



Abstract

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Sciences in the classroom, sciences in society

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Have young people fallen out of love with science? For several years, surveys and reports from all countries have been pointing out the lack, soon to become crucial, of young people destined for a career in sciences. This question of boosting the numbers of science and technology students has been listed as one of the priorities of the OECD since 2004 because "the economy depends more and more on complex knowledge and high level cognitive competencies".

But this pessimistic observation has taken a beating from researchers, and sociological analysis is opposed to the idea of a world-wide crisis of sciences.

In this context, the teaching of sciences has enjoyed a serious makeover in the majority of school systems. The part played by initial and in-service training is crucial. Underpinned by a number of complex issues, this crisis situation raises the broader question of the role of the scientist in society.

This issue attempts to take stock of these problems, in the light of recent research work, in France and abroad.

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