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# **THE CHALLENGE OF SHADOW EDUCATION**

**Private tutoring and its implications for policy makers  
in the European Union**

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An independent report prepared for the European Commission  
by the NESSE network of experts



This is an independent report commissioned by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture. The views expressed in the series are those of independent experts and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the European Commission.

This report has been authored by [Mark Bray](#) on behalf of [NESSE](#), an independent team of experts working on social aspects of education and training which supported the European Commission from January 2007 to February 2011. Mark Bray is Chair Professor of Comparative Education and Director of the Comparative Education Research Centre at the University of Hong Kong. Between 2006 and 2010 he was Director of UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) in Paris.

Drafts of this report benefited from comments and advice from other members of the NESSE team and from other experts in this field.

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For printed copies (free of charge) please contact: Dr. Angelos Agalianos  
European Commission, DG Education and Culture  
Tel.: +32-2-29.55.098, [angelos.agalianos@ec.europa.eu](mailto:angelos.agalianos@ec.europa.eu)

## Foreword



Parallel to mainstream education systems in the European Union (EU) are *shadow education systems* of private supplementary tutoring. These have grown considerably across the EU but have received little attention, even though they have profound economic and social implications.

For a long time, many policy makers were able - and preferred - to ignore the shadow education system. This independent report shows that this is no longer possible.

The report engages with some crucial questions which include:

- *How significant are these private education "markets" in the EU, and how and why do they exist?*
- *What are the economic, social and educational implications of the phenomenon?*
- *What are the effects on mainstream education systems?*
- *What can we learn from the shadow system to improve mainstream schools?*
- *How do national administrations deal with the tutoring phenomenon?*

A first key message from this report is that private tutoring is **widespread**. It has reached such a scale, and has such strong implications for equity, for the work of schools, and for the lives of children and families, that it must be addressed. We need to recognise and evaluate it. We also need to heed the signals it sends about the nature of mainstream schooling.

A second key message is that private tutoring **has not taken hold to the same extent in all EU Member States**. Southern Europe has particularly high rates of tutoring. Tutoring is also widespread in Central and Eastern EU Member States. While in Western Europe the scale of tutoring greatly increased during the last decade, the Nordic Member States appear to be the least affected by the phenomenon so far.

A third key message from this report is that private tutoring is much less about pupils who are in real need of help that they cannot find at school, and much more about **maintaining the competitive advantages** of the already successful and privileged.

The tutoring industry is an expanding source of employment as well as a way for many mainstream teachers to earn supplementary incomes. This appears to be one reason why both governments and trade unions tend to avoid the subject.

Breaking the silence about this phenomenon can be an important step in our effort to improve European education and training systems. The European Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture commissioned this independent report, recognising the importance of this issue and the need to provoke more active discussion within the European context.

Brussels, May 2011

Jan Truszczyński,  
Director-General, Directorate-General for Education and Culture



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## Note on the Author

Mark Bray was born and educated in the United Kingdom, and at an early stage of his career taught at the Universities of Edinburgh and London. He is now Chair Professor of Comparative Education and Director of the Comparative Education Research Centre (CERC) at the University of Hong Kong. He has taught at this university since 1986, but between 2006 and 2010 he took leave of absence to work in Paris as Director of UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP). He is also a Past-President (2004-07) of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES). He has written extensively in the fields of educational policy, comparative education, and administration and financing of education. E-mail: [mbray@hku.hk](mailto:mbray@hku.hk).

## Acknowledgements

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## At a Glance

1. Private supplementary tutoring is an EU-wide issue. It has grown considerably in most Member States.
2. The growing scale and intensity of private tutoring in the EU has profound economic, social and educational implications. It has strong implications for equity, for the work of mainstream schools, and for the lives of children and families. It also sends signals about the nature of mainstream schooling.
3. Private supplementary tutoring has not taken hold to the same extent in all EU Member States. Southern Europe has particularly high rates of tutoring. Tutoring is also widespread in Central and Eastern EU Member States. While in Western Europe the scale of tutoring greatly increased during the last decade, the Nordic Member States appear to be the least affected by the phenomenon so far. These countries have good mainstream provision that appears largely to satisfy the expectations of families.
4. Although tutoring often exists because the mainstream system is weak, other forces are also pertinent. Some countries have well-developed systems, but experience strong demand for tutoring fuelled by competition and examination-based learning.
5. In Eastern European Member States, the decline in the purchasing power of teachers' salaries was a major force driving the expansion of private tutoring during the 1990s.
6. In Western European countries, social competition, school performance rankings, examination-based learning and the pressures transmitted to families and children have been a stronger force driving the expansion of shadow education. Also, financial cuts have reduced the extent to which educational institutions have felt able to provide individual learning support within school.
7. Most of the pressure for tutoring comes from high achievers. Private tutoring is much less about pupils who are in real need of help that they cannot find at school, and much more about maintaining the competitive advantages of the already successful and privileged.
8. In some Member States, tutoring tends to be greatest among pupils already in fee-paying private secondary schools.
9. If left to market forces, tutoring maintains and exacerbates inequalities. Families with higher income can afford both greater quantities and better qualities of tutoring.
10. In some Member States, private tutoring dominates children's lives and restricts their leisure times in ways that are psychologically and educationally undesirable. And it can be perceived in some settings as a form of corruption that undermines social trust.

11. Much tutoring is of low pedagogic value. It teaches to the test and is dominated by past examination papers, tips on likely questions, and strategies for answering questions within the time constraints.
12. Urban students are more likely to receive tutoring than their rural counterparts, for reasons of both demand and supply.
13. Increasing volumes of tutoring are provided by companies working on a local, national or international basis. Many of the tutoring companies, especially in Western Europe, employ personnel who have not been trained as tutors.
14. In some Member States, much private tutoring is provided by mainstream teachers in order to earn supplementary incomes. Many of these tutors are already responsible for the same pupils in the mainstream schools. This practice can be seriously problematic as it gives incentives to divert effort from classrooms to private tutoring.
15. The tutoring industry is an expanding source of employment as well as a way for many mainstream teachers to earn supplementary incomes. This appears to be one reason why both governments and trade unions tend to avoid the subject.
16. Much tutoring is carried out informally, beyond the reach of the government tax collector.
17. Some EU governments give tax relief to families that invest in tutoring. Most of those who take advantage of tax relief are relatively wealthy.
18. Some EU Member States have major gaps in their regulations, others have ambiguous regulations, and yet others have clear regulations that are not rigorously implemented. Many policy makers and planners prefer to avoid difficult decisions by ignoring the phenomenon and leaving it to market forces.
19. More research on the phenomenon is necessary. The existing paucity of data reflects two factors: first, many of the actors deliberately avoid transparency; second, until recently shadow education has been barely on the agendas of either researchers or policy analysts.

## En Bref

- 1.** La question du soutien scolaire privé est une question de dimension européenne. Cette pratique s'est largement répandue dans la plupart des États Membres.
- 2.** L'étendue et l'intensité croissantes du soutien scolaire privé au sein de l'Union européenne caractérisent un phénomène qui a des implications économiques, sociales, et éducatives profondes, d'autant plus fortes dans le domaine de l'équité, du travail des écoles publiques et de la vie des enfants et des familles, et qui est révélateur de la nature de l'enseignement de l'école publique.
- 3.** Le soutien scolaire privé ne s'est pas développé de la même manière dans tous les Etats Membres de l'UE. Le sud de l'Europe enregistre des taux de soutien scolaire particulièrement élevés. Le soutien scolaire privé est également répandu dans les Etats Membres du Centre et de l'Est de l'UE. Alors qu'en Europe occidentale le soutien scolaire a fortement progressé au cours des dix dernières années, les Etats Membres nordiques paraissent les moins affectés par ce phénomène jusqu'à présent. Ces pays assurent, en effet, un service de qualité dans l'enseignement public qui semble satisfaire largement les attentes des familles.
- 4.** S'il est vrai que le soutien scolaire constitue souvent un recours parce que le système scolaire traditionnel présente des faiblesses, d'autres explications entrent en jeu. Certains pays ayant des systèmes éducatifs bien développés connaissent, pourtant, une forte demande en matière de soutien scolaire, qui est alimentée par la compétition et la préparation des examens.
- 5.** Dans les pays de l'Europe de l'est, le déclin du pouvoir d'achat des enseignants a été une raison majeure qui a conduit à l'expansion d'une éducation parallèle dans les années 1990.
- 6.** En Europe occidentale, la compétition imposée par la société, la course aux résultats scolaires, la préparation intensive des examens et la pression transmise aux familles ainsi qu'aux enfants ont davantage contribué à l'expansion d'une éducation parallèle. À cela s'ajoutent des restrictions budgétaires qui ont réduit la capacité des établissements scolaires à fournir un soutien scolaire individuel au sein de l'école.
- 7.** Ce sont principalement les meilleurs éléments d'une classe qui sont demandeurs de cours particuliers. Le soutien scolaire privé ne consiste pas tant à offrir un soutien à des élèves ayant réellement besoin d'une aide qu'ils ne peuvent pas trouver à l'école que de maintenir les avantages concurrentiels des élèves privilégiés qui réussissent déjà.
- 8.** Dans certains États membres, le soutien scolaire privé semble être plus répandu chez les élèves fréquentant déjà des établissements d'enseignement secondaire privés et payants.
- 9.** Si on l'abandonne aux forces du marché, le soutien scolaire privé risque de maintenir et d'exacerber les inégalités, car les familles aux revenus les plus élevés pourront s'offrir des cours particuliers en plus grande quantité et de meilleure qualité.

- 10.** Dans certains États Membres, le soutien scolaire privé domine la vie des enfants et limite leurs loisirs, ce qui est néfaste sur le plan psychologique et éducatif. Dans certains cas, il peut également être perçu comme une forme de corruption qui ébranle la confiance sociale.
- 11.** Bon nombre des cours particuliers ont une valeur pédagogique faible. Ils encouragent le bachotage en mettant l'accent sur les sujets d'examen passés et en se bornant à donner des conseils sur les questions probables et à inculquer des stratégies pour répondre aux questions dans les limites de temps imposées.
- 12.** Les élèves issus du milieu urbain sont plus susceptibles de suivre des cours particuliers que leurs homologues du milieu rural pour des raisons liées à l'offre et à la demande.
- 13.** De plus en plus de cours particuliers sont dispensés par des sociétés travaillant à l'échelle locale, nationale ou internationale. De nombreuses sociétés spécialisées dans le soutien scolaire, notamment en Europe occidentale, emploient du personnel n'ayant reçu aucune formation de professeur particulier.
- 14.** Dans certains États membres, les cours particuliers sont souvent dispensés par des enseignants du système scolaire traditionnel pour arrondir leurs fins de mois. Une partie de ces professeurs suivent déjà les mêmes élèves à l'école. Cette pratique peut être extrêmement dangereuse, car elle incite les professeurs à détourner les efforts de leurs classes pour les consacrer aux cours particuliers qu'aux cours collectifs en classe.
- 15.** L'industrie du soutien scolaire est génératrice de plus en plus d'emplois, et s'avère également un moyen pour beaucoup de professeurs d'écoles publiques d'encaisser des revenus supplémentaires. Cela semble être l'une des raisons pour lesquelles les gouvernements comme les syndicats tendent à éluder le sujet.
- 16.** Le soutien scolaire est une activité menée d'une manière informelle, qui est rarement déclarée et échappe au contrôle de l'administration fiscale.
- 17.** Certains gouvernements de l'Union européenne octroient des allégements fiscaux aux familles qui investissent dans le soutien scolaire ; la plupart des familles qui bénéficient de ces allégements sont relativement aisées.
- 18.** Certains États membres de l'Union européenne ont des lacunes importantes dans leur réglementation, d'autres ont des réglementations ambiguës et d'autres encore ont des réglementations claires qui ne sont pas rigoureusement appliquées. De nombreux décideurs politiques et planificateurs préfèrent éviter les décisions difficiles en ignorant le phénomène et en l'abandonnant aux forces du marché.
- 19.** D'autres études sur le phénomène sont nécessaires. La pénurie actuelle de données reflète deux facteurs : 1) de nombreux acteurs évitent délibérément la transparence ; 2) il y a peu de temps encore, l'éducation parallèle figurait à peine au programme des chercheurs et des analystes politiques.

