

EDUCATION EVOLUTION

NATIONAL REPORT OF ARGENTINA

2004-2008



**Ministerio de
Educación**
Presidencia de la Nación

Ministry of Education

**Argentine Republic,
November 2008**

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1. The Argentine education system facing the challenges of the XXI Century: an overview

Since 2003, Argentina has started to rebuild its institutionalism within a constitutional democratic framework after undergoing one of the worst political, social and economic crisis in its history.

This reconstruction is founded on a State strengthened by popular legitimacy and oriented towards the accomplishment of one of the greatest national goals of the current Century: compensation for social inequity by means of a permanent work of inclusion and creation of real opportunities for access to education, employment, health and housing.

Immerse within the logic of the market and affected by the crisis, we witnessed the increase of inequalities and a steep gap between the conditions of privilege for a few people and the disadvantages for others.

The economic situation affected living conditions levels of millions of Argentines. The social fragmentation and polarization that characterized and still characterizes our society constituted an obstacle to think a common future for all.

Inequality not only was observed in the abrupt increase of poverty and imbalance in the distribution of economic resources but also in the access to cultural goods and the possibilities of integration and citizen participation.

The detriment in life conditions, worsened by the economic crisis of 2001 were a landmark in high unemployment ratios and poor employment conditions. In 2003, around 50% of the Argentine population lived under the line of poverty and, within this percentage, a little more than a half were unable to afford the basic food basket. In the case of youth, figures for 2003 were particularly harsh: 57.3 % of teenagers between 13 and 15 years were poor and 42.7 % were extremely poor. This situation put more pressure to their access to the labor market. Percentages of high school completion showed that: among the families with lower income, only 27.3% of students completed high school, whereas 73.1 % of middle class students completed school education. This difference strengthens the idea that a better allocation of public funds must be assured and equal opportunities for all must be provided for the population. Around 70% of the population between 5 and 18 years came from poor families and in the provinces of the northwest region this figure reached 82 %. Although in 2004, this average dropped to 40.2%, social vulnerability conditions still had a severe impact on the possibilities of young people to access regular education .

The education system had not been excluded from that process of crisis: inequality in education conditions, fragmentation and poor labor and salary conditions of teachers

¹ Indec 2003 -2004.

produced big differences in the education opportunities for girls, boys and young Argentines, increasing education exclusion conditions.

The education reforms under the nineties were carried out within a framework of harsher social polarization and an absent State incapable of integrating and articulating the society as a whole. In the education field, the segmentation of the education system in differentiated circuits was steep, and lower income sectors not only received less schooling years, but also a lower quality education. The process of furthering existing inequalities gave rise to the fragmentation of the education system, by breaking the equality aspect that have always characterized the Argentine education system since its origins. At the same time, there was social concern towards the detriment of the education system.

The fragmentation not only was expressed in the inequalities between social sectors, but also in the variety of situations among jurisdictions, promoted by despair compliance with and diverse modalities of implementation of Federal Education Laws. Among other things, this promoted within the education system the coexistence of different structures according to each jurisdiction and yet within the structures themselves. Likewise, decentralization of education funding provoked an unfair situation among the provinces, in as much as their management and policy-making capacity in education.

The problems that our country faces currently are the result of many past decades, based on authoritarian models, and poorer living conditions of most of the population.

Recovery of the quality of public education for Argentina based on social justice was an essential process that started four years ago and still continues today. Overcoming inequality and fragmentation demanded a strategy of general development in which education is no longer a sector policy but a key variable due to its simultaneous impact in the consolidation of national identity, sustainable development and production of the country and citizen performance levels that consolidate the democratic system.

Since 2004, under this scenario, a process of legal reform of the Argentine education system has started. Taking into account the steep fragmentation and absence of institutionalism able to govern the actions of all participants, it was essential to promote and enact a set of laws in order to achieve and, in accordance with the efforts of the society as a whole, to reach a quality education for all.

A new set of laws was enacted to define the objectives and guidelines that must be followed, the provision of fair funding for education work and to establish participation mechanisms that give relevance and legitimacy to political decisions. In this context, continuance on this path demands that actions to be taken be directed towards better learning outcomes in students, particularly in those who come from poor households.

So forth, it has been decided to give special relevance to the role of education, learning, and

scientific research, in order to achieve individual and social growth both necessary for the development of the country. Today, different social sectors are aware that there is no other way of building a just society without a system of quality education for all.

Currently, we can highlight that social and education issues are substantially different compared to those of that critical moment. Nevertheless, consolidation of changes made towards inclusive education, honoring agreements with the community and improvement of the quality of education, are still the key objectives of the national education policy.

The desire to build a just society remains the main goal. We know that education alone is not enough to guarantee inclusion but we are sure that without education, those goals will be hard to achieve.

The first part of this report presents all transformations and general characteristics of the Argentine education system; the second part, discusses Inclusive Education policy as it has been developed in the past four years.

1.1. Main reforms and innovations

1.1.a. New education laws in Argentina

Strongly convinced that in order to overcome that critical moment and with a clear intention of displaying the new course of education for the country through State policy, between the years 2004 and 2006 the following laws were enacted and promulgated:

- Teacher Salary Payment Guarantee and 180 class days (N° 25.864) – January 8, 2004
- National Fund for Teacher Incentive Law (N° 25.919) – August 31, 2004
- Technical Professional Education Law (N° 26.058) – September 8, 2005
- Education Financing Law (N° 26.075) – January 9, 2006
- Reproductive Health Education Law (N° 26.150) – October 23, 2006
- National Education Law (N° 26.206) – December 28, 2006

In order to reach social agreement, they had previously been subjected to consultation and debate not only among education authorities of the Nation and jurisdictions, but also among representatives of the education community, business environment, unions and social organizations.

Thus, for example, the process of consultation and Exchange on National Education Law (LEN) took six months, and all social actors were asked to participate in it. A document for debate, drafted by the Ministry of Education (*ME*) was submitted for consideration of more than seven hundred thousand teachers during special sessions carried out to that effect in

every education institution. Citizens were asked to answer a survey which was distributed with national newspapers. Sessions for exchange were organized at municipal, union, political, neighborhoods and academic centers, and there were parents and students forums where people gave their opinions and presented their proposals.

This methodology of multi-sectoral debate, unprecedented for the Argentine experience, contributed not only to legitimate the laws proposed, but also to set State policies on education.

We highlight two of these laws which constitute comprehensive expressions to guarantee quality education for all². They are:

- National Education Law
- Education Financing Law

National Education Law

The LEN constitutes a milestone in the process of recovery of education to build a just society. The need to reposition the State which, as a result of neoliberal reforms undertaken during the nineties, had lost its central role by setting aside many of its functions delegating them to the hands of the market, allowed changes within the scope of the State role in the field of education. In this way, the LEN broadens the responsibilities of the State ratifying its obligation as guarantor of the right to permanent, integral and quality education for all inhabitants of the Nation. Its contents are clearly oriented to solve the problems of fragmentation and inequality which affected the education system and towards the challenges of a society in which the universal access to quality education is a basic requirement for complete social integration.

The new LEN, associated to debate and legitimacy processes that back it, shows, on one hand, that Argentina has stopped applying emergency policies, recovering its capability to think for the medium and long term and, on the other hand, that the society has responded widely by exercising debate democratically.

Argentina was in need of a new legal framework which contained the basis and principles common to the Nation as a whole, and on which our school system rests upon.

Likewise, the LEN establishes that education is a public good, so forth, a main and fundamental obligation of the State. It must provide for integral, permanent and quality education for all inhabitants of the Nation, guaranteeing equal, free and equity in the exercise of this right, with the participation of social organizations and families.

A unified structure, compulsory basic education until the end of the high school level, a universal education offer for 4 year old boys and girls, active role of the national State in key

² Dates correspond to promulgation dates of each law.

aspects such as content policies and learning outcomes, teacher training, evaluation and intervention upon emergency situations, among others, are crucial aspects of school organization which can only be solved within the scope of a legal framework.

To comply with the universal right to education, the LEN looks for the provision of quality education for all with equal opportunities and possibilities, without regional imbalances or social inequity, providing integral and specific support to the students that come from less benefited social layers of the community.

In addition, it proposes substantial transformations in as much as the structure of the education system, the objective to advance towards organization, cohesion and articulation of all levels and modalities of education throughout the country. Its content provides for the resolution of fragmentation problems and inequality that affected the education system since the implementation of the structure set under the former Law of Federal Education in force between 1993 and 2006³ (See Chart 1, “Structure of compulsory basic education. Comparison between LFE and LEN”)

It guarantees free training and integral updating throughout teaching training centers by the creation of the National Institute of Teachers’ Training (INFOD). And lastly, ratifying a Decree Law of year 2005, it is important to highlight the creation of *Canal Encuentro*, the first TV channel of the *ME*, aimed at developing a public educational television of quality to make use and fosters what new communication means may offer for education, in a massive way and for the entire population of the country.

Education Financing Law

For years, Argentina could barely surpass the limit of four percent of investment in education in relation to the Gross Domestic Product. This situation restricted the possibility of carrying out public policies for the sector. The unavailability or lack of resources determined, up to an extent, the capability of different administrations to foster and keep the different actions throughout the last decades.

Although in the country there existed a law that stipulated a higher level of investment in education, this had never been achieved due to weak institutions and the lack of criteria to sustain such funding. So, as regards investment in education, it was necessary to guarantee a mechanism that provided resources beyond the term of any administration and that, simultaneously, defined the contribution and responsibility of the different levels of government. In order to position the education as one of the central axis of economic, social and civic

³ In 2006, it was possible to identify three simultaneous structures for primary and secondary levels: one consisted of 7 yrs of primary education and 5 yrs of secondary education; other combined 9 yrs EGB and 3 yrs of polimodal education -with primary extended to EGB3-; another of 9 yrs of EGB and 3 yrs of polimodal, but with secondary extended to EGB 3.

development, it was necessary to guarantee the increase of resources destined to education; such process started in 2003 and has increased, year after year, to guarantee governance of the education system and financing policies.

Once a favorable economic context was consolidated, it became clear this was the right moment to institutionalize the national effort, which some provinces have already been doing guaranteeing education for the long term. So forth, the Education Financing Law⁴ was enacted. Up to that moment, the country allocated, on average, between 3.5% and 4% of the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) to education, in spite of Federal Education Law, enacted in 1993, which established an investment in education of 6% of the GDP, which has never been accomplished. The reason for not reaching said level of investment was weak institutions, in addition to lack of criteria to sustain financing.

Taking into account this precedent, the new Law established that the State consolidated budget will increase gradually until reaching, in the year 2010, 6% of the GDP, overcoming significantly what has been allocated to education.

In this way, this law sets a precise scope of resources for the sector, a division of commitments expressly agreed to between the national and provincial governments, the institutional instruments to guarantee its fulfillment and priority objectives for the application of said allocation.

With this measure, for the first time in the history of our country, it is guaranteed that the national government, provincial governments, and the City of Buenos Aires increase the investment in education and improve the efficiency in the use of resources aimed at: guaranteeing equal learning opportunities, support policies for the improvement in the quality of education, promotion of strategies and mechanisms for allocating resources destined to guarantee inclusion and school permanence of boys, girls and youth from poor households, universal high school level of education and eradication of illiteracy.

Three concurrent aspects are defined as mechanisms to reach the budgetary provision of 6% of GDP: a) division of accountability for financing at each level of government: b) the temporary scope of resources annual goals; c) the financing source for these goals. Also, the law establishes mechanisms of bilateral articulation between the State and the provinces.

By the end of 2006, achievement of this goal consolidated investment in education has overcome the barrier of 5% in respect of the GDP, by legitimate means and not merely algebraic means. Thus, for year 2010, it is expected an increase around 53.000 million of Argentine pesos, that is, 30.000 million of Argentine pesos more than the investment carried out until the enactment of the law. By the end of 2007, the investment by *ME* in education was four times higher in relation to spending in 2003.

⁴ Enacted December 21, 2005 and promulgated January 9, 2006.

Evolution of consolidated spending in education, technology and science

1991-2007 Period

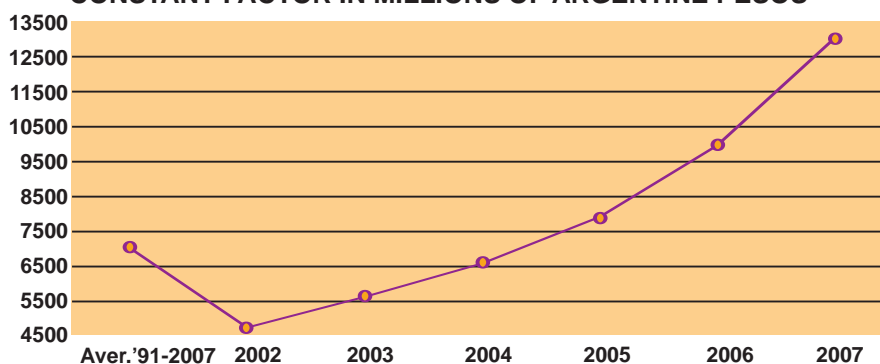
CONSTANT FACTOR IN MILLIONS OF ARGENTINE PESOS (average for first semester 2007)

YEAR	EDUCATION SPENDING TOTAL	NATIONAL SPENDING (2)	PROVINCIAL EDUCATION SPENDING (2)	EDUCATION SPENDING EVOLUTION TOTAL	EDUCATION SPENDING/ PUBLIC SPENDING TOTAL	EDUCATION SPENDING GDP
	IN MILLIONS OF \$	IN MILLIONS OF \$	IN MILLIONS OF \$		IN%	IN%
	AVE. '91-'01	25.888,22	6.950,40	18.937	505,23	12,43
2002	20.665,98	4.706,07	15.959,90	389,3	14,1	4,1
2003	20.026,58	5.599,52	14.427,06	377,3	13,1	3,9
2004	23.027,54	6.548,82	16.478,72	433,8	13,7	4,0
2005	29.111,26	7.842,88	21.268,38	548,4	14,5	4,6
2006	35.773,90	9.963,43	25.810,47	673,9	15,7	5,1
2007 (3)	41.176,21	12.993,91	28.182,30	775,7	n/d	5,3

Notes: (1) Provincial Education spending does not include MECyT allocations; (2) MECyT spending includes allocations for Science and Technology but spending in Health (Program 26, art 6); (3) National Center for Education, Science and Technology, provincial jurisdictions forecasts according to Law 26.075. Source MECyT based of budgetary information.

National spending in education, technology and science

CONSTANT FACTOR IN MILLIONS OF ARGENTINE PESOS



In addition, the law created the National Program of Teachers' Salary Compensation aimed at contributing to the compensation for inequalities in teachers' initial salary in those provinces which an evaluation proves that is not possible to overcome them. In this way, a legal framework set a policy of salary improvement which started in 2003 by doubling budget resources destined to the Program of Teachers' Salary Compensation, and setting, by 2008, a minimum salary wage of 1.290 Argentine pesos which has been agreed to with teachers unions.

**Max and Min average salary wage of the country
Teacher (basic primary level/EGB, begginer)**

Evolution 2000-2007

	DEC-00	DEC-01	DEC-02	DEC-03	DEC-04	DEC-05	DEC-06	DEC-07
Min Salary	\$ 305,55	\$ 280,55	\$ 270,54	\$ 300,65	\$ 371,06	\$ 700,00	\$ 840,00	\$ 1.040,00
Max Salary	\$ 398,82	\$ 773,82	\$ 763,82	\$ 881,07	\$ 1.116,81	\$ 1.416,38	\$ 1.660,79	\$ 1.858,25
Aver. Salary	\$ 387,59	\$ 362,70	\$ 352,91	\$ 413,03	\$ 562,73	\$ 759,83	\$ 893,55	\$ 1.096,12
Relat max / min	2,61	2,76	2,82	2,83	3,01	2,02	1,98	1,79
Relat max / aver	2,06	2,13	2,16	2,13	1,98	1,86	1,86	1,70

At the time the Education Financing Law was enacted, State contributions represented around 28% of the education consolidated spending of the country. That percentage is used to fund state universities (excluding the scientific-technological system) and specific programs for basic education (scholarships, infrastructure, equipment, teacher training, etc). The other 72% was contributed by the provinces for financing non university education. Nowadays, the Education Financing Law establishes a contribution by the central government that it shall contribute 40% of the increase in education spending as a proportion of the GDP.

It is important to highlight, that in order to support the mechanisms that allow the application of budget resources according to the objectives set forth in Article 2 of the law, as a set of goals that the education should achieve in 2010, and to facilitate bilateral articulation between the State and the provinces in making use of such resources, in 2008 within the scope of the *ME*, it was created the Undersecretariat for Education Planning to manage the agreements and basic actions in order to comply with said law.

Technical Professional Education

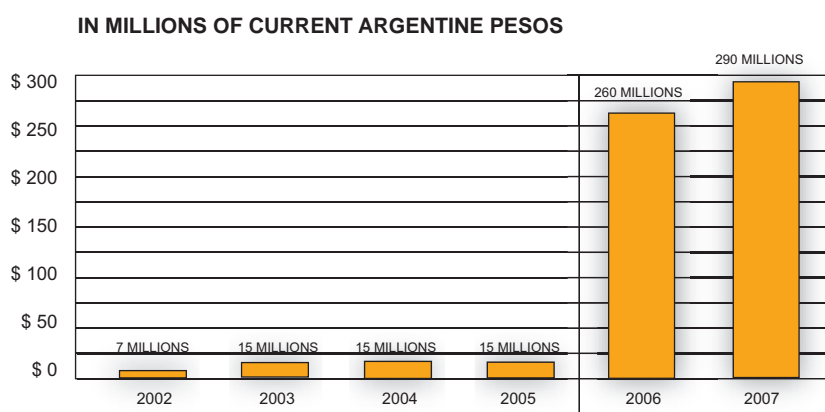
This law was enacted and promulgated in 2005, purposed to give technical professional education structure a national and federal, integral, hierarchical and harmonious policy in its consolidation. This modality is conceived as one of the fundamental strategies for inclusion, social equity, scientific and technical development, sustained economic growth and productivity of national economy, given its particular relation to the scientific and technology world, work and production.

The law establishes that Technical Professional Education has specific purposes such as

training, updating and developing the skills of persons to work with the objective to benefit their insertion in the productive field. It provides the scope for technical professional education as part of the integral and permanent training of the persons from a systemic approach that links technical education-at high school and university levels of education- and professional training, for the permanent broadening of the training scope of all inhabitants in relation to science and technology, work and economic growth.

It establishes the National Fund for Technical Education and Professional Training in order to guarantee the improvement of institutions by means of financing actions related to equal opportunities, equipment and facilities conditioning and teacher training, among others. To this extent, an annual fund no less than 0.2% of the total current income set forth in the annual consolidated budget for the public sector shall be allocated. Since the enactment of the law, the budget for technical education increased from 15 to 290 million of Argentine pesos.

Evolution of the budget allocated for technical education



Teacher Salary Payment Guarantee and 180 class days Law

Strongly willing to guarantee the principles of equality and equity in public education, the Teacher salary Payment Guarantee and 180 class days Law—enacted and promulgated between 2003 and 2004- establishes and unifies a minimum annual class period for every level of education and all jurisdictions in the country, and payment of teachers’ salaries. Thus, in case of impossibility of salary payment by the jurisdiction authorities, they may seek aid from the national government.

In addition to this law, the National Fund for Teachers Incentive Law, enacted and promulgated in 2004, will continue the payment of teachers’ incentive for 5 years, in order to

reach a minimum salary for all teachers of the country and gradually increase the class days period. Since 2003, funds for payment of teachers' incentive increased from 330 to more than 2000 million of Argentine pesos by the end of 2008.

Reproductive Health Education Law

This law –enacted and promulgated in 2006- establishes that all students have the right to integral Reproductive Health Education, in both public and private schools of the country. In order to comply with the law the National Program for Integral Reproductive Health Education was created, and it proposes, among its objectives, the incorporation of precise, trustworthy and updated learning on reproductive health education, promotion of responsible attitudes towards sexuality, prevention of general and sex health related problems and provide for equal treatment and opportunities for boys and girls.

Parallel to this set of laws explained so far, which have a direct impact in the structures and functions of the education system, the Argentine parliament enacted another important law for the society: Law for the Integral Protection of the Rights of the boys, girls and teenagers⁵. This law, regarded as one of the most advanced in this field, falls under the scope of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and establishes that State entities, the family and society must provide for boys, girls and youth total development of their personality to the maximum of their potentials, and enjoyment of a joyful life.

1.1.b. Organization, structure and management of the education system

Governance and management

In accordance with the Len, the *ME*, among its main functions, sets education policies and strategies, plans, carries out, supervises and evaluates policies, programs and education outcomes; provides technical and finance assistance and strengthens education planning and management capabilities of jurisdictional governments; coordinates and manage international cooperation and promotes integration, especially among countries of the MERCOSUR.

In the education system, constitutional criteria of national and federal unity in the governance and management are privileged. The Federal Council of Education (CFE) is responsible for integrating the national education policy. Thus, it established that governance and management of the national education system is a shared and agreed responsibility by the Executive, through the *ME* and the executive powers of the jurisdictions.

At the same time, the governments of the provinces and of the City of Buenos Aires must,

⁵ Law for Integral Protection of the Rights of the boys, girls and teenagers N° 26.061, enacted September 28, 2005 and promulgated October 21, 2005.

among others, guarantee the right to education within their territories; plan, organize, manage and finance the education system in their jurisdiction, attending their particular social, economic and cultural characteristics and approving the curricula for the different levels and modalities of education.

