*, Helsinki Design Lab, SITRA, Helsinki, 2011.

development and the rapid prototyping of an architecture of solutions.

A learning and redesign lab crystallises around four key elements:

- *Problem*: The starting point is a social challenge which is regarded as urgent and important. In this case, the future of education in Flanders.
- *People*: Three groups take part in the lab. A heterogeneous creative team of eight to ten people has received a mandate to develop a vision and design an architecture of solutions. In addition, an almost equal number of 'guests' participate who feed the process with content through expert testimonies and as sparring partners. Finally, two or three supervisors feed the process with their competencies regarding facilitation, design approaches, visualisation and systems thinking. An education-related lab offers an environment in which professionals (teachers, educationalists, (para)medical staff), parents, children and young people, policy makers, entrepreneurs and activists can play a role.
- *Process*: Loyal to the spirit of a design studio, a learning and redesign lab has the character of a pressure cooker or a boot camp, in other words a training camp that submerges the creative team in the complex issues and requires it to design a vision and an architecture of solutions in the short term.
- *Place*: The physical framework of such an intense and creative process is important. The initiators offer a space which the participants regard as hospitable, functional and revitalising.

1.2 How to read this text?

Work in progress

What was produced during the learning and redesign lab is a work in progress. The presented forward-looking concepts can be enriched and deepened. They invite us to think beyond the short term and out of the box.

Source of inspiration

The participants in the participatory conference**, which took place on 20 November 2013 and involved a larger group of stakeholders, built on the forward-looking concepts of the learning lab: "What inspires me? What do I want to further develop together with other interested parties?" At a later stage, everyone who is concerned with education is invited to participate in a social dialogue on the future of that education.

Faithful to the language and concepts of the lab

The present text sticks as closely as possible to the concepts developed during the learning and redesign lab. No new meanings, insights or developments have been added. We used the concepts as formulated on the last day of the lab.

** For the report on the participatory conference, please refer to www.ond.vlaanderen.be/onderwijs-2030.

Short and easily accessible

At this stage the output of the learning lab had to be attractive and easily accessible: no exhaustive and lengthy texts, but texts which capture the essence of the matter.

We invite you to discover our forward-looking concepts, add your ideas, enter into debate and design. That is also how we did it...



Rachida, Kurt, Teemu, Katrien, Sam, Francesca, Tony, Inge, Bram and Lorenzo

2 Innovation and research agenda for education in 2030

A learning and redesign lab is founded on a good preparation. The framework of a lab session consists of one or more briefing papers. These papers outline the opportunities regarding the challenge, formulate a number of orientating questions, synthesise relevant facts and add a forward-looking dimension.

The three briefing papers for the present lab can be found on the website of the Department of Education and Training.² They combine an exploratory review of current literature, in-depth interviews, focus groups and an exercise regarding scenarios of society in 2030.

As a transition to the findings and forward-looking concepts of the learning and redesign lab, an overview is now first given of the main themes for an innovation and research agenda from the exploratory review of current literature by Joseph Kessels, Professor of Human Resource Development at the University of Twente and Professor of Educational Leadership at the Scientific Centre for Teacher Research, Open Universiteit [The Netherlands]. These are set out below in the form of a large number of questions that may provide direction during the coming dialogue on the future(s) of education. These questions help the reading of the scenarios developed by the creative team in the learning and redesign lab (from point 4 onwards).

2.1 The curriculum

What will be the common knowledge base for education in the future? Is there a core curriculum with a uniform set of knowledge, skills and attitudes? Is there a common base of content that every person involved in the educational system should have mastered, either in the form of initial qualifications or in order to gain access to further education?

Is it possible to formulate the basic knowledge that is needed in order to function in a knowledge society? Is it possible, based on views on this basic knowledge, to describe uniform levels for primary education, secondary education, vocational education and higher education? How do these levels relate to core values such as participation, social cohesion, sustainability, autonomy, responsibility and creativity? Are there skills that are required in order to survive in the 21st century?

A tension emerges around the effect of controls resulting from the presence of compulsory basic knowledge, competency profiles and required skills, and also from the need to identify, discover and develop talents, as stated by the Committee Accent op Talent (Accent on Talent) in 2009. The practice of exerting control through prescribed content is based on an approach to education which is fundamentally different from the talent-oriented development which starts by valuing and recognising the individual's potential and ambitions. Here a deficiency-based approach clashes with a growth-based perspective.

There is increasing agreement that the so-called soft skills such as creativity, curiosity, entrepreneurship and innovation have a crucial part to play in developing the society of the future. There are also doubts as to whether the existing education system is capable of adequately meeting this challenge.

2.2 Diversity and personalisation

The society of the future is increasingly super-diverse, with its varied experiences, cultural differences and multilingualism. There is also a desire to focus learning environments on

² www.ond.vlaanderen.be/onderwijs-2030

individual differences and personal preferences. This is not only in order to improve learning outcomes, but also to satisfy the need for well-being, engagement and motivation.

What are the consequences of diversity and personalisation? Is there a tension between an individualised approach and the core curriculum? Is the educational system capable of connecting with people's differences and preferences in relation to learning and areas of knowledge, even for a student population whose composition is so diverse that social cohesion clearly becomes a major issue? Is there a tension between the desire to develop everyone's talent and the required basic knowledge (see point 2.1)? What influence does a uniform, standardised assessment system have on efforts to achieve diversity, personal development and diverse educational content? Diversity probably demands a small-scale approach; is it possible to satisfy this demand, in an environment where education is increasingly delivered on a mass scale?

2.3 Perspectives on knowledge and learning

What is the perspective on knowledge and learning underlying the educational system? Does it see knowledge as gathered cultural heritage, accumulated in the past, which we have to pass on to a new generation by means of the educational system? Is learning about the ability to access those cultural goods and internalise them in the individual's own thinking and experience? Is it about knowledge as a personal ability to identify new and unfamiliar problems, analyse them and design and implement a solution based on relevant information? How does a person acquire a critical attitude, a capacity for innovation and a creative mind? If we offer the independent student a high level of autonomy in terms of both the content to be learned and the way in which it is acquired, will such an independent student learn enough? Is learning an individual matter, or is it above all a social undertaking?

What does an educational system look like which is based not on teaching a uniform curriculum but rather on unfolding individual talents and developing personal skills? Is basic knowledge a precondition for the development of skills or does the development of personal skills invite people to find out the relevant information?

2.4 Digitisation and ICT

Can it be assumed that ICT and digitisation will cause a new generation gap? Is ICT limited to new forms of information delivery and communication, or does it also influence people's thinking and experience and thus their way of sensemaking?

How can the educational system play a bridging role in this area? How much attention is the education system paying to the older generation of people who have not grown up with ICT and are increasingly falling behind the younger generation? What skills do pupils, students and employees in the education system need in order to structure ICT appropriately in their own learning and working environments? Can the education system be innovative in this area, or is it only capable of playing a supporting role?

2.5 Lifelong learning

What are the implications of efforts towards lifelong learning in terms of structuring the education system? How can we make education so attractive that people develop habits of learning to learn and lifelong learning? How can we create a school that offers an attractive prospect of developing talents even at later stages in life, in contrast to an institution that people want to leave as quickly as possible? How can you acquire skills that will allow you to structure lifelong learning independently?

2.6 Knowledge productivity and social inequality

If a knowledge society is mainly driven by the dynamism of constant renewal and innovation, how can we structure the education system in such a way that everyone is invited to learn and participate in it? Does a strong emphasis on transferring cultural heritage promote or does it actually inhibit improvement and innovation? How can you make people curious about relevant information and how can you help them to develop the skill to identify this information, process it and convert it into new personal skills? How can formal learning and informal learning find a place in the education system?

