

## APPENDIX

### Private School Funding and Regulation in Selected Nations

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The relationship between government funding of private schools and government regulation is an important but sometimes overlooked issue in the debate about school choice and education vouchers. To shed light on this issue and stimulate discussion, we at the Center on Education Policy have gathered information from various sources about the experiences of 22 countries in subsidizing and regulating private (non-government) schools. Our review focused mainly on the industrialized European nations, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada, because these countries provide various types of aid to private schools, face some of the same education and social issues as the U.S., and have been the subject of numerous research studies. This appendix summarizes the information we found for the 22 nations. Although we have tried to collect current information wherever possible, readers are advised that the situation is continuously changing. Many countries are reforming their education systems in ways that affect both public and private schools--for example, by decentralizing governance. And in some nations, changes in political leadership have brought shifts in policies toward private schools.

Our review drew from a range of studies, reports, and government documents, all of which are listed at the end of this appendix. Among the major sources were EURYDICE, an educational unit of the European Union; various national, state, and provincial government web sites; the London-based Independent Schools Information Service; and the embassies and education departments of various nations that responded to our request for information on this topic. Specific sources for each country are noted in italics at the end of that country's description.

#### AUSTRALIA

**General.** During the past 25 years, Australian private school enrollments have grown considerably, encouraged by the availability of government aid. In 1997, private schools (sometimes called non-government schools) educated 26% of primary children and 34% of secondary students. Most private schools are Catholic. Other private schools include various denominational schools, non-sectarian schools, and an influential sector of elite independent

schools which cater to students from more advantaged backgrounds. Private schools charge tuition, which can sometimes be quite high. State governments have the main responsibility for establishing educational policy in Australia, and they vary somewhat in their treatment of private schools. Most of the aid for government schools in Australia comes from the state level, while most of the public funding for private schools comes from the federal level.

**Subsidies.** Aid to private and religious schools has been a contentious issue in Australia since the colonial days. Since 1973, the federal government has provided significant public aid to private and religious schools. Private schools are eligible for federal grants for general operating expenses (including salaries), certain capital projects, literacy and language programs, and programs for students with special needs. The amount of per-pupil aid is based on the financial need of the school. Low-wealth private schools (mostly Catholic parish schools) receive higher grants, but high-wealth schools still receive some assistance.

In recent years, government policies have fluctuated with changes in political leadership and controversies have arisen about the equity of current approaches to aiding private schools and their impact on public schools. In 1996, the newly elected Coalition government changed certain private school policies of the prior Labor government by raising the maximum amount of aid a school could receive and removing certain restrictions on enrollments. For 1999, the maximum federal general recurrent grants to private schools ranged from about \$525 (Australian dollars) per primary student in the lowest funding category, to more than \$3,500 per secondary student in the highest category. On average, private schools receive about 60% of their per-pupil aid from public sources, with most Catholic schools receiving a much higher percentage from public sources.

**Regulations and accountability.** To qualify for government funding, a private school must be non-profit and must register with the state. Private schools must meet basic standards for minimum enrollments, headmaster qualifications, and facilities. Some states require private school teachers to comply with state credentials, while others allow independent associations or individual schools to credential their own teachers. Private schools must follow broad state curriculum guidelines, which vary by state in their prescriptiveness.

Most federal regulations affecting private schools are aimed at ensuring financial propriety, such as requirements for schools to keep certain fiscal and attendance records, to submit to independent audits, and to spend their government grants for the intended purposes. Private schools also participate in certain periodic government surveys and studies. The main levers for educational accountability are the state-level, high-stakes exit exams, which exert a de facto control over curriculum content.

**Research findings.** Government aid has helped to secure the financial stability of the private school sector and to increase enrollments, especially at elite institutions (Hirsch 1997). It has helped to improve the quality of Catholic and other private schools; students attending these schools tend to do well on school-leaving exams (Doyle 1989). But other analysts (Brown,

Cookson, Potts) assert that the availability of government aid has encouraged large numbers of middle-class and upper-middle-class families to abandon public schools in favor of private schools. Private schools, which can be selective in admissions and can expel unsuitable students, have grown in prestige and are considered by many parents to be the route to a university education and a high-paying job, while public schools, which must accept all children and retain as many as possible, have declined in reputation. Some researchers (Boyd) contend that the relatively low level of government regulation of private schools has given them a competitive edge over public schools, thereby diminishing equality of educational opportunity.

*Sources: Australian Department of Education, Training, and Youth Affairs; Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Boyd: Brown; Cookson; Hirsch 1997, Hirsch 1994; Potts; Reynolds; Sherman.*

## AUSTRIA

**General.** Austria's network of private, mostly Catholic schools is loosely intertwined by European standards. Church-maintained schools are the only type of private school to receive significant subsidies from the government. But both church-maintained (subsidized) and independent (non-subsidized) private schools are regulated by the government if they desire to obtain "public-law status," a form of government recognition that allows them to offer valid exams and certificates, serve as teacher training sites, and secure free transportation and other benefits for their students.

**Subsidies and teachers.** The government pays for teacher salaries in church-maintained schools, using a formula based on pupil-teacher ratios in comparable public schools. The teachers in subsidized schools are selected by the government and have civil-servant status, although a private school may reject a candidate it deems unsuitable and request someone else. For subjects not offered in public schools, the religious school may recruit its own candidates and be reimbursed for their salaries. Religious schools must fund operations, maintenance, facilities, and other non-personnel costs from non-government sources, including tuition payments.

Private schools that are not church-maintained seldom receive subsidies, although the government may appropriate special funds to cover staff costs in these schools if national budget priorities permit. In addition, students who attend private schools with public-law status--whether church-maintained or independent--receive free transportation and textbooks and may receive a boarding school allowance.