As previously highlighted, the CFE constitutes the environment for the agreement of education policies for the country. It is a permanent, inter-jurisdictional body headed by the Minister of Education of the nation and integrated by the authorities responsible for the education management in each jurisdiction and three (3) representatives from the Council of Universities. Resolutions from the CFE are compulsory upon the Board's approval.

The new LEN introduces the creation of different Consultation Councils that will back the work of the CFE. Opinions and proposals from these Consultation Councils are public. The Councils are: Council for Education Policies, Economic and Social Council, and Curriculum Update Council.

Structure: levels and modalities of education

At the same time that LEN extends to 13 years of age compulsory education, it establishes a unified structure for primary and secondary education. This structure encompasses 4 (four) levels viewed each one of them as integral education units: Pre-Primary Education (5 years), Primary Education (6 or 7 years), Secondary Education (5 or 6 years) and Higher Education (see Chart I); and 8 modalities: Technical Professional Education, Artistic Education, Special Education, Rural Education, Bilingual Intercultural Education, Education in Contexts of Deprivation of Liberty, and Domicile or in Hospital Education.

Since Len was enacted, within a period no longer than 6 years, the provinces and the City of Buenos Aires shall choose between the two possible structures for primary and secondary levels of education: a) a 6 (six) years structure for primary level and 6 (six) years for secondary level, or b) a 7 (seven) years structure for primary level and 5 (five) years for secondary level. The new structure shall be implemented in every jurisdiction before year 2012.

Chart I:
Structure of compulsory basic education.
Comparison between LFE and LEN

Federal Law of Education (LFE) (from 1993 to 2006)	National Law of Education (LEN) (since 2006 onwards)	
	Six (6) years Primary and six (6) years Secondary	Seven (7) years Primary and five (5) years Secondary
Initial level	Initial Education	
1 st year Basic General Edu 1	1 st grade Primary Education	
2 nd year Basic General Edu 1	2 nd grade Primary Education	
3 rd year Basic General Edu 1	3 rd grade Primary Education	
4 th year Basic General Edu 2	4 th grade Primary Education	
5 th year Basic General Edu 2	5 th grade Primary Education	
6 th year Basic General Edu 2	6 th grade Primary Education	
7 th year Basic General Edu 3	1 st year Secondary Education	7 th grade Primary Education
8 th year Basic General Edu 3	2 nd year Secondary Education	1 st year Secondary Education
9 th year Basic General Edu 3	3 rd year Secondary Education	2 nd year Secondary Education
1 st year Polimodal	4 th year Secondary Education	3 rd year Secondary Education
2 nd year Polimodal	5 th year Secondary Education	4 th year Secondary Education
3 rd year Polimodal	6 th year Secondary Education	5 th year Secondary Education
4 th year Polimodal Technical Professional Stage	7 th year Secondary Education Technical	6 th year Secondary Education Technical

Taking into account the transformations introduced by the LEN, the *ME*, together with the education governments of the 24 Argentine jurisdictions, started to promote a set of political, education and financing decisions in order to achieve the following goals:

- Strengthening management of the education system to provide the institutional conditions for the implementation of the new law.
- Improvement of schooling experience of boys, girls and youth, taking into account

teaching proposals and institutional models that guarantee the conditions to access, permanence and completion with quality education.

- Promotion of institutional work towards collective responsibility for learning and the role of evaluation in the processes of teaching improvement.

These objectives constitute the working axis that are common and transversal to all levels and modalities of the education system and at the same time they cover specific and relevant needs of each one.

Education levels

■ Pre-primary education

Prim-primary education encompasses boys and girls from 45 (forty five) days old to 5 (five) years old, education being compulsory only for 5 year old children. As highlighted before, the National Education Law establishes the commitment from the State and the jurisdictions to universalize education services for 4 (four) year old boys and girls giving priority to access and completion among the poorest sectors of the society.

Its main objectives are promotion of learning and development of boys and girls as active right holders participants in the process of their integral formation as members of a family and the community⁶. The organization encompasses: day-care institutions for boys and girls from 45 (forty five) days to 2 (two) years old and kindergarten for boys and girls from 3 (three) years to 5 (five) years of age. Also, multi-age or plural rooms in rural or urban contexts or game rooms are included.

Strengthening and expansion of the initial level of education constitute a priority in the education policy. In this sense, the *ME* gives priority to two issues that are supplementary and necessary to comply with the right to quality, inclusive and equal education for all. One of them is related to the need to broaden the education offer and enrolment for the level and the other is related to the optimization of education experiences of boys and girls since the improvement in the quality of teaching and learning processes⁷.

Particularly, in relation to the first issue mentioned before, the *ME* has the goal to broaden the strategies destined to inclusive education of boys and girls from vulnerable sectors and rural areas as well, guaranteeing compulsory education for 5 year olds and universal education for 4 year olds. To this extent, among other actions, pedagogy strategies are being formulated together with in service training and equipment distribution for school libraries and games as well.

The new LEN ratifies the commitment and obligation to expand initial education and

⁶ An exhaustive description of the objectives of this level can be found in Article 20, Chapter II, title II of the LEN (see Annex).

⁷ Both issues are explained below under Part 2 of this report.

universal education services guaranteeing access and completion within the poorest sectors. To this extent, the Directorate of Initial Education of the *ME* seeks to foster actions for the agreement of priority policies for inter-ministries and inter-levels articulation, in as much as planning facilities coverage for each one of the provinces.

Currently, enrolment coverage is 1.354.632 boys and girls, which represents 94% of the whole country. The goal to achieve 100% in compulsory five year old education, commits the *ME* to make the necessary efforts to help those jurisdictions under this average to reach that percentage. The rest of the provinces with that average or over it, have the challenge to reach 100% coverage of compulsory education for five year old children gradually in the next three years.

As regards the second issue, the *ME* has the goal to strengthen institutional management for leading teams, creating institutional and collective accountability towards the outcomes, and pedagogy strengthening of teaching proposals. For this, initial literacy, games and articulation strategies are being developed in order to improve the transition process between levels. The year 2008 has been declared the year for the Teaching of Sciences, and focused was placed on those education proposals that promote the teaching of sciences at the initial level. Likewise, the revision of school timetables and the development of priority core learning topics, and in some cases, the elaboration of jurisdictional curricula constitute key instruments for improving the quality offer at this level of the education.

■ Primary Education

Primary Education is oriented to the formation of boys and girls from 6 (six) years old, is compulsory and its main goal is to promote integral, basic and common education. Among its main objectives, this level purpose is to guarantee all boys and girls access to a set of basic learning, that enables them to participate fully and accordingly to their age in family, school and community life, in as much as offering the necessary conditions for and integral childhood development to its maximum extent⁸.

The education policy of this level is oriented to the development of inclusive actions for all boys and girls in the education system, allowing guaranteeing total compliance of their right to an education of quality and work on what is taught in all schools of the country.

Guided by these fundamental principles, defined proposals are being carried out to strengthen teaching, improve learning conditions, and strengthen education management and pedagogy at schools, with special focus on those schools attended by boys and girls in a situation of social vulnerability.

Within the framework of intra-reorganization of the *ME*, guidelines that have been developed are now under the scope of the Primary Education Directorate, in order to unify and articulate

⁸ Primary Education objectives are stated in Articles 26 and 27 of the LEN (Chapter II, Title II).

education policy for this level within the national and jurisdictional scopes. This entity continues working on the development and furthering of already existing actions at this level, by proposing specific future objectives.

Consequently, a Federal Roundtable of Principals of Primary schools was called in all jurisdictions of the country, and it has been agreed to launch a set of priority actions, that contribute to the improvement of intra performance of the system and quality with equal opportunities for all.

In this way and in accordance with the national policy, institutional self-evaluation processes of the education units were fostered to contribute to the improvement of quality of education. To this extent, a policy of national inclusive education was designed, and it was agreed on by the State and provincial jurisdictions, in order to carry out defined strategies and actions that will lead the construction of social justice and the exercise of rights, among them, the right to education. Under this concept of promotion of social justice in the field of education, it was proposed the distribution of symbolic goods (cultural, social and educational) and strengthening of material conditions, within the scope of the Integral Program for Education Equality (PIIE) and Pedagogy Strengthening of Schools under the Integral Program for Education Equality (FOPIIE)⁹.

In addition, for Primary Education other actions are articulated towards inclusion of all boys and girls into schools. These refer to specific proposals for rural areas, for Argentina-Brazil border schools, and recreation and tourism within the context of education as well.

Continuing with the achievement of goals fostered and agreed to from this level, it is worth to mention the work on pedagogy strengthening, focused on initial literacy for the first years and teaching of natural sciences and math for the last years of the level. Likewise, within the scope of the Program of Scientific Literacy (PAC) there is an instance in which professors from the IFD provide assistance to teachers on these topics.

In addition, Priority Core Learning (NAP) were identified and elaborated for the first cycle of education, in different areas. The conclusion of federal agreements backs the definition of priority contents in the areas of Physical Education, Arts, Foreign Languages, Ethics and Civil Education, and Technological Education (for the second cycle of the level).

On the other hand, a systematization and analysis of the outcomes of the Evaluation of National Operatives (ONE) are being carried out. With this, redefinition of information is taken into account as a starting point in the elaboration of education proposals.

As regards the Extension of School Timetable, we are working on the evaluation of implementation tests carried out so far, in view to redefining the criteria for planning its implementation.

⁹ Both programs are detailed under subchapter 2.2b

I Secondary Education

Secondary Education encompasses teenagers and youth who have completed Primary Education and its main purpose is to enable them to exercise their citizenship rights, work and continue education. In this sense, the LEN¹⁰ proposes that this level should provide for an ethical formation allowing students to live as persons aware of their rights and obligations, that practice pluralism, cooperation and solidarity, have respect for human rights and reject any kind of discrimination.

As previously highlighted, one of the most ambitious goals under the National Education Law is to extend compulsory education to secondary level. Achieving this goal constitutes a mandate for the State, the society as a whole and the citizens in particular. A commitment as such with such wide objectives poses the challenge to spot problems, define procedures and strategies, and establish goals for the short, medium and long term that requires national agreement for their achievement.

It is important to notice that the principal aspect of this level of education is its heterogeneous curricula and institutional structures that coexist in the different jurisdictions. So, this new stage presents an historic opportunity to democratize and renew the education-organizational model of this segment of education, and an important challenge in the development of strategies for the inclusion of all youth as well. In this sense, we are working on a document with the new guidelines for the new high school, and its preliminary draft has been submitted for consultation between the technical-political teams of the different jurisdictions. In addition, federal roundtables of discussion on the curricula organization of high schools have been called.

The LEN establishes that secondary education is divided in two cycles: a Basic Cycle, common for all orientations, and Vocational Cycle, diversified according to the areas of knowledge, social and work environment.

Currently, the *ME* sets forth that secondary education act as a link between the social function of school and its core task in the development of teaching processes to guarantee the right to education as a fundamental right, creating instances for debate on other fundamental rights. To achieve this, it promotes at high schools role playing situations where students are the main characters thus they develop critical thinking for citizen participation and their integration to cultural and productive life as well. Also, it is promoted, at the same time, the link between high schools and the world of production and work, through practices in companies, public agencies, cultural or civil society organizations, that enable students to learn the use of technology and provide an adequate experience in relation to their vocational education. In addition, among the priority actions related to this aspect, high school completion plans are being developed for students who

¹⁰ Secondary education objective are detailed under Article 32, Chapter VI, Title II of the LEN.

have to pass some classes, and also mechanisms to take care of issues related to completion, retaking, drop out and overage, and absenteeism are being created as well.

To think the school in terms of a democratic institution requires understanding school as a matter that involves all including all education participants and not in terms of individuals or isolated actions. It is promoted the creation or strengthening of those spaces that allow us to look at each other in a different way within the school context: in decision making, institutional and curricula planning, definition of communication and expression spaces, establishing of living rules, all of which it is aimed at facilitating the permanence of students at school and generating learning of quality.

From the new perspective proposed by LEN for this level, inclusion is conceived as an aspect of quality, which implies to consider it as the result of the application of a genuine policy of human rights. So, from the State different strategies are sought to relate teenagers and youth with the high school, no longer from national programs that must be integrated to the school and that respond to specific groups of the population, but as a set of unified and integral strategies from the Directorate of Secondary Education¹¹.

Among them, we can distinguish: alternatives to support schooling experience of youth, such as tutors and class coordinators; extra school activities outside the scope of the school timetable for all students and youth of the community, oriented to the development of activities related with arts, physical education and recreation, among others, and inclusion of teenagers out of school within informal school contexts as a way to reinsert them into the school system again. In addition, taking into account the central responsibility that teachers have in the achievements obtained by schools towards a real inclusive education of quality, and with view to constitute more solid teacher teams in each institution, we shall look for the promotion of mechanisms to concentrate class hours or teaching positions in secondary education.

Particularly, in rural areas 1000 basic cycles of secondary education have been launched, and tutor teachers and professors have been appointed in the different curricula areas. Also, teachers were trained to work at multiple-levels in the basic cycle of secondary education.

Between years 2004 and 2007, proposals were developed for improvement in the conditions of students arriving at school and to benefit their schooling experience in relation to permanence at school and completion with quality of this level.

■ Higher Education

The LEN establishes that Higher Education encompasses universities and university institutions, among others, public or private, and Higher Education institutes. The objectives of Higher Education are to form scientists, professionals and technicians, characterized by

¹¹ Strategies are detailed in Chapter 2 of this report.

their solid education background and their commitment with society and to prepare them for teaching at all levels and modalities within the education system.

The university system is subject to the Higher Education Law and currently there is a debate in process for its reformulation.

Within this framework, it is expected that the university may decide on its role to contribute to the sustainable development of the Nation. This requires a deep and continued reflection that enables the implementation of youth formation in a world where integration has a complex and challenging dimension.

With the purpose that the universities back and develop cultural identities and promote democratic values through networks of different geographical regions, in 2008 took place the 5 edition of the Program for Promotion of the Argentine University (PPUA). Through this initiative, projects of national, provincial, and private university institutions are funded. This program consists of two lines of work. On one hand, the “Strengthening of Interuniversities Network III” giving continuity to two previous meetings by which 170 international academic Networks have been established. The main goal is to promote the creation and strengthening of institutional networks between Argentina and foreign universities by allowing teachers, researchers and students to travel within an International Framework, with special focus on cooperation and integration with Latin America and the Caribbean.

On the other hand, “University Missions to Abroad II”, keeps up with the first meeting in 2007 and invites to submit associative projects, to present the academic offer and scientific and cultural developments of the Argentine university system, that may allow the signing of agreements, attract foreign students and develop projects and programs together with foreign institutions.

The XXI century university must show its capacity to cover the needs and development goals of the society in order to contribute to the elaboration of integral models of economic growth and comparative, sustainable, equitable and democratic development. These goals must contribute to eradicate poverty, intolerance, violence, illiteracy, hunger, detriment to the environment and diseases through actions carried out in an inter and transdisciplinary way.

As regards Informal Higher Education, it will be discussed in the corresponding chapter under National Institute of Training for Education Practitioners (INFOD) and National Institute of Technical Education (INET)

Modalities

Modalities of the education system are those organizational and/or curricula options of basic education, within one or more levels of education, that may answer specific requirements of formation and attend particularities of permanent or temporary characteristics, either personal

and/or contextual, with the purpose to guarantee equality in the right to education and comply with legal, technical and education requirements of the different levels of education.

■ Technical Professional Education

Professional Technical Education (ETP) is a modality of the education system, coordinated and carried out by the National Institute of Professional Technical Education (INET). This modality is subjected to Professional Technical Education Law¹². The field of Professional Technical Education in the country articulates and integrates diverse types of institutions and education for work and in places of work. It encompasses IPEP Institutions and Institutions of Professional Training¹³.

One of the main objectives of this modality is to strengthen, in terms of quality and importance, professional-technical training to contribute in the processes of social and family inclusion and facilitate the incorporation of young people to the labour market and continuing education of adults throughout their active work life, and answer to new demands and requirements that come from technological innovation, economic growth and reactivation of the productive systems.

It is highly relevant to point that during the 90s, technical education almost disappeared. This was the conception of a country that expected sustained and balanced growth, but unfortunately it never happened. The essence of that conception is that, in a society and economy based on information and knowledge, technical education oriented to teaching an occupation has less importance: what really matters is achievement of a good general education. That was the logic that, as an alternative, offered professional-technical projects, but framed in an integral education.

In this context, in recent years, the decision to foster technical education again favored the enactment of the Technical Professional Education Law, which allows increasing the resources invested in it. The current conception gives and recognizes the strategic characteristic in terms of social and economic development to this type of education. In this way, the *ME* carries out actions of coordination and promotion of national and federal programs oriented to strengthen technological, technical education and professional training, articulated with the different levels and cycles of the national education system. Likewise, it implements strategies and actions of cooperation between different entities, institutions and organizations (governmental and non governmental), searching for agreement to policies, guidelines and development of the education offer.

Along this line, it is promoted entailment and articulation of the areas of technological,

¹² The scope of this law is detailed under subchapter 1.1a

¹³ The first ones have the purpose to form junior and senior technicians for specific areas of work and introduce students to professionalization, at the same time allowing them to continue learning throughout life. The second ones have the purpose to train, update and develop persons' skills for work, regardless of their initial education situation.

technical and professional education with sectors of employment and production at local, regional and interregional levels. Also, mechanisms of international cooperation and actions related to different processes of education integration are being carried out; in particular, those related to the countries that belong to the MERCOSUR.

Under the frame of inter-sectoral work carried out from the INET, in the last years efforts have been gathered to strengthen the system of technical professional education, purposed to benefit inclusive education, social and labor strategies.

Among the actions carried out to that extent, there is the construction of spaces for inter-sectoral agreement and consensus, such as the National Council of Education, Work and Production, made up by representatives of the *ME*, Ministry of Work, Employment and Social Security, Ministry of Economy and Production and the CFE, Chambers of businessmen, work unions, technician professional entities, among others. This consultation and proposal making agency is aimed to give counsel to the Minister of Education in different aspects such as those related to the collaboration of productive sectors and social actors on technical professional education; in as much as linking technical professional education to the labor market.

In terms of integration of the formal education system, this modality has worked especially in the homologation and validation of national diplomas, at secondary and university levels, in the development of families and professional profiles and training offers; in as much as strengthening institutions of the ETP, through the funding of their improvement projects.

As regards education for work and social integration, different strategies of cooperation and join action are implemented with the Ministries of Work, Economy and Social Development; and special cooperation programs with the INTI¹⁴ and the modalities of Education in Contexts of Deprivation of Liberty and Permanent Education for Youth and Adults as well.

At the same time, and to promote processes for the improvement of the quality of training institutions and their programs, proposals for initial teachers training and improvement of teaching and learning of science and technology have been developed through actions for continuing teacher training in technological areas, production of education resources, and publications in different contents and basic disciplines (math, physics, chemistry, biology).

■ Artistic Education

The quality of education, as a right of all, is conceived as an integral training, which establishes that it is necessary to pay particular attention to the development of artistic education, understood not in terms of artists training, but as the possibility to have access to learn and

¹⁴ National Institute of Industrial Technology

appreciate different expressions of art as one of the maximum expressions of human creativity. This new concept falls within the scope of the LEN, and it establishes the modality of Artistic Education at all levels and modalities of education, constituting an orientation at Secondary Level and is also taught at Higher Education Institutes. Artistic Education seeks to foster and develop the sensitivity and creative capacity of each person, within a frame of valuation and protection of the national and cultural, material and symbolic heritage of the different communities that make up the Nation.

Actions under the modality of Artistic Education are organized through the National Coordination of Artistic Education, created in 2008. They give response to current education and social needs and requirements, taking into account the ways of designing present learning, strongly mingled by audiovisual discourses and contemporary artistic production, especially of popular origin, in the Latin-American context.

What follows are the goals, among others, to be achieved: build an identity in Artistic Education in the national system of education; produce statistics data¹⁵ and curricula guidelines for all levels of education.

Promotion of art and culture tightly linked to teaching and education, a key issue over the last years, has undergone different working lines. Among them, in 2006, it was created the Arts, Culture and Teaching Unit, as part of a cultural education policy destined to revitalize the links between arts and education, provide new teaching scopes and education tools for all teachers (particularly those involved in the artistic area), in as much as promoting participation of students and the community as a whole.

With the purpose of encouraging production and exchange of artistic expressions within the scope of education and taking actions for strengthening inclusive processes and exploration of local identities, actions were taken since its creation. It was developed an instance of itinerary art, which is a place for training and meeting between teachers, with workshops in different languages and artistic disciplines (such as contemporary dance, films and documentaries, photography, comics and arts history). Artistic education in music was strengthened, with stages of training based on specific workshops of this language for Primary, Secondary and Higher Education teachers and there were specific itinerary schools in journalism, communications and new technologies for teachers of high schools; scene arts; and itinerary school of art for the initial level.

■ Special EducationI

This is the modality of the education system destined to guarantee the right to education for

¹⁵ It is important to notice that information related to artistic education in the country are vague and disperse. So it is difficult to precise how many artistic education institutions of formal or specialized education or artistic education places under the compulsory education system exist in the country.

persons with either temporary or permanent disabilities. Special Education is subjected to the principle of inclusive education, seeking to integrate students with disabilities at all levels and modalities.

Since 2003, with the purpose of broadening and improving education offer and inclusion of boys, girls and youth with disabilities, teaching proposals for special schools and implementation strategies for the integration to basic education in Initial and Primary Education have been reviewed. 32 new school facilities have been built, programs for early education with innovative teaching proposals for this modality have been implemented and computers equipment for blind students have been upgraded at Initial and Primary Education. Currently the *ME* seeks to: improve schooling experience of students with disabilities and develop the means for a network between special schools, secondary schools, professional training and adults schools to build a teaching context that benefits institutional development and incorporates new curricula; generate research on school practices for this population and implement rules on evaluation, accreditation and certification of students with disabilities in common schools and special schools as well.