Is the knowledge society mainly an attractive place to learn and work for highly educated people, and are less well educated people and those doing traditional jobs left behind? Are renewal and innovation mainly economic in character or do they also apply to the complex questions associated with participation, sustainability and social cohesion? What role can the education system play in this area?

2.7 The workplace as a place to learn

What are the implications of the fact that working environments are devoting more and more attention to knowledge development, developing talents and focusing on the acquisition of new skills? How will the boundaries between school and work become blurred? How is the appreciation for the world of work and professional life increasing? Will the education system be extending itself into the world of work? How can the school system make use of the rich learning environment that a workplace can provide? Is that workplace meaningful as a place of learning mostly in vocational education, or is this perhaps also the case in primary, secondary and higher education? Will teachers be participating more in the world of work? Can teachers who do not themselves participate in work outside the school offer good preparation for knowledge-based work?

2.8 The division of roles between government and school

Can the government promote the structuring of an education system that meets the need for diversity? Is the government the principal monitor of the quality of the education system? What does the task of a quality monitoring authority look like if we no longer have a uniform curriculum and if central assessment is no longer an appropriate tool? How, in an education system aiming to achieve diversity, can the government simultaneously satisfy the principles of equal opportunities and fair distribution? How, in a knowledge economy, can everyone still have equal access to the education system?

How can the government protect citizens against conflicting interests in dual forms of education in which businesses, institutions and schools work closely together to structure the education system? If, in dual forms of education, the better students have a higher chance of finding attractive jobs, how can we protect the less talented ones from impoverished learning workplaces? Should we encourage students to combine a study career with a part-time job, which will improve their chances in the future?

How can the government encourage development-oriented research that will explore the possibilities and hindrances presented by new educational arrangements and generate new and inspiring examples for the education system of the future? How can the government promote renewal and innovation in the education system without the existing system of rules imposed by the same government discouraging the same things? Is there an exclusive task for the government, as an important promoter and financier of the above-mentioned questions relating to renewal, and what part will be played by individual schools and the social partners? How can schools retain ownership of improvements and innovations, since doing so is an important precondition for successful implementation?

2.9 Education with two tendencies? Debate on the aims

The questions set out above refer directly or indirectly to the purpose of education: what aims should an education system be seeking to achieve? They also touch on personal views on the role of education, which in many cases are coloured by people's own experiences.

These views on education range from preparing young people to occupy a meaningful place in society to creating freedom to make choices independently and structure their own lives in future. In his famous essay *Education as Socialisation and as Individualisation* (1989), American philosopher Richard Rorty (1931-2007) describes two main tendencies in the thinking on the aims of education.

Rorty: two main tendencies

On one side is the tendency according to which the primary aim of education is the *socialisation* of children. The school is above all involved in training the pupils, teaching and imparting to them a fixed package of academic knowledge and skills, social norms and values, together with a certain civic sense, so that they will later be able to participate in society as responsible citizens. The teacher is the carrier and imparter of the knowledge which is assembled in the fixed core curriculum.

On the other side is the tendency according to which the primary aim of education is the *individualisation* of children. This tendency sees the school more as a guide, offering the pupils various different resources that will allow them to develop into the person they would naturally wish to become. Here it is not the fixed, prescribed knowledge that is most important, but the development of a critical ability that enables the pupils themselves to shape and perhaps even radically change their own future - and that of society. This demands a flexible curriculum and the implementation of new technologies in which the teacher stands among the pupils as a coach. These two tendencies, which Rorty links respectively to conservative and radical left-wing approaches, and which in the recent publication by writer and journalist Tobias Reijngoud (2013) are referred to as Followers and Shapers, are also expressed in the German concepts of *Ausbildung* and *Bildung*.

Systems or talents?

It becomes more complex if *Ausbildung* as preparation for future work takes the form of adjustment, discipline and domestication, with an (excessively) one-sided emphasis on economic utilitarian thinking. The Flemish Education Council (2013) warned against this in a response to the European Union education policy. Here numeracy and literacy are the core of the curriculum and form the basis for all subsequent forms of secondary education. This view tends to lead to a reduced interest in creative expressions, physical activity, culture and cultural differences, appreciation for manual skills and technical/instrumental approaches.

It may result in strict rule-based systems with prescribed competency profiles, standardised national tests, agreed performance targets linked to budgeting systems and a competitive examination system, which opens the way to the top for only a few and delivers a series of experiences of frustration, lack of achievement and failure for many people. One-sided utilitarian thinking may degenerate into a system of constant selection and exclusion, which overshadows the enjoyment of learning and development and reproduces existing social inequalities. It undermines the intrinsic motivation and belief in one's own ability, which are two conditions for further growth and development. It creates a temptation for schools to commit financial and diploma fraud, and for pupils to steal examination test papers and sell them on the Internet.

The *Bildung* ideal can accommodate the current concern to develop talents and strive to get the best from yourself, while there is also critical reflection on the environment in which people live. Aleid Truijens summarises this as follows in the book by Reijngoud: "The most important task of

the education system is to show children and young people how the world works and to teach them to think about it. That task is certainly important for children who do not receive much from home, as in the case of many children from underprivileged neighbourhoods and families of blue-collar workers. Where will these children come into contact with history and culture, other than at school? This does not apply only to them: even children with well-educated parents do not always have a rich and formative upbringing at home. Many people's lives consist largely of nothing but work and consumption. For many people their time at school is the only period in their life when they think deeply about history, read poetry and novels, look at art, learn to make music or see lettuces grow in the school garden."

The development of talent, self-development, creative and artistic formation, critical reflection and learning to think independently and autonomously may hold the promise of creating more freedom and promoting emancipation, but in the eyes of many these are vague intentions that are difficult to put into practice at all, let alone measure and assess for their effectiveness and efficiency. Brilliant teachers will use the space that is provided responsibly and professionally, but less talented staff may easily lose track of what is going on, waste the pupils' time and squander the public resources that are made available. Experiments with the new learning, the study house and self-directed learning have often ended in failures and conflicts, and pupils have paid for this with educational delays.

When structuring the education system of the future, views from both tendencies will need to find a place, preferably in a way that does not allow good intentions to degenerate into dogmatic restrictions that would form the basis for deep-rooted conflicts with no prospect of reconciliation.

Letter from the future

Dear Kim,

Tomorrow, I have the honour of welcoming you for the first time to our Learning Park! Our entire team will do its utmost best to help you become the best version of yourself. Questions like: 'Who am I? 'What do I enjoy doing?' 'What am I good at?' and 'Who do I want to be?' are very important for our team to be able to help you outline your pathway through the Learning Park. Together with the people at home who are important to you, we will give you attention and identify your talents. At decisive moments we will be there for you to help you make the right choice.

At the Learning Park we will try to teach you what it is like to live in a community and to actively participate in a society. Not just with people from the neighbourhood. You will also learn to live together with people from the other side of the world, people who think and act differently, and people who look 'differently'. Here, you will learn what it is like to jointly take care of each other, to not envy each other and to talk to each other. You will learn what it means to show solidarity with others.

Just like at home, you will be taught here how to survive. You will learn to deal with the 'hard' aspects of life. How you can still generate wealth and abundance from scarcity, how you will sometimes have to fight hard and work for things that once were so straightforward, how you can find your way through a large amount of knowledge and information that is difficult to grasp. And we also want to teach you what lifelong learning is like. We want to enhance your appetite for this.

And remember this: you are not on your own. You will get help from a lot of people. Naturally, in the first place from your family and friends who mean the world to you. But at the Learning Park as well a large team of people will be there to help you: with good advice, with love, with experiences...In the coming years they will create a lot of experiences for you. Experiences that are very close to 'real' and everyday life and work. They will do so together with others, and with us.