**Regulation.** To attain public-law status, private schools must prove that their educational achievement is equivalent to that of the public schools, although in the case of church-maintained schools, the educational quality is usually taken for granted without the school providing additional evidence. Private schools with public-law status are subject to the same government regulations as public schools. They must follow government norms for curriculum,

syllabi, exams, and number of teaching hours, but they may design their own teaching methods, just as public schools may. They are also subject to government inspection. Both public and private schools in Austria may be selective in student admissions.

Private schools that do not have public-law status must have their charters authorized by the government but otherwise are not heavily regulated. Students who attend this category of private school, however, must take annual tests before an outside board of examiners.

*Sources: EURYDICE 1997; Mason 1992.*

## **BELGIUM**

**General.** Private "grant-aided" schools are a very major sector of education in both the Flemish and French Communities of Belgium (which administer separate school systems). A century of controversy over educational freedom was resolved by a 1959 statute that confirmed parents' rights of educational choice but also required non-public schools to follow certain requirements if they wanted to grant recognized diplomas and obtain state subsidies. Most grant-aided private schools are Catholic schools. In both the Flemish and French Communities, there exist a few completely private schools that receive no government funding and are not regulated, but these schools are not entitled to award recognized certificates.

The majority of children in the Flemish community attend grant-aided private schools (65% for primary, 75% for secondary in 1990-91). Private school enrollments are also high in the French community (45% for primary, 57% for secondary in 1995-96). Private schools tend to serve students from higher-income families and are believed by many parents to have an edge over public schools because of the high level of involvement they foster among students and families.

**Subsidies.** The government subsidizes private schools at the same level as public schools, as long as they meet certain requirements. The amount of the subsidy covers teacher and administrator salaries and operating costs. Funds are also available for boarding costs, transportation, and low-cost construction loans. Subsidized private schools cannot charge fees for students at the compulsory attendance level.

**Regulation and inspection.** Grant-aided private schools must follow a recognized curriculum, comply with public timetables, have a minimum number of pupils, have adequate teaching materials and equipment, and meet health and safety standards. The conditions for teacher service are also regulated. Grant-aided private schools have freedom of teaching methods, assessments, and organizational structure (although they tend not to be very innovative). These schools must submit to regular state inspections of their instructional program and other aspects. In the secondary schools of the French Community, the inspectors draw up reports on individual teachers, which are given to the headmaster. The French Community also has a separate inspectorate for religious and philosophical courses.

**Admissions.** In the Flemish Community, grant-aided private schools must be open to all pupils, regardless of their religious, ideological, or political convictions. In the French Community, grant-aided private schools may turn away students in certain circumstances--particularly if they are filled--but they must inform the public authorities why a student has been turned away and must provide the family with information about other schooling options.

*Sources: EURYDICE 1997; EURYDICE 1992; Glenn 1989; Mason 1992*

## CANADA

**General.** Private schools enroll about 5% of elementary and secondary students, which represents an increase over the past 25 years; enrollments are somewhat higher in Quebec and British Columbia, but still under 10%. Most private schools are religious schools, including a growing sector of Christian schools. Others include special pedagogical schools, second-language schools in French or other languages, and independent schools. As in the U.S., education in Canada is primarily the responsibility of the provincial (state) governments, and policies toward private schools vary among provinces.

In all provinces, private schools that were in existence at the founding of the Federation in 1867 are "protected" and continue to operate with full public funding; most of these are Catholic or Protestant denominational schools and operate more as quasi-public schools. In some provinces, including Quebec and Ontario, the protected denominational schools constitute a separate, parallel school system that is supported with taxpayers' funding and operates as a part of the provincial educational system.

Several provinces (Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, and New Brunswick) provide some degree of public funding to private (non-protected) schools. The levels vary among provinces; the average subsidy was about 30% of school costs in 1988-89. The provision of public funding has tended to coincide with increased regulation and supervision of private schools. Provinces that fund private schools generally require them to follow provincial curriculum and educational programs.

**Alberta.** All private schools must register with the Ministry and comply with standards for achievement, monitoring, testing, courses of study, instructional time, instructional materials, and health and safety. A smaller group of private schools, called "accredited" schools, submit to Ministerial approval of their educational program and teacher qualifications; these schools receive subsidies of up to 75% of the public school per-pupil grant.

**British Columbia.** In 1977 the provincial government enacted legislation to provide partial subsidies to private schools, based on varying percentages of public school per-pupil costs. The proportion of students attending private schools increased from 4% in 1977 to 7% in 1990.

- Subsidies and regulations in B.C.: Private schools may choose among various levels of assistance, each with a different level of regulation. Those that do not seek public funding must still register with provincial authorities. Schools that receive the lowest subsidies must have adequate facilities and cannot promote racial or religious intolerance (and cannot exclude students or reject teachers based on their religion). Schools that receive modest subsidies must undergo regular inspections and demonstrate student progress. Those that receive the highest subsidy, equal to about 50% of public per-pupil costs, must comply with Ministerial regulations, hire certified teachers, have adequate facilities, meet requirements for teaching time and curriculum content, and participate in the provincial exams. The Ministry has the authority to examine all school records, and government evaluation teams periodically evaluate student achievement, teachers, programs, operations, and administration.
- Research studies: (Erickson; Van Brummelen). Most B.C. private schools that accepted subsidies became more like public schools and used teaching methods and curriculum similar to those of public schools. Some parents became dissatisfied with what they perceived as a loss of the schools' religious character. But once the schools became dependent on government funding, they found it difficult to sever their ties to government. Christian school teachers and leaders report that government funding has brought improvements in teacher salaries, special needs programs, decision-making and planning, instructional leadership, professional development, and financial stability. But some also feel overburdened by paperwork and bureaucratic matters, and believe their schools are too willing to accept whatever the government suggests. Some feel their programs have become less distinctively Christian, while others say they have had to maintain determination and constant vigilance to keep their distinctive features.