■ Permanent Education for Young and Adults

This modality is oriented to guarantee literacy and compliance with the compulsory requirement for those who have not completed school at an early age stated by law, and to give the possibility to continue education throughout their lives.

The curricula and institutional organization of the Permanent Education for Young and Adults provides for basic education that enables the acquisition of knowledge and the development of capabilities of expression, communication and interpersonal relations; promotes the ability to participate in the social, cultural, political and economic life, and exercise effectively their citizen rights; improve their professional training and/or acquire some training that facilitates their insertion in the labour market; incorporate to its approach and basic contents gender parity and cultural diversity; promote the inclusion of older adults and persons with temporary or permanent disabilities; design a module curricula structure based on flexibility and open criteria; issue partial certifications and give credit for learning obtained through labor experience; develop actions for in presence and/or distance education, particularly in rural or isolated areas. The *ME* designed two proposals: the National Program of Literacy for Young and Adults “*Encuentro*” and the Plan for Completion of Primary and Secondary Education (FinES)¹⁶.

■ Rural Education

This modality is designed to guarantee compliance with compulsory education through means

¹⁶ Both programs are detailed in Part 2 of this report.

adapted to the needs and particularities of the population that live in rural areas.

In Argentina, 13 % of Primary school students and 8% of the secondary basic cycle belong to rural areas. Rural Schools are a place of reference for the communities, to which they belong to, being in most of the cases the only public institution within the area.

Teachers from these schools do not have the opportunity to participate in seminars with other teachers since geographic characteristics and long distances that surround them make that difficult. Only few alternatives specifically contemplated the rural condition in the initial teachers training, continue training and curricula development initiatives.

Frequently, children enrol later in school or interrupt their education due to an insufficient education offer for the Initial Level, among other aspects, particular living conditions of their families and long distances, or their incorporation to temporary jobs. These situations also have an impact on a frequent retaking level of education tendency, with consequent higher rates of overage and the serious difficulties to stay in school. An important number of students are not able to reach the basic cycle of Secondary Education.

In this context, from this modality the main goals are that boys and girls attend Initial and Primary Levels at their community or nearby schools, improving their schooling experience. It is important to note that, between 2004 and 2007, rural education proposals gradually are no longer being considered from compensatory programs perspective and provincial ministries of education started to incorporate the Area of Rural Education to their government structures, thus articulating, in a transversal way, definitions for the different levels of the education system. Within this framework, the Program for Improvement of Rural Education (PROMER), constituted an initial integral survey of the schools in this modality that translated into the investment of 20 million of Argentine pesos for improvement of infrastructure and books for initial and primary level classrooms. In addition, 4000 basic cycles of secondary education have been fostered.

To benefit inclusion of boys, girls and youth of this population, in 2006 scholarships were granted to students that attending 4, 5 or 6 grades in isolated rural schools, were in a condition of overage and were able to prove their need of a scholarship to complete their education. Also, scholarships were granted to students who having completed primary school in rural environments and who have not started basic secondary education to go back to school and complete their education.

■ Intercultural Bilingual Education

In terms of inclusive education, this modality is recognized for the first time by national education laws. The same guarantees the constitutional right of indigenous communities to receive education that contributes to preserve and strengthen their cultural behavior, language,

cosmovision and ethnic identity, participating actively in a multicultural world and improving their quality of life. Intercultural Bilingual Education (EIB) promotes a mutual enriching dialogue of knowledge and values between indigenous communities and populations which are ethnically, linguistically and culturally different, and promotes the recognition and respect of such differences.

Likewise, the LEN sets that to benefit development of the EIB, the State shall be responsible for: creating the mechanisms of permanent participation of the representatives of indigenous communities in as much as institutional instances for planning and development of teaching and learning processes and defining strategies of education policies; promoting research on the social, cultural and linguistic reality of indigenous communities, that allows the design of curricula proposals, relevant education materials and teaching management means, and benefit the design of models and education practices of their own including their values, knowledge, language and other social and cultural aspects.

Currently, it was created the coordination of this modality and it has the challenge to establish and consolidate EIB in each provincial education system and in the City of Buenos Aires. Thus, it is proposed the definition of common curricula contents that promote the respect of multicultural values and knowledge of original cultures in all schools of the country, by the promotion of value and understanding of cultural diversity as a positive attribute of our society.

II Education in Contexts of Deprivation of Liberty

This modality of the education system is destined to guarantee the right to education of all persons in a context of deprivation of liberty, by promoting their integral education and complete development. The exercise of this right does not allow any sort of limitation or discrimination related to a deprivation of liberty situation, and it is effectively communicated to all persons with their freedom restricted, since the moment they arrive at the institution.

The objectives of this modality are: to guarantee completion of education for all persons deprived of liberty inside or outside institutions, whenever conditions allow to do so, at all levels of the national education system, and promote the development of proposals aimed at stimulating artistic creativity and the participation in different cultural expressions, such as physical education activities and sports that contribute to their social inclusion. In order to accomplish these goals, flexible and quality criteria will be followed to guarantee equivalent outcomes of those of the basic education.

Likewise, it is established that jurisdictional education systems shall offer initial level education for boys and girls from 45 (forty five) days of age to 4 (four) years old, born and/or raised within these contexts, through day-care centers or kindergartens, in as much as other education and recreation activities inside and outside penitentiary units.

Since 2003, different actions were carried out to assist the population deprived of liberty. Among these, it is possible to mention: training actions for 1.190 recipients –technical teams, heads and teachers of 15 jurisdictions, related to the penitentiary environment or locked institutions that host teenagers who have conflicts with the law-; provision of technological equipment for schools in federal and provincial prisons of 13 jurisdictions; more than 185.000 text books for completion of Adults EGB and equipment for libraries in prison schools which included 100.000 literary books were delivered.

The main actions in development for the coordination of this modality are the development of proposals to support education for work; creation of centre for activities for the youth; provision of books and education materials; formation of provincial trainer groups and technical assistance for the implementation of emerging training projects to reach all school principals and teachers of schools in contexts of deprivation of liberty; redefinition of the librarian role to promote reading and technical and bibliographical update; development of actions that imply joint actions between teachers of the education system and security agents in relation to human rights; development of Postgraduate Degrees in Higher Specialization in Education within Contexts of Deprivation of Liberty; participation in the RedLECE network (Latin American Network of Education in Contexts of Deprivation of Liberty) as member of the Executive Committee together with Brazil and Honduras.

I Domicile and in Hospital Education

Domicile and in Hospital Education is the modality of the education system for Initial, Primary and Secondary Education levels, aimed at guaranteeing the right to education of students that, due to health reasons, are deprived from the possibility to regularly attend classes for periods of 30 (thirty) days or longer. The objective of this modality is to guarantee equal opportunities to students, allowing them to continue with their studies and reinsertion to the common system, whenever that is possible.

This modality was set forth under the scope of the LEN and currently strategies to be implemented throughout the country are under elaboration.

1.1.c. Curricula policies, education content and teaching and learning strategies

The curricular policies established by the *ME* for each level and modality of the education system are defined based on the conviction that education shall provide the necessary opportunities to develop and strengthen the integral education of persons throughout life and promote in each student the capability to define his/her life project, based on the principles of freedom, peace, solidarity, equality, respect of diversity, justice, responsibility and common

well being. Taking all this into account and with the purpose to guarantee an education of quality, cohesion and national integrity, the LEN establishes that the *ME* in accordance with the CFE, is responsible for: the definition of basic curricula strategies and contents and priority core learning topics in every level and years of compulsory education, establishing mechanisms for total or partial periodic renewal of said contents.

Within the framework of necessary update of school contents in all levels of the education system, priority was given to actions developed by the *ME* as regards introduction of new contents in fundamental areas for citizen education of new generations. Among these, it is worth mentioning reproductive health education, scientific literacy and human rights. Along this line, reading, writing and teaching sciences are also considered priorities.

In addition, the LEN establishes that there should be part of the basic contents in every jurisdiction a regional Latin-American perspective, particularly of the MERCOSUR region, under a framework for constructing an open national identity respectful of diversity; the Islas Malvinas, Georgias del Sur and Sandwich del Sur issue; and the exercise and construction of collective memory on historical and political processes that broke up the constitutional order and installed State terrorism; awareness of the rights of boys, girls and youth, set forth in the Convention of the rights of the Child, in as much as learning cultural diversity of indigenous communities and their rights, and of those contents and guidelines that contribute to build relations based on equality, solidarity and respect between genders.

Priority Core Learning

Thinking unity in an unequal system of education requires guaranteeing equivalent conditions of teaching, recognizing diversity of learning and work to reduce the gaps. To this respect, Priority Core Learning (NAP) constitutes a set of core topics that must be included in the education for all boys, girls and youth. The goal is to generate equal possibilities of access to learning that contribute to their complete social integration and support principles that benefit common well being, social living, shared work and respect of differences.

The starting point for approval of NAP was of a great concern due to existent inequalities inside the education system, in a scenario extremely heterogeneous and fragmented throughout the country¹⁷. In this context, arises the need to carry out policies to advance in the conformation of a common platform; recovery of the central role of education and promotion of learning, towards construction of citizenship. Thus, it was conceived that priority core learning contributes to guarantee the basis for unity of the national education system and

¹⁷ Reference is made to different curricula designs elaborated by the provinces since Common Basic Contents (CBC) were set forth under the LFE in 1993. The LFE contemplated the elaboration of curricula by the jurisdictions in different levels and modalities. This process contemplated three levels of achievement: a national level (CBC); jurisdictional level (particular guidelines by the provinces); and institutional level (each institution designed its own curricula).

making sure that all inhabitants achieve equivalent skills, capabilities and knowledge independently of their social and territorial location.

So in 2004, under the CFE, education authorities from all jurisdictions agreed to approve the NAP. The agreement did not imply a disregard of definitions achieved so far by each jurisdiction in their respective curricula. On the contrary, the collective identification of the NAP places each one of them, based on their local particularities, in a position in which attention should be drawn to that knowledge considered as common “between” jurisdictions and unavoidable from a global perspective.

In a first stage, NAP was identified for Initial, Primary and first stage of Secondary levels, related to the areas of Social Sciences, Natural Science, Spanish language and Math. It was elaborated by political representatives, technicians, supervisor and teachers of the Argentine provinces and the City of Buenos Aires and technical teams of the *ME*.

Support material for teachers

Based on the Nap, the *ME* elaborated the series of books *Cuadernos para el aula*, a collection of two books for Initial Education, 28 books for Primary Education and 20 books for Secondary Education. These support materials for teachers and professors try to be a toolbox that guides and supports everyday class work, facilitating the links between the NAP and practice. They contain proposals for teaching in classrooms these core topics in the different fields of learning. Also we advanced in the development of proposals for teaching Ethics and Civil Education and Artistic Education as well.

In addition, the series “*Juntos, familias con la escuela*” was elaborated, and this material started to be handed over annually, as of 2005, to the families for each grade at schools –from the Initial level to tenth grade- in different schools of the country. This is a collection that abridges the concerns of families and the commitment and responsibility of the State towards the education of children, represented by the work of all teachers of the country.

Teaching Sciences

Through active policies and a budget increase, the national government has shown clear signs in support of the activities of science and technology as a key factor for the development of the country. So by the end of 2007, the budget allocated for the Secretariat of Science and Technology under the scope of the *ME*, has risen 144%. Likewise, the programs for technological upgrading and the salaries of researchers of the National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET) have risen in a sustained way.

Other priority in the policies related to this field is the improvement in learning in the fields of Natural Science and Math. In relation to this priority, in 2007 the *ME* convened a committee

of specialists to elaborate a report with recommendations¹⁸ for the short, medium, and long term for the improvement of teaching and learning in these fields. This committee elaborated a set of recommendations related to the following: teacher training, contents and teaching methods, equipment and teaching resources, articulation between schools and scientific and technological institutions, dissemination of the sciences, financing and legal framework.

On the other hand, in 2008 the national government created the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovative Production (MINCYT). The creation of this Ministry answered the need to establish policies and coordinate actions towards the capacity of the country to provide solutions for priority problems of different sectors and social problems, in as much as contributing to increase the competitiveness of the productive sector, based on a new pattern of production based on goods and services with hi tech.

The *ME*, together with the MINCYT, has designed a set of activities for the improvement of teaching and learning processes for students within this field. To this respect, a specific Plan for the improvement of teaching of sciences was designed that proposes to continue with current guidelines, the strengthening of priority actions and incorporation of new ones. Among these, it is worth mentioning: “Scientists go to School” that contemplates the work of teachers in the classroom supported by scientists and researchers; scientific literacy proposals; Scientific Fairs, Olympics and Camps; publication of scientific topics through the television channel “*Encuentro*”.

Other joint action between the *ME* and the MINCYT consists of a plan of scholarships aimed at the promotion of university degrees related to new technologies and engineering. 6.700 scholarships have been granted to young students from low income households wishing to continue their studies at national universities in Electronic Engineering, Telecommunications Engineering, Computing Engineering, Information Systems Engineering, Computing, Analysis of Systems, Systems, and Computing Sciences. This action is framed within the goal of the national government to support development through the promotion of exports diversification and an increase in the added value of production. So forth, the scholarship program tries to expand the capacity of Argentina to generate productive innovation in areas based on knowledge and development of specialized human capital.

Promotion of Reading

Reading as a cultural practice has been one of the priorities of the *ME*. Actually, there is social consensus and a generalized concern over the practice of reading, in many cases due to a diagnosis that indicates low performance of students at different levels of the education

¹⁸ A report “Mejorar la enseñanza de las Ciencias y la Matemática: una prioridad nacional. Informe y recomendaciones de la Comisión nacional para el Mejoramiento de la Enseñanza de las Ciencias Naturales y la Matemática” was drafted.

system, by the decrease in the use of textbooks at schools, in as much as the transformation in the cultural practices outside school.

Since 2003, through the National Reading Plan, reading plans have been created and strengthened throughout all jurisdictions of the country. Provincial trainers and workshops teams carried out training actions for teachers, librarians and different social actors of the community and developed tasks for the promotion of reading directly for students and the community in general. Also, we have worked in the creation of Promotion of Reading Centers in each jurisdiction as spaces of reference of each plan, open to teachers and other actors of the society. Within the framework of the National Plan, diverse publications were produced and many books purchases to complete school libraries of the different levels of education and of the jurisdictional reading plans have been done.

During the period 2004-2007, 15 million textbooks have been purchased and distributed among students of primary and secondary schools. By the end of 2008, 9000 bookcases with 100 books each will be delivered to secondary schools, and 55.000 bookcases with 42 books each, named "*Escritores en las escuelas*", which is a literary collection of Argentine writers for children and youth will be delivered among schools.

In addition, within the Framework of the National Reading campaign, the *ME* is committed to facilitate different reading materials to a larger quantity of inhabitants of the country. Thus, since 2003, it was started the distribution of short stories and poems, as an invitation to keep reading, at soccer stadiums, hospitals, school dinning rooms, bus and train stations terminals, summer locations, popular festivals and during celebrations of different national days. Since 2003, there were produced and distributed: a) more than 18.000.000 copies in non conventional locations; b) 4.500.000 copies of anthology books, short stories for teenagers, books for program coordinators, short stories for children, etc. published through one of the most important newspaper of the country, during 2006 and 2007, 10.000.000 of literary journals "*Pasión por leer*" were distributed. More than 250 writers throughout the country participated in the campaigns and more than 350 books were published. In total, 32.500.000 copies were produced and distributed as reading material.

National Library of Teachers

The National Library of teachers is a historic institution, founded with the purpose of giving all teachers of the country information and knowledge. Since 2003 it has developed innovative actions to further its mission and broaden its scope. Currently, the Library provides its services throughout 24 jurisdictional centers and through the National Teaching Libraries Network located at provincial and popular libraries of the country.

During this period, each one of the kernels of the Education Information System were

furnished with technology and updated bibliography; a federal network of consultation specialized services for teachers was constituted and consolidated in libraries of provincial Ministries of Education and in public and/or popular community libraries in suburban areas and the interior of the country that wish to integrate the network; more than 250.000 copies were distributed to 5.806 institutions and libraries throughout the country; many and important especial collections were incorporated to the Library and the registry of bibliographical material from 1516-1810 were adapted, and those from the personal Library of Leopoldo Lugones and the Levene Archive.

In addition, during the current year, it was introduced the initiative “Institutional Survey of Argentine school libraries 2008/2009”. This is the first Web Poll carried out by the Ministry of Education and its aim is to give account of the characteristics and functioning of School Libraries in every school of the education system.

The Library has approximately 300.000 books, the online catalogue has 1.500.000 hits daily, through its web page, and more than 150.000 users, among teachers, students and researchers, visit the reading room. Likewise, 10.000 books are borrowed monthly.

Education for memory

Since 2003, Argentina, in response to the social mandate as a whole, has adopted concurrent decisions with the preservation of the four pillars in the fight against impunity: memory, truth, justice and compensation.

So forth, one of the key concerns of the education policies during the period that encompasses this present report, has been to contribute to learning the recent history of our country and generate spaces for debate and reflection about our society, democracy, equality, justice and human rights.

Within this framework, an intense work of collective memory construction was developed, promoting learning and reflection on the recent history of our country by new generations. Thus, a series of publications were prepared to work on this topic in primary, secondary and training courses for teachers’ classrooms throughout the country.

The book *Treinta ejercicios de memoria* reunited thirty writers, poets, essayists, historians, journalists and artists of different generations and from different places of the country was published. 36.500 copies were distributed at high schools and teachers training institutions of all the country and 350.000 posters with graphic material and work proposals for boys and girls in the classrooms of primary and secondary schools were also distributed. A CD “Schools for the Identity” was developed, and it offers a set of materials- videotapes, testimonies and teaching proposals-to approach the topics of identity and human rights, framed under the recent history of Argentina. Together with the Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo a Collection of

teaching materials has been developed and it is called “The Grandmothers tell us”, for teachers and students of primary schools to work on identity, memory and human rights in the classrooms. It is made up of a series of nine stories, a videotape with theatrical representations, and a notebook with teaching proposals. Seminar and work meetings were carried out with teachers and students from training institutions that gathered 4.250 students and teachers of all the country. 6.615 specialized bookcases on education, human rights and memory (10 books each) have been distributed among secondary schools and training institutions of the country

Coordination of Programs for the Construction of Citizenship at School

Since 2008, the Coordination of Programs for the Construction of Citizenship at School was created to promote the consolidation of an institutional culture that strengthen democratic practices in the education system, and by which conflicts are approached in a peaceful way. Generation and strengthening of the processes of democratization of links and school practices compromises the schooling experience as a whole.

Through this coordination, it is sought an integral approach that contemplates different topics or aspects involved in the problematic, compromising and strengthening the capacity of action of the group of institutional actors, through different perspectives that are expressed in the Programs that function in the *ME*. These are:

- National Program for the Rights of Childhood and Adolescence
- National Program of School Mediation
- Argentine Observatory of Violence at Schools
- National Program of School Life

Their objectives are to strengthen the responsibility and authority of adults towards boys, girls and youth; promote the consolidation of a non violent culture at schools; to watch over the rights of boys, girls and youth; facilitate the transition from a disciplinary model to a model focused on democratic living; and sensitize and train the education community about this topic.

In order to do this, it was proposed to unify the conceptual and methodological approach and articulate actions between the four programs that integrate the Coordination and to train and/or strengthen each province into one Unique Technical Team responsible for the implementation of different programs.

1.1. d. Learning Outcomes

As previously highlighted, currently the main challenge of the education policy is to achieve an education of quality for all. Indicators, such as national and international evaluation, point out that learning outcomes are not satisfactory.

The analysis of the outcomes show that, on the one hand, in Argentina, behind a bad average

performance, lays a huge inequality related to the life conditions of the families and, on the other, that in both evaluations outcomes are from those students currently attending the last stage of high school, that is, students who have been through the education system in the last ten or twelve years through all the crisis period.

National tests, within the scope of the National Directorate of Information and Quality Evaluation of Education (DINIECE), are taken in third and six grades of primary school, and in third and fifth year of high school. It is interesting to appreciate improvements in the outcomes in third and sixth grade. The group that has better scores in these two stages is larger than in previous periods, and that in higher grades of high school. This allows us to have a relative optimistic view, since it shows an improvement in the material conditions of living of the population, together with some education offer conditions, which is giving better outcomes. Nevertheless, the education policy is focused on improvement of the quality. It is understood that provision of material supplies for learning are a necessary factor but not enough to such effect, since having adequate and equipped facilities, in as much as more class hours and textbooks does not automatically translate into changes in the outcomes. The decisive factor for the improvement of material supplies and better learning is the teacher. This opens an important and wide range of topics that may be grouped under three categories: working conditions (which include but exceed salaries), school environment, and the characteristics of training teachers may aspire to.

In addition, a new approach is being developed from the *ME*. This approach understands the teacher work within the scope of the scholar institution. Consequently, initial training and training in service of teachers have to be governed by collective professionalism of team work. This is encompassed in the launching of the Project of Institutional Self Evaluation for all schools in the country. The same is aimed at favoring reflection of the teacher team itself and of scholar institutions principals that may relate their practices to the outcomes obtained.

Starting up the process of self evaluation of schools has the purpose to reverse the negative trend that shows the outcomes of the tests of quality evaluation, under the National Education Law that establishes the implementation of continue and periodic evaluation policies of the education system and develop processes of institutional self evaluation, as an instrument for improving the quality of education.

