HEADLINES  Social mix, equality between women and men, disability, a review point of diversity in ParisTech’s schools

CHRISTIAN LERMINIAUX  President of ParisTech

EDITORIAL

In February, ParisTech launched a survey on how its brand, values and actions are perceived. Open Not only were ParisTech schools students, their alumni, their administrative and academic staff, and their PhD candidates invited to participate; the invitation was also extended to teachers and students in high schools and preparatory classes (the “Classes Préparatoires aux Grandes Écoles”), institutions, research operators, companies, the media, and communication agencies; in the end, it collected over 5,000 replies.

The results will be processed by the ENSAE’s Junior Entreprise and released in June.

What strikes one at first glance is the number of students and alumni who responded to the survey: they accounted for 90% of respondents, all schools taken together. They were questioned regarding ParisTech’s renown, its links with their school, its positioning compared to other networks; they overwhelmingly gave their opinions through numerous comments that represent a wealth of information for our schools.

So see you in June, to learn all the lessons this survey has for us, to hear what our students and alumni have to tell us, and to support our strategy and actions concerning this very valuable feedback.

YVES POILANE, chairman of ParisTech’s Diversity Commission, director of Télécom ParisTech;

BÉNÉDICTE HUMBERT, director of the Institut Villebon-Georges Charpak;

YVON GAIGNEBET, person in charge of Mines ParisTech’s Cordées de la réussite

What are ParisTech’s major actions in favour of diversity?

YP: Historically, diversity – particularly the question of social openness – lies at the core of ParisTech’s actions, which first accompanied and set up the Cordées de la réussite, a shared initiative between several schools and was later behind the Institut Villebon-Georges Charpak, which is dedicated specifically to promoting equal opportunities.

Within the Diversity Commission, ParisTech schools get together to consider possible ways of addressing these complex issues. For example, news of the Weinstein case and the events surrounding it, the movements focused on sexual harassment and violence against women, have prompted us to question with greater intensity our attitudes regarding the issue of gender equality, where we had been focusing more on social diversity.

Can you tell us more about the Cordées de la réussite? How is that going today?

YG: The Cordées de la réussite were launched in 2008 by the Ministry of Higher Education. But as early as 2003, Mines ParisTech had launched high-school tutoring sessions that foreshadowed what the Cordées would be. Today, the school offers 5 certified paths. Through various programs, our engineering students accompany grade-, middle-, high- and preparatory-school students. Thus, nearly 1,000 young people are helped each year through tutoring, school support, cultural openness…

One in two of our school students participates, in one way or another, in this social-openness issue.

Are any of the Cordées de la réussite common to several ParisTech schools?

YG: Most of ParisTech’s schools have their own paths, with specific programs that meet the Ministry’s specifications. But there are no common paths anymore. On the other hand, each year, we hold a Day for all the 11th- and 12th-grade students of those institutions which are ParisTech Cordées partners. We welcomed over 300 young people to Mines ParisTech last January 19th, with conferences animated by teachers from the ParisTech schools and an orientation forum that brought ParisTech schools together with preparatory classes, technical college students (“Brevet de Technicien Supérieur”), and the Institut Villebon-Georges Charpak.
What about the Institut Villebon-Georges Charpak? Where did it come from? What are its goals?

YP: The Institute was born out of the desire to diversify the profile of graduate engineers to go further than the Cordées de la réussite, reaching out also to young people who do not have much of a very academic profile but who are creative, curious, interested in science, who like to work as a team, are self-willed...

BH: We soon realized that we had to look for these young people at the senior high-school level to create a path to the Bachelor’s degree. So schools got together with partner universities Paris Descartes and Paris Sud. We have mixed school-university teaching teams with a blend of cultures that allows us to create an atypical, very generalist and experimental program with strong support for the student’s professional project.

How many students do you coach? What do they become?

BH: We receive classes consisting of 30 to 40 students. Their educational level when they come in matters little. The students are selected on the basis of teachers’ assessment of their school reports and an application file that reveals their personality through as objective a grid as possible. The students come out of generalist and technological senior highs (STI2D, STL, STAV) and present very diversified profiles. We have a fifty/fifty mix of males and females, and 16% are young people with disabilities. 70% of the students receive scholarships.

After the Bachelor’s, 94% of our students go on to a Master’s, in the Grandes Écoles (France’s top graduate schools), obtaining professional degrees in a wide range of fields (environment, civil engineering, biology, physics, chemistry...).

What is the involvement of ParisTech’s schools in the Institute?

BH: Each school is involved in a variety of ways: assessment, access to staff and teacher-researchers, help recruitment assistance, tutoring of engineering students, welcoming of interns, conference organization...

The schools are members of the Strategic Committee and part of the governance.

20% of the Institute’s students join the engineering cycle of one of ParisTech’s schools in parallel admission.

Finally, the ParisTech Foundation plays a very important role in bringing us patrons who support the Institute.

Getting back to the gender-equality issue, what avenues of reflection are you pursuing?