I wish you great success, and above all... a lot of fun!

Myriam, Learning Park Coordinator

3 Basic principles for designing the Learning Park

The prevailing concept that is highlighted by the learning and redesign lab from all the concepts, examples, stories... about education in 2030, is that of the Learning Park.³ With this concept as basis, we explicate and describe the results of the learning lab below. First and foremost, it is important to explain the basic principles that were developed during the learning lab. A mostly implicit, but highly steering element is the underlying vision on the purpose of education.

3.1 Keeping the purpose of education in mind

The concept of the Learning Park did not come about in a vacuum. As we mentioned earlier, the members of the creative team let themselves be challenged by a variety of opinions, reflections, concepts and expectations, which were combined in interviews, focus groups and an exercise regarding scenarios of society in 2030. This was done during the exploratory phase of the forward-looking project. The reading of all the interviews with key figures from education and other social sectors provided the members of the creative team with incentives and challenges that inspired them when developing their vision and working on an architecture of solutions.

Not in the least does this reading hold a powerful appeal to always keep in mind the 'big why' of education. Or in other words: its purpose. Before discussing the basic principles of the Learning Park (in 3.2) in greater detail, we therefore use a targeted selection of quotes, clustered around four large themes, to conjure up the concepts and ideas about the purpose of education which the members of the creative team picked up and used.

1. *Becoming the best version of yourself (self-development)*

A first basic idea from the exploratory phase is the expectation that the school sets itself the task of addressing the learning potential of all children and of ensuring that they can discover and develop their talents. Developing talents also means bypassing purely 'intellectual talents'. Learning and developing imply more than developing cognitive skills. It also means that education should instead focus on combining mind and body. Getting to know yourself, asking the question 'Who am I?', with all the uncertainty and the not-knowing that goes along with it. Personal development, identity development and giving meaning are crucial.

"Every child has the right to become to best version of him or herself."

"It's about developing the person, but it's developing a person that is able to navigate in a world which is changing extremely quickly and continues to change extremely."

"Everything you do must help develop them (i.e. talents), definitely not 'deaden' or harm them."

"Equal educational opportunities and education are about the right to become the best you."

"I think that education can play an important role in making young people have a lot more confidence in themselves and in their own strength, when they are young and later on in their lives as well, to change things for the better."

"I see school as a place to start to better understand yourself."

"It is also a plea to put an end to banalities and discuss essential matters: ourselves."

2. *Learning to deal with 'others'*

³ In the present document we each time use the English term for this.

Another key purpose of education has to do with 'humanity in interaction'. In addition to getting to know yourself well, developing your own identity and from there developing a meaningful and significant life, building up relationships from that identity is important as well. Respondents from the exploratory phase and the creative team share the belief that education has to socialise and encourage people to build communities, combine paradigms and fuel the dialogue between people with different views on life. This also means that education must make children competent in dealing with others, which requires specific skills and attitudes, such as learning to let go of your own traditions and reference points and listening to others.

"Good education is about humanity in interaction."

"Education has to bloody well get young people to meet people who are different and to realise that this is not a threat, but an opportunity."

"The more lenses – in the sense of different world views – you have, the more you can triangulate. It is not about looking for a single truth, but about combining paradigms."

"[...] ultimately the ability for human interaction is probably the most basic competence we all need in order to manage in this complex environment."

"Telling the 'big love stories'," that's basically what it boils down to."

"I think the capacity or the ability to listen to other people is one of the major, one of the most important abilities to have."

"Important in the education of this open source society (2030) is that children learn to deal openly with collective society and its many changes and diversity. This requires an education system that constantly challenges and encourages them and gives them responsibility from an early stage onwards, as well as whets their appetite for autonomous activity and cooperation, for instance through projects."

3. Preparing to participate in society

A third cluster of ideas about the purpose of education has to do with building a foundation for a meaningful personal and professional life, playing a role in society and developing into informed citizens. Answers are sought to the age-old question whether education should prepare pupils for the labour market, or whether it should be broader: one cannot be viewed separately from the other. It is believed that young people should be encouraged to develop themselves broadly, and education should challenge them to become thoughtful and critical citizens by making room for asking the question 'why?'. Therefore, education should be about topics that are socially relevant and linked to real life. It should get pupils doing things, with their minds and bodies, so that they can grow in terms of taking responsibility and learning to stand on their own two feet. This also means that through education they develop resilience, are courageous, dare to stand alone, and learn not to give up, but to fight and work. But also that they learn to think critically and not just accept everything.

"Students will be active in solving issues that their future is depending on."

"Of course education is broader than preparing people for jobs, it's about preparing citizens, it's about well-rounded people who are capable of being involved in a number of different levels in society."

"Children will have to learn things that are socially relevant. And children will have to acquire certain basic skills that are necessary for them to be able to function in society and later on at work."

"We have to teach young people to take responsibility for life, whereas today I have the feeling that we hinder them in that regard more than help them. [...] Today, I have to argue so much about whether or not digital is important. It's as if education has been placed under a bell jar, screened off from society."

"We must teach children how to fight and persevere instead of giving up."

"[...] perhaps those people should work harder? Perhaps farming and sport will be more important - including in education - because they're going to have to do it themselves in order to survive?"

"I think education can also train young people to be more rebellious. [...] Perhaps we should change the definition of 'sense of public responsibility' to 'not marching in step', but 'finding your own way'."

"Now more than ever, we must live with unresolved questions and problems, but that's life. The single-minded focus on the rational aspects of today's education is outmoded in a world of not-understanding and not-knowing. And that's actually even richer and more interesting than the world of knowing."

4. Creating a purpose

The participants' reflections on how we can discover and realise the purpose of education constitute a final element which is, however, at least as important. It is often about finding a balance between the expectations of society and the expectations of the individual. The purpose of education is one of the most important questions, something which is not discussed nearly enough. And yet it should always be on the agenda. It's never done.

"Good education strikes a balance between the expectations of the individual and the expectations of society. [...] The curriculum for education should not be based solely on the person, nor solely on society, but should strike a balance between the two."

"What should always be on the agenda: What are the goals of education? Very little is said about this: What do we want to achieve with our pupils and why? [...] Pursuing the debate on the question 'What do we want with our education system?' is extremely important. [...] In other words, this is a never-ending discussion; you have to keep talking about it."

3.2 Basic principles

The following basic principles served as guidelines for the practical development of the Learning Park which you can find under point 5:

1. Education belongs to all of us!

Education is by definition a common good. Not only does society finance education, qualitative education is also in the interest of society as a whole. Enjoying education strengthens the capacity to build a community and to participate in the labour market.

Everyone is involved in education in some or other way. We have all received education ourselves. Some of us have children within their household or family who go to school, or live close to an educational institution. Others cooperate as local entrepreneur with schools, use the school accommodation, etc.

This principle will be recognisable in the future concept of education, which will be shaped as a cooperative organisation; a cooperative in which all actors involved will participate, which encourages social actors (enterprises, non-profit organisations, associations...) to work together, and which is strongly embedded in the local community.

2. Learning and living go hand in hand in a complex society

The society of 2030 will make us face complex challenges. Dealing with shortages, using technology, looking for sustainable solutions, finding our way through a maze of information, keeping up with the accelerated pace.... These are just some elements from the environmental analysis that were permanently considered in the background during the learning and redesign lab.

This principle will be recognisable in the curriculum concept outlined by the lab: the traditional subdivision into subjects makes way for learning activities, structured around meaningful projects and leisure activities that are close to tomorrow's 'real' world. Preparing children and young people for participation in a complex society means that they will be faced with a similar complexity in their learning and living environment. Living and learning will be more closely intertwined.