## Auf Einen Blick

1. Private Nachhilfe ist in der gesamten EU ein Thema. In den meisten Mitgliedsländern hat sie beträchtlich zugenommen.
2. Das wachsende Ausmaß und die Intensität der privaten Nachhilfe in der EU haben erhebliche wirtschaftliche und soziale Auswirkungen. Dies hat starke Auswirkungen auf Chancengerechtigkeit, die Arbeit der etablierten Schulen und auf das Leben von Kindern und Familien. Außerdem sendet dies Signale über die Eigenschaften des etablierten Bildungssystems aus.
3. Private Nachhilfe hat sich nicht in allen EU Ländern im gleichen Ausmaß verbreitet. In Südeuropa ist der Anteil der Nachhilfeschüler besonders hoch. Während in Westeuropa der Umfang der Nachhilfe während des letzten Jahrzehnts deutlich zugenommen hat, scheinen die nordischen Länder von diesem Phänomen bisher am wenigsten betroffen zu sein. Diese Länder haben ein gutes etabliertes Bildungswesen, das weitgehend den Erwartungen von Familien entsprechen zu scheint.
4. Obwohl Nachhilfe häufig in Anspruch genommen wird, weil das bestehende Bildungssystem zu wünschen übrig lässt, können auch andere Faktoren eine Rolle spielen. Manche Länder verfügen durchaus über ein gut entwickeltes Bildungswesen, aber die Nachfrage nach privater Nachhilfe ist trotzdem groß aufgrund von Wettbewerbsdruck und prüfungsbezogenem Lernen.
5. In osteuropäischen Mitgliedsländern war der Rückgang der Kaufkraft von Lehrergehältern ein wesentlicher Antrieb für die Ausbreitung privater Nachhilfe in den 1990er Jahren.
6. In westeuropäischen Ländern hatten der soziale Wettbewerb, Schulperformance Rankings, prüfungsorientiertes Lernen und der Druck, der auf Familien und Kinder ausgeübt wird, stärkere Auswirkungen auf die Entwicklung eines Schattenbildungssystems. Hinzu kamen Kürzungen der Finanzmittel, die zu einer Einschränkung des Angebots an individueller Lernunterstützung in Schulen führten.
7. Die stärkste Nachfrage erhält das Nachhilfewesen von leistungsstarken Schülern. Es gibt deutliche Hinweise darauf, dass es bei privater Nachhilfe viel weniger um Schüler geht, die tatsächlich Hilfe brauchen, welche sie im Unterricht nicht bekommen, als vielmehr darum, den Wettbewerbsvorteil der ohnehin schon Erfolgreichen und Privilegierten.
8. In manchen Mitgliedsstaaten scheint Nachhilfeunterricht am meisten unter denjenigen Schülern verbreitet zu sein, die bereits schulgeldpflichtige private Bildungseinrichtungen der Sekundarstufe besuchen.
9. Wenn sie allein den Marktkräften überlassen bleibt, erhält oder verstärkt die Nachhilfe Ungleichheiten – Familien mit höherem Einkommen können sich mehr und bessere Nachhilfe leisten.

- 10.** In einigen Mitgliedsstaaten dominiert die private Nachhilfe das Leben der Kinder und schränkt ihre Freizeit auf eine Art und Weise ein, die vom psychologischen und erzieherischen Standpunkt aus unerwünscht ist. Unter Umständen kann sie sogar als eine Art Korruption aufgefasst werden, die das soziale Vertrauen unterminiert.
- 11.** Ein großer Teil der Nachhilfe hat nur geringen pädagogischen Wert. Sie ist prüfungsorientiert und stützt sich auf Prüfungsarbeiten aus der Vergangenheit, Tipps zu wahrscheinlichen Prüfungsfragen, sowie Strategien, um Fragen am besten unter Zeitdruck beantworten zu können.
- 12.** Schüler in Städten erhalten eher Nachhilfe als Kinder und Jugendliche auf dem Land, was sowohl vom Angebot als auch der Nachfrage abhängt.
- 13.** Zunehmend mehr Nachhilfe wird von Unternehmen angeboten, die auf regionaler, nationaler oder sogar internationaler Ebene tätig sind. Viele der Nachhilfeorganisationen, insbesondere in Westeuropa, beschäftigen Mitarbeiter, die nicht als Lehrer oder Tutoren ausgebildet sind.
- 14.** In manchen Mitgliedsländern wird viel Nachhilfe von Lehrern aus dem etablierten Schulsystem erteilt, um damit zusätzliches Einkommen zu verdienen. Viele dieser Nachhilfelehrer sind bereits für dieselben Schüler an herkömmlichen Schulen verantwortlich. Diese Vorgehensweise kann äußerst problematisch sein, denn sie gibt den Anreiz, das pädagogische Engagement vom Klassenzimmer in die Nachhilfe zu verlagern.
- 15.** Die Nachhilfebranche bietet zunehmend mehr Arbeitsplätze und ist zugleich eine Möglichkeit für Lehrer des etablierten Schulsystems zusätzliches Einkommen zu verdienen. Dies scheint einer der Gründe zu sein, warum sowohl Regierungen als auch Gewerkschaften dieses Thema nicht aufgreifen.
- 16.** Ein großer Anteil der Nachhilfe wird informell und am Fiskus vorbei angeboten.
- 17.** Die Regierungen in manchen EU-Ländern gewähren Steuererleichterungen für Familien, die in Nachhilfe investieren. Die meisten, die diese Vergünstigungen in Anspruch nehmen, sind jedoch vergleichsweise wohlhabend.
- 18.** In manchen EU-Mitgliedsstaaten sind die Vorschriften lückenhaft, in anderen sind sie nicht eindeutig und in wieder anderen gibt es zwar klare Vorschriften, aber sie werden nicht konsequent durchgesetzt. Viele Entscheidungsträger und Planer gehen schwierigen Entscheidungen aus dem Weg, indem sie das Phänomen ganz ignorieren und es den Marktkräften überlassen.
- 19.** Eine weitere Erforschung dieses Phänomens ist notwendig. Der derzeitige Mangel an Daten ist auf zwei Faktoren zurückzuführen: erstens sind viele der Beteiligten gar nicht an Transparenz interessiert und zweitens stand das Schattenbildungssystem bis vor kurzem kaum auf der Agenda von Forschern und Politikanalysten.

## Executive Summary

Every year families across the EU spend billions to supplement their children's schooling with private tutoring seeking to ensure that their children perform adequately in exams and for work that should -normally- be mastered at mainstream school.

This study focuses on fee-paying tutoring in academic subjects such as mathematics, languages and sciences. It does not cover supplementary learning of sports, music, etc. except and unless they are considered part of the core curriculum of schooling.

Such supplementary tutoring is widely called shadow education. The metaphor is used because much tutoring mimics the mainstream school system. If a new curriculum or assessment mode is introduced in the mainstream, in due course it appears in the shadow. And as the mainstream expands, so does the shadow.

The scale of shadow education in the EU may be indicated by some figures:

- In *Austria*, an estimated 20% of parents pay for supplementary tutoring for their children.
- In *Lithuania*, 62% of university students surveyed had received private supplementary tutoring in their last year of secondary school.
- In *Slovakia*, 56% of students in a parallel survey indicated that they had received private tutoring.
- In *Portugal*, 55% of candidates for the national university entrance examinations had received tutoring in Grades 10 to 12.
- In the *United Kingdom*, approximately 12% of primary school pupils and 8% of secondary pupils are receiving tutoring.

These statistics on participation may be supplemented by data on costs:

- In *Cyprus*, tutoring consumed €111.2 million in 2008, of which €30.5 million was for children in primary schools, and €80.7 million was for students in secondary schools.
- In *France*, the sector was estimated in 2007 to be worth approximately €2,210 million.
- In *Germany*, tutoring was indicated in 2010 to consume between €942 and €1,468 million.
- In *Greece*, tutoring was estimated in 2008 to consume €952.6 million.

In several EU Member States, tutoring has become a major enterprise. The household expenditure figures for Cyprus and Greece are especially notable, because they are equivalent to approximately 17% and 20% respectively of the government expenditures on primary and secondary education.

These figures reflect a feeling by increasing numbers of families that the provision of mainstream schooling is inadequate to meet all their expectations, and particularly for the achievement of their children in relation to that of other young people. Private supplementary tutoring of various kinds is used to bridge part of the gap, and especially to improve and maintain their children's competitive advantage.

The expansion of tutoring brings major challenges for policy makers, since the effects and consequences are not confined to those directly involved. Shadow education has profound social and economic implications. It also shapes the ways that policy makers, families, teachers and others think about and experience public education.

Shadow education is a contested issue. Its proponents claim that it can help low achievers to keep up with their peers, can further stretch the learning of high achievers, and can increase society's stock of human capital, thereby contributing to wider economic and social objectives. Its critics claim that it adds considerably to existing social and economic inequalities, that it is a mechanism for the already relatively privileged to extend their privilege, and that it may be a financial burden on low-income households. Shadow education may also have a negative backwash on mainstream schooling. The different pedagogic approaches of teachers and tutors can be confusing to pupils, and supplementary tutoring can exert undesirable pressure on young people by making the schooling day very long. Moreover, when teachers receive extra income from private tutoring of their own students, concerns arise about possible corrupting influences and perverse incentives.

These remarks lead to questions about the implications for policy makers. The first need is to *recognise and evaluate the nature, scale and implications of shadow education systems*. This requires assessment of existing quantitative and qualitative data, and effort to collect additional data. The evidence is likely to indicate greater amounts of tutoring and of corresponding household expenditures than is widely assumed.

Policy makers should then *ask why the shadow education system has expanded dramatically*, and how it affects mainstream schooling. As part of this process, they should address three issues. First, to what extent does shadow education reflect shortcomings in, or excessive demands on, the mainstream school systems which could be remedied? Critics decry the tendency for tutoring to take increasing proportions of what arguably should be the roles of good public education systems. Second, does shadow education have acceptable implications for equality of opportunity? The evidence suggests that shadow education is less about support to those who are in real need of help that cannot be provided by schools, and a lot more about maintaining competitive advantages for students who are already relatively successful and privileged. And third, are the hidden forms of privatisation in education acceptable to governments which claim to promote equal access for all? The increased acceptability of marketised supplementary education could constitute a threat to the social fabric that should not be permitted to occur by default and without question.

Policy makers should then consider ways to *regulate and guide the shadow education system*. In some countries, anybody can become a tutor without professional qualifications or a business licence. Parents and young children are then subjected to services in the marketplace which may be unreliable. To avoid such abuses, at a minimum regulations might be needed for child safety in tutoring premises; and going further, governments might wish to promote codes of conduct and related forms of quality assurance. They may also wish to find ways to tax the earnings of tutors who currently avoid it.

Finally, cross-national comparison has important lessons for countries where shadow education is not (yet) a major phenomenon. Within Europe there is considerable variation. Policy makers in countries where the shadow education system is modest in scale still have opportunities to avert some of the major problems experienced by countries in which it has become engrained in cultures and daily lives.

European Union Member States



## Introduction

The phenomenon of shadow education has become increasingly evident in Europe. For a long time it was possible to ignore it, but this is no longer the case. "Shadow education" is a widely-used term that covers various forms of private supplementary tutoring (Box 1, next page). In recent decades shadow education has greatly expanded, and it has far-reaching economic, social and educational implications.

This study is entitled *The Challenge of Shadow Education*. The word *Challenge* has been chosen for two reasons. First, it is argued, the existence of shadow education is a challenge to mainstream school systems. The shadow sector exposes shortcomings in mainstream systems, and offers a way to compensate for at least some of these shortcomings. Second, the shadow education system raises fundamental issues for policy makers, who must devise appropriate responses and may find this a challenging task. The arena is complex, and requires discerning policies based on the circumstances of particular societies and particular types of shadow education.

This report, prepared for the European Commission, focuses on the 27 countries of the European Union. To some extent, the diversity of these countries in economic and social dimensions is echoed in diversity in the scale and nature of shadow education. This diversity can be instructive.

For analysis of this particular theme, one major issue concerns availability of data. In a methodological article about international mapping of shadow education, the author likened the task to an "assembly of a jigsaw puzzle with most of the pieces missing" (Bray 2010: 3). One major recommendation of this report is that more attention be devoted to shadow education by researchers in order to generate a stronger foundation of evidence. Nevertheless, enough is already known about the phenomenon to be able to draw some significant conclusions. This report is primarily based on existing literature supplemented by interviews with policy makers, parents, teachers, tutors and other stakeholders.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Some of these interviews and related interactions occurred when the author was based in Paris as Director of UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) from March 2006 to March 2010. Other occasions include the conference of the Czech Comparative Education Society (CCES) in Prague, 30 August to 3 September 2010, at which the author presented a keynote address on shadow education that led to extensive discussion not only with Czech participants but also with colleagues from elsewhere in Europe and beyond. The author has also made considerable use of e-mail to solicit and discuss data. At the same time, he has been aware that more data are available from some countries than others, and that in this respect the report does not achieve full geographic balance.

