
Editorial: Pluralist economics education in France

The Members of the PEPS-Economie Students' Association

PEPS-Economie,
C/O Arthur Jatteau, 15 rue René Boulanger, 75020 Paris, France
Email: pepseconomie@gmail.com

Since 2010 our student-led initiative has championed a pluralistic education in economics. An essential stakeholder in the French field of economics higher education, often quoted in the media as well as by French economists and auditioned by officials from the Ministry of Higher Education, we owe this reputation to the evidence-based study of existing economics curricula undertaken in 2013, and to the successful organisation of the Estates General of economics education, held at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS, Paris) in April 2013.

Our actions put economics education on the agenda of the Ministry of Higher Education and Research. The Minister entrusted the Hautcoeur Commission with the important task of mapping of economics education and research, and setting out specific recommendations. Auditioned by this Commission in November 2013, we were pleasantly surprised by the report subsequently issued in June 2014. Indeed, the Commission members accepted a significant portion of our recommendations; although we are somewhat skeptical about the specific implementation of these recommendations.

PEPS-Economie helped globalise the fight for pluralism and is a founding member of International Student Initiative for Pluralism in Economics (ISIPE) and an initiator of the global open letter issued in May 2014 bringing to the fore economics education at a world scale (see <http://www.isipe.net/open-letter/>). Initially, about 20 groups from 20 countries, ISIPE consists now of 65 groups from 30 countries and has attracted worldwide media coverage, indicating the widespread discontentment with economics education.

PEPS-Economie took part in the 1st General Assembly of ISIPE in Tübingen (Germany) in September 2014 – a unique opportunity to meet with students committed to a pluralistic economics education from all over the world. It was also an opportunity to launch several projects at a global scale. Our most ambitious project within the ISIPE is a detailed study of economics curricula in most of the involved countries. Such a study will allow us to objectify our feelings about the lack of pluralism in teaching and provide evidence to support our claims; and we feel it has potential to be a game changer in the fight of pluralism. This work draws on the detailed study undertaken by PEPS-Economie in France in 2012.

In an article originally published in the journal *L'Économie politique* in April 2013 and whose English version is made available here for the first time, the PEPS-Economie members dedicated themselves to two interconnected tasks: First, they documented the urgent need for more pluralism by taking a close look at today's economics curricula in all French universities (50 universities total); and second, they designed a curriculum committed to a strong conception of pluralism. Although this survey is limited to France,

given the high degree of similarity in economics curricula from one country to another, we hope that it will inspire supporters of pluralism in economics education. Our work was undertaken with very modest means – mostly the good will of PEPS members using their own computers on their own time. We did not require any funding and thus feel such a study could be replicated in other countries.

We hope this editorial and the accompanying article inspires others to carry out similar studies and help energise the fight for pluralism.