

### EDUCATION IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY DURING THE EIGHTIES

Fewer pupils and students, but tending to stay longer in the education system. During the eighties the number of pupils and students in the Community fell by about 3 million to slightly less than 72 million in 1989/90. However, a gradual decline in numbers throughout the decade masks contrasting trends in the various levels of education. On the one hand, there is a decrease due to a fall in the number of children starting school while, on the other, there is an increase due to a tendency to stay longer in education.

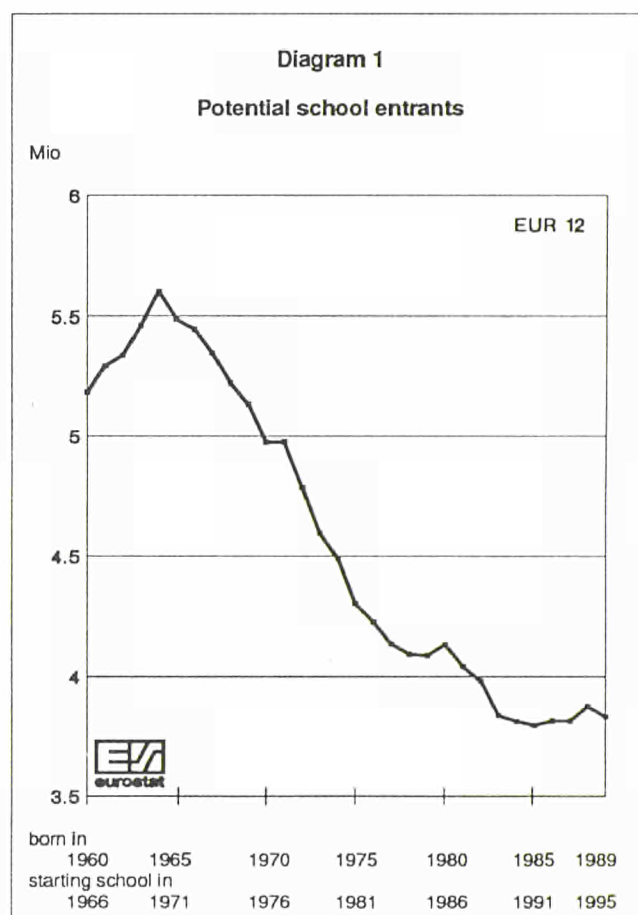
#### School entrants

Diagram 1 shows the number of births in the Community over the last three decades. By assuming a school starting age of six years, it can be seen that the number of potential school entrants fell quite dramatically in the seventies and eighties, but that this trend will level off in the first half of the nineties. At present, there are two contrasting trends in the annual number of births: an increase in the north of the community but a continued decline in the south.

#### Pupils and students by level

The figures for EUR 12 are shown in both table 1 and diagram 2, and for each Member State in table 3.

Primary education (first level) was of course the first to be affected by the decrease in the number of children. After peaking in 1971/72 the number of pupils in primary school education has declined significantly, falling by 15% or slightly less than 4 million pupils during the eighties.



**Table 1**  
Participation in education  
(excluding pre-primary)

EUR 12

	75/76	80/81	81/82	82/83	83/84	84/85	85/86	86/87	87/88	88/89	89/90
	1000										
Population aged 5-24	98597	99382	99989	98271	97606	96655	95747	94664	93357	91976	90731
Pupils and students	65843	66247	65874	65381	64861	64547	64158	63656	63175	63029	63017
Participation rate (%)	67	67	66	67	66	67	67	67	68	69	69
	Index 1980/81=100										
Population aged 5-24	99	100	101	99	98	97	96	95	94	93	91
Pupils and students	99	100	99	99	98	97	97	96	95	95	95
1st level	110	100	97	95	92	90	89	88	87	86	85
2nd level	93	100	100	100	100	99	99	98	97	96	95
3rd level	86	100	103	108	113	117	120	122	126	131	138

Lower secondary education (second level, first stage) peaked later – in 1977/78 – and numbers have declined steadily since. By contrast, the number of pupils in upper secondary education (second level, second stage) increased by 11% between 1980/81 and 1989/90. This is due to the fact that pupils are tending to stay longer in non-compulsory education. The total decline in the number of pupils at the second level was about 1.6 million in the eighties.