The report begins with some definitions to indicate its focus and scope. It then turns to the scale of shadow education before examining the intensity, modes and most popular subjects. Next, the report considers actors, purposes and approaches. As part of this commentary, it is necessary to ask who receives tutoring and why, as well as who provides tutoring and how. These remarks lead to the question how much tutoring costs at both individual and national levels. A further necessary question, of course, is whether tutoring "works" in the sense of being a good investment by families for enhancing learning. The answer to this question may be mixed, depending on the motivations of the students, the skills of the tutors, and the curricula and frameworks within which tutoring is provided.

From these remarks, the report considers implications for policy. The overall implication is that shadow education should be given much more attention by policy makers, recognising its increasing scale and significance. While shadow education may have some positive dimensions, it can also have very problematic ones. Policy makers should reflect on the reasons why in general the sector has expanded but is more apparent in some countries than others. They may also wish to consider various forms of regulation and steering in dealing with the phenomenon. The European Commission may assist with this analysis.

#### **Box 1: Noting the Terminologies**

Even in the English language, diverse terms are used to describe what in this report is called shadow education; and of course the other languages of the EU bring their own vocabularies.

A broad term, also used in the title of this report, is private tutoring. Some people refer to private tuition rather than private tutoring. "Coaching" is also a common term, particularly for tutors who focus on study skills more than on subject content and perhaps operating over an extended time period. "Cramming", by contrast, refers to intensive study especially for examinations.

In France, tutoring is commonly called *éducation parallèle* (parallel education); and comparable terms are used in Romania (*sistemul paralel de educație*) and Greece (*parapedia*). Other societies have terms unique to their own contexts. In Ireland, for example, tutoring is commonly called "grinds". In some countries, different words are used for one-to-one tutoring and for institutionalised class-based tutoring. Tutoring over the internet may be a further category.

### ***Focus and Scope of this report***

This report focuses on supplementary tutoring of academic subjects which are already taught in mainstream schools. Thus, it is concerned with mathematics, languages, sciences and other subjects on the standard school timetable. It is not concerned with supplementary learning through Sunday School, Boy Scouts, soccer, choir or ballet, except and unless they are considered part of the core curriculum of schooling. Such activities may be of considerable importance to families and to societies as a whole, but the issues are slightly different and are beyond the focus of this study.

In terms of levels, the report is concerned with primary and secondary education. Private tutoring may also be evident at pre-primary and post-secondary levels, but again the issues are rather different and are beyond the present focus.

The metaphor of the shadow is used to describe private supplementary tutoring for several reasons. First, most tutoring mimics the mainstream: as the size and shape of the mainstream changes, so do the size and shape of the shadow. Thus, if a new syllabus is introduced in the school system for, say, mathematics, then that new syllabus will soon be reflected in the work of tutors in the shadow. Likewise, as the school system expands, so does the shadow.

Reference to shadows can bring a negative connotation, and indeed many dimensions of shadow education are negative. However, shadows are not necessarily problematic. On the contrary, they can be useful in various ways. As the author remarked in an earlier work (Bray 1999: 17):

Just as the shadow cast by a sun-dial can tell the observer about the passage of time, so the shadow of an education system can tell the observer about change in societies.

Policy makers responsible for mainstream schooling can learn a great deal from looking at the scale and nature of shadow education, reflecting on the reasons why families seek private tutoring and on the responses of the market. While some tutoring is of doubtful quality and of questionable value, other tutoring may be very effective and of great value not just to the learners but also to their families and to the wider societies. For policy makers and other stakeholders, therefore, the questions become what sorts of tutoring should be discouraged and what sorts, if any, should be encouraged, and how.



# CHAPTER 1. The Scale of Private Tutoring in the European Union

Data on the scale of private tutoring come from scattered sources. They have different methodological underpinnings, and some are rough estimates rather than exact indicators. Nevertheless, they are part of the jigsaw puzzle which can be used to assemble the picture. Table 1 presents such a picture. In some respects, to use a common phrase, it compares “apples and oranges” (and perhaps also pears, plums and peaches). But at least these items are all fruits, and much can be learned from the comparison provided that care is taken to recognise limitations.

**Table 1: Indicators of Private Tutoring in European Union Countries**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Patterns</b>
<b>Austria</b>	A 2010 telephone survey of 2,760 households with 4,406 children found that 20% of parents paid for tutoring (AK-Wien [Abteilung Bildungspolitik] 2010: 6). This report echoed Wagner et al. (2003), who had stated that approximately 20% of secondary students “seem to get tutoring of one kind or another”.
<b>Belgium</b>	Commercialised private tutoring has expanded rapidly since the mid-2000s (Bouillon 2010; Dehandschutter 2010). Meskens and Berkenbaum (2009) described it as a “juicy market” in which one child out of 10 is considered to need private tutoring.
<b>Bulgaria</b>	Tsakonas (2002: 34) described private tutoring as “a flourishing industry”. Home-based tutoring was said to cost the equivalent of €5 per lesson, and on average general secondary school students were estimated to receive 160 lessons per year totalling the equivalent of approximately €800.
<b>Cyprus</b>	A 2008 household survey (Cyprus 2010) indicated that tutoring consumed 52.9% of household expenditures for secondary education (including direct fees to private schools). A 2003 study of 1,120 college students found that 86.4% had received private tutoring when in secondary school (Stylianou et al. 2004: 335).
<b>Czech Republic</b>	Informal observation indicates that tutoring is extensive and has expanded in recent years (Štech & Greger 2010). Korpasová (2009) provided some evidence in a small-scale study of tutoring in English language.
<b>Denmark</b>	PISA data indicate low levels of extra tutoring in Scandinavian countries (see e.g. Southgate 2009: 99). The data do not distinguish between paid and free tutoring; but since data for the combined categories show low levels, the scale of private tutoring is presumably modest.

<b>Country</b>	<b>Patterns</b>
<b>Estonia</b>	A survey of stakeholders has been conducted by Kirss (2011). A government official estimated the prevalence at 30-40%, while others felt that at least half of the student body would receive private tutoring at some time. Tutoring is said to be common both in basic and in secondary education.
<b>Finland</b>	See remarks above about Denmark.
<b>France</b>	Melot (2007) reported estimates that 25% of lower secondary students and 33% of upper secondary students were receiving tutoring. In large Parisian lycées the proportions were even higher – perhaps as much as 75%.
<b>Germany</b>	Klemm and Klemm (2010) reported that 1.1 million pupils, representing 14.8% of the student population, received regular tutoring. This matched findings by Guill (2010a), who reported that 18.5% of Grade 8 students in an urban sample received tutoring.
<b>Greece</b>	A 2000 survey of first-year university students found that over 80% had attended preparatory schools of the 'cramming' type ( <i>frontistirio</i> ), 50% had received individual private tutoring, and one third had received both types (Psacharopoulos & Papakonstantinou 2005). Lioudakis (2010: 5) noted expansion during the following decade, and stated that "today almost all Grade 12 high school students attend shadow education".
<b>Hungary</b>	Among the 1,361 students at the University of Debrecen surveyed by Bordás et al. (2011), 60.5% stated that they had received private tutoring in secondary school. Ildikó (2004) stated that over three quarters of primary and secondary students received tutoring.
<b>Ireland</b>	A survey of 1,496 students who had completed their upper secondary education in 2003 indicated that 45% had received paid private tutoring during their last year of school. This was a significant increase from 32% of the same age group in 1994 (Smyth 2009: 9).
<b>Italy</b>	A 2010 search for "lezioni private" in Google (Italian version) delivered 369,000 items, most of which were advertisements of people offering tutoring. Press comments (e.g. Adoc 2008; Messagero Veneto 2009) described a "boom" in the industry.
<b>Latvia</b>	Strode & Rutkovska (2008: 19) sampled 600 parents, 10.8% of whom said that parents were expected to pay for individual or group tutoring. They also asked 604 teachers, 14.5% of whom said that parents were expected to pay for tutoring. Aizstrauta et al. (2004) surveyed 267 Grade 12 students in eight schools in Riga, Valmiera and Jurmala. They found that 46.4% received private tutoring.
<b>Lithuania</b>	Būdienė and Zabulionis (2006) surveyed 801 first-year university students in 2004/05. Among them, 61.9% reported having received tutoring or attended preparatory classes in their final secondary year.
<b>Luxembourg</b>	Haag and van Kessel (2000) sampled 907 pupils in four lycées. One half had received private tutoring at some time, and one quarter were currently receiving tutoring. The highest proportion (40%) was in Grade 7.

<b>Country</b>	<b>Patterns</b>
<b>Malta</b>	A 5% sample of Grade 10 students undertaken by Vella and Theuma (2008) found that 51.9% were currently receiving tutoring and that 77.9% had done so at some time in their school lives. A decade earlier, Fenech and Spiteri (1999) had surveyed 1,482 upper primary and lower secondary pupils and found that 50.5% had received tutoring at some time.
<b>Netherlands</b>	PISA data suggest low levels of tutoring in the Netherlands, comparable to patterns in Scandinavian countries (OECD, 2011:33).
<b>Poland</b>	Murawska and Putkiewicz (2006) surveyed 849 first-year university students in 2004/05. Among them, 49.8% reported having received private lessons.
<b>Portugal</b>	A 2005 government survey of 30,686 candidates for the national university entrance examinations (cited by Ventura et al. 2008: 135) indicated that 54.7% had received tutoring in Grades 10 to 12. This was consistent with school-level studies (Neto-Mendes & Costa 2007; Azevedo & Neto-Mendes 2009).
<b>Romania</b>	A 2007 stratified random survey of 1,267 secondary students by Metro Media Transilvania and the Agenția pentru Strategii Guvernamentale (2007) in 160 schools of 40 counties indicated that 27% received tutoring. Three years later, a sample of 1,500 children aged 6-19 (i.e. including both primary and secondary students) found that 17% were receiving tutoring (Daedalus Millward Brown 2010). A 2010 national random sample of 1,316 adults by the Romanian Institute for Evaluation and Strategy (Institutul Român pentru Evaluare și Strategie [IRES] 2010: 33) found that 50% had employed tutors for their children.
<b>Slovakia</b>	Kubánová (2006a) surveyed 926 first-year university students in 2004/05. Among them, 56.0% reported having received tutoring and/or attended preparatory classes in their final secondary year.
<b>Slovenia</b>	Faganel (2010) reviewed websites advertising tutoring and indicating prices. The research did not identify the proportion of pupils receiving tutoring, but clearly showed that the phenomenon was common.
<b>Spain</b>	Gallardo (2010) estimated that 20% of pupils aged 6 to 18 were receiving tutoring. At the secondary level, a study of 2,535 secondary students in 48 schools of the Asturias region in 2008 (Álvarez Fernández et al. 2009a, 2009b) found that 58.9% were receiving tutoring.
<b>Sweden</b>	See remarks above about Denmark.
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Ireson and Rushforth (2011) reported on their survey of 3,615 pupils in Years 6, 11 and 13 in England. Over a quarter (27%) indicated that they had had a tutor at some point during their schooling. A 2008 random telephone survey of 1,500 parents in England found that 12% of primary school pupils and 8% of secondary school pupils were receiving private tutoring (Peters et al. 2009: 2).

In addition to the data in Table 1 are statistics from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) operated by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). PISA has tested learning achievements of 15-year olds in multiple education systems (43 in 2000, 41 in 2003, 58 in 2006, and 65 in 2009), including many European systems. The questionnaires have delivered potentially useful data on shadow education, but were insufficiently precise to provide data that can confidently be placed on a single yardstick. For example, the 2006 parent questionnaire secured data on total family education spending, but did not differentiate expenditures on tutoring from those on other items (OECD 2005a); and the student questionnaire collected data on out-of-school-time lessons, but did not differentiate lessons by private tutors from other lessons (OECD 2005b). Some authors (e.g. Southgate 2009) have placed more weight on the numbers than can be justified. Thus, although the PISA findings may tell some sort of story (see also OECD 2011), the numerical data have not been reproduced in this report.