1.1. e. The teaching job

One of the core strategies of education policies implemented in the last years was to arrange hierarchically the job of teachers. The possibility to build a fairer system, that guarantees all boys, girls, youth and adults access to cultural goods requires to give value to the job teachers and professors do everyday. Policies related to the work of teachers are conceived from an

integral perspective that includes actions towards improvement of material conditions of living¹⁹ and opportunities to access cultural production as well. Thus, the efforts in the improvement of the salary and job situation were carried out along with actions for repositioning training as a fundamental right of teachers, and at the same time, as an obligation of the national State.

Under this frame, the LEN creates the INFOD. Its existence grants a strategic key role and a specific institutional framework for the development and strengthening of teacher training policies.

National Institute for Teacher Training

The creation of the National Institute for Teacher Training (INFOD), promoted by the *ME* under national agreement, represents a huge advance towards the articulation of the efforts by the nation and provinces to develop State policies for teacher training. The agreement reached reflects a hierarchically arrangement, articulation and dynamics of teacher training to improve the education system, which is strengthened by the presence of favorable context conditions that allow a progressive approach of the structural problems, taking care of a reality that appears with steep inequalities and demands that cannot be satisfied.

The relevance of this decision shows the commitment to further actions carried out so far, in order to consolidate a different, powerful and dynamic institutionalism, able to redesign, in the medium and long term scenarios, organization processes, integration, articulation, strengthening and improvement of the training system, its institutions and links.

It is worth to mention that since 2004 until the creation of the INFOD, teacher training was under the scope of the National Directorate of Curricula Management and Teacher Training. So it was promoted a training by which teachers took a position in education problems, reviewing critically the daily work at schools and the perception of teaching as an intellectual task of key relevance in the present time. At the same time, there was a search for the generation of spaces and guaranteeing the conditions necessary for the teachers to get hold of the practical and academic tools to carry out their job.

Three priority points of intervention were defined by the creation of the INFOD:

- ***Institutional Development:*** work strategies have been designed and implemented towards redefinition of identity and unity of teacher training, providing consensus and conditions for its organization, planning, strengthening and improvement.
- ***Curricular Development:*** oriented to the integration and improvement of study plans and curricula management, renewal of teacher training, teaching and learning tools as well.
- ***Professional Development:*** teacher training in service, articulated with its practices and contexts of work taking into account heterogeneous experiences and teaching and learning problems that arise from diverse labor contexts.

¹⁹ This point is developed under the heading New Laws for Education in Argentina: Teacher Salary Guarantee Law and National Fund for Teacher Incentive Law.

In a process of collective construction between the different actors in the field of teacher training in the country- in which, among others, teacher and management teams, and union representatives took part- in 2007 the “National Plan for Teacher Training (2007-2010)” was created. Considering this Plan as a management tool, currently the INFOD is developing a set of guidelines for continue training and professional development of teachers, regarded as permanent activities and articulated with real practice of teachers; to answer for the needs of teachers and specific contexts of their performance.

The Plan points that in Argentina the main problems in the field of teacher training²⁰ are related to: fragmentation and low impact of continue training offer and professional development; the need for training to improve institutional management and the need of support teacher practices at initial training institutions.

In order to reverse these problems, a set of strategies to modify this situation are proposed. It is proposed the development of coordinated offers for continue teacher training, that guarantee a better degree of professionalism and taking care of demands of the education system, including diversified and pedagogy of impact modalities at schools.

Also, it is proposed as a strategy the development of training offer for institutional management and teaching renewal in training courses for education practitioners, guaranteeing innovations and institutional networks. In addition, new opportunities of professional development are being created for professors at institutions, through new teaching modalities and renewal of teaching and learning strategies and evaluation of professional teachers’ capacities, and it is proposed the development of work teams integrated with institutions as the appropriated environments for training and learning.

It is important to highlight that during the last years specific programs of postgraduate degrees have been developed for professors of Higher Teacher Training Institutes (ISFD), for professional update and strengthening actions have been initiated for a group of institutes of initial training, launched by the national administration. These actions require broader scopes that have an impact on the work teams of institutions, overcoming individual credentials.

Among the current actions, it is worth mentioning the program “Choosing Teaching” launched in 2003, as an incentive to choose teaching as a profession. This program targets teaching students at high school level and constitutes an action towards the improvement of teacher training and as an incentive policy to choose teaching as a profession.

Currently, it is being carried out in 132 institutions of teacher training in the country, and four groups of scholars have been incorporated and between 2004 and 2007 1500 annual scholarships were granted.

²⁰ In the country, continue teacher training offer expanded since 1996 with the Federal Network of Continue Teacher Training, which issues and registers training certifications by the Registry of Federal Projects, Evaluation and Certification.

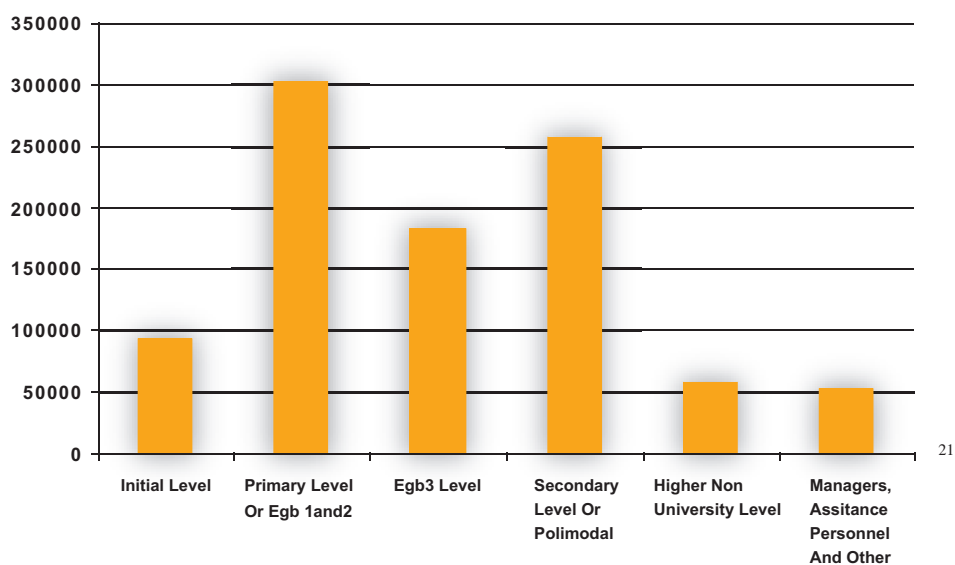
National Census of Teachers

With the purpose of producing accurate information on the strategic aspects of the education system, the National Directorate of Information and Quality Evaluation of Education (DINIECE), between October and November 2004 conducted the National Census of Teachers. It is the first time that in the country a census, not a poll, was conducted and it encompassed teachers' population.

This task was conducted throughout the country and its purpose was to gather relevant information about teachers working within the education system-setting aside university level-and it was carried out in every public and private institution of the country. This census constitutes one of the privileged sources of information when analyzing the performance of the national education system and designing, monitoring and evaluating State policies for this sector. This census provides information about the persons working within the education system and their insertion into it; reveals the exact number of teachers in the country or in each political administrative jurisdiction and how many teachers work in each type of education (either public or private), at which education level, education function, etc.

The main results of this Census showed that, for 2004, there was a total of 825.250 teachers, out of 759.284 worked within basic education.

Teachers in service discriminated by teaching level of education, Census 2004



Source: National Census of teachers 2004

²¹ Census 2004.

Similarly to the rest of the World, teaching in Argentina is an activity mainly performed by women: eight out of ten teachers are women. The majority of female teachers is found at the Initial Level (94%); and the minority of female teachers is found at secondary level (70%). This is so in as much as public and private schools.

Teachers for each level of education by sex

Sex	Initial Level	Primary Level	Secondary Level
Women	59.191	196.892	165.845
Men	3.506	26.880	76.350
Total	62.697	223.772	242.195

Source: National Census of Teachers 2004

The average age of teachers in 2004 was approximately 41 years old. Teachers and professors working at Initial Level were the youngest, and those working at Secondary Level were older in average. In addition, today it can be seen an “ageing” process of teachers at all levels of education. In comparison with the previous census, the average age of teacher grew older between 3 and 4 years.

Another particular aspect of relevance is the number of schools at which teachers work. For the year 2004, more than 75% of teachers and professors of Initial and primary levels worked in only one school, whereas at Secondary level less than half (45%) were under that situation.

Number of schools at which teachers work by level of education.

Total of the country. Year 2004

Number of schools	Initial	Primary	Secondary
1	78.3	74.9	45.8
2	15.9	18.0	27.6
3	3.5	4.2	14.7
4 and over	2.3	2.9	11.8
General total	100.0	100.0	100.0

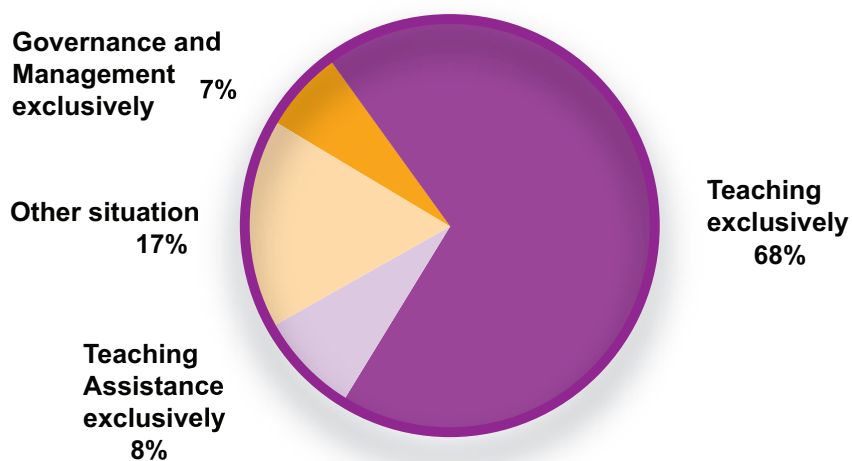
Source: National Census of Teachers 2004

The wearing out that implies working as teacher in different schools is a factor that directly impacts on the conditions of work of the teachers and on the quality over the tasks they perform. So those who have to work in more than one school are expected to have more difficulties to participate in the education community, and carry out the follow up of particular situations of the students too.

Another aspect that stands out is the distribution of teachers according to their function in education. Practically, 7 out of 10 teachers were only teaching that year. But, only 7% were in charge of management activities exclusively and other 8% assisted teaching. This is how the distribution of responsibilities is characterized within the education system.

Teachers by education function performed.

Total country. Year 2004.

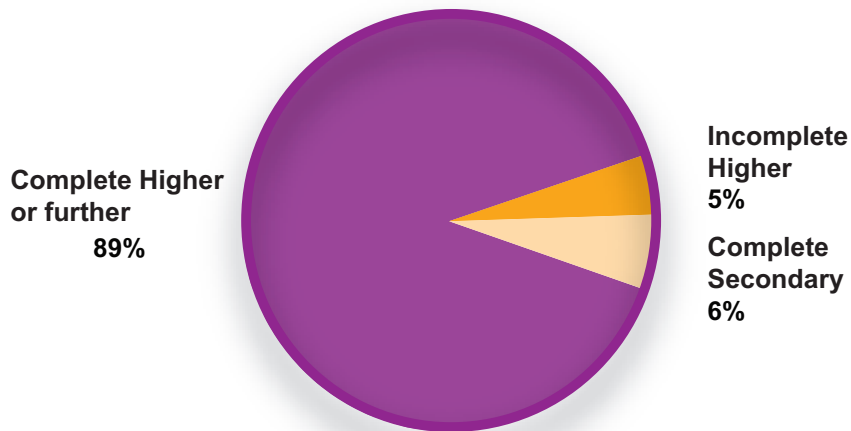


Source: National Census of Teachers 2004

As regards general levels of teacher training throughout the country, almost 90% of teachers devoted to basic education and who were working, had achieved higher education or further education.

Teachers working in basic education by highest level of education achieved.

Total country, year 2004.

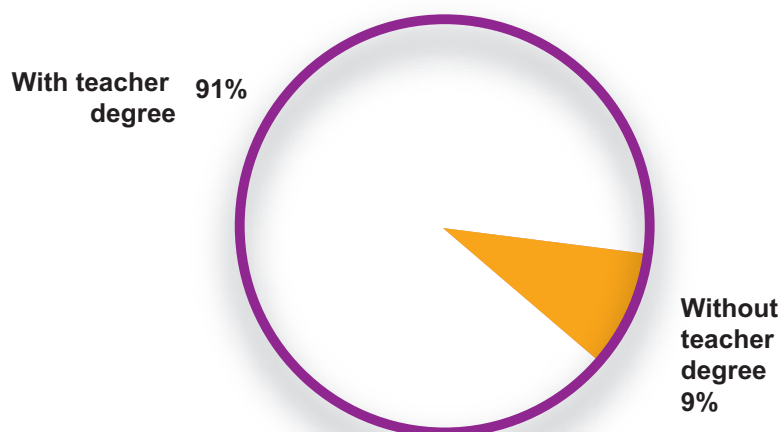


Source: National Census of Teachers 2004

Other aspect to take into account is whether training is related to teaching or not. In this respect 9 out of 10 teachers teaching basic education had a teaching degree.

Professional Teachers of basic education in service.

Total country, year 2004.



Source: National Census of Teachers 2004

²¹ Censo 2004.

1.1. f. New Information and Communication Technologies at school

Expansion of mass media and digital technologies foster production and knowledge dissemination to a larger scale, but at the same time, produce inequalities as regards access to information and knowledge and broaden economic, social and cultural differences that already exist. In this context, the main challenge to be achieved from the education policy is to work for reducing the gap related to the asymmetric access to digital goods. The new technologies must be an efficient tool to provide new opportunities and contribute to the promotion of social inclusion, since for a majority of boys, girls and young Argentineans, school is their only chance of access to information and communication technologies (ICTs). The work with ICTs at Argentine schools has been increasing progressively in the last years. However, the most outstanding characteristics of the integration of said technologies at a country level have been variety and spreading of these goods. That is, there exists a higher interest and demand by parents and education teams, in as much as specific experiences most of the time related to personal initiatives of the teachers, institutional programs or national or provincial isolated programs than general and systematic initiatives.

According to data gathered in 2005²², the average number of students per computer at Argentine schools is approximately 50 per computer. 78 % of students of basic education had a computer available at school. As regards its distribution, there is a significant variation in rural or urban schools, level of education or public or private institutions. In rural areas, for that same year, 40.7 % of schools of basic education had a computer, whereas in urban areas that figure reached 75.7%.

The incorporation of computer equipment to Argentine schools is a process that has started in the 80s, though the first national statistical records available are from 1998. For that time, one out of three schools had one or more than computer; currently, two out of three schools are equipped. The significant process of microelectronics cheapening occurred at International level and the long overvalue of the Argentine peso within the framework of convertibility in the economy, were factors that contributed to the dissemination of technology throughout the country in general and in the education system in particular. In spite of a deep economic crisis that reached its peak between 2001 and 2002- with budgetary restrictions- the computer equipment process at schools kept going on.

By 1998, it was registered an average of 86 students per computer; in 2005 this indicator was around 50 students per computer.

A general overview of computer equipment distribution in schools shows that gaps still persist. There is a bigger amount of computer equipment in urban schools, of the private sector, with a bigger number of students and, especially, those schools that offer secondary level education.

²² Annual Survey, National Department of Information and Assessment of Educational Quality. (DINIECE), Ministry of Education.

Whereas 75.7% of urban schools of basic education have at least one computer, that figure decreases to almost half (40.7%) in rural areas. This implies that 81% of students in urban areas and 54% of students in rural areas attend schools that are equipped with computers. However, there are no significant differences as to the average of students per computer. This apparent contradiction can be explained because in rural areas computer equipment has developed mainly in bigger schools; whereas a significant amount of smaller schools, with a multi-grade organization, still lack computer equipment.

Schools and students in basic education schools that have computer availability and average of students per computer

Total country. Absolute figures and averages

Scope	Schools that have computers		Students at schools with computers		Average of students per computer
	Absolute	%	Absolute	%	
Urban	17.265	75,7	6.853.078	81	50
Rural	5.787	40,7	500.236	54	58
Total	23.052	62,3	7.353.314	78	51

Source: DINIECE – Annual Survey 2005

During this period, it has been designed a teaching political approach towards ICT that gives hierarchy to the notion of inclusion, as long as it favors diagnosis, approach and action in a complex way. From this perspective, working guidelines are promoted towards the insertion of ICT components in programs related to improvement of the educations system as a whole. So access to ICT is conceived as a right of all citizens.

These guidelines are based on the need to generate spaces of significant appropriation and not only instrumental to the ICT. To this regard, it is not only limited to the provision of equipment and training in the use of information and communication technologies, but also they promote the exploitation as a teaching tool, curricula transversal insertion, training of teachers teams and heads of institutions, production of contents and systematization of experiences.

Within this framework, for the time being, an important proportion of public funds were destined to the incorporation of equipment for schools, especially for those in sectors of lower income. Between 2004 and 2007, more than 100.000 computing classrooms were opened throughout the country (mostly in secondary schools of technical modality).

Systematic training of teachers was one of the working lines favored by the *ME* in relation to

the integration of ICTs. Training is conceived as a fundamental component that goes along with the provision of equipment and infrastructure, directly reaching teachers in their places of professional practice and promoting the work of institutional teams.

It is worth to mention that at this point the new LEN contains a specific Annex related to Information and Communication Technologies, under the heading “Education, new technologies and communications means”. For the first time, digital literacy is included under the legal framework. In that section, it is established that the *ME* shall develop education options based in the use of ICTs, that contribute to accomplish the goals and purposes set forth by law. In addition, formal recognition was given to *Portal Educ.ar* and the television channel *Encuentro*, which produces education television programs and multimedia, to strengthen and complement strategies of equity and education of quality.

***Educ.ar* Website**

Throughout the last years, the educational website *Educ.ar* has consolidated as a source of permanent reference for students, teachers and directors. The website’s work is focused on supporting teachers in the incorporation of ICTs in teaching practice and collaborating on their daily task by means of different tools, such as educational resources available online to be used in lessons, interchange and information weblogs, virtual communities, educational CDs, among others.

***Encuentro* Channel**

The *Encuentro* Channel, the first television signal from the Ministry of Education, created by national executive order in 2005, went on the air in April 2007. This channel was created with two main aims: developing a public, educational and quality television and using what new mass media can offer in favor of teaching. It is focused on providing schools with television and multimedia contents to improve the quality of education, contributing to equity in the access to knowledge for all inhabitants, regardless their place of residence or social condition; developing competence in the use of information technology on teachers and students, in the framework of the knowledge society; offering innovative tools for improving and making teaching and learning processes easier, among other actions.

Its programming is aimed at teachers, for their professional updating; at students, for enriching their work in class and for searching and increasing the course contents explained in lessons; at adults and youth who are outside the educational system, offering programs of professional and technical education, literacy teaching and Primary and Secondary Education completion; at the society in general, by means of cultural, educational and scientific outreach programs, as well as language courses in distance learning format. Contents, educational and

cultural, are especially produced in Argentina or purchased from production companies from Latin America and the rest of the world.

The *Encuentro* Channel forms part of the *Educ.ar* project. Both are linked to create a multimedia and interactive space, through the convergence of television and the Internet. In this way, this innovative and unprecedented idea emerged, turning the Internet into a medium for complementing television contents that can be used in class. This idea of convergence tends to break the one-way nature of television, allowing everybody –children, youth and adults- to become content producers.

El Monitor de la Educación Magazine

In 2004, the magazine “*El Monitor de la Educación*”, a historic publication from the *ME*, was relaunched aiming at being an instrument for teacher training, which could promote educational debate and generate more sustained reflections on school pedagogy.

The first issue of *El Monitor de la Educación Común* was published in September 1881 by the National Council of Education, which at that moment was in charge of directing the whole country’s national schools. For many years, the magazine intended to be the authorized voice of pedagogy and teaching, accompanying teachers’ work, helping them in the updating of pedagogic strategies, disseminating an educational concept, and setting the path to be followed by schools.

The magazine was, for decades, an additional tool in the strengthening of an education system that integrated immigrants’ children and favored the upward social mobility of citizens. *El Monitor* was published until 1949 and from that moment, it reappeared during short periods (1959-1961; 1965-1976 and 2000-2001) in which the successive directors proposed, with different outcomes, reviving that idea of accompanying the work of teachers in the classroom and offering an integrating instrument for the national education system.

At present, the magazine *El Monitor* is published quarterly and reaches schools in the whole country. It is aimed at teachers and directors from all levels and modalities of the educational system, and it intends to be a communication channel between ministerial authorities and teachers, among teachers from different regions of the country, between schools and supervisors and between community leaders and government officers, contributing to create horizontal links between schools and teachers over the country.

Some of the topics discussed by *El Monitor* are: school and memory, childhoods, care at school, what is a good school, requirements, language teaching, pain, the world we live in, equality and coexistence, natural science teaching, assessment, among others.

1.1.g Educational Information

The National Department of Information and Assessment of Educational Quality (DINIECE) is the unit of the *ME* that is responsible for the development and sustainability of the Federal System of Educational Information, the assessment of the national education system, as well as the design and conduction of research related to the formulation of educational policies.

Its mission is to provide appropriate and quality information for planning, management and assessment of the educational policy and to make access to public information easier in accordance with the provisions set forth in the Regulations for Access to Public Information.

The National Statistical System, in turn, produces analyses and disseminates information about different aspects of the national education system –with the exception of the university level-, and conducts research focused on improving quality and equity.

It is worth noting that, during this period, a National Educational Map has been created, a georeferenced information system designed for educational management and monitoring, created from the integration of the jurisdictional Educational Maps on the basis of an agreement on the variables on which a consensus has been reached at national level.

