



**Opening Session**  
**Contribution by Minister of Education Claude Meisch**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Global Education Industry Summit – Schools at the**  
**crossroads of innovation in cities and regions**

Luxembourg  
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Dear Commissioner,  
dear Ministers,  
dear colleagues,

It is a pleasure for me to open this conference and I am honoured to welcome you as the host of the third Global Education Industry Summit in Luxembourg.

If Luxembourg is by many considered to be the heart of Europe, the European Convention Centre symbolizes this in an excellent manner: It not only hosted the first European Parliament, it also regularly brings together policy makers and offers a marvellous context for the meetings of the Council of the European Union.

The European Convention Centre is one of those places where Europe, as we know it today, has been invented. And the construction of the European Union in the aftermath of the Second World War is arguably the most important innovative



idea that the people of this continent came up with during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Ever since, it has been a guarantee for a peaceful and thriving eco-system. The Kirchberg, the plateau on which the convention centre is sitting is home to the European Court of Justice, the European Investment Bank, and several other major EU administrative offices. You can breathe the European idea in these surroundings.

It is not a coincidence that Luxembourg has always been a driving force of the European Union and that it is, at the same time, regularly ranked among the most entrepreneurial countries, among the most innovative countries in the world. Innovation is vital for our small nation and it has always been. And innovation is at the heart of this summit, innovation in schools, around schools and through schools.

Schools have a great potential for innovation. And even if, if we can believe the TALIS survey, even if teachers in industrialized countries seem to share the perception that schools are innovation hostile environments, the focus of this Summit will be on schools at the crossroads of innovation in cities and regions. Even more so in times of digitalisation and automation, in times when solutions that are conceptualised to fit all children simply don't work any more. Schools are doomed to innovate, to find



alternative answers to the major challenges of an ever changing society.

And whereas most people in this room will agree that formal education is a public good and a prime responsibility of public policy, we all know that states cannot solve all the challenges that they are confronted with on their own. States need to associate all stakeholders, parents and communities in order to find the answers to the challenges of the digital age. There are, as a matter of fact, the universities but school systems also have to connect with the local community and with the regional economy, including business, industry and social profit organisations as well as industry partners.

Education industry has always been present in schools via textbooks, learning material and educational services. However, through the process of globalization, digitalisation and automation, the education industry has developed in an impressive way, at a global as well as regional and local scale. Today education industry enables learning tools unheard of before. Therefore it is vital to create strong bonds between us, to establish a continuous dialogue between education policy makers and the education industry.



I am confident that today and tomorrow we will have plenty of opportunities to discuss next practice examples that illustrate cross-sector collaboration on all levels of the system. Those examples lead to real world learning contexts, that foster cooperative strategies and combine the advantages of digital as well as soft skills; they lead to what we call deep learning. Only together, policy makers, education industry leaders and teachers, we can amplify teaching and learning.

In Luxembourg, recent reforms set the context that will open up the boundaries between schools and the surrounding environment. We aim to foster the establishment of connections between schools and their local and regional economies. One example are schools that we call Future Hubs, entrepreneurial schools that are resolutely digital oriented and very closely linked to the surrounding eco-system. We are bringing start up mentality to schools; create opportunities to young people to live out their creativity and their entrepreneurial skills.

But it is also, and more so for a small state with limited resources like Luxembourg, an absolute necessity to cooperate with educational industries all around the world especially when it comes to large scale undertakings. Like for



example the development of new and powerful learning tools. A good example is the development of MathemaTIC, a personalized learning environment in mathematics that is being conceptualized by teachers and researchers in Luxembourg, developed by a company from Canada, tested in primary and secondary schools Luxembourg, France and in Portugal. This project brings together ministries, teachers, universities, and technological industry around shared goals that matter: Closing the numeracy gap, Raising attainment and fostering autonomous and individualized learning.

We need to prepare the next generations for a next future that is not yet known to us. Even predictions seem to be useless, somehow haphazardous, especially when you look back at them: Anyway, it will come differently. What is certain: We don't need to teach wikipedia content since it is available permanently. Young people will need to be able to use knowledge in ways we don't know yet and to create new knowledge we have no idea of. Indeed, this is a difficult task and it asks for strong networks and huge efforts!

To put it in the words of Dirk van Damme, it is therefore crucial to create opportunities like the Global Education Industry Summit to bring together industry leaders and education



leaders, “to pave the road towards better learning eco-systems for the 21<sup>st</sup> century”.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let us take this third Summit as an opportunity to further explore how we can make a difference in the lives of young people. Let us enhance the learning of the adults of tomorrow by nurturing today the bonds between education policy makers and education industry leaders. Let us think about policies for better ecosystems of innovation.

I would like to especially thank our co-organizers : the European Commission whose representative Commissioner Navracsics I most warmly welcome as well as the OECD and its Director of Education Andreas Schleicher. In 2015 they started this idea of bringing together education as well as private industry leaders for the first time in Helsinki and last year in Jerusalem.

Therefore, I wish us all inspiring discussions, great opportunities to network and: To sum up, Welcome in Luxembourg for a successful third Global Education Industry Summit 2017.

Thank you.