Similar remarks apply to the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and its successor Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (also called TIMSS), which were conducted under the auspices of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). The first round of TIMSS testing in 1995 collected data from over 500,000 students of mathematics and science at five age or grade levels, and from their teachers and principals, in 45 countries (see <http://timss.bc.edu>). The second round was conducted in 1999 and focused on mathematics and science at Grade 8 in 38 countries. The third round in 2003 collected comparable data from Grades 4 and 8 in 49 countries; and the fourth round in 2007 collected data from the same grades in 60 countries. Again, the questionnaires contained limitations from the perspective of shadow education (see Bray 2010), with the result that the findings are difficult to interpret. As with PISA, some authors (e.g. Baker & LeTendre 2005; Lee et al. 2009) have placed more weight on the numbers than can be justified. Consequently, the TIMSS data are also not reproduced in this report even though they may tell some sort of broad story.

Returning to Table 1, a difficulty arises from the fact that the reported studies have a wide range of foci, and are not all based on rigorous sampling. Nevertheless, an overall geographic pattern can be observed:

- **Southern Europe** has particularly high rates of tutoring, led by Greece and including Cyprus. Further research would be valuable to explore why Greece and Cyprus have long appeared to have much more tutoring than neighbouring Italy, for example. Tutoring is also strongly evident in Malta, although it has not reached the scale of Greece and Cyprus.
- **Eastern Europe** has traditions of tutoring that pre-date the political transitions of the late 1980s and early 1990s, but during the period since those transitions the scale of tutoring has greatly increased. Especially in the former Soviet countries, a major driving force was the collapse in purchasing power of teachers' salaries, which required teachers to find supplementary ways to earn incomes. In the other

countries previously associated with the Soviet Union the economic crisis was less severe, but also in those countries the economic pressures were major initial drivers. Now tutoring has become part of the established culture.

- **Western Europe** has also had long traditions of private tutoring on a small scale. However, during the last decade the scale of tutoring has greatly increased. It reflects the increasing competitiveness of societies in the context of greater mobility of labour and skills, and is part of the marketisation of education which has become more socially acceptable in these countries.
- **Northern Europe** seems to date least affected by the rise of private tutoring. Scandinavian countries seem to maintain stronger traditions of schools adequately meeting their students' needs. Certainly students in Scandinavia receive extra lessons, both to help slow learners keep up with their peers and to stretch the learning of high achievers; but much of this work is provided within the framework of public schooling rather than through a parallel system.

Within these broad pictures, of course, are variations. Patterns in France differ from those in Spain and Portugal; and patterns in Latvia differ from those in Bulgaria and Slovenia. Moreover, significant variations may be found within countries. In Austria, the 2010 study by the AK-Wien (Abteilung Bildungspolitik) found that the highest amounts of tutoring (32 per cent of the sampled households) were being received in Vienna. Next highest on the list was Burgenland (29 per cent), followed by Steiermark (20 per cent). At the other end of the scale proportions in Salzburg were 14 per cent, and in Tyrol they were only 11 per cent.

To some extent, these Austrian figures also reflected urban/rural variations of the type observed elsewhere. In Romania, for example, Daedalus Millward Brown (2010) found that 27 per cent of urban children received private tutoring while the proportion for rural children was 7 per cent. Related patterns in other countries have been reported in Germany (Dohmen et al. 2008), Greece (Hagitegas 2008), Hungary (Bordás et al. 2011), Lithuania (Büdienė & Zabulionis 2006), Poland (Murawska & Putkiewicz 2006), and Spain (Álvarez Fernández et al. 2009b). Urban students are more likely to receive tutoring than their rural counterparts for reasons of both demand and supply. Cities tend to be more competitive, may have more higher-income families able to afford private tutoring, and are more likely to host universities whose students provide tutoring in order to earn supplementary incomes. Villages may have fewer avenues for private tutoring, since the major companies do not target thinly-populated regions, and the individuals willing to provide tutoring are spread more thinly.

However, strong urban-rural biases are not found everywhere. The Slovakian study by Kubánová (2006a; 2006b) found a difference of only 3.5 percentage points between the scale of tutoring received by urban and rural students; and in Ireland, Smyth (2009: 11) reported that, contrary to her expectation, no difference in the scale of tutoring was evident between urban and rural areas. Although the formal tutorial schools were more easily accessible to urban students, Smyth concluded that the balance was maintained for other students through informal one-to-one tutoring. This certainly was the case in Slovakia. Kubánová (2006b: 286) observed that while in Bratislava many more students received tutoring through institutional courses rather than on an individual and small-group basis, in the villages the converse pattern was the norm.

## CHAPTER 2. Intensity, Modes and Subjects

The figures in Table 1 provide an indication of the incidence of tutoring, but do not show the intensity during the week and at peak seasons, the modes of tutoring, or the popular subjects. The following remarks address these domains.

### *Intensity*

The intensity of tutoring is partly shaped by its purpose. Tutoring which is seen as providing long-term support may be provided steadily throughout the year, but tutoring which is driven by high-stakes examinations is likely to peak in intensity just before those examinations. Tutoring may be provided on a part-time basis in the evenings and at week-ends, and/or it may be on a ‘block’ basis during vacations. As described by the director of one tutoring company in Austria: “the summer [long vacation] is important to us, just as the Christmas [shopping] season is important to other companies” (Gruber 2008). Classes during the summer vacation are also a major phenomenon in Italy (Messaggero Veneto 2009; Adoc 2010).

One might expect secondary school pupils to have longer attention spans and to face more pressure from the end-of-schooling examinations, and thus to receive more hours of tutoring per week. However, this does not necessarily occur: much depends on the aspirations of the parents and the extent to which they see tutoring as desirable for a strong foundation. A study of English-language tutoring in Czech Republic may match wider patterns. Korpasová (2009: 27) selected a sample of pupils aged 10 (Grade 4), 13 (Grade 7) and 15 (Grade 9). Just over half (54.4%) of the students receiving tutoring did so for up to one hour per week, with this pattern being equally distributed across the grades. Almost all the others (43.3%) received one to two hours per week, again with this pattern being equally distributed across the grades. Only 2.2 per cent of the pupils received less than one hour per week or three or more hours per week.

The study in the Czech Republic may be compared with one in Portugal which focused only on Grade 12 but covered all subjects and examined trends over a six year period (Costa et al. 2003; Neto-Mendes & Costa 2007; Ventura et al. 2008). Patterns were surveyed in four schools, and Table 2 (next page) shows findings in 2006/07. Half of the pupils received between one and three hours of tutoring per week, 40.7 per cent received four to six hours a week, and 5.3 per cent received seven to 10 hours a week.

**Table 2: Intensity of Tutoring in Grade 12 of Four Secondary Schools, Portugal**

Schools (pseudo nyms)	No of students surveyed	Students receiving tutoring (%)	Hours per week spent in tutoring (%)				Monthly costs in Euros (%)			
			1-3	4-6	7-10	>10	≤70	71-140	141-210	>210
Blue School	99	55.6	60.0	32.7	3.6	0.0	34.5	52.7	9.1	1.8
Pink School	113	43.4	42.9	51.0	4.1	2.0	32.7	36.7	18.4	8.2
Green School	125	53.6	55.2	37.3	7.5	0.0	19.4	65.7	10.4	1.5
Yellow School	112	64.3	51.4	43.1	5.6	0.0	23.6	62.5	9.7	1.4
<i>Total</i>	449	54.1	52.7	40.7	5.3	0.4	26.7	56.0	11.5	2.9

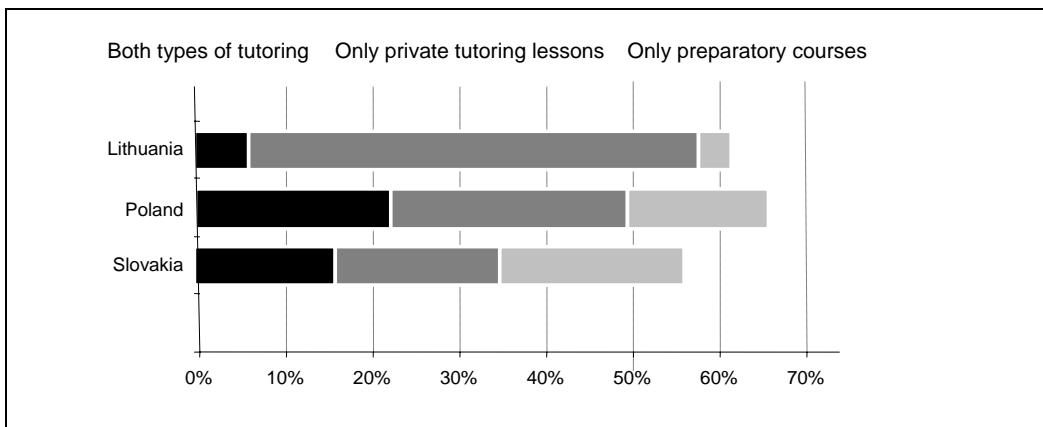
Source: Ventura et al. (2008: 130).

A third example may be taken from Malta, where Vella and Theuma (2008: 50) investigated a sample of Grade 10 students and found that 51.9 per cent were receiving tutoring. Among these students, 56.1 per cent received private tutoring for up to three hours a week. Just over one third (35.4%) received tutoring for four to six hours, 1.4 per cent did so for seven to nine hours, and 7.2 per cent did so for 10 hours or more. Pupils in the high-performing schools were more likely to receive tutoring, and to devote longer hours, than pupils in the lower performing schools.

### Modes

Much tutoring is provided on a **one-to-one** basis, in pairs, **or in very small groups**; but other forms of tutoring are **classroom-based**. European countries do not seem to have "star tutors" of the sort found in Hong Kong in which teenagers are encouraged to view their tutors like film stars or popular musicians and in which pupils pack large lecture theatres with overflow rooms to which lessons are transmitted by video (Kwo & Bray 2011). However, many tutorial schools (*frontistiria*) in Greece have long been classroom based, and have counterparts elsewhere in the EU. In general, the costs for the students are much lower in the large classes than in the small ones.

One-to-one tutoring and classroom-based tutoring are of course not necessarily mutually exclusive. This was noted in a study sponsored by the Open Society Institute (OSI) which covered nine Central and Eastern European countries of which three are members of the European Union. The study asked first-year university students about their experiences during the last year of secondary school. It recorded the proportions of respondents who had received tutoring in individual or small groups, the proportions who had received tutoring in classroom-based preparatory courses and the proportions who had received both types. The findings for Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia are presented in Figure 1 (next page). In Lithuania, most students received only individual or small-group tutoring, though some received only preparatory classes and a slightly larger proportion received both. In Poland and Slovakia, patterns were more balanced with about one third receiving only individual or small-group tutoring, one third receiving only preparatory classes, and one third receiving both.

**Figure 1: Modes of Tutoring Received in Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia**

Source: Silova & Bray (2006: 73)

The market is also evolving in the skills stressed by tutors. While for many students and their families the subject-specific skills (i.e. correct grammar, accurate calculation of mathematics, etc.) remain the main focus, an expanding component of the tutoring sector focuses on study habits, information retrieval, and general organisation. Oller (2009) has highlighted this pattern in France, noting the development of broader forms of coaching alongside the traditional forms of subject-based support. Similar observations have been made in Belgium by Berkenbaum (2008).

As might be expected, new modes of tutoring are developing with new technologies. Most obvious among them is tutoring by internet, which can be achieved face-to-face in real time using web cameras. This mode, moreover, crosses spatial boundaries. The pupil and the tutor do not need to be in the same village or town – or even in the same country. TutorVista is a company based in Bangalore, India, which offers tutoring over the internet through the medium of English to clients around the world including the United Kingdom (Box 2, next page). Other companies have seen the potential, some of them publishers which seek to broaden their products beyond traditional paper-based books to electronic books and interactive media. As noted by Ventura and Jang (2010: 65), tutoring over the internet can reduce the disadvantages faced by children in rural and remote locations. Families with good internet connections can access the same levels of service as their counterparts in urban and suburban locations.

The internet can also be used to identify tutors who will make home visits in person. Every European country, and indeed perhaps every major city, seems now to have one or more websites which provide matching services through which households can identify tutors in their neighbourhoods. These tutors are commonly self-employed, and the managers of the websites cover their administrative costs through commissions from the tutors and/or the clients.

**Box 2: Tutoring over the Internet Breaks Geographic Barriers**

In 2007 a new company gained immediate success through use of readily available technology to link students and tutors across the globe. This company, TutorVista, received much publicity including television and newspaper coverage in the UK and the USA which can be downloaded from its website ([www.tutorvista.com](http://www.tutorvista.com)). "World class online tutoring," the company declares, is "just a click away".

