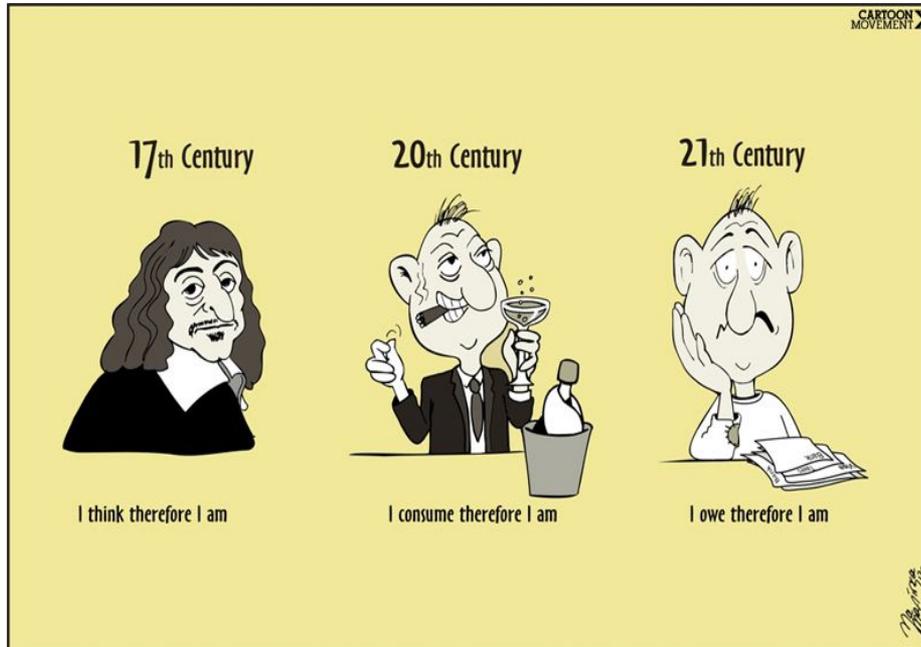


Philosophy as enriching element in the European Curriculum

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What is a European School?

The European Schools are official educational establishments controlled jointly by the governments of the Member States of the European Union. In all these countries they are legally regarded as public institutions. The mission of the European School system is to provide a broad education of high quality, from nursery level to university entrance and offer an opportunity for pupils to stay connected with their Mother Tongue while being educated in a multi-lingual and multi-cultural environment, to become open minded citizens.

European Schools in The Netherlands:

the European School of Bergen (www.esbergen.eu)

the European School of The Hague (<http://www.europeanschoolofthehague.nl>)



What is the European Baccalaureate (EB)?

- The secondary school course is validated by the European Baccalaureate examinations at the end of the seventh class. The certificate awarded is fully recognised in all the countries of the European Union, as well as in a number of others. Those awarded the certificate have the same rights and benefits as other holders of school-leaving certificates in their countries, including the same right as nationals with equivalent qualifications to seek admission to any university or institution of higher education in the European Union. (in the Netherlands, the EB is equivalent to the so-called *VWO diploma*)
- it contains the following *obligatory* subjects in the final two years: Language 1, Language 2, Mathematics, History, Geography, **Philosophy**



Philosophy as part of the EB

- Philosophy is a compulsory subject in the two final years of secondary.
So: all EB students study Philosophy for two years, starting from scratch. According to the Statute of the European Schools, Philosophy 'belongs to the cultural and intellectual heritage of Europe'; countries like France and Italy wouldn't have recognised the EB if it hadn't included Philosophy.
- Students can either follow the compulsory 2 period Course or opt to do a 4 period Advanced Philosophy Course
- Philosophy is taught in 1st or 2nd language
- The Philosophy course:
 - is identical across the language sections
 - leads to the same examination: the European Baccalaureate.



The Syllabus for the 2 weekly period Course contains the following Fields:

1. *Perception, knowledge and truth*: epistemology (what do I know? senses vs intellect; truth, certainty etc.), philosophy of science (distinction between natural science and humanities, different methods being used, distinction between pure science and applied science etc.)
2. *Man: cultural and moral being*: antropology (who am I? cultural identity, mind body dilemma, etc.), ethics (what are my duties? do I have a right to happiness? free will vs determinism etc.)
3. *Society and Politics*: political philosophy (foundation of the legal state, democracy and how it works etc.)



Syllabus for the 4 weekly period Course: contains the following Fields:

1. Perception, knowledge and truth: epistemology, philosophy of science
2. Human beings, others values: antropology, ethics
3. Society and the state, law and politics: political philosophy

These three fields are treated more systematically than in the 2 period course, with emphasis on a detailed reading and interpretation of texts, the development of philosophical language and philosophical argumentation.

4. Nature and Technology: environmental ethics, globalisation of information technology and its consequences etc.



What are the objectives of the teaching of Philosophy?

1. To impart **Knowledge** (history of philosophy; concepts; life and work of great philosophers etc.): in this way students structure their own ideas by learning how to use the ideas of great thinkers, past and present.
2. To stimulate **Reflection** (on the major questions of life and contemporary society): the students learn to ask questions without expecting definite answers, they discover themselves as consumer, thinker, moral agent, critical citizen, etc.
3. To teach **Civic Competence / 'Burgerschapskunde'** : particularly knowledge of social and political concepts and structures (democracy, justice, equality, citizenship, civil rights), it equips individuals to engage in active and democratic participation (this is one of the eight so-called Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, as recommended by the European Parliament in 2006), see: <http://keyconet.eun.org/eu-policy>

Testimonials from students:



- "I learnt how to **think** for myself, out of the box"
- "It enriched my life and I would recommend it to anyone and everyone"
- "I became politically aware"
- "Thanks to Sartre, I have realized I am a true existentialist"
- "It allows us to grow up faster than other people of our age"
- "I became more open to the mindsets of atheists"