The third level has not yet been fully affected by the decline in the number of children. In addition, many more young people, particularly females, are tending to continue in education after completing their compulsory schooling. As a result of these factors, the number of students increased steadily during the decade: a rise of more than 2 million students representing an increase of almost 40%.

Table 3 shows the trend at each level for every Member State. As far as the second and third levels are concerned, Member States can basically be classified into one of three groups.

In the first group – Greece, Spain, Ireland and Portugal – the number of students in higher education increased by more than 50%, while numbers at the second level also increased significantly (more than 10%).

In the second group – Germany and the United Kingdom – the increase at the third level was also large (around 40%), but the number of pupils at the second level fell by more than 10%.

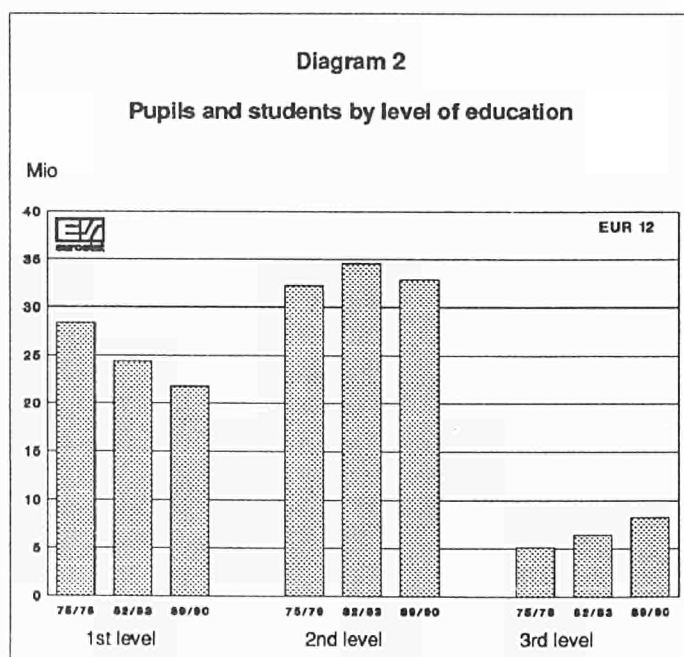
In the third group – Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy and the Netherlands – the increase at the third level was smaller, but still amounted to more than 20%, while the number of pupils at the second level varied less than in the other countries.

## Gender

The number of girls per 100 boys, at pre-primary, first and lower secondary levels, remained constant - around 95 - throughout the entire decade. This reflects the unequal sex ratio at birth. By contrast, the participation of girls in upper secondary and higher education increased significantly more than that of boys (12% against 8% in upper secondary and 49% against 27% in higher education). As a result, the number of girls per 100 boys at these two levels increased accordingly (see diagram 3).

## Foreign students

Table 2 shows figures for foreign students at the third level in 1989/90. In the nine Member States where figures can be compared, 5% of third level students were foreigners. In two Member States



**Table 2**  
**Foreign students in higher education 1989/90**

	TOTAL	B	DK	D	GR	E	F	I	NL	P
Foreign students	303329	23561	5171	97985	1357	10570	131654	20199	9224	3608
% of females	38	40	39	37	36	47	38	34	40	45
<b>Country of origin</b>										
EUR 12	72588	10969	935	23069	78	3390	20622	9437	3751	337
Rest of Europe	26691	1162	1631	16269	45	961	3900	1981	734	8
Africa	95072	7614	86	5900	188	1619	74733	2021	687	2224
North America	14275	603	257	5339	59	1159	5805	552	363	138
South America	12885	645	60	3059	3	2571	4312	326	1036	873
Asia	78108	2480	1398	42652	963	807	21632	5809	2350	17
Oceania	519	15	22	181	15	44	136	29	66	11
Not specified	3191	73	782	1516	6	19	514	44	237	0
<b>Foreigners as a % of total number of students</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>

IRL and UK – the number of foreign students who were not permanent residents in these countries in 1988/89 were 2889 and 63223 respectively. Of these, 1269 and 13088 came from EUR 12.