The business model is based on the existence in India of a large pool of talented, English-speaking graduates who have been trained in an education system with a British colonial heritage and who are willing to work for salaries which, in European (and North American) terms, are low. Clients and their tutors operate face-to-face, with payments being made by credit card also over the internet. As Blakely (2007) explained, the business:

echoes the outsourcing model that led to an exodus of financial services back-office jobs to India, where wages are lower and skilled workers plentiful. Students are coached via an online platform that is down-loaded on to a home computer and includes an interactive white-board, an instant messaging tool and an internet telephone system. Tutors ... must have a good degree in the subject that they will teach and are given a six-week training course covering topics such as the UK syllabus and how to broach the "accent barrier".

Clients are attracted not only by the relatively low costs but also by the fact that the arrangement avoids the intrusion of a stranger to a family home (which is a common mode for one-to-one tutoring) or travel to the tutor's home (which is a common alternative mode). Initially the company focused on mathematics, but it noted that other subjects could be covered in the same way. In Europe, the strongest markets would seem to be in education systems which operate through the medium of English; but in all education systems the English language is itself an important subject and could be covered through the same approach.

## Subjects

As might be expected, the most popular subjects for private supplementary tutoring are the ones which are essential for advancement, which in most systems includes mathematics and national languages. Table 3 illustrates this observation with data from England across a range of year groups.

Table 3: Percentage of Students with Tutors, by Subject and Year Group, England

	Year 6	Year 11	Year 13
Mathematics	17	18	19
English	16*	10	8
Science	8	6	6
Modern Languages	0	3	3
Humanities	0	2	0.4
Entry Tests**	4	0	0
Other subjects	1	2	2
<b>Total %</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>29.5</b>

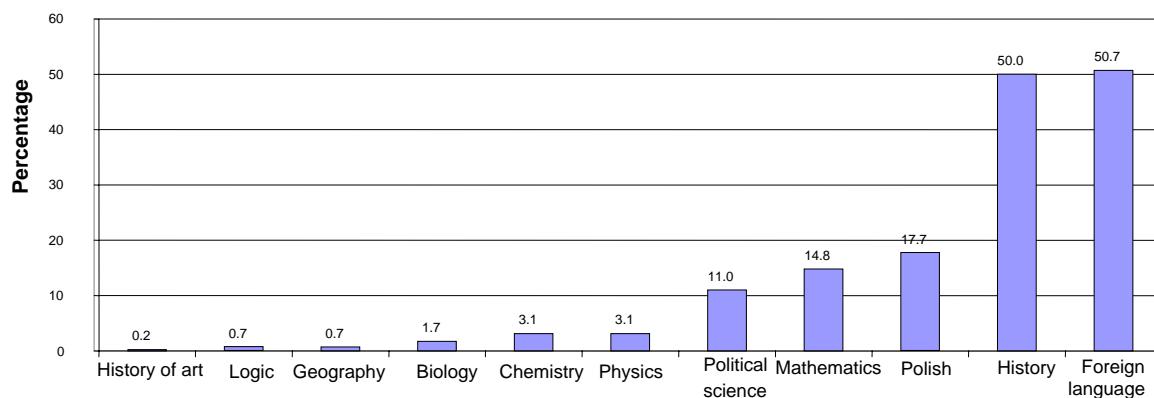
\* Includes reading and writing;

\*\*Tests of general ability used in secondary school selection (11+, verbal and non-verbal reasoning)

Source: Ireson & Rushforth (2011: 7)

Surveys in Luxembourg, Latvia, Cyprus, Germany, Austria, Portugal, Romania, and Hungary showed that mathematics was also the most popular subject in those countries (Mischo & Haag 2002: 265; Aizstrauta et al. 2004; Stylianou et al. 2004: 337; Guill 2010a: 124; Gruber 2008; Azevedo & Neto-Mendes 2009: 99; IRES 2010: 35; Bordás et al. 2011: 4). However, the Spanish study by Álvarez Fernández et al. (2009b: 2) showed that languages were almost twice as popular as mathematics. Similarly, among Year 12 students in Poland history and foreign languages were the most popular subjects (Figure 2). The fact that mathematics was much less in demand may reflect the fact that for Year 12 the compulsory stage of mathematics had been passed.

Figure 2: Subjects in which Year 12 Students Received Tutoring, Poland



Note: Respondents could select more than one answer

Source: Murawska & Putkiewicz (2006: 268).

As with other dimensions of tutoring, the demand for particular subjects may also vary by school. In Malta, Vella and Theuma (2008: 62) indicated that overall the most popular subjects among Grade 10 students were, in descending order, mathematics, physics, English, and Maltese. Proportions of pupils receiving help in mathematics were roughly equal across schools, reflecting its general importance, but English was more popular among pupils in government schools while Maltese was more popular among pupils in private schools. This reflected the fact that private school students already spoke much English at school and at home, but relatively little Maltese, while for government schools the converse was the case.

A further dimension concerns gender. Looking at Maltese schools of similar types, Vella and Theuma (2008: 63) noted that in the private sector girls were more likely than boys to receive tutoring in chemistry and biology, while boys were more likely to receive tutoring in computer studies. In the academically-demanding Junior Lyceums, girls were more likely to take business studies while the boys again were more likely to take computer studies; and in the less academically-demanding Area Secondary Schools, girls commonly received tutoring in home economics while boys were more likely to receive it in design and technology. In the Portuguese study reported by Ventura et al. (2008: 132), proportions by subject in 2006/07 were almost equal for boys and girls in mathematics, biology and the languages, but more girls than boys took history while more boys than girls took physics and chemistry.

## CHAPTER 3. Actors, Purposes and Approaches

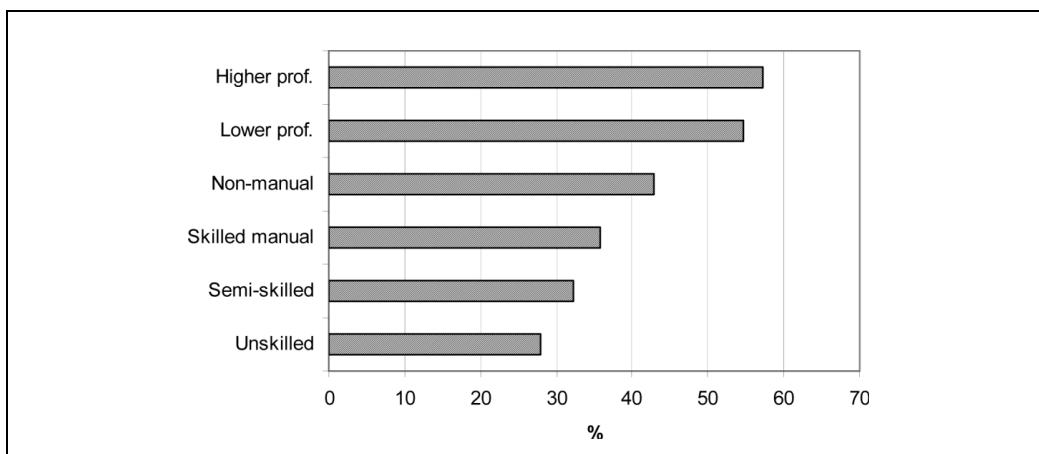
### *Who Receives Tutoring and Why?*

Casual observers tend to assume that the groups which receive most tutoring are those which are most in need, i.e. pupils who are achieving below national norms for their age groups. This is certainly not the case in many parts of the world. In East Asia, for example, tutoring is more likely to be received by pupils who are already performing well but whose families wish to maintain or further enhance their performance in the competitive society (see e.g. Bray & Kwo 2003; Bray 2009; Dawson 2010). In Europe the social, economic and cultural ingredients may differ, but it would still appear that if left to market forces tutoring is more likely to be received by relatively high academic performers than by their weaker counterparts (see e.g. Hatos 2006; Dutercq 2008; Koinzer 2011). This is correlated with disparities in family incomes. Shadow education is much less about support to those who are in real need of learning support that they cannot find at school, and a lot more about maintaining competitive advantages within schools for students who are already successful and privileged. Elaboration on this matter requires identification of a range of motives for seeking tutoring.

#### Socio-Economic Groups

Families in higher socio-economic groups have more opportunity to invest in tutoring, and commonly use this opportunity. Figure 3 presents data from Ireland collected in 2004 through a nationally-representative survey of people who had left secondary school the previous year. Proportions of students receiving tutoring were greatest in the higher professional group. Participation was least among students from working-class backgrounds and especially among those from unskilled households.

Figure 3: Receipt of Private Tutoring by Social Class Background, Ireland



Source: Smyth (2009: 9)

Comparable findings emerged from research in Poland (Putkiewicz 2005: 97-102; Murawska & Putkiewicz 2006: 271). Over half of the students in the sample who had attended private preparatory classes in their last year of secondary schooling were in high socio-economic groups, compared with one third in medium socio-economic groups and just 19.2 per cent in low socio-economic groups. Related patterns were evident in consumption of one-to-one and small-group tutoring. Students from high socio-economic groups were much more likely than middle and low socio-economic groups to be receiving such tutoring (58.7% of the sample compared with 46.7% and 35.1%), and to be receiving tutoring in more subjects.

Various other studies match these findings. In Greece, Verdis (2002: 248-251) found that receipt of one-to-one or small-group tutoring (*idietera*) and having a computer at home were highly associated with both fathers' occupations and mothers' occupations. He found in addition that attending tutorial classes (*frontistiria*) was associated with mothers' occupations. Schneider (2004) similarly found correlations between tutoring and the socio-economic status of parents in Germany. With reference to the United Kingdom, Scanlon and Buckingham (2004: 288) remarked that:

Despite the government's commitment to "social inclusion", it is arguable that educational inequalities between homes have never been greater. The so-called "digital divide" – between those who have access to home computers and those who do not – has been well documented.... [Analysts] are concerned about the "invisible" purchasing of educational privilege through home tutoring.... As such, there are growing concerns that the commercialisation of out-of-school learning may exacerbate educational inequalities.

Also significant is Smyth's finding (2009: 10) in Ireland that tutoring was greatest among pupils who were already in fee-paying secondary schools. Vella and Theuma (2008: 36) similarly found high levels of tutoring among students in Maltese private schools; and their findings have been paralleled in Romania (Kallai et al. 2006: 27) and Spain (Álvarez Fernández et al. 2009a). Thus, one should not assume that private schools are already meeting all the needs of their pupils, and that it is only pupils in state-supported schools who feel shortcomings. Evidently, in the increasingly competitive European societies many middle- and upper-income families feel that schooling by itself is not enough to secure superior social positions, even when that schooling is provided through private institutions.

### **High-stakes Examinations**

Examinations have high stakes when they significantly determine the future pathways available to the students. In most European education systems, the examinations at the end of secondary schooling fit into this category. Some education systems also have high-stakes examinations at earlier stages. In Ireland, for example, students take two nationally-standardised examinations: the Junior Certificate at the end of lower secondary education and the Leaving Certificate at the end of upper secondary education (Smyth 2009: 2). The Maltese system has an examination at the end of primary school called 11+, and then further watershed examinations at Grades 11 and 13 (Gauci & Wetz 2009: 4). Malta's system is highly stratified, and the future prospects of students in the Area Secondary Schools are significantly different from those in the more academic Junior Lyceums.

Other systems have fluctuated between becoming less stratified and more stratified. Czech Republic, for example, has a set of elite secondary schools, known as gymnasiums, and a rigid system of tracking within institutions. This system has become even more stratified with recent reforms, and tutoring companies are recognising the business opportunities (Štech & Greger 2010). Lithuania also has a system of gymnasiums, which were reintroduced in the 1990s after the country regained its independence. The gymnasiums take the best and most motivated students and teachers, and their reintroduction fuelled the demand for private tutoring (Būdienė & Zabulionis 2006: 215).

In some countries, school-leaving examinations are different from university-entrance examinations. In Slovakia, the government reformed its school-leaving examination, known as the *maturita*, in 2004. Universities were given the right to incorporate the results of the examination into their admission criteria, but were not obliged to do so (Kubánová 2006b: 283). As a result, many students continued to face the demands of both the *maturita* and the individual entrance examinations, and felt a need for private tutoring on both sides. Similar issues were evident in Poland, where the examination at the end of secondary school is called the *matura*. Government reform of the examination system in 1999 sought to make it more egalitarian, but in practice increased the pressures for tutoring. As explained by Murawska and Putkiewicz (2006: 263):

The *matura* examination was intended to replace university entrance examinations but ... a significant number of [university] faculties decided to retain additional tests as part of the recruitment process. It is commonly believed that schools are incapable of preparing students for the new *matura* examination, particularly if its results are to be a decisive factor in university admission. Thus, students seek private tutoring for both the *matura* examination and preparatory courses for the individual university examinations.