**Manitoba.** Private schools enrolled about 5% of students in 1991. The province pays private schools subsidies averaging about 60% of public per-pupil funding, plus extra support for special needs students, materials, and transportation. Subsidized private schools must operate under the same financial, administrative, reporting, and accountability requirements as public schools. Regulation has increased with the onset of subsidies; before they received government funding, private schools had only to offer a certain number of courses equivalent to the public schools and to hire provincially certified teachers to teach them.

**Ontario.** Families identify whether they want their local property taxes to be used to support the public school system or the separate Catholic school system (if one exists in that community). In general, Catholic families send their children to Catholic schools, which enroll almost a third of Ontario's students. The Catholic system is publicly funded and operates under the same curriculum and other regulations as public schools, except for the teaching of religion. Other private schools are eligible for a limited amount of government aid. They must register with the government, and those that wish to grant approved diplomas must allow the Ministry to inspect their standards of instruction.

**Quebec.** The protected schools are a significant sector in Quebec. They receive high government subsidies for their operating costs, along with some funding for facilities. Other types of private schools are eligible to receive up to about half of their revenues from government funding. The provincial Ministry approves private schools to operate, based on criteria regarding curriculum, instructors, enrollment, budgets, and tuition fees. Subsidized private schools must offer the same educational services and comply with the same basic regulations as public schools.

**Saskatchewan.** The protected schools receive a large per pupil subsidy and must follow provincial education goals and curriculum policies, have certified teachers, comply with time and credit allocations, and be supervised by provincial authorities. Subsidies are also available to "alternative" private schools, which provide a unique education to special needs students that is not available through the regular curriculum. Funding for these schools is tied to student needs.

*Sources: Barman; Brown; Canadian Education Association; Erickson; Lawton; Ontario Ministry of Education and Training; Quebec Ministry of Education; Sherman; Van Brummelen.*

## **DENMARK**

**General.** Private schools enroll about 12% of students in grades 1 through 10 (an increase since the 1980s) and about 6% of upper secondary students. Private schools are a mix of denominational, pedagogical, vocational, small rural, and immigrant schools. Parents may choose whether to send their children to a public or private school, and parents also have the right to establish their own school at government expense as long as it enrolls a certain number of children. Attending a private school is not usually considered elitist, although controversies sometimes arise because private schools can refuse difficult children while state schools cannot.

**Subsidies.** Denmark has a very long tradition of providing government subsidies to private schools regardless of their religious or ideological orientation. Private schools are eligible for operating grants in amounts equivalent to per-pupil expenditures in public schools, minus fees paid by private school parents. Grants vary based on school size, student age distribution, and teacher seniority. In 1995, the average grant covered about 77% of the private school expenditures, with the rest made up by fees. Private schools may charge fees as long as they are not too high--in fact, schools are expected to find a degree of self-financing. The government will pay the fees for students whose families can't afford them. The government also provides additional grants to private schools for students with special needs and for building maintenance, construction, rent, etc.

**Regulation and oversight.** To qualify for subsidies, private primary schools must have adequate facilities, enroll a minimum number of students, and be nonprofit entities. The government prescribes detailed requirements for how private schools must allocate their

government subsidies, but only general requirements about educational content. These schools have latitude in their teaching methods and programs; however, they are expected to measure up to public schools in terms of student achievement. Students take state final exams, which serve as an indirect quality control. Private school parents must appoint a supervisor to evaluate pupil achievement in Danish, math, and English. Parents whose children are not making satisfactory progress may move them to another school. If overall achievement in a private school is inadequate, the appointed supervisor informs the municipal authority and, in extraordinary circumstances, the Ministry may establish special supervision.

Private schools at the upper secondary level are subject to more regulation than primary schools. These schools must be officially authorized by the Minister of Education, who approves their governing statutes and must endorse the headmaster appointed by the school's governing board. Approval may be revoked if the school fails to comply with regulations. Private upper schools must meet requirements regarding staff qualifications, appointment of a teachers' council and a pupils' council, and administration of state exams.

*Sources: Denmark Ministry of Education; Doyle 1997; Doyle 1989; EURYDICE 1997; EURYDICE 1992; Hirsch 1994; Mason 1992.*

## **FINLAND**

**General.** Citizens have a constitutional right to establish private schools or to school their children at home. Private schools were once the main provider of education in Finland, but with the rise of a state system of education in the 1970s, most private schools were taken over by the state. Private school enrollments range from 3 to 5% of the student population.

**Subsidies and regulation.** Most private schools are under public supervision, which means they follow the national guidelines for curriculum and teacher qualifications and receive government funding on the same per-pupil basis as public schools. These schools must be open to students of all income levels; they may not charge fees but may receive donations for capital projects. Private schools appoint their own staff and control their own finances, educational goals, and instructional methods.

*Sources: EURYDICE 1997; Mason 1992.*

## **FRANCE**

**General.** In 1990-91, 15% of primary students, 20% of lower secondary, and 21% of upper secondary students attended private schools. Most private schools are Catholic, and many parents who send their children are seeking a traditional religious environment. Private schools have a somewhat elitist image in terms of income (middle and upper-class families are over-

represented), but not necessarily in terms of academic quality. Public schools in France are rigorous and academically respected, and private schools sometimes serve as an escape hatch for children who are having trouble in the public system.