1.1. h. Infrastructure

The integral actions carried out as regards infrastructure and equipment organize their objectives around the achievement of a quality education for everyone.

Therefore, it is worth highlighting the implementation of the *Programa 700 Escuelas* (700 Schools Program), a joint initiative by the *ME*, the Ministry of Federal Planning, Public Investment and Services and the Ministries of Education from each jurisdiction. The Program conducts the construction of school buildings throughout the country, according to the demand of each jurisdiction.

The objectives of the program are oriented, in general, to achievement of goals regarding secondary school coverage, increase in the average schooling years, academic performance and efficiency in the provincial education expense.

In order to carry out the works, tasks have been performed together with the provincial ministries, after a selection process of schools to be built or rebuilt under a group of conditions: 1) the existence of a proportion of the enrolment living in poverty; 2) the existence of an effective and potentially dissatisfied demand in the area of influence by educational level; 3) the structural and functional deterioration of buildings. Moreover, the Program considers the provision of furniture and computer equipment. At present, it has 546 schools finished and 164 in process.²³

Recently, and taking into account the changes in the education system regarding coverage extension, creation of a new regulatory framework that sets medium- and long-term

²³ Data from the website of the *Programa 700 Escuelas* www.700escuelas.gov.ar. September de 2008.

objectives, and infrastructure improvement through a plan of construction and expansion of school buildings that is still in force, it has been decided to conduct a new census that could permit updating the information on building and equipment infrastructure available at the *ME* and the jurisdictions. That updated information will also make it possible to take decisions as regards infrastructure expansion, adaptation and maintenance, such as:

- Considering the need of a new building work and its location strictly.
- Detecting available spaces to expand the existing building, in order to meet the requirements set by the extension of compulsory education (especially at early childhood and secondary level), the implementation of extended or full school days at primary level and the redefinition of the academic structure of the system.
- Considering the needs of the existing building for adaptation to new requirements of school architecture (safety, accessibility, circulation, thermal conditioning and ventilation conditions; new concepts of the use of teaching spaces, student grouping, etc.)
- Identifying and assessing obsolete buildings that need to be replaced.
- Assessing and characterizing the available equipment.

1.1. i. Regional Integration

Since 2003, Argentina has worked intensely in the planning and management of actions aimed at achieving strategic objectives of the MERCOSUR's Educational Sector, such as the consolidation of regional identity by promoting a common citizenship, a culture of peace and respect for democracy and human rights.

Moreover, during the 18th Ibero-American Conference of Ministers of Education, the "*Proyecto 2021. La Educación que queremos para nuestros jóvenes*" (Project 2021. The Education we want for our youth) was presented. Within this framework, the Minister of Education presented Buenos Aires as the venue for the next Ibero-American Congress on Education to be held in 2010. The project intends to reach an agreement on the educational goals of governments over the region. These goals are set out as reference and stimulus for supportive effort and collective commitment of the countries in the region, within the framework of a cultural, historic and educational integration consolidated in the diversity unit.

2. Inclusive Education: a way to the future

2.1. The conception of inclusion in Argentina's educational policies

The 21th century began, as previously mentioned, with one of the major crisis in the history of our country. The loss of legitimacy of the State and the weakening of the bond of trust with institutions made it more difficult to think of a public education for everyone.

In this context, it was necessary to take up again a fundamental principle for the construction of a fair society: education as an inalienable right of every citizen and the State's obligation of guaranteeing its universal access.

The period started in 2003, with Mr. Daniel Filmus as minister of education, during Mr. Néstor Kirchner's presidency, conceived education as a privileged instrument of social integration, which was part of a political democratizing mechanism to promote equality and social justice. Since then, this conception has been maintained considering an integral approach to this concept as a key, which implies associating educational policies with those social policies that are aimed, through ministerial work, at the inclusion of childhood and adolescence in the concepts of health, housing and social development, among others.

In this context, the strategic principles defined by the Ministry to orient its ideas of pedagogical policy intended to reconstruct the weave of that social fabric carrying out different actions in the search for maintenance and updating of public education, as well as transmission and recreation of our culture.

Early childhood, primary and secondary education enrolment.

Period 1900-2005. Total country. Evolution of the enrolment by level.

	Early Childhood	Primary (1)	Secondary	Non-University Higher Education
1900	-	451.247	451.247	-
1910	-	557.026	18.079	634
1920	1.324	1.121.663	48.477	2.194
1930	1.474	1.444.546	85.732	2.201
1940	3.135	1.930.193	153.918	3.080
1950	32.745	2.214.117	323.884	5.635
1960	84.601	2.858.488	563.987	14.292
1970	229.025	3.425.288	980.558	39.846
1980	480.216	3.929.125	1.326.680	93.645
1991	982.483	4.816.010	2.033.198	252.076
2000	1.246.597	5.351.826	2.736.947	440.164
2005	1.324.529	5.324.807	2.731.224	509.134

SOURCE: 1900-1977 - MCyE - DIEPE - Statistic Data

1991 - INDEC - National Population and Housing Census. 1996 a 2005 - MEN - Annual Surveys.

Although according to the historical data we can state that Argentina has gone through a process of consolidation of basic and primary education as universal and a significant early childhood and secondary education enrolment expansion, this growth has not necessarily been accompanied by other indicators –repetition, drop-out or overage rates– which would imply full education inclusion.

The relationship between the socio-economic level, poverty or cultural level of the social groups and their performance throughout the education system represents a topic extensively studied in the Sociology of Education. Although the relationship between poverty and the possibility of having a less regular school path (with difficulties regarding courses, repetitions and, eventually, drop-outs and lack of attendance) is traditionally compared, it is also currently being discussed that the relationship between both elements has exceptions that should be studied. Likewise, this debate is underlain by the function school can fulfill in social reproduction and promotion.

Some local studies show that “school performance is a complex phenomenon in which many causal factors merge. Learning quality depends not only on the characteristics of the institutions and the pedagogical processes but also on the attributes and aptitudes of the members of those institutions and participants of those processes. Teaching and learning practices take place mainly in the classrooms but are also affected, on the one hand, by what occurs at school and in the education system, and on the other hand, by what happens within families and the community”²⁴.

Finally, in this decade, the research that has begun to be conducted has showed the so-called “educational fragmentation” by recording the new features acquired by society and the education system. These studies²⁵ demonstrate that faced with the significant social changes undergone especially in the 90s (crisis and weakening of the State’s role, changes in familiar institutions and extremely high unemployment rates, among others), the Argentine society registered strong disintegration processes. Social hierarchies are not new, what is new is the dynamics of social and educational fragmentation. These processes refer to social spaces and groups that separate from one another. Social origin is not enough to explain these divisions in society and school, there are also variables related to culture that have influence on them. In a society where integration through work does not longer exist, as it happened especially in the middle of the 90s, social groups have started to develop new integration strategies and schools have begun to play an important role to that aim. Thus, the dynamics of educational fragmentation constitutes a new phenomenon in which, on the one hand, common things have

²⁴ Tedesco, J.C. y Morduchowicz, A “*El caso de la ciudad de Campana*”, “*Rendimiento Escolar y actores locales*”: IIPE 1999.

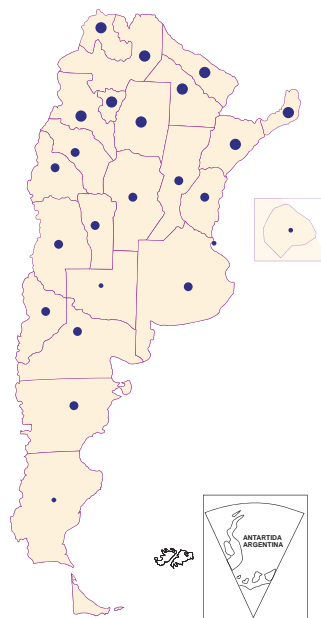
²⁵ Tiramonti G. “*La trama de la desigualdad educativa. Mutaciones recientes en la escuela media*”. Manantial, Buenos Aires 2004.

started to blur, and on the other hand, educational inequality has become a more complex phenomenon for the design and development of educational policies.

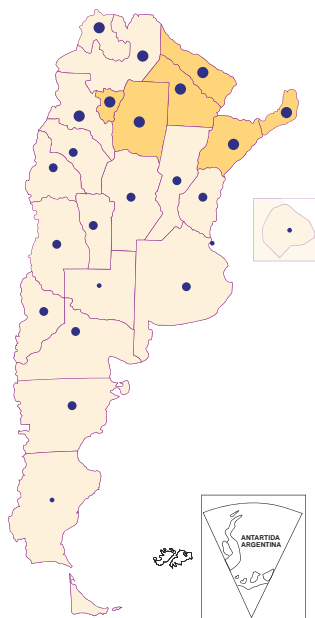
This brief theoretical synthesis has been aimed at showing that the study of the relationship between poverty and school outcomes, on the one hand, has existed for a long time and has aroused various interpretations and, on the other hand, must be understood in its historical context. The latter is especially important within the current framework due to the social changes that have occurred in the last decades.

Population percentage attending and NBI percentatge

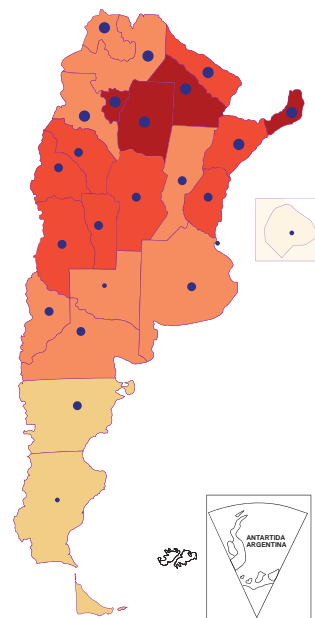
Population percentage attending school. Age group 6 to 11 and NBI total population percentage.



Population percentage attending school. Age group 12 to 14 and NBI total population percentage.



Population percentage attending school. Age group 15 to 17 and NBI total population percentage.



NBI Population Percentage

- 21.6 - 33.6
- 13.1 - 21.5
- 7.8 - 13.0

Population percentage attending

- 59.63 - 66.31
- 66.32 - 78.43
- 78.44 - 85.2
- 85.21 - 93.27
- 93.28 - 99.76

If we observe these maps, where poverty is related to attendance, it is clear firstly that the socio-economic level does not have the same influence on the different teaching levels. This is due to the history of expansion of the system. In fact, while the basic teaching level expanded early in connection with the formation of the Nation-State in Argentina, the secondary level was originally designed for the education of a learned elite. Its expansion occurred later, towards the 50s, whereas basic education had very important expansion waves.

The first one was from the beginning of the 20th century to the 30s, where the 20s showed the highest levels of student enrolment.

This process of development explains why inequality of access shows, at present, notable differences in the diverse educational levels and/or age groups. Even when populations present high poverty levels, the coverage of basic education is very high, and so it is considered universalized, whereas as regards secondary education, we can observe, on the one hand, a lower coverage in general, and on the other, interprovincial differences in access that are still highly marked.

Moreover, these differences in the various social sectors are also expressed in the learning outcomes of children and youth. As an example, and as it can be seen in the following chart, the results from the PISA test in Argentina show a wide gap between the lowest and the highest quartile of the population, significantly higher than the rest of the countries in the region.

Reading Marking, PISA 2000/2001

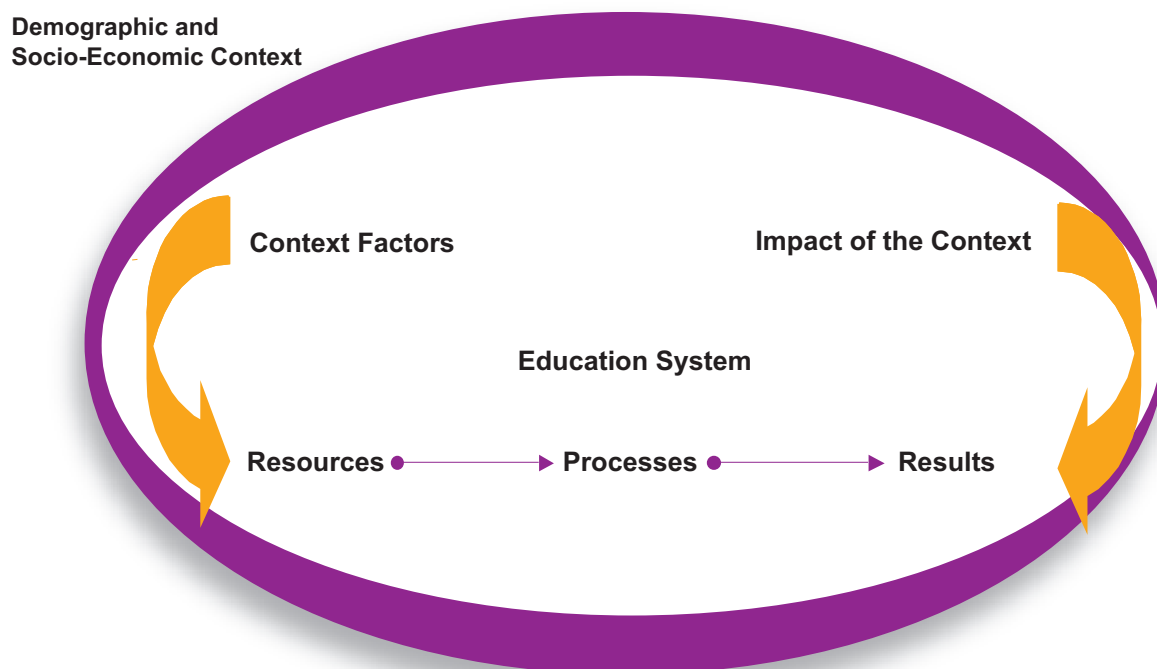
Country	Inferior Quartile	Superior Quartile	Gap
Argentina	379	483	104
Brazil	368	435	67
Chile	372	466	94
Mexico	385	471	86
Peru	283	383	100
OCDE	463	545	82
Germany	427	541	114
South Korea	509	542	33
Spain	461	529	68
Finland	524	576	52

Source: OECD, PISA study.

This information confirms that one of the major problems of the country is not only poverty but very especially socio-educational inequality at the time of promoting the conduction of actions aimed at improving the distribution of material and symbolic resources and offering equality of opportunities with educational quality.

2.1.a. Situation in Argentina and indicators that report the inclusion policy²⁶

The *ME* has a group of indicators developed on the basis of a conceptual framework that can be summarized in the following diagram:



Different indicators are considered for each area of this diagram. Therefore, the “percentage of urban population” is one of the indicators of the DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT of the education system. Or, as other examples, the “percentage of teachers with pedagogical education” is considered an indicator within the area of HUMAN RESOURCES, and the “maximum educational level reached by adult population”, an indicator regarding the IMPACT of the education system on the context.

This system of indicators represents a complex diagram that considers the education system in its back-and-forth relationships within the context. In this sense, many indicators can refer to or show results of inclusive education²⁷.

However, in this case we emphasize those indicators that refer especially to system coverage and student progression through the different educational levels or cycles.

As regards education coverage, we can mention the “net schooling rate by teaching level” and the “schooling rate by age groups”. Both indicators are included in the PROCESSES area of

²⁶ The following information is related to the twelve years of compulsory education comprised in the Primary level (6 or 7 years) and the Secondary level (6 or 5 years) in accordance with the structure defined by the new National Education Law. In order to make information presentation easier, the years are presented correlatively from the 1st to the 12th year of education.

²⁷ Primary information for the calculation of indicators is obtained from various sources, both from periodical surveys carried out by the Ministry of Education and from censuses and polls conducted by other state organizations.

the diagram presented and refer especially to students' access to school. The "net schooling rate by teaching level" is the percentage of children and youth that are in a given level at the corresponding theoretical age compared to the total population of the same age. The "schooling rate by age groups" is the percentage of children and youth of a given age who are within the system compared to the total population of the same age. Both indicators show coverage and make reference to the equality reached in educational insertion.

For 2001, year of the last National Population and Housing Census, the net schooling rate for the 5-year-old kindergarten was 90.76%; for primary level 98.09% and for secondary level 76.29%²⁸. The primary level, which expanded early in our country, shows the highest percentage of children receiving schooling at the corresponding theoretical age. As for 5-year-old kindergarten, which is compulsory since 1993 with the passing of the Federal Education Law, it shows a high coverage on the basis of the efforts taken by jurisdictions on that respect. Finally, the secondary level is the one that presents, comparatively, a poorer coverage. This explains, in part, why its compulsory aspect at a national level was approved with the new National Education Law in 2006. Moreover, secondary school constitutes a level of education where various problems converge and hinder the entering, permanence and regularity of educational paths. Among these problems we can mention the enrolment of new public that traditionally do not receive schooling, the confluence of study and work in a great part of the population at this level and the later expansion of the level.

Net schooling rate for Primary Level in the population from 6 to 12 years old, according to jurisdiction

Net schooling rate					
Year	1960	1970	1980	1991	2001
TOTAL COUNTRY	85,6	87,7	90,1	95,1	97,9

Net schooling rate for Secondary Level in the population from 13 to 17 years old, according to jurisdiction.

Net schooling rate			
Year	1980	1991	2001
TOTAL COUNTRY	42,2	59,3	71,5

Other indicators in the PROCESSES area that can also be used to "measure" education inclusion are those related to students' educational paths. Among them we can mention the "effective promotion rate", the "repetition rate" and the "year-on-year drop-out rate". These three variables

²⁸ Drawn up by the DiNIECE from the data obtained in the National Population and Housing Census 2001. Provisional calculation from the correction of the ages of the National Population and Housing Census 2001.

constitute jointly 100% of a certain school population, in other words, the totality of students of one level, course or group of schools of a specific program, for example, those that promote are the percentage that passes to the next corresponding year, others drop out school, whereas the rest are those that repeat the year²⁹. These indicators reflect students' paths, the type of passage through school and the regularity with which they manage to undertake their studies.

Therefore, repetition and year-on-year drop-out constitute important measures as regards the needs of education insertion of the population. Data related to the evolution of these indicators in the last years for the compulsory 12 years of education established by the National Education Law currently in force are analysed below. We will observe the most critical years of study concerning these indicators and will analyse the characteristics they present in the different areas (urban-rural). These differences are central at the time of planning inclusion programs and projects, because socio-economic and regional features have a clear influence on the students' paths throughout their schooling period.

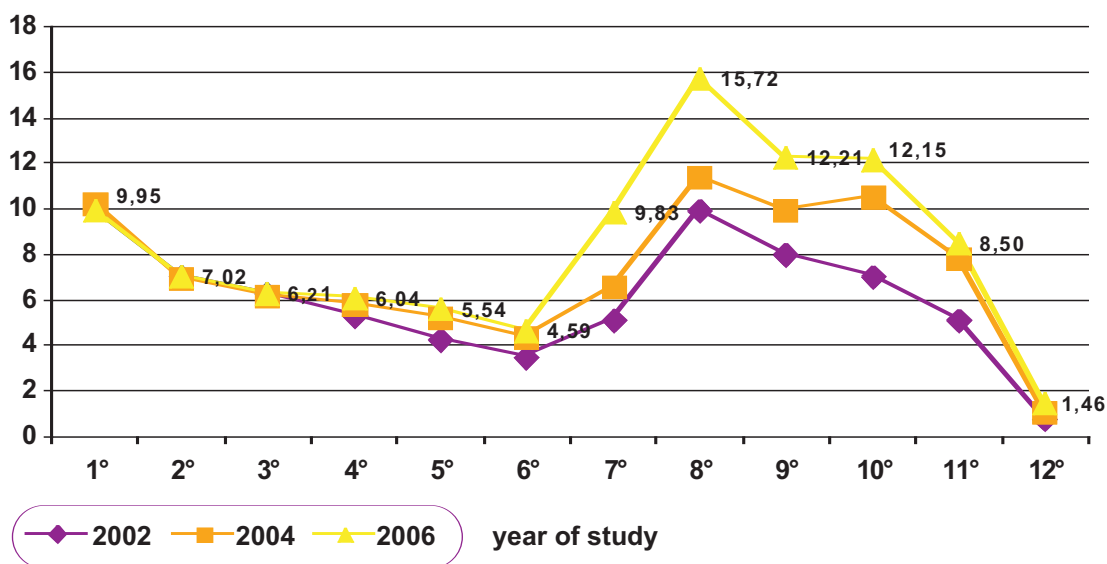
Repetition

According to what can be observed in the following graph, the first year of study registers the most significant repetition of the group of the first six years of study. This trend tends to decline in the following years of study. A worrying feature is the increase in the repetition of the 7th year. One possible explanation for this phenomenon is that this year is no longer the last one in the level, due to the structure of 6 years of primary and 6 of secondary school adopted by most jurisdictions, and it has passed to form part of a new educational cycle, which resulted in an increase in repetition. The figures of repetition in the seventh year have intensified so much that they are similar today to the primary first year.

The eighth year has traditionally been characterized by higher repetition because it has corresponded with the first year of secondary school, but this phenomenon also records a considerable worsening. At present, an increase in repetition of the ninth and tenth year is also noticed. Although the standard variable of academic organization is not included in this analysis, it is possible to think that in the tenth year there could be an incidence of the passage from one educational cycle to the other.

²⁹ Repeating a year means retaking a previous course already taken in order to improve or resolve students' learning processes. There is a wide debate surrounding the value of repetition and the risks that it implies if it becomes a strategy based on reiteration of the teaching proposal more than an adequacy to the students' needs and difficulties.

Evolution of the repetition rate by year of study at primary and secondary education, years 2002-2004-2006



Source: DINIECE, Annual Survey

The lower values adopted by the repetition rates in the rural area are surprising. One possible explanation lies on something previously stated. The most serious problem in the rural area is low coverage in secondary level, therefore, those who can continue their secondary studies are already in relative advantage, being able to follow a more regular educational path.