Also worth noting are the vested interests of the tutors. Writing about Romania, Popa and Acedo (2006: 104) observed the resistance by both secondary school teachers and university professors to reforms that would dilute the stress on high-stakes examinations. The chief factor, Popa and Acedo stated, is the fact that such examinations underpin the market for private tutoring and therefore significant extra incomes for the secondary teachers and university professors. A similar remark was made in Bulgaria by Totomanova (2002: 22).

Finally, by way of contrast it is useful to note patterns in Finland. That country is recognised to have remarkable equality between schools, and a highly professional teaching force (Välijärvi et al. 2002; OECD 2010a). Finland is also characterised by the absence of national high-stakes testing. It is perhaps no coincidence that it also has very low levels of private supplementary tutoring.

### **Overloaded Curriculum**

Related to the nature of the examinations is the nature of the curriculum, which in many settings is described as overloaded. Thus, returning to the Lithuanian case, Būdienė and Zabulionis (2006: 213) stated that:

The curriculum reform of the 1990s introduced new school subjects and substantially stretched the existing curriculum. In addition, schools have been encouraged to move from teacher-centred learning, which was common during the Soviet period, to student-centred learning (e.g. group work, project work, educational excursions), which may be more effective but is time consuming.

These curricular changes broadened academic horizons, but they also burdened the students. As a response, academic profiling was introduced in the last two grades of upper secondary school. Profiling aimed to permit students to focus on an academic area of their interest based on the requirements of the post-secondary paths that they would like to pursue. Yet, as Būdienė and Zabulionis (2006: 213) continued, academic profiling may be problematic:

One of the strongest disadvantages is that academic profiling may limit students' choices should they change their minds regarding future professional orientation. For example, "soft" profiling often starts in grade 9 when students are relatively young and undecided about their careers. If students fail to choose the right profile at this stage, their future academic options may become more limited. In this case, private tutoring becomes one of the most effective ways for students independently to master academic subjects that they may have rejected previously as a result of profiling but are required for entry to higher education programs of their choice.

Curricular pressures were also noted in Malta by Gauci and Wetz (2009: 58). Teachers feel that they must "finish the syllabus at all costs", and that, since this does not permit the sort of individual attention and revisiting of weakly-covered concepts that they would like, supplementary tutoring may be desirable for some pupils. Many teachers in other countries would certainly recognise the problems of heavily loaded curricula.

When curricula become overloaded by addition of new subjects, another effect may be to reduce the extent to which parents feel able to help their children with homework. In such cases, parents may feel forced to turn to tutors for subject-related reasons. This may also apply to 'old' subjects which are taught through new approaches. Thus, curriculum change may have the indirect effect of increasing pressure on parents to seek external help.

### **Non-academic Motives**

Students may have non-academic as well as academic reasons for seeking tutoring. Such reasons could include a desire to meet friends and fit into peer groups. In Malta, most teenagers go to single-sex schools but attend co-educational tutoring classes and are therefore able to mix in these settings with the other sex (Sultana 2011). Other reasons might be to please parents or other significant actors. In Slovakia, 34.4 per cent of respondents in the survey administered by Kubánová (2006b: 294) agreed or strongly agreed that they received tutoring "because their parents make them do so". A similar response was made in Spain by 24.5 per cent of respondents in the study by Álvarez Fernández et al. (2009b: 2).

The pressure from the parents may reflect on their own comfort zones as much as their children's needs. In Malta, Gauci and Wetz remarked (2009: 8) that

Parents send students to private lesson in order to feel that they are doing all they could to help them. It is probably the case that [at least some] local students attend private lessons even when there is no real need.

Shifts in concepts about what it means to be a good parent are also, of course, promoted by the tutoring agencies as a mechanism to expand their reach. Ball and Youdell (2008: 98) remarked that the market in education "is no longer simply a matter of choice and competition between educational institutions but rather is a diffuse, expanding, and sophisticated system of goods, services, experiences and routes – publicly and privately provided". In addition to tutoring, parents are persuaded to purchase educational toys and publications on how to perform their roles better. As Ball and Youdell added (2008: 98):

specialist childhood and parenting magazines thrive on both the commercial exploitation of anxiety and childhood generally as a new market opportunity. Such magazines offer advice, but also create new desires and fuel fears.

Thus, the behaviour of parents may reflect social norms and anxieties as much as the real educational needs of young people. Certainly the tutoring agencies generally aim to stimulate as well as to satisfy demand.

Parents may also have other non-academic reasons for seeking tutoring. When children are young, parents may see tutoring as a sort of child-minding service. With reference to Luxembourg, for example, Haag and van Kessel (2000: 14) observed that private tutoring centres were especially attractive to parents who had insufficient time during the day to look after their children. These parents:

can assume that their children's homework is well taken care of without having to feel responsible. The main advantage of organised private tutoring schools is that they offer a flexible package of private tutoring in several subjects and homework supervision. If a few pupils of the same level are joined together in a group, homework can be supervised at an almost unbeatable price.

Similarly, tutoring may be a way to keep young people gainfully occupied during the school vacations, especially during the long summer months. And in general, especially for teenagers, tutoring may be seen by parents and the wider community as having a wider function of keeping young people constructively occupied in place of behaviour which might otherwise be delinquent (Glasman 2010: 59).

In addition, for parents with older children, especially adolescents, tutoring may be a way to purchase peace within the home. Glasman (2007: 1) was specifically writing about France but made a point with wider application when he observed that homework, especially for teenagers, tends to become a locus of tension.

Consequently, sending one's child to a private tutoring centre – or to a third party able to help him or her with school work or school training – is a way to remove the tensions away from the house thereby contributing to the pacification of relationships among family members. Getting started with homework is a difficult moment for the parents when their children don't want to get down to work. Helping a teenager who has not understood any part of the course at school is not easy, even when (or especially when?) the father or the mother is highly qualified in the same subject. So it is much better if the problems are dealt with elsewhere.

With increased family mobility, children are less likely to live near their grandparents. This means that a traditional source of domestic support has ceased to be available and tutoring may be a substitute.

## ***Who Provides Tutoring and How?***

The range of types of personnel who provide tutoring is broad. Tutors may be trained or untrained, and full-time or part-time. The span of ages is wider than that for school teachers, who are typically aged from their early 20s to their early 60s. Some tutors are university students who tutor primary or secondary students, and even secondary students who tutor primary or other secondary students. Other tutors are retired teachers in their 60s, 70s or beyond.

### **The identities of the tutors and their employers**

Increasing volumes of tutoring are provided by companies working on a local, national or international basis. The local and national companies are too numerous to list here, but among the international ones are some which reach across continental boundaries. Kumon is headquartered in Japan, and claims to have four million students studying in 26,000 franchised centres in 46 countries including Germany, Greece, Ireland, Spain and the United Kingdom<sup>2</sup>. Kip McGrath is headquartered in Australia, operates in four continents, and in Europe has franchised tutoring centres in Ireland, Spain and the United Kingdom<sup>3</sup>. Within Europe, Acadomia is headquartered and has most of its operations in France, but has now expanded to Spain and Portugal<sup>4</sup>. These companies employ many part-time tutors.

On a rather different note, in some countries a significant proportion of tutors are full-time teachers who provide additional tutoring in order to supplement their incomes. The study in Romania by Daedalus Millward Brown (2010) found that 30.0% of students received tutoring from their own teachers, and 60.4% from other teachers in their own or other schools. Table 4 presents additional data from Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia. The table indicates the responses of Grade 12 students on the identities of their tutors, and reports on those who were teachers (i.e. excluding university lecturers, full-time tutors employed by companies, etc.). In all countries, a significant proportion of these teachers were already responsible for these students in their mainstream schools. Other teachers in the students' schools, and teachers from other schools, were also prominent categories.

**Table 4: Teachers as Tutors in Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia**

	Your class teacher	Other teacher from your school	Teacher from another school
Lithuania	16.6	22.1	40.7
Poland	9.4	7.9	30.6
Slovakia	10.9	11.8	13.1

Source: Silova (2010: 336)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.kumon.ne.jp/english/about/office\\_europe.html](http://www.kumon.ne.jp/english/about/office_europe.html), accessed 29 January 2011.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.kipmcgrath.com>, accessed 29 January 2011.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.acadomia.fr>, accessed 29 January 2011.

The practice of class teachers providing extra lessons for their existing students can be problematic. Most obviously, it risks the temptation for teachers to reduce the effort they put into their normal duties in order to increase demand for their services outside school hours. This has certainly been considered a problem in Lithuania (Būdienė and Zabulionis 2006: 216). In addition to undermining the quality of mainstream schooling, the system may also lead to elements of favouritism. Among the 30.0% of students receiving tutoring from their own teachers in Romania, 68.1% justified the choice on the grounds that the teacher was a good professional, and 8.6% on the hope that the teacher would be more lenient when making judgements (Daedalus Millward Brown 2010). In a different setting, Box 3 presents the reflections of a Greek student which would have echoes elsewhere.

### **Box 3: A Greek Student's Experience**

On my 16<sup>th</sup> birthday, I visited my friend Michael. He received private tutoring after school and therefore knew some topics in mathematics better than I did. Our mathematics teacher, Mr. Stavrides, was a brilliant mathematician, but I always left his classes with many unanswered questions and many issues still unclear. It was not his fault, though. How could he be expected to be effective with 33 students in a class where the radiators did not work and the ceiling leaked?

On that day, with a little help from my friend I managed to grasp the topics that I had not understood in Mr. Stavrides' class. On my way home, I thought about it. If my parents could afford to send me to private tutoring like Michael, I would have a chance to achieve my goal of becoming an electrical engineer.

It was an open secret that Mr. Stavrides offered private lessons to groups of three to five students of his class just after his normal teaching hours in the school. My family could never have afforded these lessons. Some students said that Mr. Stavrides could be persuaded to offer a little extra 'push' to the grades of the students of his groups. These grades were of great importance for university entrance. Everybody in the school knew Mr. Stavrides' private students. They knew that we knew. The normal hours in the school and the private hours in Mr. Stavrides after school 'lessons' were interlinked. However, nobody could do anything about it.

I duly took my examinations the following year, and eagerly awaited the results to see if I would become an electrical engineer. Sadly, my grades were not adequate. My cold class with the leaking ceiling and my teachers who secretly and unashamedly taught for money are among the excuses that I still make today in order to protect my hurt ego. Yes, I never became an electrical engineer; but it was not my fault. Yes, I could have become an electrical engineer if I had been able to afford to be better prepared for the examinations.

At that time, I didn't know the exact meaning of the phrase 'equality of educational opportunity'. But I did know the meaning of the word 'unfair'. Two decades later, the world is very different. However – and this is quite disheartening – the Greek school system has not overcome the problems that I experienced many years ago.

Source: Edited from Verdis (2002: 12-13).

However, the concerns about corruption and inequalities are not shared universally. With reference to Slovakia, Kubánová (2006b: 284) reported that:

Most pedagogy students interviewed for this study were not motivated to teach, but saw it as a last resort for employment and declared that, in such a case, they would certainly give private tutoring lessons. They justified this by pointing out how low teacher wages were and did not feel that it was an ethical problem to tutor one's own mainstream students.

Moreover, even parents might consider it desirable for students to receive tutoring from their own teachers on the grounds that the teachers already know the students well and that there is no danger of introducing a clash through tutors with different pedagogic approaches.

In England, a government-sponsored scheme launched in 2007 to provide one-to-one tutoring for low achievers permitted schools either to give extra money to classroom teachers who provide extra lessons for their pupils or to employ tutors from private agencies. An interim evaluation of the scheme (PricewaterhouseCoopers 2008: 15) indicated that schools were having difficulty finding enough tutors. The final evaluation (PricewaterhouseCoopers 2010: 64) reported that the shortage of tutors had been alleviated by greater willingness by teachers to become tutors because they saw the benefits for their pupils' learning. Overall, 70 per cent of the tutors were school based. Schools showed a reluctance to employ agency tutors because of concerns about quality and the burden of administration. In addition, liaison between teachers and tutors was considered more demanding when external tutors were concerned. Yet while the scheme no doubt had strong professional underpinnings, some observers might have had misgivings about the notion of paying classroom teachers extra money to tutor their own pupils after school hours.