**Subsidies.** Since 1959, private schools have been able to enter into various types of contracts with the government, which provides financial assistance in exchange for state supervision. The vast majority of private schools are under contract and accept government subsidies. Private schools can choose from among three levels of government involvement:

- **No contract:** Schools without a government contract receive no government aid and operate independently of government intervention.
- **Simple contract:** Schools with a "simple contract" receive government subsidies for teacher salaries and teacher training. They are also eligible for state-guaranteed loans for construction and grants for technology acquisition. In return, they must accept a moderate level of regulation, along with ceilings on the tuition they may charge. This type of contract is available only to primary schools.
- **Association contract:** To be eligible for an "association contract," a primary or secondary school must have a religious orientation or a distinctive philosophy or character not met by the public school system. Schools with this type of contract receive all of the government subsidies provided under the simple contract, plus additional per-pupil subsidies for operating expenses on the same basis as public schools. In return, these schools accept greater regulation--in essence, they must conform almost completely with public education programs. They cannot charge tuition, although they may charge modest fees for building costs, religious instruction, and other extras.

**Regulations.** All contract schools (both types) must comply with national government requirements regarding adequate facilities, health and safety, numbers of pupils, hours of instruction, curriculum, textbooks, and timetables. Their students must sit for national credentialing exams. They cannot discriminate in admissions based on religious beliefs, background, or national origin. They have the right to maintain their distinctive character, but they must also respect pupils' freedom of conscience when it differs from the school's orientation. Association contract schools must meet additional regulations concerning teacher selection and credentials, pedagogy, and class size. Both types of contract schools are subject to state inspection, administrative audit, and financial audit.

**Teachers.** Teachers in private contract schools must have the same credentials as public school teachers, be paid on the same schedule, and undergo an annual review. Teachers in simple contract schools are private sector employees, selected by the private school's head teacher but approved by the public authorities. Teachers in association contract schools are civil servants, appointed by the public authorities in consultation with the private school head teacher.

**Research findings** (Fowler) Government support has made French private schools more centralized and bureaucratic, and more like public schools. This is not necessarily perceived as a negative, insofar as some private school leaders acknowledged the need for better organization in their sector. Government involvement has also made public and private school teachers more similar. During the 1980s this led to controversies over freedom of conscience and lifestyle of private school teachers. Government funding has allowed lower-income and middle-class children to have a strong presence in private education, without marked increases in pupil creaming and without major shifts of enrollments toward private schools.

*Sources: EURYDICE 1997; EURYDICE 1992; Fowler 1992; Fowler 1991; Mason 1992; Matheson et al.*

## **GERMANY**

**General.** In 1991, private school enrollment ranged from 1% at the primary level to 12% at the general secondary level. National law guarantees the right to establish private schools. At the primary level (grades 1-4 or 1-6), most private schools are Catholic or Protestant denominational schools or special pedagogical schools, like Rudolph Steiner schools. At the secondary level, there are two categories of private schools: 1) "Alternative schools" have a religious or distinctive philosophical orientation, have a status equivalent to public schools, and receive government subsidies. 2) "Complementary schools" are usually vocational in nature and do not receive government funding.

**Subsidies.** The Lander, or state governments, have varying policies, but all provide sizeable financial subsidies to alternative private schools for salaries and operating costs. Some Lander also provide funds for construction, instructional materials, and teacher pensions, along with tax breaks to parents for tuition and transportation costs. The state subsidies do not cover all the costs. Private schools may charge moderate tuition fees, and they must adjust fees for children whose families cannot afford to pay.

**Approval and regulation.** Subsidized private schools must be approved by state authorities. The state monitors these schools and can revoke approval if criteria are no longer being met. To receive approval, private alternative schools must be equivalent to public schools in terms of their educational aims, facilities, materials, teacher qualifications, teacher economic security, and organizational aspects, although they need not follow the same weekly timetables as public schools. Subsidized private schools may choose their own textbooks, teaching methods, and religious or philosophical approach. (Some Lander place additional rules on alternative schools.) Subsidized private schools may select students but cannot discriminate on the basis of parents' financial status. The students must take state exams, and the schools must issue annual reports. As long as students perform adequately on state exams, the schools are generally left alone. In actual practice, subsidized schools differ little from state schools in structure, curriculum, and methods.

**Teachers.** Subsidized private schools select their own teachers but they must pay them at a rate not significantly lower than public schools and must offer retirement pensions. Teachers in private schools (as well as public schools) must have a local certificate of good conduct.

*Sources: EURYDICE 1997; EURYDICE 1992; Mason 1992; Matheson et al.*

## **GREECE**

**General.** 1990 enrollments in private schools were about 6% of students at the primary level, 5% at the general upper secondary level, and 24% at the secondary vocational level. Private schools tend to attract middle- and upper-class families because many public schools are crowded and poorly equipped.

**Subsidies.** With very few exceptions, private schools are not subsidized by the state. Occasionally the Minister of Education makes special discretionary appropriations for private general secondary schools. Private vocational schools receive no state funding, but their students may receive financial aid.

**Regulation.** Like many aspects of Greek society, education is centrally controlled and highly regulated. Even without government funding, private schools are regulated by the government. Their establishment must be approved by the Ministry, and they must follow the same curricula, syllabi, and school year as public schools and use the same textbooks. Private schools must also comply with government policies for enrollment, tests, grades, discipline, and class promotion. Tuition increases are subject to annual regulation. Students must take national exams, which are monitored by government supervisors. Teachers must receive at least the same pay and work the same hours as public school teachers. Private schools are subject to government inspection, which looks at such areas as adequacy of staffing, pupil-teacher ratios, and exam administration.