3. Organisation of staff as lever

The quality of education and learning is very closely related to the people who are co-responsible for this learning process: facilitator, coach, project manager... The way in which these people carry out their profession and commit themselves as individuals has a great impact on young people's learning performance and identity development.

The learning lab sketches a differentiated picture of educational staff on the basis of a diversity of roles: a facilitator who further develops the traditional role of the teacher; a coach who guides children and young people through their individualised learning pathways; a project manager....

This principle can also be found in the picture which the learning and redesign lab gives of the personnel in a Learning Park. A Learning Park uses different roles in the learning process, with learning teams and a learning academy. It invests in a modern and development-oriented HR policy and in management skills. It applies alternative assessment systems, aims at diversity within the team and actually makes use of this diversity.

4. Learning takes place 24/7

Learning and developing is done everywhere and all of the time. Not just in formal learning processes, but also in the interaction with peers, when talking about news events from nearby and far away, when exchanging stories about what goes on in your private life... Learning is not a nine-to-five activity.

This principle is translated in the concept of a learning environment which is embedded in the local community, in which leisure activities are linked to the curriculum and in which parents and other people from the close environment are involved as well.

5. *Diversity as a resource for teaching and learning*

The team of the learning and redesign lab strongly believes that diversity is not an obstacle to be overcome, but instead an inexhaustible resource for teaching and learning. Diversity is about the differences in what we have in common as people. It is thus about each one of us, not about 'the other'. It is about respecting both differences and similarities, about the desegregation of schools and communities, and about actively supporting a diversity of identities. This principle is discussed in greater detail below.

4 Outline of the Learning Park concept

The aforementioned principles are the basic principles for the Learning Park concept. In time, this may become an attractive and effective alternative for today's schools. Below, images are evoked of what the Learning Park would look like, of the different actors involved, of how learning is organised there...

Embedded in the local community

The Learning Park is both a physical and a virtual place. There is a great variety of open and closed spaces that invite people to meet and enter into dialogue. Their scale may vary, depending on the spatial - and in 2030 mainly the urban - context. However, there is definitely involvement in the neighbourhood. The embedding in the local community is crucial. A Learning Park is a place where learning activities are organised, but also where local sports clubs, cultural associations, social organisations, community organisations, local authorities, etc. feel at home. The physical place of a Learning Park is strongly connected to daily life.

At the Learning Park the dimension of 'meeting people' takes priority. Children and young people meet each other. Other local residents, parents, elderly people etc. also find common grounds there to meet. Building maintenance and the atmosphere at the Learning Park are entrusted to the local neighbourhood. In this concept all the elements of a Learning Park's cooperative structure are visible (see below).

A project-driven learning environment

Children and young people no longer sit in a classroom all day. The learning and redesign lab sketches another concept of the future: during a typical day pupils can be a couple of hours in their regular learning group to study language and mathematics, for instance. However, the main part of the day they engage in projects which allow them to actively develop their competencies. In this concept pupils are expected to be given every opportunity to make their own choices for their learning pathways. In addition, leisure activities can be organised within the learning environment.

Drastically changed role for teaching staff

What kind of teacher does the Learning Park have in mind? Teachers will no longer just be 'teaching'. A resource team of adults, a 'teaching team', will be put together which will include people with complementary practical and academic knowledge and skills. The team supports the involvement, the cooperation and the teaching of and learning by pupils.

Learning Parks will have more freedom and flexibility in implementing the HR policy for their teaching staff. Teaching staff themselves will get the opportunity to reshape their jobs according to their own experiences, aspirations and competencies. Depending on their choice, they can attach greater weight to teaching, coaching or project management activities. Moreover, they are highly appreciated, because they are key figures in dealing with complexity.

Abstract

Thanks to the conceptualisation and design of a Learning Park, the learning and redesign lab was able to further develop the principles. The design mode has challenged the members of the lab to think creatively and to dare present concrete solution strategies.

Are these concepts of decisive importance? Do they rule out other concepts? Probably not. As desired forward-looking concept, a Learning Park should above all feed the discussions about the future of the school as an attractive place to learn and work. Anyone who is interested is invited to further build on what is presented here and to explore additional perspectives.

5 Concepts explained in greater detail

The Learning Park is an integrated, open concept for the future. Below, a more analytical description of its underlying concepts is given. We will take them out of the aforementioned context so as to be able to better clarify them.

5.1 A cooperative community - Towards a local setting...

In the thinking process about the future of education in 2030 it has been suggested several times to shape education increasingly from the involvement of a variety of stakeholders. This is a further translation of the basic principle "education belongs to all of us". The central idea is to make the largest possible group of people from the local community responsible for and have them commit to the organisation of a Learning Park. In such a model, everyone is an equal partner and carries responsibility for the overall results. This vision and type of organisation can be found in a cooperative community. As a result, the local community will have more direct responsibility for the Learning Park, which means that the central role of government diminishes and may thus change in the future.

Learning Parks can be organised as cooperative organisations that cooperate closely with their local environment. All stakeholders - staff, parents, local enterprises, associations... - are shareholders and share the commitment, responsibility and involvement. The learning and redesign lab emphasises the importance of having local businesses, non-profit organisations, government representatives, teaching staff and - above all - parents sit on the board of each Learning Park.

Local? Member of a cooperative?

This raises at least two important questions that require further consideration. First: How local is local? If a Learning Park is situated at the level of the neighbourhood, how is it related to other Learning Parks that are embedded in a mainly metropolitan/urban context? Can there be small and big Learning Parks, depending on the residential density? If each actor of a Learning Park becomes a shareholder, then how big is 'too big'? Of when is small 'too small'?

Another question has to do with management. Is it advisable to also have political representatives involved in the Learning Park? Can/should, for instance, an alderman or alderwoman for education be a member of the cooperative? And in what capacity? As a parent, a local resident, an elected politician?

There is still a lot of discussion about how one becomes a 'member of the cooperative'. Many options are still open. Does one become a member of the cooperative by making a financial contribution? Is that contribution significant or rather symbolic? Or does bringing your child to the Learning Park also qualify as a contribution? Or is this a prerequisite for becoming a shareholder? And when does one resign? Does one ever resign? And does one recover their 'contribution' when resigning? Does this also include added value? And what would this be exactly? Etc.

Board

Due to the management and legal status, all members of a cooperative organisation are involved in the choices that are made with regard to action plans, administration, project management, financing and HR policy. All members have an equal voting right. Profits generated by projects and by the synergy with local businesses will be re-invested in their Learning Park. This type of structure can guarantee that the local Learning Parks are embedded in the local community and that social changes have an accelerated impact on education.

The members of a Learning Park cooperative will in this type of organisation be able to take decisions about the board and management, staff recruitment, the organisation of learning projects and activities, financial management, the involvement of external experts, the participation of stakeholders in the organisation and projects,...

In this concept the Learning Park manager is accountable to the board members of the cooperative community, who in their turn are assisted by external advisers/experts in the recruitment and screening of candidates. The profiles and criteria for the recruitment of the manager and teaching staff may for instance be determined by the board of the cooperative through a participatory process. They can be regularly adjusted to the specific needs of the Learning Park.

Stakeholders?

A Learning Park can also become a place for other local stakeholders to meet and learn. Especially parents, local entrepreneurs and non-profit organisations can be involved in projects. They can also avail themselves of the learning opportunities offered by the facilities and people, both in a material and intellectual sense. Again, this raises a lot of questions. Do we enter into an agreement about this? What about parents who have less time and can therefore not participate to such a high extent? Do we agree on a minimum degree of involvement? And what about local entrepreneurs or organisations?