### **The tutors' professional qualifications**

When school teachers provide extra tutoring, one may assume that in most cases those teachers have been trained in pedagogic methods. This is not the case for many other categories of tutors. Some have no training at all, and a few declare this as a virtue. Box 4 (next page) presents a statement from the United Kingdom, in which almost anybody can become a private tutor. For many people, this is a cause for concern. They do not agree with the stridently-expressed tone of the author quoted in Box 4 (see next page). Arguably, professional training is desirable not only to identify curricula which match the levels and capacities of individual children, but also to know how to handle emotional disturbances, imbalanced power relationships, and variable concentration spans. The author makes an analogy with the work of car mechanics; but many drivers would hesitate to allow their cars to be managed by unqualified mechanics, and their children would presumably be seen as considerably more precious than their cars.

#### **Box 4: [The Absence of] Professional Qualifications**

Graham Woodward (2010) has written a book, published in the United Kingdom, entitled *How to Start a Business as a Private Tutor*. The following extract is from pages 13 and 14:

The most frequently asked question from people considering a career as a tutor is

**'Do I have to be a qualified teacher?'**

**NO! You do not have to be qualified.**

The Oxford Dictionary definition of a teacher is as follows:

*"A person who explains, shows and helps to impart knowledge by way of instruction and example."*

Do you honestly think you need to go to university and wear a gown and a mortar board and obtain a B.Ed. in order to do this?

What do you think every parent does every day with his or her children? As an example, a parent is a very 'qualified' teacher who exercises that 'qualified' role every day.

If you are particularly good at anything – mathematics, gardening, decorating, etc., if you can communicate well, are reasonably intelligent and care about children; who has the audacity to suggest you have to be 'qualified' to impart your knowledge to another person?

A reasonably well-educated adult is perfectly able to pass information to a child, probably better than a teacher is....

I once asked a teacher years ago, when I was considering starting as a private home tutor, what she thought of me not being a qualified teacher. She said, "**Just go for it!** I don't have to take my car to a qualified mechanic if it breaks down – I can get a friend or a neighbour to look at it if I wish." A good analogy, I thought.

In over ten years of being a private home tutor I have been asked if I was a qualified teacher only three or four times. I always reply politely, "No, I am not, but if you are happy with teachers who are qualified and the school, why are you ringing me?" I offer them references and testimonials from satisfied parents and they are perfectly happy.

Always remember, too, that the last thing a child wants to see knocking at their door at night is a teacher.

Nevertheless, it remains the case that many of the tutoring companies, especially in Western Europe, employ personnel who have not been trained as tutors. In Belgium, the company Educadomo proudly declares on its website that its "instructional coaches" (tutors) are "all students at the university or in other higher educational establishments who are specialising in an academic field. They are aged between 20 and 25 years old and are studying medicine, civil engineering, applied economics, translation, teacher

training or speech therapy, psychology, physiotherapy, etc.<sup>5</sup> The website declares that they are selected "for their extreme human and instructional competence, as well as their skills in managing time and planning studies". However, it appears that few have professional training. "Enthusiasm to pass along knowledge to younger students" seems to be considered a more important attribute.

In a different category, especially in Eastern Europe, much tutoring for senior secondary students is provided by university lecturers and professors. These people are also unlikely to be trained in pedagogy, since the subject knowledge is generally more important to their university employers. In their case, however, the tutoring role is very different from the one-to-one tutoring in the homes of the pupils, many of them young, to which the examples from the United Kingdom and Belgium refer. The university lecturers are chiefly providing tips and related guidance to senior secondary students for university-entrance examinations. For this mode, arguably the need for professional training is not so great.

### **Tutoring approaches**

Classroom teachers who provide tutoring as an additional activity generally teach in much the same way as during regular lessons, particularly if their tutorial groups are large. However, if the groups are small they may adopt different approaches; and they may be more client-oriented since the students are paying fees for the service.

One-to-one tutors, of course, must necessarily employ different styles from classroom teachers. In England, a survey commissioned by the government (Tanner et al. 2009: 24) commenced with a review of websites and found that 93 per cent of the agencies that provided information on style of tutoring used such words as "individualised" and "flexible". Only 7 per cent offered specific programmes, the majority of which used materials and programmes specific to their agencies, such as Kumon and Kip McGrath.

A telephone survey provided additional information, including on the ways that the tutors decided which clients to accept (Tanner et al. 2009: 60-61). Some tutors placed most emphasis on the needs of the parent or student when deciding whether or not to agree to provide tutoring. In other circumstances tutors considered the student's ability: some preferred students who were already achieving well because the tutors felt more confident that these students would secure good examination passes. Other tutors felt that they lacked the skills to tutor students with special educational needs. The timing was also important, especially if a student was working towards a specific examination. Some tutors routinely declined to take clients if they were "too close to the exam", though the tutors' perceptions about when this was varied widely (p.61). One tutor indicated willingness to take any student, in order to earn the money.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.educadomo.be/en/coaches-en/about-educadomo-2/who-we-are-coaches>, accessed 27 November 2010.

Finally, it is useful to return to the phenomenon of internet tutoring and to note some distinctive approaches from that medium. Ventura and Jang (2010: 65) observed that despite the disadvantages compared with the direct physical presence of a tutor, internet tutoring may have some advantages. In particular, certain types of students may feel more at ease in an online environment to ask questions and to expose doubts:

When they are in the classroom or in a group at a private tutoring centre they feel ashamed to assume that they do not know some things they should know. Sometimes, they fear being victims of embarrassment by their colleagues, or even of bullying situations, due to the fact that they show their ignorance regarding certain subjects or because they have a slower learning rhythm.

However, Melot (2007: 112) rightly pointed out that, like e-learning in general, tutoring over the internet is only strongly effective for pupils who are autonomous and motivated – which is rarely the case for pupils who have academic difficulties.

## CHAPTER 4. How Much does it Cost?

The cost of tutoring to students and their families depends on the type of tutoring received and the reputations of the providers. As one might expect, one-to-one tutoring is generally more costly than tutoring in groups, which in turn is more costly than tutoring in large classes.

Some indicative hourly costs for one-to-one tutoring in Western Europe in 2011 were as follows:

- *Belgium*: Educadomo, which described itself as the “premiere Belgian network of private lessons at home” charged €75 per family for enrolment and then approximately €33 per hour for tutoring plus the costs of transportation for the tutor.<sup>6</sup>
- *France*: Acadomia, which was the market leader, indicated that an hour of tutoring for a Grade 10 pupil in a large city would cost €30.50<sup>7</sup>. The company stressed that eligible persons could reclaim 50 per cent of this cost through taxation relief.
- *Ireland*: Private tutors typically charged about €30 per hour, though with a range by location, subject, level and quality.<sup>8</sup>
- *Portugal*: Prices for tutors were lower than in the countries listed above. A typical rate was €15 per hour.<sup>9</sup>
- *United Kingdom*: Home Tutors UK, which described itself as the country’s “leading tutoring agency”, stated that an hour’s tutoring for a Year 10 student would typically cost £20 (€24). Tutors could add £2 to £5 to cover travel expenses. However, the website said, “tutors who are not qualified may decide to waive the travel expense”.<sup>10</sup>

From the hourly costs, the next question would be how many hours a student would need. Obviously this also varies considerably. The research in Portugal by Ventura et al. (2008: 130) assessed the time spent on tutoring on a scale ranging from 1-3 hours per week to over 10 hours per week. The findings naturally showed that students who devoted more hours also had higher costs (see Table 2). In a different context, Smyth (2009: 2) indicated in Ireland that some tutoring was priced by courses of fixed duration rather than by hour. Typical courses in tuition centres cost approximately €895 per year for one subject, and block classes cost approximately €245 per subject.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.educadomo.be/en/secondary/prices-conditions-secondary>, accessed 11 March 2011.

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.acadomia.fr/divers/tarifs.html>, accessed 11 March 2011.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.irish-grinds.com>, accessed 11 March 2011.

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.explicacoespugal.com/explicacoespugal/home.php?module=inicio>, accessed 11 March 2011.

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.hometutors.org.uk/tuition\\_fees.html](http://www.hometutors.org.uk/tuition_fees.html), accessed 11 March 2011.

A wider lens on costs relates to countries as a whole rather than to individuals and their families. Estimates include the following:

- In *Austria*, tutoring was calculated in 2010 to consume €126 million per annum (AK-Wien [Abteilung Bildungspolitik] 2010: 6). This figure was roughly consistent with earlier estimates by Gruber (2008) and Maszl (2004).
- In *Cyprus*, tutoring consumed €111.2 million in 2008, of which €30.5 million was for children in primary schools, and respective amounts for students in gymnasiums, technical schools and lyceums were €33.7, €2.6 and €44.4 million (Cyprus 2010). These household expenditures were equivalent to approximately 17 per cent of the government expenditures on primary and secondary education.
- In *France*, Melot (2007: 50) estimated the size of the sector at €2,210 million and growing at about 10 per cent per year.
- In *Germany*, tutoring was indicated in 2010 to consume between €942 and €1,468 million per year (Klemm & Klemm 2010: 7). The bulk of these costs were at the secondary level. The primary level was estimated to consume €143 million, and the secondary level between €798 and €1,325 million.
- In *Greece*, private tutoring was estimated in 2008 to consume €952.6 million<sup>11</sup>. This represented 18.6% of all household expenditures on education and 20.1% of the government expenditures on primary and secondary education.
- In *Italy*, the consumers' association Adoc (2010) calculated the annual cost of tutoring at €420 million. Compared with the previous year, prices were estimated to have increased between 3.4 per cent and 6.0 per cent, depending on the subject.
- In *Romania*, tutoring was estimated in 2010 to consume about €300 million per annum (Daedalus Millward Brown 2010).
- In *Spain*, Gallardo (2010) estimated that tutoring consumed €450 million per annum.

As one might expect, university lecturers and professors usually charge higher rates than school teachers. Kubánová (2006b: 290) investigated this matter in Slovakia and found that rates varied further according to the subject and institution. Students applying to high-demand faculties paid about 1.5 times the price for low-demand faculties. University lecturers commonly worked with more than five students in a group, reflecting the fact that they were in high demand and ensuring greater earnings for themselves. Average payments to existing class teachers were slightly more than teachers from the same school but less than payments to teachers of other schools.

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<sup>11</sup> Centre for the Development of Education Policy (KANEP/GSEE), 2011. These figures were subdivided as €340.1 million for home-based individual or small group tutoring (*idietera*) and €612.5 million for class-based tutoring (*frontistiria*). A further €705.0 million was spent on private teaching and certification of foreign languages. Additional household expenditures were incurred at the tertiary level.

## CHAPTER 5. Does Tutoring Work?

Among the obvious questions, especially for students and their parents but also for governments and their policy makers, is whether tutoring "works" in the sense of raising the learning achievement and particularly examination scores. This question is difficult to answer unambiguously. As with other forms of education, much depends on the motivations of both tutors and tutees. Other significant elements in the equation are the types of tutoring and the pedagogic approaches.

One starting point is with the perceptions of the students and/or their families. It may be presumed that in most cases the perceptions are positive, because otherwise the students would not seek and continue to receive tutoring. The research literature does have some empirical findings on this matter. In Luxembourg, for example, 54 per cent of the students sampled by Mischo and Haag (2002: 265) declared that tutoring had positive effects and only 4 per cent stated that tutoring was of no help at all. In Lithuania, 55.4 per cent of the students sampled in the OSI study felt that private tutoring lessons had great impact, and 36.1 per cent said that it had some impact, while only 5.0 per cent said that it had no impact (Silova & Bray 2006: 87).

However, the findings presented above may be more about perceptions than reality. To investigate matters more deeply, some researchers have examined databases of examination scores in order to identify correlations between receipt or non-receipt of tutoring. Several groups of studies in this category may be highlighted.

First, in Ireland Smyth (2008: 469) examined 1994 data on 4,709 students who were in their final year of secondary education in 112 schools. Just under one third (31.9%) of students had received private tutoring during the previous three months, but some with low intensity. Of these, over half (54.8%) had devoted five hours or less to private tutoring during the three months, while 23.8 per cent had devoted six to 10 hours, 8.5 per cent had devoted 11 to 20 hours, and only 12.8 per cent had devoted over 20 hours. The questionnaires also collected data on family background, prior ability as measured by performance in the Junior Certificate examination two to three years earlier, and student motivation and engagement. These factors allowed the researcher to control for other important variables which shape achievement. Smyth's conclusion (p. 474) was that:

Comparing like with like, no significant difference is found between those taking tuition and other students in their final examination grades. Interestingly, there is no evidence that those with more intensive levels of involvement in private tuition (i.e., spending more than 20 hr in the previous 3 months) secure any grade advantages over nonparticipants or those with only low levels of involvement.