*Sources: EURYDICE 1997; Mason 1992; Paizis.*

## **ICELAND**

**General.** In 1996-97 there were six private schools in Iceland, which served about 1.5% of the student population. Private schools must be accredited by the national ministry. They follow the same national curriculum guidelines as public schools, and their students take the same national exams. Five of the private schools receive considerable funding from municipal governments, and they also charge student fees.

*Source: EURYDICE 1997.*

## IRELAND

**General.** The typical American distinctions between public and private schools do not apply to the Irish education system. The state system of free education has a religious orientation--an outgrowth of local traditions developed under British rule. Most state schools in Ireland are administered by the Catholic church or an independent board, but they are funded partly or completely by the government. The arrangements are somewhat different at the primary and the secondary levels:

- **Primary:** Most free state primary schools are Catholic schools, funded wholly by the government. The state closely regulates and inspects them and specifies teacher wages and working conditions. There is a shrinking sector of strictly private, fee-paying primary schools that do not receive government funding and enroll only 1.4% of students; the government does not inspect these schools, nor does it control their curriculum.
- **Secondary:** All secondary schools in Ireland must be recognized by the government. The majority of secondary schools are owned and administered by a religious body (usually Catholic) or an independent board, and receive considerable government aid. Some of these schools are free, while others charge tuition. In the free schools, the state pays teacher salaries, operating grants, building funds, and other expenses. In the tuition-charging schools, the state pays almost all of the teacher salaries, and tuition fees cover the other expenses. Tuition-charging schools may reject applicants.

**Regulation and inspection.** Except for the strictly private primary schools, all Irish schools must follow government regulations regarding curriculum content and courses, school premises, teacher qualifications, pupil/teacher ratios, exams, and minimum numbers of pupils. At the secondary level, the Minister of Education approves syllabuses of specific subjects. State inspectors visit all schools regularly to see how subjects are taught, inspect student work, and advise on deficiencies and on curriculum development.

*Sources: EURYDICE 1997; EURYDICE 1992; Irish Department of Education and Science; Mason 1992.*

## ITALY

**General.** Currently private schools enroll about 8% of primary students, 4% of lower secondary students, and 8% of upper secondary. Private schools charge fees, which in some cases are quite high.

**Subsidies.** Only rarely do private schools receive government support, despite ongoing campaigns by private school interests to increase funding and reduce regulatory controls. (With a

recent government proposal, change may be on the horizon.) Currently government assistance is limited to private schools that meet needs not being adequately addressed by the public schools, such as educating migrant students, disadvantaged students, or children in remote rural areas. In addition, local and regional governments sometimes pay for books, transportation, or meals for children who attend recognized or approved private schools. A limited number of industrious students at the secondary level may receive tuition scholarships to attend approved private schools.

**Regulation.** Complex regulations affect most private schools, especially at the secondary level; compliance is monitored by a special private-school unit of the Ministry of Education. There are multiple categories of private schools at the primary and secondary levels, based on the degree of government involvement and regulation:

- "Authorized" private primary: These schools must be approved by the local government, based on the adequacy of their facilities and the moral and legal capacities of their sponsors to run a school. The curriculum of these schools must conform in a general way with the goals of the national curriculum, and they are subject to government inspection. They do not receive government subsidies.
- "Officially recognized" primary: The central Ministry recognizes these schools as being equivalent to public schools, and they are subject to government inspection. If these schools are meeting needs not met by public education, they are eligible for state subsidies of up to 100%, although the actual amounts are determined by agreement between the school and the government. Officially recognized schools must educate students free of charge and be accessible to all. They must comply with government norms for curriculum, materials, timetables, and organization. They must pay teachers the same as public schools and recruit them by open competitive exam. Their certificates have the same value as public school certificates.
- Completely private secondary: There is no government approval of these schools, which need only comply with health and safety regulations.
- "Legally recognized" secondary: These schools offer courses, exams, and certificates that are considered valid by the Ministry. They must adhere to state requirements for health and safety, facilities, materials, school organization, educational programs, curriculum, and teacher certification. Although they charge tuition, they must be open to all.
- "Approved" secondary: Schools administered by religious bodies or public entities may be approved by the Ministry. These schools must provide free places to students receiving scholarships. In addition to meeting the requirements for legally recognized schools, they must also provide the same number of teaching posts as public schools, select their teachers through a public competition, and pay starting salaries equivalent to those of public school teachers.

**Teachers.** Teachers in recognized or approved private schools are represented by one of several unions. Often they have complex contracts with detailed provisions concerning pay, duties, pension rights, etc.

Sources: EURYDICE 1997; EURYDICE 1992; Mason 1992.

## LUXEMBOURG

**General.** The limited number of private schools in this small country enroll only about 2% of primary students and 10% of post-primary students. Most private schools are religious denominational schools, and there is one Waldorf school. Private schools charge tuition fees, which must be adjusted for family income and are subject to government approval.

**Government involvement.** Since 1982, state subsidies have been available to both religious and pedagogical private schools. These subsidies cover about 80% of teacher salaries and somewhat less than half of other costs. Subsidized schools must follow the same timetables, admission and promotion standards, and curriculum as public schools (except the Waldorf school uses its own curriculum). Schools that do not wish to receive subsidies are less regulated, although they must be initially approved by the Ministry. The criteria for secondary school approval, which are more rigorous than for primary, include such factors as moral character and qualifications of managers and teachers, facilities, goals, curriculum, teaching methods, admission requirements, disciplinary rules, financing, and tuition levels. Private school students must take public final exams. All private schools are subject to state inspection and monitoring.

Sources: EURYDICE 1997; EURYDICE 1992; Mason 1992.