Repetition rate by area³⁰

Repetition Rate 2005-2006	Total (six years of study)	Year of study					
		7°	8°	9°	10°	11°	12°
TOTAL	10,7	9,8	15,4	11,7	12,1	8,2	1,4
Urban	11,0	10,2	15,9	12,2	12,5	8,5	1,5
Rural	9,1	7,6	13,1	9,4	11,3	6,5	0,9

Source: Annual Surveys 2005 and 2006. DiNIECE. MECyT. PROVISIONAL DATA

Year-on-year drop-out³¹

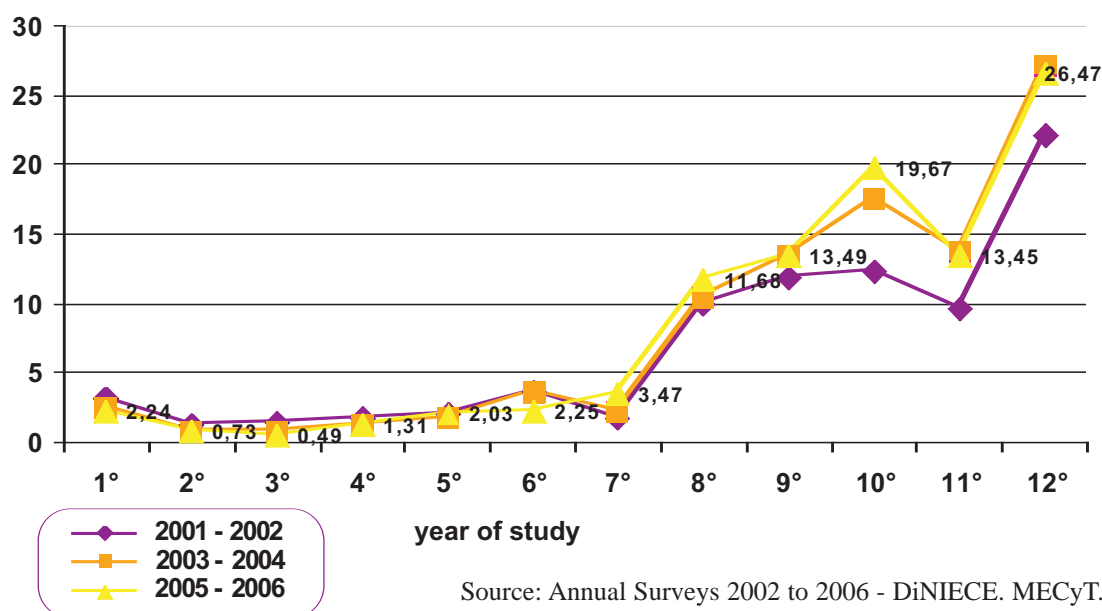
In the 8th, 9th and 10th years of study³¹, year-on-year drop-out decreases considerably. The last year, finally, presents worrying numbers in the sense that it affects the conclusion of compulsory education and the possibility of obtaining a school certificate. In the last years,

³⁰ This analysis is based on the structure of 6 years of primary school and 6 years of secondary school established by the National Education Law.

³¹ Op. cit.

year-on-year drop-out in the secondary level has tended to worsen, especially in the 10th and last year of study. The 10th year implies a change in the secondary cycle. This shows that the problem of changing the level or cycle is still, as it was historically, a crux in students' path.

Evolution of the year-on-year drop-out rate, by year of study at primary and secondary education. Years 2002 to 2006



Source: Annual Surveys 2002 to 2006 - DiNIECE. MECyT.

As regards the rural area, as in the case of repetition, the early selectivity of the level is also recorded. In this sense, it is possible to notice drop-out indexes highly superior to those of the urban area. Thus, the students who are able to remain between the 7th and 9th year of study are included in more significant proportions in the rural area. Given that there are still many schools in the rural area that offer up to the 7th year of study, the high drop-out rate in that year could be, in part, due to the lack of secondary education offer.

Year-on-year drop-out rate by area – 2005-2006

Repetition Rate 2005-2006	Year of study					
	7°	8°	9°	10°	11°	12°
TOTAL	3,5	11,7	13,5	19,7	13,5	26,5
Urban	1,7	11,6	13,2	18,7	12,7	27,1
Rural	23,9	13,8	13,4	17,5	11,1	20,9

Source: National Department of Information and Assessment of Educational Quality. Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. Annual Survey 2006 (provisional data).

The percentages include estimated data for the absences in every year.

Overage

This indicator refers to those students older than the age that corresponds to the year of study they are in. Students' overage could be due to late enrolment in the system, repetition of one or more years of study or drop-out from school for some time and later reincorporation.

Firstly, we can mention that in the first years of study, which correspond mostly to primary education, overage is substantially lower than in secondary education. The fact that overage students go in crescendo throughout their schooling implies that the system manages to retain them and/or the families implement strategies for students to continue their studies. In this respect, it is important to highlight that secondary education, where the most significant overage levels are recorded, has expanded in our country much later than primary education and has acquired its compulsory condition less than two years before. The newer and more focused actions and strategies related to retention of students and/or inclusion of youth who are outside the system, compared to those implemented by primary education in history, also have an influence on this problem.

The analysis by year of study shows that both in the total country and in the state sector and rural area, the cruxes in the path of the secondary level are the 7th and 8th year of study. This phenomenon could be due to the change of level –either in the previous educational structure or the one established by the new legislation- and constitutes a well-known historical problem. Thus, in this first year of secondary school (7th or 8th year), the incidence of repetition and drop-out and later reincorporation gives place to a considerable increase in overage.

In the rural area, we can find a special feature: overage starts to decrease in the 9th year. This shows that rural students are increasingly excluded from that year of study onward, possibly due to reasons related to their early insertion into agricultural work or to the lower secondary education offer in some regions of the country and the difficulty of some students to travel to more distant institutions. So, while in the rural area overage begins to affect the persistence in the system from the 9th year onward in a sustained manner, in the total country there seems to be more fluctuating paths where older students come and go from the system at different moments even when they end up dropping out.

Percentage of overage students by sector and area - 2006

Overage percentage 2006	Year of study											
	1º	2º	3º	4º	5º	6º	7º	8º	9º	10º	11º	12º
TOTAL	15,0	20,0	23,1	25,2	26,5	26,7	32,8	38,9	36,1	38,2	34,8	27,7
Urban	13,0	17,6	20,8	23,0	24,5	24,8	31,6	38,2	35,6	38,1	34,7	27,4
Rural	27,6	35,8	39,2	41,2	41,6	40,9	43,6	45,9	42,1	39,4	36,3	32,8

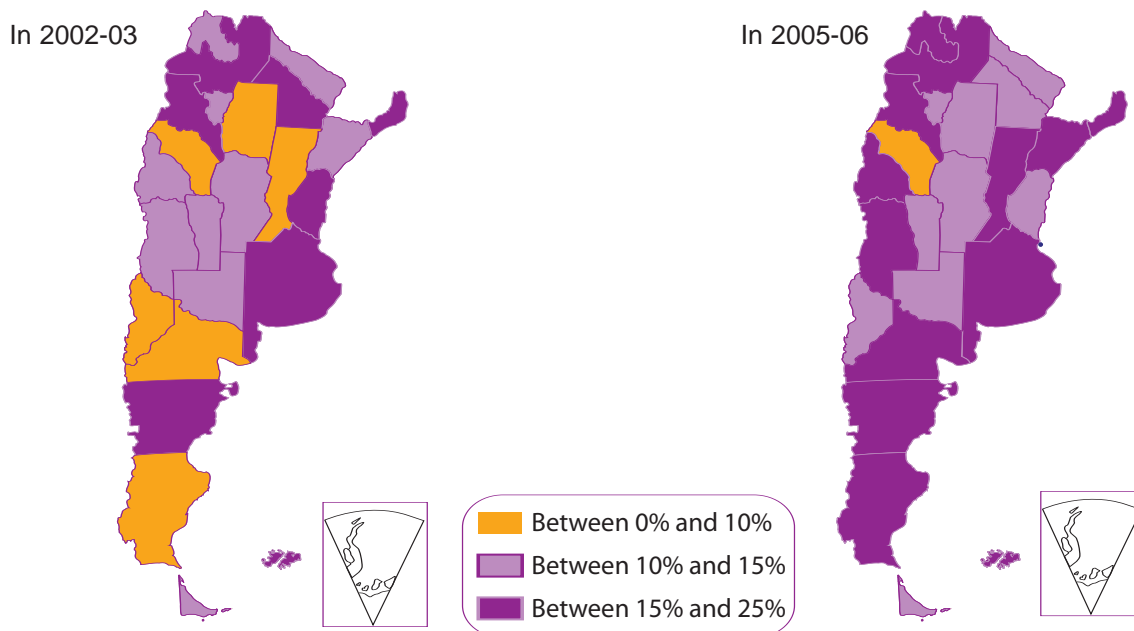
Fuente: Annual Survey 2006. DiNIECE. Ministry of Education.

Statistical and space analysis

Having an extremely heterogeneous country in relation to the levels of education inclusion, another effective tool at the time of analysing schooling reality and being able to take political decisions is the georeferentiation. By means of this instrument, we can not only place the different educational problems spacially but also produce the interaction of the system of indicators created with space dimension.

As an example, we present the following two maps of the country, in which the drop-out problem in secondary level is showed graphically, by jurisdiction, from the comparison of two cohorts. Interprovincial heterogeneity is significant in relation to the trend of school drop-out, both in the magnitude of the indicator and in the differences of its evolution. In effect, the maps clearly show a very different situation among jurisdictions in the year 2003. Moreover, comparing it with the year 2006, a negative evolution can be noticed: drop-out increases in most jurisdictions. In this sense, the various provincial trends become central components at the time of designing and implementing educational inclusion policies aimed at reducing education drop-out in the secondary level.

Secondary Education drop out



Source: Argentine Educational Map, DINIECE, ME.

Space analysis has a central use in some cases of education inclusion. One of the most interesting examples is the detection and location of necessary sections or schools with the aim of providing schooling for children or youth in some particular region of the country.

2.1.b. Socio-educational policy

The development of policies on promotion of equality has been considered a priority, and within this framework, a new broad definition has been given to education inclusion, in which the aim is not only that children and youth at an age of compulsory education attend school, but also that they can remain in it receiving equality of opportunities to acquire the necessary knowledge and finish their studies.

Understanding quality as teaching quality, which demands coherence between the educational aims and the actions carried out, it was possible to develop a comprehensive conceptualization of inclusion, understanding that it is necessary to guarantee the right of access as well as fundamental to work so that everyone could receive a better education.

The challenge has been to recover universal policies without creating parallel and stigmatizing educational circuits with the firm intention of promoting education equality as well as escaping from a logic in which focalized policies could not only be developed from the creation of specific programs and start thinking in the fact that they can integrate as central

priority objectives of the system policy itself.

At a first stage and in order to give quick responses to the emerging crisis, programs were developed with the aim of assisting the population of students at the different levels who were in a situation of high vulnerability as well as providing priority support to the schools that mainly assisted that population.

Today we are at a new stage, where from the consolidation of the country's education aims, legitimized by the National Education Law, the purposes of promotion of equality are the basics of the education system.

Taking as a precedent the remedial policies adopted in the 90s, a change has been considered in the way of formulating policies on education inclusion. Unlike welfare policies, in which the "beneficiary" was a passive receptor, a new period begins where it is necessary to think in models of policies with participative management in which actors are again protagonists and co-responsible for finding solutions to new and old problems, always with the support and ultimate responsibility of the State as a guarantee.

With the main objective of pursuing this policy, the *ME* created at the beginning of this year the National Department of Socio-educational Policies (DNPS). This new department replaces the National Department of Compensatory Policies, integrates all the programs and projects that have been being developed and contributes to equal objectives in the framework of the promotion of equality.

The department as a whole works in coordination with the educational levels in order to support the improvement in the quality of education providing material resources, strengthening human resources and developing intervention strategies aimed specifically at the sectors with major social vulnerability.

In the framework of educational policies, we talk about socio-educational policies as those that give sense and orientation to actions involving social aspects, as long as they contribute to the strengthening of educational processes. Therefore, the goal of this policy is improving the conditions and possibilities of access, quality in the schooling path as well as outcomes reached in terms of acquisition of the knowledge necessary for social, cultural and community life.

The State, the different areas and sectors that composed it (Health, Social Development, Work), families, the community and civil society organizations are all involved with this purpose.

Actions are developed with the aim of reducing social, economic and educational inequalities, which make access to and exercise of rights to education of children and youth difficult or impossible, and objectives are defined in order to organize interventions as protection circles for the rights as a way of restituting them to that population that has suffered experiences of exclusion and marginalization.

The actions of the DNPS offer support and accompaniment in three complementary

directions: towards students, towards schools and towards provincial jurisdictions, generating an integral proposal of socio-educational support and accompaniment.

The actions directed to students are aimed at providing material resources for those in a situation of socio-educational vulnerability, in order to strengthen their basic educability conditions. The actions aimed at schools intend to be a complement to the actions directed to students, in order to strengthen their inclusion and promote a quality education offer at schools that work with popular sectors. At last, the actions that provide support to provincial jurisdictions are aimed at, on the one hand, improving the articulation of the national proposal with the jurisdictional policies and programs so as to avoid the duplication of actions and to adjust the national offer to local needs, and on the other hand, strengthening local technical teams related to the definition and implementation of socio-educational policies.

Finally, in a transverse way, the educational sector is promoted to work together with State sectors, so as to articulate the provision of basic social services in the most vulnerable schooling population, and with civil society organizations, favouring the opening of schools to the community.

In this sense, the challenge is to unify the actions that have been being carried out from the *ME* at the time of implementing new strategies, in order to offer in the three levels of intervention an integral proposal of socio-educational support and accompaniment that allows breaking with some dynamics of exclusion that are present in the education system.

In this way, at the time of defining strategies of education inclusion, two fundamental premises are taken into account: the search for an integral approach, concerning the fact that it offers services that face different dimensions of the socio-educational problem of marginal sectors³², and the flexibility of the proposal, so as to design a group of strategies that could be effectively articulated with provincial policies and with the particular needs of each educational institution, recognizing therefore the different contexts and realities where the educational policy is implemented³³.

The State must guarantee that schools are the vehicle through which it could be possible to access cultural resources equally but we must also construct a school where children, youth and their families could renew the dialogue and become producers of a culture that expresses the diversity of their communities. The new legislation is part of a historic educational policy

³² The IIEP-UNDP report (2007) emphasizes the need of an integral approach in the policies and programs against schooling drop-out, these “must distinguish and articulate interventions aimed at guaranteeing the social conditions of education... with those that intend to intervene in the education offer” (page 108).

³³ The assessments carried out over the Programs that include financing of projects or institutional initiatives conclude that flexibility in the proposal is one of the most highlighted aspects by educational institutions, as the possibility of adapting the project to the needs of the institution and its students’ situation allows a higher appropriation of the programs. However, it is worth highlighting that a greater flexibility also implies greater institutional strengthening and leadership of the directive team (IIEP-UNDP, 2007) and that the limit of this flexibility must be set within a series of general rules and common denominators that could guide work. (UNICEF, 2007).

of our nation by recognizing education as a right and the corresponding obligation of the State of guaranteeing its fulfillment. In this sense, the LEN defines education as a public property and forces the State to provide it in all its levels and modalities for free and with quality. The educational policy is therefore conceived as a way of constructing a fairer society guaranteeing equality, a cost-free status, quality and equity.

2.2. Public policies for education inclusion: programs and strategies

When talking about exclusion, questions related to distribution should be mentioned, but not only economic distribution. Although poverty and unemployment are the most evident symptoms of the exclusion dynamics, they are not the only ones that define it. It is not only the lack of material resources because referring only to them would be to interpret that phenomenon centrally, from a restricted capitalist logic. The excluded person is also outside the processes of social participation and symbolic interchange. It is a subject untied from the social bond and their social rights as a citizen.

At the time of analysing who are the children and youth excluded from schools, two types of causes were defined, which then supported the fundamentals of the priority policies that have been designed:

- **Causes external to school:** related mainly to socio-economic emergency, students' familiar and emotional problems.

- **Causes intrinsic to the school itself:** related especially to organizational and pedagogical characteristics of the school, that in many cases would turn out to imply expulsion. According to what was stated and thought in the design of a policy that could tend to face those internal and external factors, in this section, education inclusion is tackled through three different interrelated central points that include policies, strategies and actions developed by the *ME* during this period:

- 2.2.a Inclusion of children, youth and adults that are outside the system.

- 2.2.b Accompaniment of the schooling paths and improvement in the quality of education.

- 2.2. c Attention to cultural and social diversity.

Thus, on the one hand, there is a development of a series of educational policies and strategies, which pay attention to the urgency and situation, aimed at the inclusion of small groups of children and youth who are excluded from the education system, either enrolled in formal education or outside the education system. On the other hand, there are those policies and actions focused on strengthening the education system with the aim of favouring a quality learning guaranteeing the true inclusion, permanence and graduation of all children and youth regardless their socio-economic, cultural, ethnic or geographic origin, paying attention not

only to providing schools with material resources but also and fundamentally with the development of actions aimed at teacher training, the implementation of new pedagogical strategies, institutional strengthening and the relationship with families and the community.

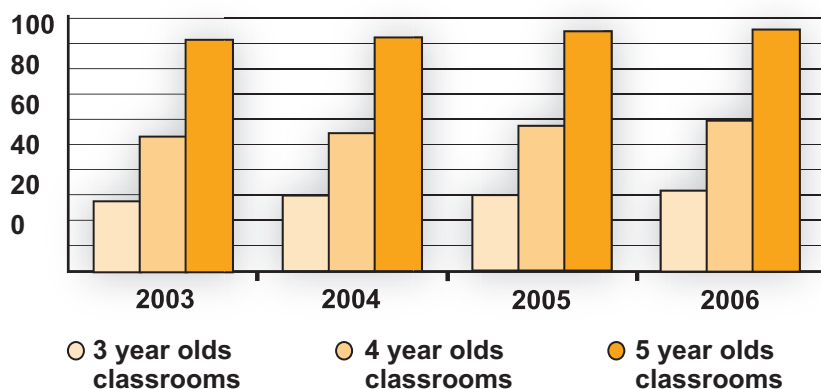
2.2 a. Inclusion of children, youth and adults who are outside the education system

All those policies and strategies whose main aim is the inclusion of children, youth and adults in the education system are grouped within this point. Among them, we can describe each of the components that have been implemented to this aim and result innovative for the educational policy of the country. These inclusion policies are not restricted to guaranteeing access, but they intend to promote education equality ensuring the necessary conditions for the recognition, integration and educational achievement of all children, youth and adults in all levels and modalities.

Early Childhood

Between the years 2003 and 2006, the enrolment in the 3, 4 and 5-year-old kindergarten has increased significantly. The schooling rate has increased by a 3.1% in the 3-year-old kindergarten, a 6% in the 4-year-old one and a 3.2% in the 5-year-old class. It is worth noting that, according to some studies on the subject, this rise is in all cases associated fundamentally to the expansion of the offer of the state sector and the creation of new educational units.

Evolution of Initial Schooling level rates



Despite this increase and the compulsory condition of the 5-year-old kindergarten, today there are still gaps in the conditions of access of the population as well as strong heterogeneities in the offer. Moreover, the population between 3 and 4 years old still present a very unequal

access to services and there are generalized problems of coverage, with different intensity and importance according to jurisdictions.

Considering this situation, the *ME* implements different actions related to the management of the level, such as: diffusion and awareness campaigns in the provinces for stimulating education enrolment; strategies for school-family connection; the convenient accompaniment to the schooling process, through interministerial commissions; actions aimed at education inclusion of children from the most vulnerable populations identifying the causes of non-attendance to 5-year-old kindergarten. For this last point, basic elements that ensure material conditions are provided, such as: shoes, clothes, transport, etc. Moreover, the universalization of the 3 and 4-year-old kindergarten will be favoured during the period 2009-2011 by the provision of inclusion grants for students of the ages mentioned and scholarships for 5-year-olds. The provision of grants and scholarships will be accompanied by pedagogical programs of inclusion and strengthening in early childhood schools.

Furthermore, plans of improvement of the infrastructure and the equipment related to educational material are being developed in order to make the expansion of coverage easier. In the next three years, it is estimated to provide batches of educational material to 5-year-old kindergartens, which will be accompanied and assisted by training offers for 58,000 teachers, so as to make the most of it.

In the rural area, education inclusion for early childhood education is mostly related to the necessity of expanding the offer and the conditions of access to education of the little ones. In this sense, the main strategy implemented is the creation of integrated classrooms. Unlike urban contexts, where due to the compulsory condition of 5-year-old education, the expansion of coverage imposes priority on that age, in rural contexts, the low enrolment by age would make it possible to assign rural positions to the creation of integrated classrooms for all those children of three, four and five years old of each community. In a parallel way, there is also progress in training with proposals of classrooms that recover the richness of work in integrated classrooms, in organizational and educational analogy with the multi-grade classroom. This training is developed in two workshops: “Multi-age Classroom” and “Library” with the aim of accompanying and enriching the daily work of teachers of early childhood education in rural areas.

Children and Adolescents

In 2004, the national Program of Education Inclusion (PNIE) was created with the aim of giving response to the problem of education and social exclusion of all children and youth from 6 to 18 years old that were outside the education system, assuming the responsibility of meeting the needs of those sectors in situation of extreme social vulnerability and education exclusion. The main objective of this program is the inclusion in the education system of children and youth who due to different reasons have never enrolled at school or have dropped out their studies. To this aim, an incentive scholarship is awarded and a series of strategies are developed, which, as a bridge, allow the integration of students with different schooling and social paths to the education system, as quickly as possible, inviting them to return to classes, remain, advance in their studies and finish education. It is worth noting that until the creation of this initiative, the *ME* only contemplated in the development of its actions the population of school-age children and youth who were included in the education system, a situation that reverts by including as subject of the educational policy also those who are outside school considering their characteristics and needs.