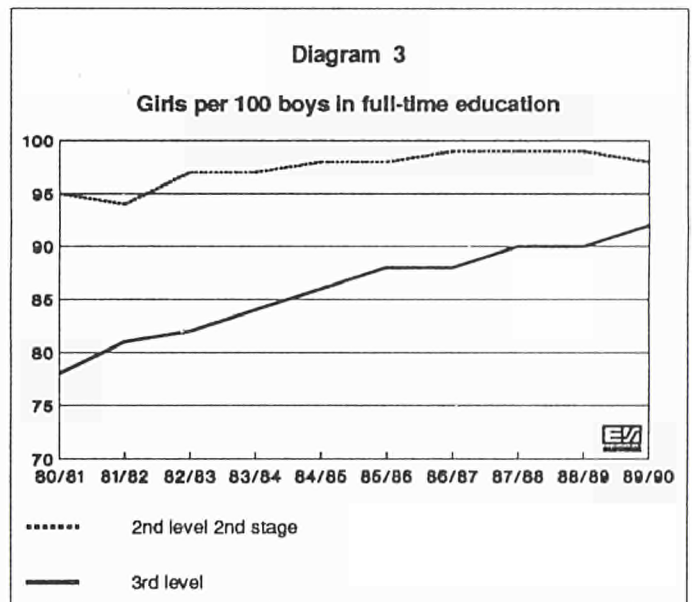
L – not applicable  
B – full-time only  
GR and NL – 1988/89  
F and E – universities only  
Rest of Europe – excludes former U.S.S.R.

– Belgium (10%) and France (12%) – the proportion of foreign students was appreciably higher.

Only 38% of foreign students were women compared with 48% at the third level as a whole.

24% of foreign students came from another Member State in the Community with a further 9% from the rest of Europe. Asia accounted for 26%, Africa 31% and America (North and South) 9% of the total. Europeans accounted for 51% of foreign students in Belgium and Africans made up 57% of foreign students in France.

The figures for Ireland and the United Kingdom are not comparable with those of the other Member States because they collect data on 'foreign' students in a different way (see explanatory notes).



### Explanatory notes

The statistics in this report refer to full-time and part-time education in the ordinary school and university system as defined in the Unesco International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). The various types of national education have been broken down according to the levels defined in ISCED. Briefly the ISCED levels are:

Pre-primary school (ISCED 0). Education prior to the beginning of compulsory schooling.

First level (ISCED 1). Elementary education, compulsory in all cases and lasting five years as a rule.

Second level, 1st stage (ISCED 2). Lasts three years in the majority of cases and is also compulsory

Second level, 2nd stage (ISCED 3). begins around the age of 14 or 15, lasts normally for three years and leads to the standard required for admission to university or other higher education.

Third level (ISCED 5, 6, 7). Comprises universities and all other types of higher education.

In Ireland and the United Kingdom, students are considered to be foreigners if they have permanent residence in another country while, for the other Member States, foreign students are those holding passports from another country.

All figures in this report exclude those in special education outside regular schools.