5.2 The staff in teaching teams - Investing in a diversity of roles and talents

Readers of Financial Times elect Belgian teacher as HR Manager of the Year

30 March 2030 - For the first time in the long history of this prestigious Financial Times election, a Flemish teacher won the award, leaving the HR Director of British Airways and the Human Development Manager of Unilever behind on respectively the second and third place. There seem to be a lot of changes going on in the Flemish educational sector. "Use the energy which is already available: this is a good starting point for accelerating the learning process", says the winner.

The readers of The Financial Times appreciate the inspirational practices of Ramalho. "I'm just a teacher, trying to bring out the best in all my pupils," he says. His classroom looks like a creative lab. Each day, 15 young people aged between 15 and 18 work and learn together while bringing their talent and passion to the surface and at the same time learning to discover, appreciate and use the talents of their classmates. Ramalho sees himself as a 'convener' and 'mobiliser' of the potential of his pupils, while using these talents to organise activities in which they can shine and grow.

In the Learning Park concept we see a staff team which is not just a reflection of the active citizens in the society of 2030, but which is also organised like other professionals in that society: like a network in which each individual contributes from his or her own expertise, wisdom, love and experiences.

Learning processes that are aimed at preparing children and young people for full-fledged participation in the complex society of 2030 are extremely complex and merit a rich variety of experiences. This richness can only be offered by a team in which being connected and working together generate added value, and in which variety, diversity and creativity are important elements.

Facilitators, project managers and coaches

In the concept we have in mind facilitators, project managers and coaches are the closest to the learning processes of children and young people. Below, we sketch the outlines.

Facilitators give guidance and structure to children, for instance by supporting them in planning their daily, monthly and annual activities. In addition, they are responsible for what is called the 'formal curriculum' further on in this document. They are in charge of the minimum competencies which pupils have to master. They do so by providing a basis for a 'learning family', which children

from different age categories jointly belong to. The facilitators monitor the progress and activities of each pupil.

Like all other personnel in the Learning Park they have a contract for a fixed number of sessions per week. This can be a mixture of morning, afternoon and evening sessions. They spend about 40% of this time with the group. They also have a special role in linking the different communities in the Learning Park with each other into one single community whose members share common values. They also ensure that the ownership of the community is shared by everyone who works there, as well as with the pupils, families and other stakeholders. Together with the project managers they coordinate day and evening activities with parents and other people from the surrounding communities.

Coaches are trained and have experience in the field of counselling psychology. They give children the opportunity to receive individual feedback and guidance in their individualised learning pathways. They can also offer assistance and support to the teaching staff with regard to the psychology of learning.

Project managers come from a variety of backgrounds and negotiate with children and young people about projects at the Learning Park. Individualised learning by gaining experiences, engagement with the real world and 21st century curricula, knowledge and skills in today's society take a central position in this.

The project manager supports pupils in the self-monitoring of their progress. (S)he succeeds in making them take pleasure in learning while challenging them to deepen their study. Each child keeps its own project learning diary. Project managers and students will negotiate about when they move on to a new project in the same or a different area of interest. The project manager will also build a bridge with activities outside the Learning Park, including with the business world. Projects will not be limited to a specific age group and considerable use will be made of peer coaching.

Teaching teams in the education hub: community belonging

According to a recent survey, the practices of three education hubs in Flanders show that 'teaching teams' consisting of staff with different profiles, qualifications and roles are viewed by teaching staff, pupils, parents and coordinators as linked with positive engagement in learning, reciprocal teacher and pupil coaching, development of learning potential, positive attitudes of active participation and feelings of belonging to the community... Phenomena like burnout and stress in teachers seem to be reduced by sharing responsibility for students' learning in teams working on a flexible basis. This flexibility means that the teams, which boast a diversity of profiles and qualifications, adapt to the needs of learner groups.

For the project managers and coaches specific training programmes will have to be developed in order to inspire the teaching staff and prepare them for their new key roles. Working in a Learning Park could become a very flexible job and the teaching staff will be encouraged to gain an array of professional experiences, while switching to other jobs than teaching.

Coaches and project managers will get the opportunity to largely shape their own career path on the basis of their own interests, passions and talents. A high degree of flexibility can be built into the system. Teaching staff, coaches and project managers no longer face a linear career. Developing and managing successful learning projects will be a path of learning and growing for the teachers themselves and will allow them to extend their own skills in the process.

New talent scout in guidance centre of Learning Park

10 April 2030 – In the Oostrozebeke Learning Park talent scouts are available to provide assistance to the pupils on a 24/7 basis. They offer guidance, consultancy and coaching to orient the young people towards anything that may help them speed up their learning experiences. This week, a new expert named David Robrecht has joined the team. What is special about this new team member is that he brings a lot of experience from outside the education system into the Learning Park. So

expectations are running high. Robrecht: "I dream of opening up a new world of possibilities for young learners."

They will agree goals with the pupils, giving high priority to the skills of open-ended research and study. They will share the responsibility for successfully implementing projects and achieving educational objectives and they will be regularly evaluated by them. In addition, project managers must periodically act as mentors for junior project managers.

Pupils appreciate teaching teams

Students Ibrahim and Inge express their appreciation for their team of coaches, facilitators and trusted experts. Ibrahim: "Fifteen years ago, Flanders introduced a new vision for teaching and learning. The dynamic and connected community centres for teaching and learning are a great success. A key factor in these community centres is the growth mindset of the team that guides us in our learning process."

Coordinator; other staff

A Learning Park is managed and coordinated by a **coordinator** who takes over the role of the current head teachers. They act as reference person and coordinator for everyone who participates in a Learning Park. They are in intense communication and maintain close relations with the local administration, which acts as a 'critical friend' in the reflection on the activities and processes taking place at the Learning Park. They lead the Learning Park on a continuous path of guided self-improvement. This pathway comes about through a participatory approach involving adults as well as children and young people from a Learning Park, and other stakeholders.

The managers do so in cooperation with other Learning Parks and organisations that share their goals, from Flanders and from other regions and countries. A council of experienced Learning Park managers that is elected from all professionals in the field meets on a regular basis to discuss strategic educational topics and to give advice to the Government. The coordinators are assisted by a **coordination team**.

Staff is also available for providing logistic and administrative support. **Kitchen personnel, building maintenance workers, gardeners, health workers, social workers and office managers** all offer the possibility to children to join them and help them to keep the school running. Children can thus also take their responsibility in these fields as well.

Learning Academy opened at the Oostrozebeke Learning Park

8 June 2030 - The Oostrozebeke Learning Park is the place where all pupils and learning facilitators from the local community meet, learn and create the future while learning at the same time. The campus has now been enriched with a Learning Academy. Teachers can meet each other there and work together around a wide range of projects and learning issues.

5.3 The curriculum - Building up and adequately assessing competencies

What type of curriculum lies behind the concept of a Learning Park? Do we still need a curriculum in 2030? When building on the basic principle that learning takes place 'whenever and wherever', one could say that a standard curriculum does the character of learning and the diversity of learning styles and learning needs injustice. The question therefore remains: does a curriculum meet the complexity of learning and growing up?

Apart from the answer to this question, the learning and redesign lab is convinced that some sort of curriculum is needed. A curriculum offers something to hold on to, as well as a framework for shaping and supporting learning. In combination with the purpose of education, one can only

conclude that it is advisable or even necessary to impart certain basic skills, values, norms, principles and convictions to children and young people. From this thought the concept of a threefold curriculum was developed:

- formal curriculum
- project-based curriculum
- informal curriculum.

Teachers' conference proposes new curriculum for 21st century

After three days of intensive discussions the teachers have succeeded today in welding together the work of six teams of educators from across Flanders who met several times during the past two years: "We finally have a supported document that preserves what is good about existing curricula while engaging with the realities of children's lives in this century", commented Petra, one of the project coordinators.