From the creation of this policy, inclusion has been conceived as the joint work of the National State, jurisdictions, schools and social and community organizations. The basics of the program operation are set in the local coordinating boards, which are in charge of the design and implementation of the inclusion project.

The PNIE has been organized in four lines of action in order to develop varied inclusion strategies that could benefit groups of girls, boys or youth in different school universes. Among the lines of action proposed are: “*Volver a la Escuela*” (Returning to School) which focused its work in the incorporation of all children and adolescents from 6 to 14 years old, “*Todos a Estudiar*” (Everyone to School) aimed at the inclusion of youth between 11 and 18 years old; “PNIE Rural” (PNIE Rural), which assists children and youth from 6 to 18 years old in a rural context who have dropped out school or who, attending classes, present three or more years of overage; and “PNIE *Judicializados*” (Judicialized PNIE) that gives support to children and youth from 6 to 18 years old with social and criminal trials, institutionalized or not.

This structuring is aimed at responding to different situations that require certain specificity in the responses. According to the characteristics of the group of children to be included and the reasons why they are excluded, each jurisdiction must establish a working plan to guarantee the effective inclusion through the main strategies and components offered by the program:

- Incentive scholarships for children and youth from 6 to 18 years old, which are granted until the student finishes their compulsory education.
- Creation of "bridge spaces" for entering into the system.

³⁴ Age requirements are extended in the case of students with special educational needs.

- Tutoring in charge of a teaching facilitator.
- Support in the development of Pedagogical Projects on Inclusion.
- Formation of joint work boards between schools and community organizations for zone survey, monitoring and accompaniment of the children and youth to be included.
- Specific training for teachers from the schools that incorporate this population, with the support of educational material.

Among the specific measures related to teaching and learning strategies for increasing educational opportunities for everyone are: the Role of the “Teaching Facilitator” and the “Bridge Space”.

Regarding the Teaching Facilitator, it is a teaching figure responsible for working with students with the aim of promoting and strengthening their inclusion in the education space guaranteeing their insertion, permanence and promotion. Facilitators are also in charge of an alternative space called “bridge space”. This is a symbolic or physic space aimed at receiving, at a first instance, youth that are outside the system. Different institutional, group or individual strategies are developed in this space, as appropriate, for achieving the student’s insertion into the corresponding common education group. The bridge space is a temporary strategy in the sense that youth use it for the time necessary for their full incorporation to common education.

Facilitators are in charge of organizing tutorial workshops for those students that present some kind of difficulty in their schooling path. Workshops and meetings are organized in different shifts or outside the class schedule in order to complement the study processes and accompany youth before and after the exam periods. Moreover, home visits are made to those students who need it, in order to foresee the possible shelling and being able to invite youth to return to school in the face of social, schooling or familiar difficulties.

- 7,359 schools have received a benefit for the development of pedagogical projects.
- 4,957 facilitator teachers develop inclusion projects with children.
- 7,800 teachers, directors and members of social organizations have participated in training courses for the implementation of the Program.
- 1,800 community organizations manage, together with schools, the education inclusion projects of each region.
- Between the years 2004 and 2007, more than 109,000 children and youth in the whole country who were outside the system were included in the education system.

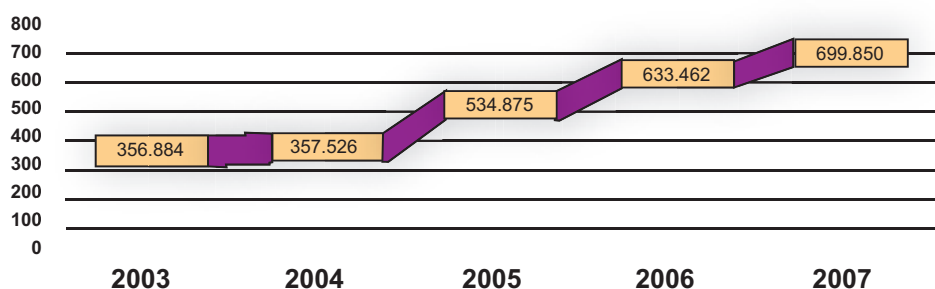
In this sense, inclusion policies are oriented to provide fundamental material conditions for the effective exercise of the rights of access and transit of children and youth for a decent education experience. The provision of resources (inclusion grants, books, educational materials, computer equipment), as well as the building and renewal of physical spaces, have been conceived as a basic condition to give place to a broader educational offer intended to open new ways of teaching and learning. At the same time, these policies will try to promote a fully egalitarian and democratic education proposal.

At present, given the relevance acquired by these strategies, especially the figure of the facilitator and the space bridge in the strengthening of teaching and learning processes and students' schooling paths, the *ME* is promoting the expansion of its development beyond the limits of this initiative to reach a greater percentage of the population.

Number of Scholarships granted

	Retention scholarships	Inclusion scholarships	Indigenous students scholarships	Special scholarships	Technical school students	Total
2003	350.000		5.500	1.354		356.854
2004	350.000		6.000	1.526		357.526
2005	500.000	26.000	6.500	2.377		534.875
2006	500.000	93.000	7.000	3.362	30.000	633.462
2007	500.000	109.000	16.500	15.650	60.000	699.850

Annual evolution



With the aim of expanding the coverage of secondary education in those areas where the distance to urban centres prevents rural youth from completing the compulsory education years, dropping out their studies in the sixth or seventh year without a certificate, a proposal of multimedia rural Basic Secondary Cycle is being developed. The aim of this proposal is that those youth that go to distant rural schools could complete their education in the institutions

where they received Primary Education. Its design includes meeting instances between students and teachers throughout each school year according to the possibilities of each area, the presence of a referent adult for accompanying the group of students in their schooling path, provision of individual materials, incorporation of multimedia resources, and alternatives for community inclusion. Materials in video format are being produced in articulation with the *Encuentro* Channel with the aim of including them in the development of teaching proposals. Furthermore, a program of Improvement of rural/special education is being conducted specifically for children with special educational needs. Within the framework of this Project, survey is being carried out at rural schools to determine the presence of students with special educational needs derived from a disability. In this respect, the intention is to do research into the needs, the required educational material, and the necessary funds and teacher training.

Youth and Adults

Concerning the inclusion of the population of youth and adults, the *ME* has designed term programs aimed at guaranteeing the eradication of illiteracy and the fulfillment of compulsory education for the population older than eighteen (18) years old. In this way, the proposal for the National Literacy Program for Youth and Adults called “*Encuentro*” was organized. This program summons all people at the age of 15 or older that cannot read and write to begin a learning process. A course of 5 months allows dealing with initial literacy and the certificate permits to continue studying at adult primary levels or their equivalent according to the jurisdiction. Between the years 2004 and 2008, 34,890 literacy centres were established throughout the country with the participation of more than 15,000 voluntary literacy tutors and coordinators with the result of 227,113 literate people.

The Plan for Completion of Primary and Secondary Studies (FinEs) was created in 2008 and is aimed at implementing a specific offer adapted to the needs of youth and adults for completing their primary and/or secondary studies. The objective is to reach, at a first stage, those youth and adults that have taken the last year of secondary education as regular students and have pending subjects without having obtained their degree, and at a second stage, those youth and adults who have not started or completed their primary and/or secondary education. This plan is implemented at venue schools with a tutorial system by areas of study or subjects. Educational materials are produced in different formats for basic areas (math, language, social sciences, and natural sciences). There are also plans for tutoring in specific subjects such as foreign languages and specialities of secondary education. Furthermore, there are also telelessons of the *Encuentro* Channel, a virtual platform through the *Educ.ar* website, textbooks provided by the *ME*, material from the Reading National Campaign and a library at the venue school.

It is in this way that the goals for the Federal Plan of Permanent Education of Youth and Adults 2007-2011 are set. In this case, the intention is to triplicate by the year 2011 the population assisted in 2005, and to be able to complete by the year 2015 the compulsory education of 100% of the youth included in the range from 18 to 30 years old and of 70% of those older than 30. With the aim of contributing to the improvement of the capacities of access to the world of work for youth and young adults from the most vulnerable sectors in Argentina, the program “Secondary Education and Training for Youth Work” was created, in which 23,000 youth and adults participate. It is focused on promoting completion of secondary education and work training for youth from 18 to 29 years old who do not study or work, expanding the access to quality offers. The Program is structured in three components: a) institutional strengthening of the ministerial areas responsible for the Permanent Education of Youth and Adults, b) expansion of the secondary education offer through a flexible and modularized offer, and c) improvement of the work training of youth and adults by means of work training offers articulated with the sectors of the world of work.

Education in contexts of deprivation of liberty

With the aim of overcoming the existing obstacles for an effective education inclusion of those people in contexts of imprisonment, actions are implemented to improve the management and establishment of this modality throughout the country. These actions are carried out through the intersectorial work among the different ministries, and through the creation of the necessary teaching positions for effective educational assistance of these populations. Teacher training, the provision of educational, bibliographic and technological materials, and the production of specific materials for this modality intend to contribute to improvement in the quality of these offers. In order to give an incentive to the desire of inclusion into formal education, some actions of technical and working training, artistic and cultural expression are conducted in these contexts. For example, the Project “*Bibliotecas Abiertas*” (Opened Libraries) pursues the goal of turning the library into an activity and participation centre that favours the return to school.

2.2 b. Accompaniment of schooling paths and improvement in the quality of education

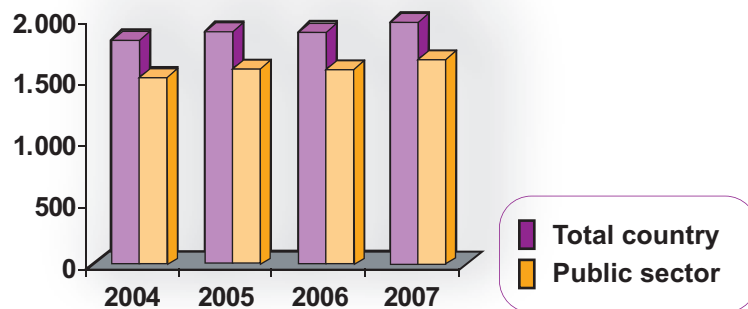
This central point comprises the programs and strategies implemented by the *ME* with the aim of guaranteeing material and cultural conditions for all students to be able to experience quality common learning processes, regardless their social or geographical origin, gender or cultural identity.

Children

A challenge taken on by the *ME* is extending the full-time education offer, especially for the sectors in poorer conditions. The design and implementation of this pedagogical proposal is aimed at opening up the horizon of educational experiences of all children, offering them spaces to become in contact with knowledge related to new technologies, communication and media, sciences, arts, foreign languages, the body and movement, games and sports, as well as the activities related to their training as students.

Considering this point, it is important to highlight that this type of educational proposal has grown in the last years. At a national level, this growth is of 8.7%, percentage that increases up to 9.1% at the state sector. This trend appears, with variations, in the City of Buenos Aires, Chubut, Formosa, Mendoza, Misiones, Río Negro, Salta, San Luis and Santiago del Estero.

Evolution of full-time common education schools at the EGB 1 and 2 level



Source: DINIECE – Annual Surveys 2004, 2005, 2006 y 2007

The *ME* has been developing since 2004 the Integral Program for Education Equality (PIIE), which it is currently being conducted by the Department of Primary Education. Within the framework of this program, actions aimed at urban schools attended by children in a highest social vulnerability situation are carried out. Its work is focused on five central points:

- **Strengthening of teaching and learning processes:** the plan is that schools could diagram and implement a pedagogical initiative, that is, a group of actions aimed at strengthening teaching and learning processes. For its implementation, the PIIE provides schools with pedagogical accompaniment and each institution is paid a benefit.
- **Teacher Professionalization:** the central place of teaching is strengthened, recovering the place of transmission as the school's fundamental task. Therefore, activities, meetings and training seminars are organized for the schools' teachers. Moreover, complementary pedagogical documents and educational resources are designed for these actions.

- Educational actions related to the school environment: the relationship between the school and the community is strengthened by different proposals with organizations in order to expand the school environment and forming learning communities. There is a promotion of work in interinstitutional and intersectorial networks so as to strengthen the school and improve the teaching and learning possibilities of all children.
- Distribution of material resources for schools. Each school receives books for libraries, computer equipment consisting of 8 PCs, school overalls and a benefit for school supplies.
- Operation of the school infrastructure: economic resources will be given for improvement in basic school infrastructure, especially aimed at building, adequacy and improvement of computer classrooms.

According to this series of proposals and actions, the PIIE plans to reorient efforts and concentrate resources at schools, trying to avoid demands and strengthening the school's central task: teaching.

In the period between the creation of the program in 2004 and the year 2006, there was a gradual increase in the percentage of state, urban and primary educational institutions incorporated to this line of work, passing from 14.6% to 29.5%. During this same period, the percentage of children from the whole country who attended schools incorporated to the program also increased from 19% to 34.1%. At present the program is composed of 2,293 schools, with a total enrolment of 1,162,981 students, distributed in all jurisdictions of the country.

Despite being in situations of extreme vulnerability, in the program's schools incorporated after 2004, the decrease in the year-on-year drop-out passed from 2.57% to 1.49%, although the year-on-year drop-out rate in state, urban and primary institutions within the period 2002-2005 decreased from 2.13% to 1.22%.

The Scientific Literacy Project (PAC), a program aimed at students and teachers in the first years of primary education, is being developed at the schools that participate in the PIIE. Its objectives are promoting, valuing and spreading science and technology, understanding its strategic relationships with the country's development model, and improving scientific education in order to contribute to the education of scientifically literate citizens and arousing scientific vocations. Within this framework, there are teachers' trainers seminars, aimed at teachers of teacher training institutes from all jurisdictions.

The Pedagogical Strengthening Program for the schools participating in the Integral Program for Education Equality (FOPIIE) was created in 2005 within the framework of a collaboration policy between the European Union and Argentina. Being aimed at improving and renewing the teaching proposals of acquisition of basic knowledge of the children from the participating

schools, the FOPIIE's components are focused on the strengthening of education management and pedagogical capacities, the support to equity in the access to ICTs and the school projects in connection with civil society organizations.

The strengthening of education management forms part of the set of priorities of the policy for children. In this respect, work is being done in the articulation of the PIIE and the National Education Inclusion Program, in its line of action *Volver a la Escuela*, and that is why the following activities have been proposed: creation of a specific pedagogical and curricular proposal for overage children; organization of national meetings of technical, referent and supervising teams; organization and implementation of work meetings with directors and teachers from the provinces, meetings of follow-up and strengthening of the trainings on ICTs; and work of survey, analysis and reorientation of pedagogical proposals.

Furthermore, the project "Creation of Policies and Strategies for Prevention of School Failure" was created in 2004 in the framework of the strategic supportive cooperation plan presented by the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI) of the Organization of American States (OAS). This project is aimed at improving the quality of basic education by means of the creation of policies that pursue the fulfillment of the schooling path of all children and youth, contributing to a gradual decrease in repetition, overage, failure and drop-out.

Adolescents and Youth

The National Scholarships Program is being carried out with the aim of stimulating the permanence, promotion and graduation of students between 13 and 19 years old who are in situations that make their continuity in the education system difficult, go to public schools and their families are in poverty contexts. The Program's activities are organized around three lines: annual scholarships for students, institutional retention projects and study texts. The Institutional Retention Programs (PIR) are aimed at the development of institutional and pedagogical actions to improve the levels of students' permanence and promotion. In this sense, the schools' teams of directors and teachers present projects to face the problems of repetition and school drop-out, receiving financing and consultancy. More than 16,600 institutional projects have been financed between 2004 and 2008, with a value of 63 million pesos.

In this line, and with the purpose of supporting the different schooling paths of adolescents and youth, the Department of Secondary Education promotes a pedagogical policy on tutoring to be created in each jurisdiction, according to its situation, resources and priority problems at schools.

In this sense, we recognize the experience of the work developed by the National Program "*Aprender Enseñando*" (Learning through Teaching) which started to be conducted in 2003

with the aim of providing children and youth in a situation of educational, social and economic vulnerability with pedagogical and socio-affective support, so as to minimize repetition and drop-out situations and promote the reinsertion of students who have dropped-out their studies³⁵.

The proposal implies working in activities of Tutoring given by students of graduate courses at Teacher Training Institutions (IFD), public and private universities, and volunteers from civil society organizations (CSOs).

The institutions should present projects that describe the actions to be carried out in order to achieve the proposed goal, according to the characteristics of the receptors, detected by means of a diagnosis. Tutorees should be selected together with the beneficiary schools, which in turn will designate a referent teacher from the school team. More than 36,000 children and youth in the country have received the support of the program's tutors between 2004 and 2008.

Considering the need of satisfying youth's expectations and interests in the design of educational policies, the Youth Activity Centres (CAJ) were created in 2004. These centres represent meeting spaces that intend to develop education extension proposals at school related to: culture, arts, sports, community actions and school projects, construction of citizenship, with active youth participation and agreements with community organizations, with the idea of restituting the role of institution of cultural transmission to school.

The CAJ are aimed at opening at schools other spaces, other times and other forms of teaching and learning. They focused on meeting and activity spaces that respond to the needs of adolescents and youth, moments that take place outside the habitual school schedule and that are defined according to working, teaching and learning projects that intend to redefine the daily ways of connecting with our own and other's knowledge. The CAJ's management model implies students' protagonism, listening to their voices and planning the significant presence of adults that can coordinate and accompany them. It is for this reason that the management team is formed by a coordinator, selected on the basis of their past experience and ideas, and a group of youth, chosen in each course by the totality of students at school. This management team develops projects and activities from a registry of expectations of youth, the school and the community. At present, there are about a thousand CAJs in the country in which more than 97,000 youth participate.

The project "*Subite al Colectivo*" (Get on the Bus) is developed within the framework of this program. This project implies the start-up of a bus that visits places in different provinces transporting artists-teachers from various cultural expressions. During the three days that the bus stops in each visited place, workshops on different artistic and show specialties are carried out with children from communities where there are CAJs. "*Subite al colectivo*" brings nearer

³⁵ This Program is currently developed under the supervision of the INFOD.

the visited places a wide and varied menu of artistic proposals that include shows, fixed exhibitions, projections and educational workshops, incorporating local artists and the artistic proposals being developed by CAJs into the project.

At present, work is being done in the institutionalization of this initiative from the articulation CAJ – Secondary School in order to recover the contributions that this space of non-formal education can generate in the institution.

Furthermore, there is an intention of creating, implementing and articulating education inclusion programs and actions from projects based on Artistic Education such as School Orchestras. The Program of Art, Identity and Memory has started to be developed with the aim of producing and spreading Latin American socio-historic knowledge from artistic productions created by educational institutions in the country as a way of expressing identity and intercultural dialogue.

Construction of Citizenship at School

The concept of childhood proposed by the International Convention on the Rights of the Child implies a redefinition of the relationships between adults and children, especially inside institutions where they fulfill their socialization process: the family and the school. The Law 26061 has been in force in our country since 2005 and promotes the rights of children and adolescents, compelling the State and society to respect their condition of subject of rights. In this way, the *ME* intends to participate actively in the construction of an integral protection system for the rights of children and adolescents, promoting and strengthening actions tending to integration between different areas of the National State, jurisdictions, local governments and civil society organizations.

The *ME* implements actions that promote, among students, the knowledge, exercise and enforceability of their rights so as to prevent diverse forms of infringement, as well as protection and restitution actions. Moreover training is provided to technical, teaching and professional teams from different areas related to this subject matter, many of them in articulation with other Programs of this Ministry.

The Program on School Mediation was created in order to contribute to the improvement of the relationships within educational institutions and considering the problem of violence especially. The initiative is based on the need of promoting conditions that could make possible to learn the behaviours of social, pluralist and participative coexistence. The main addressees of these actions are students. There is an intention of promoting learning and the development of “skills for life”, as created by the World Health Organization. In this respect, 6,800 teachers, directors, supervisors, non-teachers and parents have received training on the basics and techniques of school mediation.

The National School Coexistence Program was created in 2004 with the mission of strengthening schools in their socializing role as institutions teaching democratic culture. This program intends to deal with problems of cultural and historical nature, which are recorded in institutional rules and are comprised within the framework of an intergenerational educational transmission in which it is necessary to recover the educational role of adults and the active participation of youth. It organizes its work in four central points: coexistence rules at schools, educational agreements between families and the school, training of directive teams on this problem, and an educational path for tutors. The Program included 4870 schools, 11 publications were developed and 55,000 copies were distributed

The Argentine Observatory of School Violence was created in 2005 with the aim of promoting the consolidation of an institutional culture that could reinforce democratic practices within the education system, as well as joining forces for the study of the problem of school violence, strengthening previously developed experiences. In this framework, research activities were carried out, such as the conduction and publication of the quantitative annual survey by means of polls on secondary students and the identification of research conducted by universities or other professional or community associations, in order to form a Network of Researchers on this theme. There was also an implementation of training workshops aimed at directors, teachers, tutors, pedagogical advisors, families, NGOs and other members of society.

At present, these four programs are integrated in the Coordination of Programs for the Construction of Citizenship at Schools.

Supportive Education

The Supportive Education Program is developed with the aim of improving the quality of education, emphasizing on the importance of a citizenship education based on participatory practice and supportive contribution to local development. This program intends to promote a pedagogical proposal of learning-service that allows students to apply the knowledge acquired in the classrooms at the service of concrete community needs.