YP: Women are a minority in 7 schools of 10 ParisTech schools. Young women, who are traditionally drawn more to agronomy and chemistry, only account for 30 to 50% of the student body in AgroParisTech, ChimieParisTech and ESPCI Paris. The rates in the other schools vary from 15% to 30%. So we carried out a study to address the gender-equality issue in our schools, and we organized a workshop dedicated to this topic, open to all ParisTech staff and students, on March 18th.

Experience sharing brings results. It allows us to realize that we mustn’t let any opportunity pass by, that we must structure communication so as to allow young women to share their experiences and provide them with support. Young men must be made aware that certain things are inappropriate so that young women feel comfortable in our schools, if we wish to attract more of them!

It’s hard to shift the lines, and the figures are stable. Measures focus especially on the furthering of young women in communication, parity in school governance, media coverage of noteworthy paths. We must wage a global fight against stereotypes...

Are other actions being implemented?

YP: Diversity levers are not easy to use. On the issue of social openness, the number of students from modest backgrounds decreases as one goes higher up the educational ladder. That’s why, in Télécom ParisTech, I took the initiative of working upstream of the major schools, the preparatory classes, scientific diplomas and technical university degrees. In partnership with Article 1 and the Institut Télémaque, we have spent the last year mobilizing Télécom ParisTech graduates to intervene as far upstream as possible in the educational chain. Some thirty alumni of the school mentor young middle-school students from modest backgrounds with guidance assistance, cultural openness, and possibly family-coordinated school support. Of course, this program will hopefully extend to all ParisTech schools.

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THE PORTRAIT

MARIE REBEYROLLE
ParisTech diversity delegate

What is your career path?

Since I studied philosophy, I “naturally” became a teacher of philosophy in high school. But after three years, I couldn’t see myself spending my whole life in school and I wanted to discover the world! So I chose and changed trades and companies several times: strategic planner at Publicis, consultant in internal communication at Havas, director of communications and later director of the consulting and reflection club at the ENSPTT, director of the Internal University of leaders of the Kering Group... All these experiences nurtured my expertise in change support and coaching, which has become my core business for the last fifteen years.

Of course, with a Master of Advanced Studies in philosophy and another in psychoanalysis as my initial training, I’ve always been fascinated by how humans function, about human relations, about collectives. That’s why I went back to school and started a PhD at the EHESS, under the supervision of Marc Augé, when I’d just been hired at the ENSPTT, and since 2005, I am a doctor in social anthropology and ethnology.

Today, through my firm, Carré Pluriel, founded in 2011, I offer my skills in anthropology, applied to change assistance, to organizations.

What is your mission as a Diversity Delegate?

First, to help lead the Diversity Commission and, more broadly speaking, the question of diversity in ParisTech’s schools. This, of course, entails organizing quarterly meetings, but also collective sessions such as Women-Men Equality workshop (“Women-Men Equality”) workshop in March 2019. It’s also a matter of animating co-construction dynamics in order to respond to the appetite of diversity referents for the exchange of experiences or, in some cases, the pooling of measures, on subjects as diverse as the operation of the Cordées or the organization of conferences and of travelling exhibitions.

What are the main challenges of this mission?

For an anthropologist, the subject of diversity illustrates the functioning of our societies, combining collective hierarchies and the individualization of pathways. How can one find one’s way in this? What are the realities, the representations, the levers?... That’s one of the challenges of my mission: to be able to bring an anthropological outlook that can make sense. That’s also what makes it exciting. Contributing to shift the lines, even infinitely, is extremely stimulating!
Diversity

The ParisTech schools welcomed nearly 300 general or technological high-school students of the 11th and 12th grades on January 19th at MINES ParisTech during the Day of the ParisTech Schools’ Cordées de la réussite. Students attended scientific lectures given by teacher-researchers from the schools, and were able to meet with students during the Forum. Several Ile-de-France establishments (Henri Bergson and Buffon lycées in Paris, Marcel Pagnol lycée in Athis-Mons, Parc des Loges lycée in Evry, Louise Michel lycée in Bobigny, Jean Jaurès lycée in Argenteuil, Darius Milhaud lycée, Arago lycée in Villeneuve-Saint-Georges) and the E. Branly lycée in Dreux were represented.

ParisTech’s member schools have been exchanging students for over ten years. These exchanges and/or substitutions of courses and/or teaching units between schools involve students who are entering the last year of the engineering cycle, students repeating one year of the engineering cycle, and doctoral candidates. A survey of the last five years (2013-2018) reveals that 95 students (including double degrees) were involved over this period: 25 engineering students, 14 Master’s students, 6 PhD candidates, 50 double-degree engineers. In the lead are AgroParisTech, which hosted 45 students (23 in double degrees), the ESPCI Paris with 31 students (25 in double degrees), and the École des Ponts ParisTech (17).

ParisTech strengthens its cooperation with Russia. Last December, the schools selected 17 students to arrive in Paris in September 2020; Cécile Vigouroux (ENSTA ParisTech) has handed the reins of the Russia jury chairmanship to Fethi Bedioui (Chimie ParisTech). In January, ParisTech hosted a delegation from Novosibirsk State University, with which several schools are renewing or signing a double-degree agreement. Christian Lerminiaux was invited and attended the celebrations of the 120th anniversary of St. Petersburg’s Peter the Great Polytechnic University in February.