## NETHERLANDS

**General.** Since 1917, the government of the Netherlands has provided equal, 100% funding to both public and private schools, including religious schools. Parents may choose where their children attend school. Parents, often with the assistance of their church, may petition the government to start a school as long as they have the required minimum number of pupils. Most private schools are Catholic or Protestant schools, but some are special pedagogical, ideological, or other religious schools, such as Jewish and Muslim. The great majority of students attend private schools; in 1990, the figures were 69% at the primary level, 73% at the special and general secondary levels, and 82% at the senior vocational secondary levels.

**Subsidies.** Public authorities directly pay all teacher salaries, as well as the costs of private school facilities, equipment, and operating expenses. Private schools may receive parental

contributions, but these funds cannot be used for personnel costs. Private schools may charge fees for extracurricular activities.

**Regulation.** Private schools are governed by virtually the same regulations as public schools. They must:

- meet initial government approval criteria;
- comply with admissions rules (unlike public schools, private primary schools may turn away students under certain conditions; at the secondary level, student sorting occurs in both public and private schools);
- follow government curriculum requirements, with some flexibility over teaching methods and materials and freedom to "opt out" of experimental approaches;
- administer national exams;
- adhere to requirements for teacher qualifications, pay scales, and working conditions (although private schools may select teachers based on their religion); and
- submit to inspection by the Ministry.

### **Research findings.**

- Uniformity: (Brown, Mason) Private schools are much like each other and like public schools in their structure, curriculum, and pedagogy. Experimentation in private schools is rare. Most religious schools no longer follow a strictly religious curriculum, but include more values-oriented discussion and tend to be slightly more educationally conservative than public schools.
- Selectivity and parent choice: Equal funding has produced a system that does not have a hierarchy of elite private schools or the creaming of the ablest students (Dronkers). Parents choose schools mostly on the basis of religion, location and socioeconomic factors rather than academic performance. Schools with high immigrant enrollment have experienced white flight. Parents do not participate strongly in the educational aspects of the school (Brown).
- School performance: In recent years, religious secondary schools, especially in the cities, have performed somewhat higher than comparable public schools, even when adjustments are made for student composition. This may be attributable to dedicated parents who are active choosers and to better relations between the teachers and school boards in religious schools. Public schools perform better in regions where they are the minority choice, which again may be attributable to parents' dedication. As parents become more aware of which schools perform better, they may begin to choose in ways that produce inequalities among schools (Dronkers).

- Efficiency: The existence of many small private schools in the Netherlands is more costly than a conventionally funded education system and in some ways is inefficient (Dronkers, James).

*Sources: Brown; Cookson; Doyle 1989; Dronkers; EURYDICE 1997; EURYDICE 1992; Mason 1992; Matheson et al.*

## NEW ZEALAND

**General.** Private schools enroll about 3.4% of school children in New Zealand. The number of private schools (those governed by independent boards) has decreased over time, as many Catholic schools and other private schools have opted to become "state-integrated"--part of the government education system. In 1989, the government undertook a major deregulation of public schools, which gave local communities a greater say in school governance and allowed parents to choose among public schools.

**State-integrated schools.** State-integrated schools receive full government support for staffing, operations, and maintenance. They must follow state curriculum guidelines and other requirements but may retain their special religious or philosophical identity. They must include elected parent and community representatives on their boards. State-integrated schools retain private ownership of their buildings and lands; with government approval, they may charge "attendance dues" to cover building and property costs. They also may solicit voluntary donations for extracurricular activities and engage in voluntary fund-raising.

**Private school subsidies.** For more than 20 years the government of New Zealand has provided per-pupil subsidies to private schools to cover a portion of salaries and operating costs. These subsidies amount to about 30% of the average per-pupil costs in state schools for grades 1-10, and about 40% of state costs for grades 11-15. Private schools make up the difference with tuition fees and other outside funding. In addition to the base subsidy, private schools may choose to participate in the Targeted Individual Entitlement Scheme, which provides a grant sufficient to cover the full cost of education for certain children from low-income families. Private schools enrolling Maori students also receive special funding for language programs.

**Private school regulation.** Private schools must register with the government, which involves meeting basic criteria for premises, staffing, and equipment. Although a private school's curriculum does not have to precisely follow the state curriculum, it must be "suitable" in reference to state guidelines. Private schools must also inculcate values of "patriotism and loyalty" in their students, and must follow certain procedures if they suspend or expel a student. Private schools undergo periodic reviews by the government. Private school students take national exams.

*Source: Gordon and Whitty; Hirsch 1994; Mason 1989; New Zealand Ministry of Education.*

## NORWAY

**General and subsidies.** The private school sector is very small in Norway, serving just over 1% of all students. To be eligible for state funding, private schools must have a religious orientation, offer a special pedagogical alternative, or serve Norwegian children abroad. State subsidies to approved private schools amount to about 75% to 85% of comparable public per-pupil costs. Tuition fees cover the remainder of private school costs.

**Regulation.** The government exercises professional, educational, and financial supervision over subsidized private schools. Schools must comply with government budgeting procedures and follow curriculum approved by the Ministry (with certain adaptations for religious and special pedagogical schools). Subsidized schools must also accept students from anywhere in the country, be open to all students who satisfy the public school enrollment conditions, and follow public school requirements for expulsion. Private schools must comply with the public school requirements for teachers' salaries and working conditions. They must have a parent council and representative board. If all pertinent conditions are not met, the minister may withdraw approval.

*Sources: EURYDICE 1997; Helgheim; Mason 1992.*

## POLAND

**General.** Since 1989, the government has encouraged groups of teachers and parents to establish new and innovative schools with partial public funding. The government provides direct financial aid to private schools, at a rate of 50% of the per pupil costs in public schools. Private schools must teach in accordance with the national curriculum, and students must take national tests.