In this respect, the intention is to articulate the supportive efforts of civil society in favour of equity and quality of education with the formal education system.

The Program has constituted a network of referents in all jurisdictions of the country. In the 13,500 schools participating in this initiative, 21,536 supportive educational experiences have been developed.

Among the fundamental actions of this program are: the annual ceremony of the Presidential Supportive Education Prizes, the organization of Jurisdictional Supportive Education Conferences; International Seminars on Supportive Learning and Service; and the promotion and accompaniment of the Board of Organizations Supportive of Education.

2.2 c Attention to cultural and social diversity

The LEN states that the national state must guarantee equality conditions, respecting the differences among people without accepting any type of discrimination. Therefore, in order to ensure the compulsory condition of education, different institutional, pedagogical and right promotion alternatives are established. These alternatives are adjusted to local and community, urban and rural requirements by means of actions that could allow reaching equivalent quality results in the whole country and in all social situations. The attention to diversity is a fundamental point in the definition of an educational policy in Argentina, and it is present both in institutional proposals, teaching learning strategies developed in classrooms, curricular designs and in teachers' training and practice.

This sections mentions different pedagogical and structural strategies that give response to diversity, guaranteeing equivalent learning opportunities for everyone.

Children and Youth with temporary or permanent disabilities

According to the LEN, Special Education, in accordance with the principle of educational inclusion, intends to provide people with disabilities, either temporary or permanent, with a pedagogical proposal that allows the full development of their possibilities, integration and full exercise of their rights.

In this sense, there has been a revision of the teaching proposals of special education and the strategies implemented for integration into common education in the early childhood and primary level. Therefore, programs are being carried out for early education with educational proposals that favour the learning development in children and make their inclusion into the education system easier.

Work is also being done in the articulation of institutional educational projects of common and special schools for revising curricular spaces and designing activities that allow the participation of students with special educational needs in workshops or specific subjects given by common schools. These instances also permit that teachers from both institutions revise and reflect on their inclusion and integration practices. Particularly directed to youth, there are actions aimed at expanding the education offer, which imply modification of curricular spaces of citizenship education, health and the world of work in order to promote reflection on their place as active citizens that participate and develop their culture. These activities represent a joint work among secondary, technical, adult and professional education schools and are carried out in the framework of "Integral Education for Adolescents and Youth with Special Educational Needs".

Intercultural Education

The creation of the Bilingual Intercultural Education modality is aimed at assuring indigenous peoples that their language and cultural identity will be respected, promoting the value of multiculturalism in the education of students.

Educational inclusion is present at every school initiative from a concept of thinking and acting based on the respect and recognition of ethnic and cultural identity. A pedagogical approach with intercultural perspective intends to reinforce the capacity of dialogue between different people, without implying that they will stop being different, as well as the construction of communication bridges that allow coming closer and expressing differences, either cultural and/or linguistic.

Considering the need of having new generations of teachers educated in the attention to and use of the cultural and linguistic diversity present in the country, there is a political wish of awarding scholarships to indigenous youth who are students of teaching and favouring inclusion of theoretical frameworks and contents of the modality itself in the curricular designs of teaching education.

The Bilingual Intercultural Program began to function in 2004. Its main objective was promoting the development of pedagogical-institutional projects whose receptors are native peoples and whose theme is centred on the strengthening of identity and of teaching and learning processes from a bilingual intercultural perspective. Actions have been aimed at recovering the knowledge of various indigenous cultures of oral tradition, providing all school libraries with material that favours intercultural work, favouring intercultural teaching education to achieve greater equality of opportunities for the indigenous population. All school libraries have been equipped with material that favours intercultural work and 40,000 scholarships have been awarded to indigenous secondary students.

Moreover, there is an intention of visualizing action strategies not only at a national level but also at a regional and Latin-American level, especially in the scope of the countries that integrate the MERCOSUR. In this way, the Bilingual Border Program started to be implemented in 2005 through the interchange of Argentine and Brazilian teachers for bilingual teaching of children at early childhood education and at the first year of primary school in Argentina and first series in Brazil. This is an Argentine Brazilian binational project for the construction of a Bilingual and Intercultural Regional Identity in the framework of cross-border cooperation. It is aimed at border schools in Argentina – Brazil (provinces of Corrientes and Misiones). Some actions were carried out in the framework of this program, such as: socio-linguistic surveys, training of teachers from the schools involved in both countries, provision of books, videos and educational materials for having bilingual libraries at schools from both countries, and creation of materials on the

common teaching project at schools in the border area, with emphasis on the teaching of Portuguese and Spanish.

Rural Education

As part of the flexibility offered by the education system to adaptations to territorial and climatic features, it is possible to recognize typical organizational models of rural areas, constituting institutions that group students of different years of study into multi-grade classrooms or into other classrooms with a regime of alternation.

The *ME* focuses its work with educational institutions on two central points. The first one consists in the form of teaching required by the multi-grade classroom and the institutional, organizational, curricular and educational matters in the different cycles and levels of the education system, including in the proposals the initial and continuous teacher training implied. The purpose is capitalizing the richness offered by the joint work of children and youth of different ages, attending to curricular diversity, which it is necessary to be considered simultaneously, and recognizing certain unity in the work from identifying common aspects. The second central point consists in the grouping of near schools in order to promote shared work among teachers, students and communities within a same area, so as to advance in the overcoming of the obstacle imposed by isolation on teaching practices and students' learning. Each rural school is tried to be thought related to other schools within its community, with the perspective of interacting in groups larger than those in which they usually participate. Different actions are planned to be organized in the framework of this groupings: instances of teacher training, convergence of students from near schools for different types of activities, participation of communities in institutional activities.

The Project *Horizontes* is implemented with the aim of promoting youth education in rural areas. This Project has been designed by the Rural Education Area and the *Encuentro* Channel as an alternative for 60,000 students from 4,000 rural schools to have secondary education in the place they live since the year 2008. It represents an education offer for youth to be able to learn, accompanied by their teachers and using printed materials of each of the curricular areas (Language, Math, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences) called notebooks for study, TV programmes, libraries, educational materials and the *Encuentro* Channel's website.

The TV programmes and notebooks for study, which will be progressively incorporated into the web, will be shared by students and teachers, but in each rural school will be probably used by all the community. The eagerness to know and the importance of school for rural families favour the fact that this experience becomes a meeting opportunity, beyond the school class.

Teaching Education

The attention to cultural and social diversity is also contemplated in the design of policies on teaching education and professional development. There are education paths at the Higher Level specific for teachers to be able to provide a quality education for everyone, in accordance with the special features of the populations or contexts in which they work. A clear example of this is the recently created course of “Higher Specialization in Rural Education for Primary Level” aimed at rural teachers in all the country.

A social and humanistic area has also been developed for higher education, through the creation of new higher technical courses in: Social Economy and Local Development, Pedagogy and Social Education, Socio-Cultural Management and Public Administration oriented to Local Development. Specific curricular contents were designed for these courses, through consulting boards with diverse state organisms and representatives from the academic, educational and working fields.

2.3. Intersectorial inclusion policies

Considering the complexity of the problem of exclusion in our country and facing the need of conducting joint and integral actions with other areas of the State and the civil society, the *ME* implements the following policies:

National Childhood Development Program “*Primeros Años*”

It was created with the aim of installing a public policy that could develop an integral approach to childhood development for the attention of early childhood in its familiar and community context.

In the articulation of the *ME*, the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Health, this program intends to reach families in their role of promoters of childhood development and communities with information, accompaniment and resources in order for the familiar groups to be able to recover their protagonist role in children upbringing. This instance of national articulation is repeated in the formation of Jurisdictional Interministerial Boards, in which some actions are present, such as the selection of locations where actions are going to be carried out or the formation of Technical Teams.

A process of training, technical assistance and accompaniment of the working processes of technical teams has been created by the nation in order to develop and strengthen interinstitutional practices of an integral approach to childhood development. Facilitators are selected and trained in each location with the aim of accompanying families in children upbringing, strengthening support networks among them and creating social mobility around local development promotion initiatives for children from 0 to 4 years old.

- The program is developed in 47 locations, where intersectorial local boards were formed, and in which Schools, Kindergartens, Health Centres, Community Centres, Civil Society Organizations and City Councils articulate.
- 3,600 facilitators have been trained and working material (guides, cards, notebooks, video, etc.) has been provided to them and to the previously mentioned institutions.
- 150,000 families are estimated to have become interested by means of this work.

Strategies to combat child labour

The legislation in force demands the implementation of active policies that guarantee equality of opportunities for all children. In the year 2000, The National Commission for Eradication of Child Labour (CONAETI) was created, a space of convergence for all national ministries, representatives of the world of work (chamber of industrials and trade unions) and representatives of the Argentine Episcopal Conference.

Moreover, UNICEF and the International Program for Eradication of Child Labour (IPEC) participate as advisors. This commission has promoted the creation of Provincial Commissions for Eradication of Child Labour, therefore, at present, most provinces have them.

The *ME* recognizes family and child labour among the external causes that motivate school drop-out. In some cases, the familiar group, in view of the poor resources that they have, gives priority to survival and relegates their children's education. In some cases, the central point in the life of youth is being able to enter into the labour market, but the lack of a school certificate conditions the type of position they can access. Informal employment, unsteady and intermittent, hinders any possibility of personal election, learning, growth and progress. With the idea of adding resources to eradicate child labour, within the framework of the CONAETI, the *ME* signed, in the year 2007, an agreement with the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security with the aim of achieving education inclusion of children that do not go to school due to their early incorporation to the labour world.

The *ME* has created a new line of action of the National Program of Education Inclusion for all those children detected in labour situations by the inspection areas of the Ministry of Labour or the provincial administrations. This contribution does not only consist in a scholarship but also in pedagogical support in the curricular areas and a joint work with schools and civil society organizations.

The Ministry of labour, in turn, commits to help parents or adults in charge of these children to get a job in the framework of the National Employment Program and give them support in the job search.

It is important to emphasize that many jurisdictions have modified their regulations with the aim of contemplating the specific characteristics of rural life, the work of families and their

transfers. Having more schedule flexibility and offering forms of acceleration and leveling, many youth were able to incorporate into school at different times of the year.

Management in association with Community Social Organization

The model of economic and political concentration that started in the middle of the 70s and deepened in the 90s, was characterized by, among other things, a redefinition of the State's position and functions. In that context, many community social organizations (CSO) advanced in the development of tasks that before were exclusively from the state. Today, joint actions are promoted between the State and the CSOs, and especially in this Ministry. In this shared work, it is required that everyone assumes its role and responsibilities.

The *ME* developed a new management model in which the State and the CSOs work together, both at national and jurisdictional and local level. In the local field, state organisms are integrated with CSOs in local coordination boards (Mecol) with the purpose of inviting all community referents or promoters interested in accompanying children's inclusion processes to get closer to schools.

Schools could not go to look for the children who had dropped out their studies. The national State, in itself, was not able to reach every location, every home, every family to find the children who did not attend classes. We realized about this need of working together. The sense of working with organizations is facilitating the fact that schools open up to the community, recovering practices of popular education, strengthening articulation strategies between formal and non-formal education, and generating mechanisms of participation at different instances. In this way, each school, through its local coordination board, designs an inclusion project.

- In 2006, it was decided to allocate funds to the support of more dynamic organizations that acted locally and formed the local coordination boards.
- The objective was to increase coverage in the diffusion and call for children and youth. At the moment of thinking of this network, it was stated that the organizations integrating it would receive a benefit for the promotion of education inclusion in their communities, as a way of accompanying the work they did.
- Finally, the Social Organizations Network for Education Inclusion was created. 220 CSOs from all provinces participate in it.
- The figure of the inclusion promoter was created. This is a person that belongs to a social organization and would be in charge of promoting education inclusion in a specific area.

Reproductive Health Education

In 2006, the Reproductive Health Education Law created the Comprehensive Reproductive Health Education Program, within the framework of which a set of actions aimed at guaranteeing the right of all students to receive comprehensive Reproductive Health Education at public, state and private educational institutions in the whole country were started.

The program integrates two lines of work that contain articulation strategies with CSOs and joint actions between the Ministries of Education and Health.

In this sense, in the Ministry of Education, two projects of Reproductive Health Education and Prevention of HIV/AIDS, which are focused on the promotion and implementation of intersectoriality, are being developed:

a) The National Program of Prevention of HIV/AIDS at school, supported by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, is aimed at contributing to the promotion of rights, comprehensive Reproductive Health Education and prevention of HIV/AIDS among adolescents receiving education in the country.

The program promotes the formation and strengthening of provincial intersectorial teams in the north-eastern and north-western regions of Argentina and of articulation with CSOs in the development of local projects and actions about Reproductive Health Education and prevention of HIV/AIDS in the school environment. Institutional projects are developed at schools participating of this program with the aim of dealing with these themes by including their curricular, institutional and community insertion. The CSOs carry out training and follow-up activities for young multipliers, through meetings at schools, assessment actions and systematization of the prevention actions.

b) In articulation with the Ministry of Health, the *ME* is integrated to the Regional Project of Harmonization of Public Policies for promotion of the rights to health, Reproductive Health Education and prevention of HIV 2007-2009, developed by UNAIDS, and the International Centre for Technical Cooperation (ICTC-HIV/AIDS) and the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) in Argentina.

Among the different lines of action currently carried out are: formation and strengthening of intersectorial technical teams –composed by referents of the Ministries of Health and Education and the civil society- through meetings, training and planning. Provincial intersectorial teams receive technical and financial support from the national team in order to carry out training actions aimed at directors and teachers and to provide schools with accompaniment and orientation actions with the purpose of developing school institutional projects. The Project distributes bibliographic material for teachers and technical teams and produces and implements monitoring and assessment instruments for the actions planned.

Far from “paco” and inside classrooms

In 2007, the *ME* signed an agreement with some CSOs with the aim of facilitating the educational attention of children and youth who are in therapeutic centres for receiving the necessary treatment to overcome their addictions. These social organizations are aimed at assisting children admitted to these centres due to drug use, especially “cocaine base” or “paco”³⁶. The paco appeared as an economic option for those who did not have access to other drugs. In the beginning of 2006, the use of this substance expanded throughout the poorest suburbs of the City of Buenos Aires and the Province of Buenos Aires.

The agreement with the Ministry was made in order to generate joint actions for offering education to this population, who are in closed institutions in a rehabilitation process. These children cannot go to school and that is why the school should go to them.

With the aim of dealing with this problem, associated work is being done between the national programs of Education Inclusion, Education in Contexts of Deprivation of Liberty and Learning through Teaching. Scholarships, tutors, bibliographic and technological materials, teacher training are provided and monitoring actions are carried out. The teaching facilitator, in this case, goes to the therapeutic community and is the link with the educational institution. The objective is to work with children who are in rehabilitation but also with those surrounding them, in the neighbourhood, at a high risk of using this type of substances.

³⁶ Paco is a cheap street drug made from the residues of cocaine, processed with kerosene and sulphuric acid (chloroform, ether or potassium carbonate are occasionally used).

■ 3.Challenges and perspectives for the future

During these four years, many educational problems of the country have been solved, we are in the way to solve others, and there are still debts to be tackled. The agenda of problems and challenges as well as the conditions being opened for the future will be faced with significantly different difficulties compared to the previous stage. It is necessary to continue incorporating the educational challenges posed by the construction of a fairer society in the context of contemporary technological, cultural and social changes.

There have always been central points that helped to think of the aims, definitions and the sense of education. The agreement on the aim of studying has been modified throughout history. In this stage, it can be noticed that we are facing a new point change. The sense of education must be another: educating for creating a fairer society, educating for achieving social justice.

We know that the educational history in the continent, and in Argentina in particular, has been characterized by complex struggles among democratizing, egalitarian, integrating and authoritarian, excluding attempts. These tensions are on the basis of our social, economic, political and cultural system; and as a consequence in our education system and school practices. A policy has been promoted knowing that a democratic educational Project is constructed from the recognition of equality of rights and the gradual creation of the conditions for all youth to have the same opportunities. One of the main challenges is that of not generating governmental circumstantial policies, but State policies that guarantee its continuity in time. In our country the education inclusion policy has been included in the LEN as a goal to be reached, and today is a heritage of all citizens.

The development of ICTs presents huge challenges for institutions and the people in charge of educating the new generations. If new technologies are ways of thinking, interacting and getting information, the school must be in charge of these new cultural experiences, incorporating them and using them productively. Moreover, the universal access to the wide control of ICTs is a necessary condition for the achievement of social and educational equality. It will also be important to advance in the modification of the regulatory framework of higher and university education, and in the development of innovations that allow turning schools into spaces where we could achieve that students from all levels could act as citizens committed to democracy and justice.

Improving our students' learning conditions substantially, strengthening their schooling paths and guaranteeing equality in those opportunities, constitutes the main challenge for our country's educational policy. In this respect, it will be necessary to maintain a sustained economic inversion aimed at improving teaching conditions, teachers' working conditions, their initial and continuous training, school's infrastructure and equipment.

Achieving educational universalization for all children and youth in the age range of compulsory education is, undoubtedly, the first essential goal to be reached, but the fact that they are inside school is not enough, the real challenge is reaching an inclusion with educational quality, paying attention to the diversity of the population.

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- *Ley del Fondo Nacional de Incentivo Docente N° 25.919*
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- www.me.gov.ar (National Ministry of Education)
- www.educ.ar (*Educ.ar* Websit)
- www.encuentro.gov.ar (*Encuentro* Channel)

■ 5. Abbreviations:

CAJ	Youth Activity Centre (Centro de Actividades Juveniles)
CFE	Federal Council of Education (Consejo Federal de Educación)
CONAETI	National Commission for Eradication of Child Labour (Comisión Nacional para la Erradicación del Trabajo Infantil)
CONICET	National Scientific and Technical Research Council (Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas)
DINIECE	National Department of Information and Assessment of Educational Quality (Dirección Nacional de Información y Evaluación de la Calidad Educativa)
DNPS	National Department of Socio-educational Policies (Dirección Nacional de Políticas Socioeducativas)
FinEs	Plan for Completion of Primary and Secondary Studies (Plan de Finalización de Estudios Primarios y Secundarios)
FOPIE	Pedagogical Strengthening of Schools of the Integral Program for Education Equality (Fortalecimiento Pedagógico de las Escuelas del Programa Integral para la Igualdad Educativa)
IFD	Teacher Training Institution (Instituto de Formación Docente)
INET	National Institute of Technological Education (Instituto Nacional de Educación Tecnológica)
INFOD	National Teacher Training Institute (Instituto Nacional de Formación Docente)
INTI	National Institute of Industrial Technology (Instituto Nacional de Tecnología Industrial)
ISFD	Instituto Superior de Formación Docente
LEF	Federal Education Law (year 1993) (Ley Federal de Educación)
LEN	National Education Law (año 2006) (Ley de Educación Nacional)
ME	National Ministry of Education (Ministerio de Educación de la Nación)
MECyT	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (From December 10th 2007, National Ministry of Education) (Ministerio de Educación, Ciencia y Tecnología)
MERCOSUR	Common Market of the South (Mercado Común del Sur)
MINCYT	Ministry of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation

	(Ministerio de Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación Productiva)
NAPs	Priority Core Learning (Núcleos de Aprendizajes Prioritarios)
NBI	Unsatisfied Basic Needs (Necesidades Básicas Insatisfechas)
OSC	Civil Society Organizations
PAC	Scientific Literacy Program (Programa de Alfabetización Científica)
PIB	Gross Domestic Product (Producto Interno Bruto)
PIIE	Integral Program for Education Equality (Programa Integral para la Igualdad Educativa)
PNBE	National Scholarship Program (Programa Nacional de Becas Estudiantiles)
PNIE	National Program of Education Inclusion (Programa Nacional de Inclusión Educativa)
TICs	Information and Communication Technology

6. Appendix

Table 1: Enrolment of compulsory common education by year of study in accordance with the structure established by the LEN.

Year 2007

	Year of education	Enrolment
Initial Education		687.356
1 st grade Primary Education		817.628
2 nd grade Primary Education		792.167
3 rd grade Primary Education		769.523
4 th grade Primary Education		768.510
5 th grade Primary Education		763.459
6 th grade Primary Education		734.002
1 st year Secondary Education	7 th grade Primary Education	759.497
2 nd year Secondary Education	1 st year Secondary Education	744.313
3 rd year Secondary Education	2 nd year Secondary Education	608.701
4 th year Secondary Education	3 rd year Secondary Education	570.297
5 th year Secondary Education	4 th year Secondary Education	433.070
6 th year Secondary Education	5 th year Secondary Education	336.807
7 th year Secondary Education Technical	6 th year Secondary Education Technical	11.902

Source: Annual Survey 2007 (Provisional data). DiNIECE. Ministry of Education.

Table 2: Amount of students by type of education – Year 2007

	Type of education			
	Common	Special	Adult	Artistic
Total Country	9.475.450	79.872	661.161	7.209

Source: Annual Survey 2007 (Provisional data). DiNIECE. Ministry of Education.

Cuadro 3: Amount of schools by type of education – Year 2007

	Type of education			
	Common	Special	Adult	Artistic
Total Country	43.475	1.481	6.775	170

Source: Annual Survey 2007 (Provisional data). DiNIECE. Ministry of Education.

Table 4: Net schooling rate for Primary Level in the population from 6 to 12 years old

	Net schooling rate				
	1960	1970	1980	1991	2001
Total Country	85.6	87.7	90.1	95.1	97.9

Source: Population Censuses

Table 5: Net schooling rate for Secondary Level in the population from 13 to 17 years old, according to jurisdiction

	Net schooling rate		
	1980	1991	2001
Total Country	42.2	59.3	71.5

Source: Population Censuses

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