5.3.1 A threefold curriculum

What can the formal curriculum look like?

A first part of the curriculum encompasses the competencies, skills, values and norms that are required to be able to participate in the society of 2030. This concerns minimum competencies and basic skills. It is difficult to already define the minimum competencies for participation in society in 2030, although some ideas have already been come up with. We have in mind mathematical literacy and just literacy in general, scientific knowledge...but also social skills, solidarity, problem-solving skills, etc. It is important to make sure that it concerns minimum competencies.

What can the project-based curriculum look like?

A second important part of the curriculum is project-oriented learning and working. Pupils work together with real clients (residential and care centres, cultural and welfare organisations, companies, nature managers, cities and municipalities...) on specific issues through projects. These projects always have three layers:

- Content: What is the project about?
 - Intended goals
 - Results aimed at
 - Problems that are at the basis of the project
 - Exploration of themes within projects
- Procedure: How is the project organised?
 - Elements of the approach
 - Project management
 - Making agreements
 - Taking steps, making progress
- Process: How do the pupils deal with the project?
 - Do I like this or not? Why?
 - What do I find important in these issues?
 - Is the cooperation successful? How do I feel about my role in this group?

They acquire the necessary competencies by working on the projects and thinking about them. They constantly discuss them with each other and with the supervising staff.

What can the informal curriculum look like?

In line with the basic principle that learning takes place 24/7, leisure activities in the sports club, association and/or youth organisation are also part of the curriculum. As a result, these activities are increasingly organised on the premises of a Learning Park. Pupils receive credits for their participation in and reflection on these activities.

5.3.2 Evaluation and certification of the threefold curriculum

The learning and redesign lab also intensively discussed the measurement, certification, evaluation and quality assurance of learning, since the underlying question remains: when is someone ready to fully take up his or her role in society? At the age of 18 or sooner? After someone has qualified and thus graduated? And what does 'has qualified' mean exactly?

It is still difficult to give unambiguous answers to these questions. To evaluate and measure learning results the following basic principle is laid down: a Learning Park is all about development and growth, about the future, about allowing someone to become the best version of him or herself. The evaluation and assessment should back up this objective. That is why the evaluation in a Learning Park is by definition development and growth oriented.

To organise this learning and evaluation system which is steered by the pupils themselves, a system of learning credits is proposed. In this system pupils can earn credits for the levels of competence they have reached. They have their personal digital portfolio in which they can demonstrate the competencies they have developed and collect the necessary certificates, as well as project reports, feedback notes, etc. The acquired credits can be saved up and result in a diploma or certificate for a specific domain.

Standardised tests to be phased out!

Brussels, 26 August 2030. It was a hot summer for the people in charge of the education system in Flanders. Several weeks of consultations and negotiations with delegations from all stakeholders ended with a breakthrough this morning. From this school year onwards, all school networks will replace their traditional methods of testing by the so-called dynamic assessment. This assessment offers pupils a lot more opportunities for showing they have learnt skills and can actually apply them than the more traditional testing methods.

The formal curriculum could be tested on a normative basis. Looking at the gaps in the minimum competencies is an important aspect of the curriculum. The evaluation in the project-based and informal components of the curriculum should be different from the formal part. It is about feedback and no longer about standardising examinations and tests. The emphasis is on 'doing', rather than on memorising knowledge. Pupils take part in numerous projects, groups, teams, assignments... They acquire skills in various domains. They are permanently monitored by experts, project managers and facilitators who check whether and decide when a child has learnt a new skill. An important tool for certifying the development of a competence is the skills certificate awarded to pupils by the expert, the project manager or the facilitator.

To enter higher education, young people will have to meet the requirements for the specific study they choose. Pupils will all have their personal coach/mentor to guide them in their choices and to address problems, when necessary.

5.4 Students have ownership of their learning - Children and young people have authority over their learning pathway

The central basic principle behind this concept is the conclusion that children and young people can differ greatly from each other in many ways: in their thinking patterns, passions and interests, their abilities and inabilities, their levels of motivation, their aspirations and dreams... The approach in a Learning Park aims to cater for these differences in the best possible way. Making the differences productive is what matters. This can be done by offering children plenty of experiences.

A further step can also be taken. Really linking up with the diversity of children and young people is only possible, if they can direct and steer their own learning, within the richness of experiences offered to them. It is not about making children entirely 'self-steering' in the Learning Park, but to make sure their own aspirations, wishes, desires and differences are taken into consideration in the creation of personal learning pathways. In a Learning Park the children will be coached to direct their own learning pathway towards the levels of competence they need and want to achieve.

How is this type of learning by children and young people conceptualised? Fifteen to twenty children will jointly belong to a 'learning unit' or 'learning family', which will replace the former classes. Within such a learning unit, pupils can be two years older or younger. Diversity is an important value: learning families are a reflection of diversity in society, bringing together different backgrounds, talents, and cultural and ethnic origins.

Pupils in a learning unit spend about half of their day together. In the morning they have a talking circle and, depending on the activities, they can attend one in the evening as well. They take turns in acting as moderator and secretary. The facilitator is a key member of the group who reflects on the day and shares his or her thoughts with the group.

Apart from the learning time they spend together in their learning family, pupils split up in project groups where they learn and work towards the competencies they want to acquire, in order to develop their entrepreneurial skills and to obtain the credits they need to enter higher education. Finally, they also have a lot of free time which they can spend doing art and IT or participating in music workshops, sports activities and games.

It is not easy to give pupils complete ownership of their own learning process. It requires reflection and being able to take a meta-perspective, but also being able to clearly define what you want to be and what you have to do to achieve it. To encourage these reflections and thoughts, pupils receive assistance from a personal coach. Together they take the necessary time and space to think about who they are, who they want to be and how they can achieve this goal. Coaches offer pupils the opportunity to think about their failures and successes, about their ambitions and about what is making them feel bad sometimes. Finally, the coaches also help them make choices regarding their own learning pathways. They encourage children and young people to explore certain experiences and to deliberately experiment with their own behaviour.

5.5 Diversity as capital - Learning starts with diversity!

Diversity was already mentioned earlier as one of the principles. In a Learning Park diversity is a resource for teaching and learning. Using diversity for learning may lead to valuable experiences and insights. Imagine a group of children. They gather in a learning family, each with their own expectations and aims, and maybe also with a concrete vision of what they want to achieve through their learning process. Expressing their aims and linking them to those of others is already part of the learning process.

What does this group need to put learning on the right track? Solidarity, openness, the feeling of being connected with each other, the experience that being different is OK and that others....can be different as well. And that learning indeed starts with connecting differences. What are your and my experiences? Can we feel comfortable enough to stand amidst our differences? And do we give each other break, some time to reconnect with 'ourselves' again?

The Learning Lab is in favour of the following key activities for making the transition to a type of education that regards diversity as a source of inspiration:

- Recruit a diverse staff as a reflection of the diversity in our communities.
- Teacher training: the teacher training curriculum reflects the cultures of local and global communities. Criteria for entry in teacher training include, among other things, an explicit commitment to teach in a diverse community.
- Embrace new content of learning activities. Focus on:
 - Interrelation between people and environments.
 - Knowledge, skills and attitudes that embrace diversity.
 - Global and local themes.
 - The development of learning skills.
- Encourage all families to send their children to nursery school.
- Provide opportunities for parents and other members of the community to participate and learn.
- Flexible learning through a large variety of activities, both outside and inside the Learning Park buildings.
- A strategy at different levels:
 - Instead of identifying pupils with 'special needs', find out who experiences barriers to learning and participation, and remove those barriers.
 - Actively recruit students for teacher training from groups that are underrepresented, like ethnic minorities and students with disabilities.
 - Establish relations and make alliances with theatre, dance, urban workshops, universities, etc.
 - Peer coaching and mentoring.
 - Develop a 'values literacy' and create opportunities for dialogue on the road to responsive schools.
- Leadership:
 - Passionate shared leadership in schools.
 - The coordinator/manager of the Learning Park as lead learner.
 - Encourage the self-management of diversity in adults and children.