\* Provisional or estimated figure

: Not available

Table 3

## Number of pupils and students by level of education (full-time and part-time)

1000

	EUR 12	B	DK	D <sup>(1)</sup>	GR	E	F	IRL	I	L	NL <sup>(2)</sup>	P <sup>(2)</sup>	UK <sup>(3)</sup>
<b>Total (including pre-primary)</b>													
1975/76	74528	2510	1026	14378	1842	8354	13553	877	12526	58	3728	1791	13885
1980/81	74804	2420	1103	13971	1908	9507	13680	938	12756	58	3797	1926	12740
1981/82	74380	2416	1103	13791	1946	9689	13633	954	12573	58	3767	1952	12498
1982/83	73903	2410	1100	13537	1938	9793	13625	970	12412	57	3734	2073	12254
1983/84	73399	2428	1086	13213	1986	9937	13690	977	12243	56	3688	2076	12019
1984/85	73404	2437	1073	12866	2023	10025	13723	987	12114	55	3641	2113	12347
1985/86	73008	2442	1063	12539	2044	10154	13773	993	11952	58	3614	2115	12261
1986/87	72461	2396	1055	12356	2056	10221	13770	998	11747	58	3551	2043	12210
1987/88	71846	2392	1040	12103	2050	10175	13833	999	11566	58	3488	1982	12160
1988/89	71658	2384	1026	11967	2045	10075	13917	995	11466	58	3434	2090	12201
1989/90	71768	2386	1013	11959	2016	10058	14032	993	11358	57	3426	2129	12341
Females 89/90	34994	1190	500	5652	974	4871	6931	485	5552	:	1640	1038	6161
<b>1st level</b>													
1975/76	28374	942	481	3903	937	3697	4754	407	4835	29	1453	1211	5725
1980/81	25687	823	435	2784	901	3650	4740	422	4423	25	1333	1240	4911
1981/82	25037	803	432	2602	891	3676	4631	423	4333	24	1270	1263	4689
1982/83	24349	780	432	2452	890	3683	4479	424	4204	23	1202	1306	4474
1983/84	23697	759	427	2366	888	3656	4343	420	4063	22	1140	1288	4325
1984/85	23166	740	415	2306	890	3620	4204	421	3904	22	1095	1275	4274
1985/86	22742	730	403	2272	888	3537	4123	420	3703	22	1110	1238	4296
1986/87	22484	728	392	2288	866	3478	4118	422	3518	22	1097	1234	4321
1987/88	22228	729	380	2324	868	3309	4152	424	3371	23	1093	1186	4369
1988/89	21964	727	363	2388	863	3117	4176	424	3242	24	1086	1140	4414
1989/90	21788	723	350	2476	846	2979	4163	422	3140	24	1082	1096	4487
Females 89/90	10578	355	171	1214	410	1437	2014	207	1526	:	537	512	2195
<b>2nd level</b>													
1975/76	32285	955	385	7775	680	3189	5155	288	4892	20	1465	446	7035
1980/81	34555	997	499	8428	740	3977	5380	323	5337	25	1689	496	6664
1981/82	34636	1005	498	8320	778	4093	5403	331	5331	26	1722	498	6631
1982/83	34572	1012	496	8098	757	4173	5483	340	5352	25	1752	553	6531
1983/84	34395	1039	487	7793	790	4301	5582	345	5357	25	1764	569	6343
1984/85	34374	1059	484	7460	803	4403	5661	351	5372	25	1755	605	6396
1985/86	34226	1072	488	7136	814	4556	5730	354	5396	27	1739	647	6267
1986/87	33832	1039	489	6803	836	4682	5746	357	5396	26	1703	610	6145
1987/88	33383	1037	486	6493	838	4763	5761	357	5372	26	1642	596	6012
1988/89	33179	1027	484	6246	848	4846	5762	355	5338	25	1590	704	5954
1989/90	32929	1020	479	6042	835	4918	5749	356	5279	24	1555	759	5913
Females 89/90	16241	524	236	2903	398	2399	2843	178	2596	:	739	393	3032
<b>3rd level</b>													
1975/76	5186	176	111	1044	117	548	1053	46	977	1	291	89	733
1980/81	6005	217	106	1223	121	698	1176	55	1126	1	364	90	828
1981/82	6201	224	107	1325	125	721	1224	60	1104	1	373	79	858
1982/83	6461	230	111	1405	137	750	1256	64	1099	1	380	99	929
1983/84	6768	239	113	1472	149	810	1304	65	1127	1	386	101	1001
1984/85	7006	245	115	1519	168	856	1332	67	1189	1	390	117	1007
1985/86	7191	248	116	1550	182	934	1357	70	1192	1	406	102	1033
1986/87	7342	250	119	1579	198	977	1366	73	1201	1	399	111	1068
1987/88	7564	254	122	1626	189	1049	1401	77	1236	1	414	109	1086
1988/89	7885	262	127	1687	188	1101	1475	81	1306	1	415	129	1113
1989/90	8299	273	133	1720	194	1169	1584	84	1373	1	438	152	1178
Females 89/90	3956	131	68	698	97	593	838	38	664	:	193	75	561

(1) Territory of the Federal Republic of Germany before 3rd October 1990

German Democratic Republic	80/81	81/82	82/83	83/84	84/85	85/86	86/87	87/88	88/89
Total	3738	3674	3613	3571	3526	3501	3482	3475	3469
Universities	130	131	130	130	130	130	132	133	132

(2) All special education is excluded

(3) Excluding part-time pre-primary education before 1984/85