*Source: Glenn 1994; Sawicki.*

## PORTUGAL

**General.** The private sector enrolled about 7% of students at the basic level and 9% at the secondary level in 1991. Catholic schools make up the vast majority of private schools in Portugal; most other private schools are owned by their founding teachers or by private companies. In addition, there are "cooperative" schools jointly owned by parents and other individuals. Students and teachers have the right to switch freely among public, cooperative, and private schools.

**Subsidies.** Independent and cooperative schools may enter into three kinds of contracts with the state, or none at all. All contract schools are eligible for state funding for set-up costs, educational experiments, facilities and equipment, and extracurricular activities. Most private schools are under some type of contract.

- "Association contract" schools: These schools serve areas where no public schools are available and receive full subsidies equivalent to public per-pupil costs. They may not charge fees and must follow the same rules as public schools for admissions and other conditions of education.
- "Simple contract" schools: Most Catholic schools have a simple contract, which means that they receive a negotiated level of subsidy that enables them to adjust their tuition for lower-income families.
- "Patronage contract" schools: These schools offer special curricula or innovative instruction not widely available in public schools. They receive a state subsidy of at least 50% of their costs, and their instructional programs are monitored by the state.

**Approval.** The government approves the establishment of private schools, based on the adequacy of their facilities, equipment, and materials and the qualifications of their staff.

**Regulation.** A bureaucratic administrative system shapes private schools in Portugal. All private schools must offer education that is generally equivalent to that in public schools. Theoretically they have freedom of choice over educational programs, teaching methods, and materials, but in actual practice, bureaucratic regulations tend to stifle variety and experimentation. Private schools must have school councils composed of elected parents, teachers, students, and others. Private schools may opt for two types of regulatory status:

- "Parallel" status: Private schools that want to be considered part of the national system of education may seek parallel status, which means they share the goals, curriculum, and methods of public schools. These schools receive some tax breaks and other legal advantages; in return they are bound by public school requirements in most areas. Their teachers must have the same qualifications as public school teachers and have similar collective bargaining agreements. Their assessments are monitored by public authorities.
- "Autonomous" status: Some private schools opt for the further privilege of "autonomy," which means they have the right to choose their own methods and materials, administer their own assessments, and grant their own diplomas. To attain this status, schools must fulfill more paperwork requirements.

**Inspection.** The government inspects the teaching and administration in private schools; requires them to keep records of pupil assessments, attendance, and lesson content; and provides them with technical assistance and pedagogical support.

*Sources: EURYDICE 1997; EURYDICE 1992; Mason 1992.*

## **SPAIN**

**General.** In 1990-91, private schools enrolled about 35% of students at the basic general level and 29% at the upper secondary level. Many private schools are Catholic, and they have traditionally held a special position in Spanish society. Private schools may be non-subsidized or subsidized. Non-subsidized private schools, which receive no state aid, are financed primarily through tuition fees and private grants; these schools are autonomous in their administration, finance, and admissions. Subsidized schools, which receive state funding and are recognized by the state, have signed agreements with the government and are regulated in several areas.

**Subsidies.** Subsidized private schools receive government aid in varying degrees, with some receiving full government support for the costs of teaching staff and administrative expenses. The highest funding priority goes to those schools serving areas of significant need, educating disadvantaged groups, or conducting experiments of interest to the education system. Subsidized schools also eligible for certain tax breaks. With the permission of government authorities, they may charge fees for extracurricular activities, transportation, special services.

**Approval.** All private schools, subsidized or not, must receive government approval before they open. Approval is based on such criteria as adequate facilities, minimum enrollments, health and safety, and handicapped access.

**Regulations for all schools.** The government defines a core curriculum for all schools--public and private, subsidized or not--which includes educational aims, content, evaluation criteria, and timetables. Schools can adapt the curriculum to local conditions and choose their own teaching and organizational methods. Private schools have the constitutional right to define their own character, but they must also respect the rights of teachers, students, and parents to opt out of religious instruction and to worship freely. The government inspects both public and private schools to ensure compliance with curriculum and sound administration, and to evaluate educational results and provide educational guidance. The government also sets general policies affecting private school teachers in such areas as leave, retirement, and options for an open-ended contract. But private school teachers usually teach more hours and receive lower pay than their public school counterparts.

**Regulations for subsidized schools.** Subsidized private schools operate much as public schools. They must:

- provide education free of charge;
- follow the same admissions procedures as public schools;
- provide courses determined by government;
- maintain government pupil/teacher ratios;
- give parents, teachers, and pupils a voice in management through a school council; and

- comply with state laws regarding staff hiring and firing, and protection of pupils' freedom of conscience.

*Sources: EURYDICE 1997; EURYDICE 1992; Mason 1992.*

## SWEDEN

**General.** In 1995-96, private schools enrolled only about 2% of students at the basic (compulsory) level. Most private schools have a special pedagogical approach, such as Montessori or Waldorf, and some are religious. Very few are considered elite. The national government recently ended a voucher program established in 1992 and is moving toward a more regulated program of per-pupil subsidies.

**Regulation.** All private schools at the compulsory level must be approved by the national government and must be open to all children. Private schools at all levels must have the same general goals as public schools and must provide students with knowledge and skills equivalent to a public-school education. They must offer student health care and home-language instruction for immigrant children. Like public schools, they are expected to embody certain values, such as democracy, tolerance, openness, and objectivity, although they may have a religious orientation.

**Subsidies.** Private schools that meet these conditions may be deemed by the national government to be eligible for subsidies, as long as their activities do not cause severe problems for the public schools. The payments are actually made by local municipalities under the terms of 1997 regulations. For private schools at the compulsory level, the municipality determines the amount of the per-pupil grant based on its criteria for public school funding; among the factors considered are student needs and type of school organization. These subsidized private schools may not charge fees. For private schools at the upper secondary level, the amounts are determined by agreement between the municipality and the school. Municipalities may inspect the activities of subsidized schools.

