



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
RESEARCH DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Directorate L - Science, economy and society
The Director

Brussels, 12/06/2007
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HLG on Science Education

Dear Colleague,

In April 2006, Michel Rocard (former French Prime Minister, and MEP) contacted Janez Potocnik the EU Commissioner for science and research to draw attention to a European initiative which he considered as showing enormous potential for increasing young people's interest in science and mathematics.

Mr Rocard's concern, and indeed that of policy makers across Europe, was that the declining interest for certain science studies among young people will stand in the way of the emergence of a truly knowledge-based society both in terms of Europe's need for more scientists and the need to ensure that all young people develop key analytical skills at school that will prepare them for the future - whatever they choose to do.

Within the European Commission both the Directorate Generals for Research and for Education and Culture are working closely together on this issue, and so Janez Potocnik and his Commissioner colleague Ján Figel', who is responsible for education, training culture and youth, invited Mr Rocard to chair a small group of experts to see what action could be taken. Indeed, the group was mandated to address a very specific question: are there examples of effective action, and can they be scaled up and have significant broader impact across Europe.

The work of this group is now accomplished, and it is my pleasure to attach to this letter a copy of their report. It makes a number of recommendations ranging from the need for collective action, how improvement in science teaching can be brought about, and what could be done at all levels: local, national and European. The main message, however, is that we need to revise significantly the way that science is taught in our schools.

It is my hope therefore that this report will act as a catalyst that will stimulate debate and a commitment for real action among policy makers at the highest levels within the European Union.

Yours faithfully,

Jean-Michel Baer