5.6 An alternative currency - Involving society through the Edu

In nearly all conversations in the learning and redesign lab, learning coaches and teachers are referred to as catalysts for effective learning processes. It is often teachers who 'do things just that little bit differently' or who 'add just that something extra' who have a lasting impact on people. A Learning Park encourages this attitude in all learning coaches, which means everyone from the team, and appreciates it as well. It has to do with enthusiasm, entrepreneurship, qualitative project work, appealing to a network, wanting to do your very best...

In order to value and promote such an attitude, the members of the learning lab propose an alternative payment and valuation system as incentive, the 'Edu'. The 'Edu' is both an alternative currency and a financing system through which Learning Parks can obtain, exchange and allocate different funds and incentives.

The central idea is that learning coaches can earn 'Edus' for setting up certain initiatives and projects. 'Edus' can be purchased by companies and non-profit organisations that have an interest in projects or initiatives for which they would like to involve pupils from a Learning Park. 'Edu' can be used to pay for services and to set up projects involving a Learning Park and various stakeholders/partners.

Wanted: pupils with an affinity for elderly care

Seniors centre Chérie is looking for a motivated team of young people up to the age of 16 to prepare and supervise the weekly activity afternoon. This may include game afternoons, exercise activities, story telling activities, excursions, walks, social gatherings... The idea is not only to prepare and supervise the activities, but to also talk to the seniors to find out how the quality of the activity afternoons can be further improved. To that end, the young people are expected to draw up an action plan for the year of operation 2031-2032. They receive their remuneration, which is defined in mutual consultation, in 'Edus'.

For more information: online data mining 376490.

The 'Edu' could be distributed by a public service, for instance the Department of Education and Training, which acts as mediator or 'bank' and can also carry out some sort of quality control. The currency is conceived as 'educational' profit: it helps improve the educational quality of project work and the experiences it creates.

What is the value of an 'Edu'? This can be determined by the 'bank'. It could be an exchange value in available hours, but just as easily a monetary value. This should be further considered and figured out by specialists.

When Learning Parks and their project managers succeed in setting up partnerships with other actors from society, they also earn more 'Edus' to invest in their projects. This may encourage teachers even more to go 'outside', build relationships, act as entrepreneurs, etc. There are also benefits for external partners. They will benefit from working together with the educational sector, not just because of the tax benefits associated with the use of 'Edus', but mainly because new opportunities and innovative products and practices will result from this cooperation.

Window Screen prototype ready

Pupils from the Learning Park have succeeded in developing the first commercial Window Screen prototype. The Window Screen allows you to control actions from your kitchen window, for instance, like activating the sprinklers, regulating the indoor temperature, and dimming the light. There are plenty of other options as well. The technique is not new, but it is the first commercial version for the private market. The pupils did this at the request of WindowScreenie bvba, an SME that

has been producing models for large organisations for years now. It would be too expensive and time-consuming for the organisation to develop it in-house. Thanks to a productive partnership with the academic world, the Learning Park and a number of external experts, the pupils have succeeded in creating the first prototype. It will now be further developed in close cooperation with the client. The design and development were facilitated by the 'Edu' system.

The Learning Park or individual learning coaches can exchange the 'Edus' they have earned for a specific investment budget (not necessarily in money) which they can use for activities that benefit the educational quality, such as personal training, excursions with the learning family, educational materials, etc. In this context we not automatically have to think in terms of absolute figures: instalments can be used as well. An example: a learning coach who annually earns 'Edus' in an instalment of 50 to 100 is allocated a certain investment potential.

6 How do we effect change?

What can a change strategy look like? The different discussions during the learning and redesign lab yielded plenty of relevant insights. This did not really give a clear picture of the strategy, but instead of basic values and dilemmas.

6.1 Basic values for starting an innovation or change strategy

Do we try doing things like we are used to, or do we dare step into the unknown?

In their search for what the education system could look like in 2030, the group shares the belief that a 'new way of thinking' is needed, after first having been confronted with old familiar habits of dealing with things. "We should at least to try to find new ways of thinking", someone said. Naturally, several models are available for considering the education of the future. A number of models are already in place. Together, this group was able to create new models, which may be totally different. Or like someone from the group said afterwards: "It can be a mistake to use your own existing models as a basis for starting a discussion." Someone else added: "Maybe it is not about the model, but about the meaning we give to such a model." At a certain point in time, the group abandoned the search for a 'model' and started to jointly shape a story for the future, in which all members could bring part of their hope and vision to life. This was a fun thing to do.

Unity instead of uniformity

Another ingrained habit is that we usually aim to find one shared vision. Maybe we should not be looking for a consensus, but rather learn to embrace the differences. Someone made this remark about learning groups: "Unity should be our aim, not uniformity." This requires understanding of and respect for the learning process itself. Each innovation is a learning process in itself...

From fear to confidence

Why do groups usually move towards a consensus and repeat the familiar ways of thinking? Why is it that, after a long brainstorming session, we arrive at the conclusion that we have comfortably remained stuck in our familiar thinking patterns, without coming up with any new and appealing concepts for the future? Maybe this is also because, as individuals who participate in groups, we are afraid of being rejected, anxious about making mistakes, and scared to death of failing our duties? The only way to learn to leave this behind us is to leave room for solidarity, acceptance and gratitude for differences. This holds true for innovation strategies as well as for the learning process itself.

6.2 Innovation starts at the local level

The learning and redesign lab team is also quite convinced that changes in the education system will have to come from the local level (municipalities, local school environments) where teachers, pupils and parents will be the real innovators. "In some places, parents and teachers already show they want to do things differently. We should use this energy to effect change. We should give these initiators of innovation room to boldly try out new ways of teaching, to make mistakes, to learn and to develop their practices." On the other hand, national and regional regulations that are focused on a uniform system make it extremely difficult these days to bring about actual changes. Therefore the main question will be: How do we help and support professionals in the field, the government and the administration to make room for these local innovations and changes? We know our common future needs them to keep up with today's and tomorrow's changes in society.

6.3 Innovation based on voluntary choices is the best way to start

In order to re-orient our existing models towards a Learning Park, we should first of all ask ourselves how we can even *begin* to move in that direction. A small beginning may become an educational revolution, if society is enthusiastic about it.

Schools will not be forced to become a Learning Park, but every school should be given the opportunity to do so if it wants to. It is a matter of choice. The government will provide schools with the necessary support to make this transition. Schools that want to begin with one single pilot project can do so if they think this is the best way to proceed.

In the end, it will be the children and parents who will decide in what system they have the greatest confidence: this is truly a 'consumer-driven' change. It is very important for the government to start creating and providing opportunities and support for schools to meet the expectations of our rapidly changing society.

6.4 An innovation strategy copes with current problems and turns them into a desired future

In the diagram below we mention in the left column the main actors involved in the (new) education system, as well as a number of basic concepts. In the middle column we give the main points of focus for the different actors (weaknesses of the current system, opportunities, etc..) and on the right we indicate the changes aimed at.