**Vouchers, 1992-96.** (Carnoy). A voucher program that existed from 1992 to 1996 required municipalities to distribute to private schools an amount for each enrolled student equal to at least 85% of the average public per-pupil costs. Private schools could still charge reasonable fees on top of vouchers. Private school enrollments increased, although only a small minority of all parents took advantage of the voucher. Under the voucher plan, private schools were not highly regulated and received little supervision. The government approved virtually all applications to establish new private schools and required municipalities to fund them, even though municipalities had no power to oversee them

**Research findings.** (Miron). Segregation and disparities among schools are becoming more common in the largest urban areas, with children of Swedish origin moving away from schools with large numbers of immigrants.

*Sources: Carnoy; EURYDICE 1997; EURYDICE 1992; Hirsch 1997; Mason 1992; Miron.*

## **SWITZERLAND**

**General.** Private school enrollments range from 3% of primary students to 15% of upper secondary students, with an average of about 7%. The cantons are responsible for education, and their policies vary. A recent law requires the cantons to officially recognize and supervise private schools to ensure they have adequate premises and qualified teachers and that they conform with state programs and examinations. Many cantons subsidize a portion of the costs of private schools that fulfill the functions of public schools. Two cantons have made private schools part of their official educational systems.

*Source: Mason 1992.*

## **UNITED KINGDOM -- ENGLAND AND WALES**

**General.** Public and private schools are classified somewhat differently in the U.K. than in the U.S. The state-supported and state-administered system of education, equivalent to the U.S. public education system, is called the "maintained" sector in the U.K. The truly private schools, which do not receive government aid and are administered by private entities, are called independent schools. Among them are the elite preparatory schools (called "public" schools in the U.K.) and other tuition-charging schools. Independent schools enroll about 7% of British students.

Certain other kinds of religious schools and privately-administered schools receive government subsidies. These schools are considered part of the maintained sector rather than the private sector. They include:

- the "voluntary-aided" schools, which were established by and are overseen by a church or charitable body, and which receive government support under a longtime arrangement;
- the newer "grant-maintained" schools, which are much like American charter schools and operate outside the purview of local educational authorities; and
- the city technology colleges--specialized, tuition-free secondary schools with a science and technology emphasis that are funded and operated through public-private partnerships.

**Oversight of independent schools.** Independent schools must register with the national Department of Education and must satisfy the Secretary that they are providing efficient and suitable instruction. They do not have to follow national curriculum or other government

regulations, and they set their own teacher pay, qualifications, and employment conditions. Independent school students must take public school-leaving exams. Independent schools, like the maintained schools, are subject to state inspection, including a review of their curriculum. Schools that are deemed unsatisfactory must improve, or they will be dropped from the independent school registry.

**Tuition scholarships at independent schools.** Independent schools do not receive direct government aid and are financed mainly by tuition fees and private donations. Students attending these schools, however, have received government scholarships under two special programs:

- Assisted places. The Assisted Places Scheme was enacted in 1980 but discontinued by the Labour government in 1997 (with a phase-out period for students already participating). Under this program, the government paid part or all of the tuition for academically able students from low-income families. To be eligible, schools had to meet certain criteria regarding pass rates on national exams, wide choices of academic subjects, and high entry rates into universities. According to research (Edwards & Whitty), this program made it possible for a greater number of independent schools to admit the best students from lower-income groups, to become more selective than they otherwise would have been, and to maintain the traditional kinds of academic programs associated with elite private schools. Participating children tended to come from families with low incomes but high cultural and educational resources, and from public schools that were already doing a good job for academically able children.
- Music and ballet. The Music and Ballet Scheme pays tuition for children from low- and middle-income families to attend special independent schools for music and dance. The Labour government is continuing this program.

**Subsidies to voluntary-aided schools.** These schools, many of which are Catholic, enrolled about 22% of all students in 1990. They do not charge tuition. Initially they received public subsidies in exchange for admitting overflow students from public schools. Today the government subsidizes the full cost of their teachers' salaries, maintenance, and other current expenditures, as well as about 85% of their capital costs. (Local education agencies have traditionally provided free transportation to Catholic schools, but in recent years, some localities have withdrawn this benefit.) Voluntary-aided schools are subject to government requirements regarding national curriculum, minimum length of school day and year, state inspection, exams, and teacher pay and employment. But they have discretion over teaching methods and materials and the freedom to teach religion.

*Sources: Arthur; Critchlow; Edwards and Whitty; English Department for Education and Employment; EURYDICE 1997; EURYDICE 1992; Mason 1992; Walford.*

## UNITED KINGDOM -- SCOTLAND

**General.** Independent schools serve about 4% of primary-secondary students. Many have a religious affiliation.

**Funding.** In general, independent schools do not receive direct funding from the government, although some students still receive tuition scholarships under the Assisted Places Scheme, which is being phased out. Special private schools for children with disabilities receive 100% government subsidies, but most of these have been merged into public systems.

**Regulation and registry.** Independent schools must register with the Scottish education department and must meet basic government standards for safety, accommodations, numbers of children, and fitness and character of owners and teachers (no criminal record). Independent schools must operate a certain number of days per year and be open roughly the same hours as public schools. The state does not oversee private school teacher qualifications, but in practice most are publicly certified. Independent school students take state external exams. These schools are inspected by government inspectors in the same manner as public schools. Their instructional programs must be appropriate in view of school inspectors, but there is no government control of curriculum or teaching methods.

*Sources: Buckle; EURYDICE 1997; EURYDICE 1992; Mason 1992.*

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