International Actions

International Agreements
Agreement on academic cooperation signed with the USP-Polytechnic School, Brazil
Renewal of the SMILE Agreement with the National Polytechnic Institute (IPN), Mexico
Partnership agreement with the São Carlos School of Engineering of the University of São Paulo, Brazil

Travels
Bucharest: Annual meeting and General Assembly of CESAER October 17th to 19th 2018
Madrid: Meeting of EELISA Consortium (European University) January 28th and 29th 2019

Welcoming Delegations
Delegation of the University of Mines and Technology (UMaT), Ghana November 20th 2018

ATHENS General Assembly December 14th 2018
Delegation of the Novosibirsk State University (NSU) January 30th 2019

Teaching

To be published in the Journal des Grandes Écoles: A ParisTech special scheduled for late April or early May. Distributed in the Grandes Écoles, universities and CPGE, this special issue will introduce ParisTech’s ten schools with an interview of each director, profiles of students, presentations by student associations. The angle of this dossier: to illustrate the specifics of each of our schools, but also what we have in common and the actions we have been implementing together for the past 20 years. This special issue will be made available in all ParisTech schools.

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Teaching

On January 29th, 2019, on the ParisTech Foundation’s premises, was held the annual meeting of patrons of the Institut Villebon-Georges Charpak, which offers a general “Science and Technology” degree to young graduates with vulnerable academic paths, to enable them to obtain quality scientific training in an engineering school.

In addition to their financial contributions, partner companies support students through corporate visits, trade conferences, CV workshops, and mentoring.

Since its creation in 2013, over one million euros has been raised for the Institute. Recognized as a pilot structure in educational innovation thanks to the IDEFI label, it was honored with a visit from Cédric Villani on November 5th, 2018.

International Foundations

On February 27th, 4 ParisTech Schools – Chimie ParisTech, École des Ponts ParisTech, ENSTA ParisTech, MINES ParisTech – presented the EELISA (European Engineering Learning Innovation and Science Alliance) European university project under the coordination of the Polytechnic University of Madrid (UPM), in partnership with the Budapest University of Technology and Economics (BME), the Friedrich-Alexander University of Erlangen-Nuremberg (FAU), the Bucharest Polytechnic University (UPB), the Istanbul Technical University (ITU), and in association with the ENAAE (European Network for Accreditation of Engineering Education).

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IN THE SCHOOLS

AgroParisTech

AgroParisTech is launching a MOOC dedicated to the environmental performance of food products. Growth in the organic-food market, local products, GMO-free, Vegan, gluten-free, recyclable packaging, sustainability charters ... both the food market and consumer expectations are evolving rapidly. The ADEME and AgroParisTech, with the support of Agrénium, are launching a free MOOC for stakeholders of the agri-food sector, to foster environmental-performance and eco-design initiatives.

Chimie ParisTech

Starting with the Spring 2019 examinations, admission to Chimie ParisTech for students in the MP and PC preparatory classes will be through the Common Mines and Bridges Competition (“Concours Commun Mines Ponts”, or CCMP). This change was sought in order to diversify the profile of students and facilitate openness and interactions of chemical engineers with other disciplines. It is part of the new strategy currently being deployed by Chimie ParisTech, the first engineering school specialising in chemistry in France.

École des Ponts ParisTech

The École des Ponts ParisTech is launching a new "Supply Chain of the Future" chair with the support of Renault group, Louis Vuitton, the Casino group and the Michelin group. This new chair, with a 4-year duration, associates the École des Ponts ParisTech and 4 industrial partners which, through coming from different sectors, have a common objective: to foster training, innovation and research in the Supply Chain field. The purpose of this chair is to meet the challenges of tomorrow’s Supply Chain. The impact of new technologies will be explored in depth, and new uses will be proposed for the Internet of things, data science, blockchain... The signing of the partnership agreement took place on February 14th, 2019, at the Maisons des Ponts in Paris.

Arts et Métiers ParisTech

Arts et Métiers was mobilized for the 9th edition of Industry Week, from March 18th to 24th. The results of the “Youth and Industry” barometer were disseminated and some 30 events were organized around 4 themes to enhance the activities and the close relationships with companies in the various regions: Training that anticipates technological needs; A school focused on engineering professions; Attractive and innovative professions; A school immersed in tomorrow’s industry; A responsible, connected industry; A school suited to accompany tomorrow’s entrepreneurs.

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ENSTA ParisTech

On December 19th, 2018, the sponsorship ceremony for ENSTA ParisTech’s 2020 class was also the occasion for the school and its new sponsor, ARQUUS – formerly Renault Truck Defense and the leader in Defense’s ground mobility – to celebrate the creation of the “Defense Innovation” teaching chair, also supported by the ParisTech Foundation. Dedicated to the innovation and engineering of complex systems in the military-vehicle sector, it responds to a growing demand from the school’s students, eager to broaden their skills by training in the on technologies and major challenges of systems engineering in high-tech fields such as hybridization or vehicle automation.

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