Key elements of a Learning Park (LP)	Points of focus	Proposed change
Cooperative organisation	Commitment Responsibility	Sense of community Membership Ownership of decision-making Visionary conference
Learning Park coordinator Project manager Learning coaches/facilitators Personal coaches (well-being)	Teacher profession under pressure Demotivated teachers Linear career Bored pupils	Flexibility Autonomy Ownership of personal career Entrepreneurship
Pupils	Boredom School drop-out rate Unfulfilled potential	Self-steering of personalised learning pathways
Credits	Qualification Monitoring	Digital portfolios 360° evaluation Entry level of credits for higher education
Coach	Chaos for pupils	Long-term counselling
Quality	Skills/competencies required for LP staff	LP coordinator, recruitment by LP Cooperative board
Local community Edu as alternative currency	Involvement Incentives	- LP coordinator is also stakeholder manager. - Currency which allows outside world to cooperate with schools: bridge with social sector, businesses, NGOs, government and pupils.

		Everyone can use the LP services through projects.
Parents	Dedication Incentives	Members of the LP cooperative and project partners through Edu
Implementation	Fear of change	Parallel system and support for change

17/01.2014

Annex 1:
Biographical information about the members of the creative team engaged in the learning and redesign lab.

Arnoud Raskin is the inventor and initiator of the *Mobile School*, a mobile game and learning space which is meanwhile being used for street children by street workers all over the world. His company *Streetwize* turns the (traditional) world upside down: the basic principle is that managers can learn from the street culture and the way in which these children survive.

Arnoud Raskin participated in the learning and redesign lab as 'eleventh' member on Tuesday 27 August 2013.



Annex 2:

Guest speakers and inspiring cases during the learning and redesign lab

Guest speakers

Jeroen Backs is the Head of the Strategic Policy Support Division of the Flemish Community Department of Education and Training.

Joseph W. M. Kessels is Professor of Human Resource Development at the University of Twente and Professor of Educational Leadership at the Scientific Centre for Teacher Research of the Open Universiteit.

Koen Vanmechelen is a Belgian conceptual artist. Central topics in his work are biocultural diversity and the interaction between art and science.

Inspiring cases

The worldwide non-profit association **CoderDojo** has existed for two years in June 2013 and is growing fast. It was set up in Ireland as some kind of after-school computer club. CoderDojo teaches programming, creating websites and apps and developing games, etc. to children and young people aged 7 to 18. This is done in a pleasant atmosphere during free Dojos with like-minded participants. The emphasis is on open source and free software. The mentors are volunteers who have sufficient ICT knowledge and the right drive to coach children and young people and to make ICT development and programming a pleasant, creative and imaginative learning experience. Dojos are currently already organised in no less than 15 Flemish cities.

At the learning and redesign lab CoderDojo Belgium was presented by Martine Tempels (President of STEM platform and initiator) and Koen Pellegrijs (coach).

www.coderdojobelgium.be

SpringAGE (2012) is a movement of young South African leaders who want to stimulate the co-creation of innovative and feasible projects and subsequently lead South Africa towards a promising future. SpringAGE is convinced that the younger generation is capable of realising this future and is also responsible for it. The movement brings together young people, through social media and during so-called SpringBreaks, and provides the government and business world with ideas. Some of the questions and challenges that are addressed on the platforms are how employment can be created for the many unemployed young South Africans, how local initiatives can be linked with each other, how technology can lead to greater prosperity, etc. The ideas result in concrete projects.

At the learning and redesign lab SpringAGE was presented by co-founder Neliswa Fente.

www.springage.co.za

Let's Go Urban is the provisional and very successful life's work of founder and director Sihame El Kaouakibi (1986). The essence of the initiative is to develop talents in young people and to vitalise urban arts and street culture. Sihame discovered that large gaps exist in dance schools in this respect. Young people between the ages of 6 and 30 can follow Urban Dance courses in all possible styles in Antwerp (and meanwhile also in a number of other locations). Since recently other courses are available as well, namely Urban Sports, Urban Music, Urban Media and Urban Choir. The public is both an ethnic and a social mixture. They come to Let's Go Urban for recreational purposes, or to improve their dancing skills. Key words are discipline, perseverance, empowerment of young people and positive energy. The courses also result in performances (Night of the Proms, Flanders Opera...). In 2011, Sihame El Kaouakibi was presented with the Flemish Culture Award for Amateur Arts.

At the learning and redesign lab Let's go Urban was presented by founder and director Sihame El Kaouakibi.

www.lets Gourban.be

The city is growing and rejuvenated and full of diversity: this is the basic principle of **Jes**, a city laboratory for children, youngsters and young adults in Antwerp, Brussels and Ghent. Jes has several sub-divisions that are integrated with each other, namely youth work, welfare, formal and informal types of education, culture, sport, employment and accommodation. The result is the creation of new concepts and a combination of 'worlds'. Jes visits its target groups in their familiar environments. Involvement, participation and co-ownership are essential in its methodology. Theme building, talent and competence development and partnership development, including with schools, are prioritised. Jes also builds up expertise to influence (youth) policy. As far as education and the development of talents and competencies are concerned, Jes particularly focuses on vulnerable groups, including immigrants and newcomers. The problem is well-known: school leavers, a wrong orientation at school, educational disadvantage, unemployment, poverty/deprivation, waste of talents... In this context as well, Jes is devoted to an integrated approach, cooperation and new types of learning.

At the learning and redesign lab Jes was presented by director Patrick Manghelinckx.

www.jes.be

The **city of Rotterdam** pursues an educational policy consisting of three programmes for its 100,000 children and young people: better performance (increased quality of schools, longer learning time, parents who support their children), 'attack on drop-out rates' (fewer school leavers and a better school career planning) and 'every child wins' (integrated support for families). It is in any case clear that a strong leadership, a culture of excellence and long-term thinking will be required in schools. The children's interest as basis, e-learning and contextual learning (for instance, about one's own neighbourhood) are upcoming concepts. The policy itself is open to a rapid review of its ideas and principles that seem to fail. One of the mind shifts to be made is that from school-centred learning to continuous learning pathways.

At the learning and redesign lab, Rotterdam's educational policy was presented by members of staff Olga Treep, Robert Glerum and Ruud Rakers.

www.rotterdam.nl/childrenszone and www.onderwijsbeleid010.nl/

Tander in Leuven is a (secondary) school that caters for the needs of young people who have difficulty to learn and display behavioural and/or emotional problems. They have often already gone through a rough period in 'mainstream' education or other 'special' schools. Apart from offering education (with general and social education, workshops and workplace learning), Tander also devotes great attention to the well-being of these young people and their social and emotional needs. These needs are attended to by coaches who work on an inclusive basis. Tander teaches its young people self-confidence, social skills and working attitudes, whenever possible in an individualised programme. Their re-integration into education or on the labour market is the purpose and joint responsibility of all educational and welfare partners concerned.

At the learning and redesign lab Tander was presented by coordinator Katrin Timmermans.

www.bo-terbank.be/tander

The first **Sudbury schools** for young people up to the age of 18 were established in Sudbury Valley in Boston (US) some forty years ago. There is also a Sudbury school in Ghent (2010) and one in Amersfoort. The emphasis is on the personal interests of children and young people, the development of autonomous and organic talents and of a sense of responsibility for oneself, for other people and for the social environment. A lot of learning processes take place here unintentionally. Classrooms, curricula and teachers do not exist: the education is self-initiated. Students set their own course and pace and decide for themselves what structure they need and what is important to them. They are involved in each aspect of school policy. A Sudbury school aims to be a reflection of 'the real world' by attracting a variety of people (age, gender, background...).

At the learning and redesign lab the Sudbury schools of Ghent and Amersfoort were presented by Maaïke Eggermont (initiator) and Pim Monquil (student at De Kampanje in Amersfoort).

www.sudbury.be