Smyth noted two possible explanations for these findings (p. 474). One was that tutoring was taken by students who tend to secure relatively high grades and there might have been a threshold effect whereby students with high grades found it difficult to boost their grades even further. Another explanation, perhaps more important, was that the amount of time that these students spent in tutoring was much lower than that spent at their regular school and thus too weak to have a major impact.

In a paper published subsequently, Smyth (2009) juxtaposed the 1994 data with further survey data from 2004. The latter indicated whether or not students had received private tutoring, but did not record the intensity or the students' prior ability or performance. Nevertheless, Smyth did feel able to conclude (p.18) that, after controlling for other variables, receiving private tutoring did not "yield a net advantage in terms of grades for upper secondary students". At the same time, Smyth recognised limitations in her research. Her study focused on the *overall* impact of tutoring on educational performance, and could not examine sources of variation. For example, students may take courses for one day or throughout the school year; they may take one subject or several; the tutoring may be one-to-one or in a large class; and data were needed on the quality of tutoring including the teaching methods.

A related study was conducted in England by Ireson and Rushforth (2005: 10). They analysed the achievements of a sample of Year 11 students who had completed questionnaires during the summer term of 2003 in seven schools. Data on Key Stage 3 and General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) results were obtained and matched. The first analysis examined the broad effects of tutoring on GCSE grades in English, mathematics and science, and the second analysis examined the effect of tutoring in mathematics on mathematics GCSE performance, and tutoring in English on English GCSE performance. Other variables included the Year 9 test results, the schools that pupils attended, gender, ethnic group, first language (English or not), and eligibility for free school meals (which was a proxy for socio-economic status).

For the first analysis, private tutoring was shown to have a positive overall effect on GCSE grades. However, for white pupils the effect was small and not statistically significant. For non-white students it was highly significant, but the researchers stressed the need for caution in interpreting findings since very few non-white students in the sample had tutors. For the second analysis, tutoring was shown to have a significant effect in mathematics, with pupils who had received tutoring scoring on average 0.4 units higher than pupils not having received tutoring. However, this was linked to gender: for males private tutoring had a positive impact on GCSE grades while for females there was no significant effect. For English, moreover, there was no significant effect of tutoring on GCSE grades for either gender. These findings attracted significant press coverage, not only nationally but also abroad (e.g. Garner 2005; Hastings 2005; Smithers 2005). However, the researchers themselves stressed several cautions. They noted (Ireson and Rushforth 2005: 11) that the reliability and validity of estimates could be improved, and that it would be desirable to collect longitudinal data in real time from a random sample of families. A further need, they remarked, was to develop a better understanding of quality in private tutoring.

This work was followed up by Rushforth (2011), who supplemented data on achievement gains by pupils with data on the perceptions of gains by both pupils and tutors. She found (p.240) that tutoring of students in her sample did lead to achievement gains in mathematics, though with substantial variations among different groups of students. By contrast, tutoring in English and science did not have a significant impact on achievement. However, the students and their tutors commonly perceived substantial gains, and were able to cite specific domains and examples in which these gains had been achieved. Rushforth remarked (p. 241) that the “vast differences in findings” between the two components of her study was “difficult to account for”. She did, however, note the methodological challenges which included retrospective evaluation of impact and the possibility that her sample of tutors and their tutees was not fully representative of the wider picture. Once again, her study underlined the complexities of research on this theme.

A further finding in England was presented by the independent evaluation of a government-sponsored scheme entitled "Making Good Progress" (Pricewaterhouse Coopers 2010). This scheme was launched in 2007 and served approximately 450 schools in 10 Local Authorities. Funds were made available to participating schools to secure 10 weeks of one-to-one support from teachers or from private tutors for pupils identified to be in need. Approximately 2.4 per cent of pupils in the pilot cohort were given this tutoring (PricewaterhouseCoopers 2010: 61). The evaluators stated (p.74) that one-to-one tutoring had a positive impact on progress when controlling for other factors. However, Rushforth (2011: 28) remarked that extreme caution should be exercised when interpreting this finding due to the lack of reliability of the early teacher assessment data used in the analysis. The finding suggested that in English, pupils progressed just over a quarter of a sub-level more than pupils not receiving tutoring<sup>12</sup>. In reading, tutored students progressed on average between one fifth and one half of a sub-level compared to pupils not receiving tutoring. The mathematics results did not show a significant positive improvement, and towards the end of the pilot there were significant negative differences for pupils who had received mathematics tutoring. It must be underlined, however, that pupils received only 10 weeks of tutoring, and that the pilot scheme had only been running for two years.

Another data set was presented by Mischo and Haag (2002), who matched a group of 122 pupils receiving tutoring in Grades 5 to 11 with a parallel group of 122 pupils who were not receiving tutoring. Following a quasi-experimental approach, the researchers employed institutional tutors to provide 90 minutes of help per day for four days a week over a period of nine months, teaching small groups of four pupils homogenous with respect to age and subject content. The researchers found (p.270) that pupils receiving private tutoring as remedial instruction showed an improvement in school marks significantly greater than that of pupils without tutoring. In addition, pupils with tutoring showed clear improvement in motivation. The study was small in scale, but seemed to provide positive findings.

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<sup>12</sup> A sub-level is a division of the National Curriculum levels 1 to 8 achieved through progression from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 3. Students progress through sub-levels from level 1c (weak) to 1b (sound) to 1a (strong), and then move to level 2c.

By contrast, the findings in Germany by Guill and Bonsen (2010) were less positive. Using data from the longitudinal study "Kompetenzen und Einstellungen von Schülerinnen und Schülern" (Competencies and Attitudes of Students), Guill and Bonsen studied the effects of private tutoring on Grade 5 and 6 students in Hamburg. Using a hierarchical linear model, the researchers controlled for individual determinants of school performance (previous knowledge, intelligence, socio-economic background) and compositional determinants of school performance (such as different school forms). They found that after control for such factors, students tutored in Grades 5 and 6 performed slightly worse in reading and mathematics tests at the beginning of Grade 7 than students who had not received tutoring during the period. Related work (Guill 2010b) matched these patterns, indicating that although both parents and students felt that their performance in school had improved as a result of tutoring, the scores might not actually have been greater than they would have been without the tutoring. Nevertheless Guill noted that further research would be needed, including detailed analysis of teaching and learning approaches during the tutoring lessons.

One such detailed analysis of teaching and learning, with a rather different methodological approach, has been provided by Gauci and Wetz (2009) in Malta. This study was based on examination of styles of teaching received by 18 pupils in a Grade 11 mathematics classroom, 16 of whom were receiving various forms of private supplementary tutoring. The researchers analysed in detail the experiences of 12 of these pupils, including the two who did not receive supplementary tutoring. These students all had different characteristics to take into account. Two were lower achievers taking a different examination, Paper IIB, who felt neglected because the teacher devoted most of her lessons to the majority who were taking the more demanding Paper IIA. The teacher was aware that both students were receiving extra tutoring, and felt that in the case of one it could be a good investment but that the other had neglected her studies for so long that tutoring would be unable to salvage the situation. In the event, neither of them passed; but Gauci and Wetz (2009: 68) seemed to make a convincing assessment when stating that in the circumstances of relative neglect by the teacher, this pair of students "could ill-afford not to attend private tuition that was specifically tailored for them".

Concerning the two students who did not receive tutoring, Gauci and Wetz recorded that one scored a grade 1 (i.e. the top grade) through her own efforts, but that the other scored only a grade 3 (Box 5, next page). Among the other eight students, who did receive tutoring, the picture was mixed. One got a (passing) grade 5, and "it was probably useful for her to attend private lessons as it allowed her to practise more and gave her a second chance to understand things that she did not understand at school" (p. 69). Two other students failed their Paper IIA, and indeed should probably have been guided to take the less demanding Paper IIB. For them, "private lessons seemed not to work, but this could have resulted from their 'wrong' choice of paper" (p. 69). The other five students achieved results in the middle ground for which it was difficult to speculate about the effect of the private lessons.

### **Box 5: Handling Pressures and Finding Appropriate Paths in Malta**

The qualitative study by Gauci and Wetz (2009) provides insights into the challenges faced by young people, especially when they reach the season of high-stakes examinations. All the students in the sample who were receiving tutoring complained about stress and the loss of time for leisure activities, though they appeared resigned to the fact that Grade 11 is a tough year in which they had to make sacrifices.

At the same time, some students saw conflicts with their school work. One, who was content to attend private lessons, said:

Most days I do not manage to finish my homework and this worries me because I want to improve and I know that I am not going to improve if I do not do my homework.

And another was in a "terrible" dilemma:

I much prefer my school teacher's lessons and the methods she uses. However, I feel safer by continuing to attend my private lessons. I am afraid of stopping ... it probably does help me a bit because I will continue going.

These remarks suggest that Malta had reached a point at which it was not 'normal' not to attend private tutoring. However, there were exceptions. Two students in the class of 18 did not receive tutoring. One confidently stated:

As long as I do well and understand my teacher at school then I am not worried. Also if I have difficulty in class I always ask and [the teacher] explains again to me. I am not afraid that we will not finish the syllabus at school as in the past they always finished it ... and therefore there is no reason why this year it should be any different.

This student did indeed score the top grade in the examination, though her classmate who did not receive tutoring scored below the predicted grade. The researchers observed (p.69) that "one can only wonder if she would have managed to get a higher grade if she had attended private lessons".

This small-scale qualitative study complemented the larger-scale quantitative ones by exploring the attributes of individual students and matching their needs to the types of provision being made by their school. The contrasting research methods show the difficulty of answering the question whether tutoring "works", and for whom. As with other forms of education, much depends on the previous histories of the students, their attitudes and motivations, the skills of the tutors, and the fit with the pedagogical approaches of their mainstream teachers.

## CHAPTER 6. Implications for Policy Makers

The previous chapters have identified a range of intensities, actors and types of shadow education. It follows that the implications for policy makers are equally diverse. Also important are contextual factors. Thus, appropriate policies for Slovenia might not fit in Finland; and appropriate policies in Portugal might not fit in Italy. Nevertheless, some messages are generally applicable. The first is that the shadow education system needs attention: it should be recognised and evaluated. Policy makers may then decide what dimensions are desirable and to be encouraged, and what dimensions are undesirable and to be discouraged. They can devise regulations and incentives, and they can identify ways to engage with and/or harness market forces. Policy makers should also heed the signals that the shadow education system sends about the nature of mainstream schooling.

### *Recognising and Evaluating Shadow Education*

This study began by noting the paucity of statistical information on shadow education. This paucity reflects two main factors. First, many of the actors deliberately avoid transparency. Writing in the United Kingdom, Russell (2002) referred to "the secret lessons" (see Box 6, next page). Likewise in Greece, Verdis (2002: 323) described shadow education as "the guilty secret" of the Greek education system which "represents a network of vested interests". And in Romania, Popa (2007: 9) was mindful that she was investigating part of the "grey economy" in which much revenue was beyond the reach of the tax collector and resulted from activities that were technically illegal.

Perhaps a stronger reason for the lack of statistical information is that until recently shadow education has been barely on the agendas of either researchers or policy analysts. Private tutoring has a history in Europe of decades and even centuries, but in previous eras was very limited in scope, mostly serving elite families and with few implications for the mainstream education of the majority. Researchers and policy makers who raised their eyes across continental boundaries did note the much larger-scale activities of *juku* in Japan and their counterparts in Korea (see e.g. Stevenson & Baker, 1992; Harnisch, 1994; Zeng, 1999); but those were largely viewed as components of education systems reflecting East Asian cultural characteristics and of little relevance to Europe. Private supplementary tutoring by ordinary teachers was recognised to have greatly expanded in Eastern Europe following the political and economic transitions of the late 1980s and early 1990s; but within those countries, policy analysts had more urgent priorities. Moreover, they tended to view the phenomenon as only a temporary feature driven by sharp drops in the purchasing power of teachers' salaries and therefore likely to diminish when the economic frameworks stabilised and the Eastern European countries became more like their Western European neighbours. And while Greece has long had significant forms of shadow education (see Box 3), tutoring was not considered a priority for research even within that country let alone comparatively across national borders.

**Box 6: The Secret Lessons**

"Do you think there's much private tutoring at your daughter's comprehensive?" I asked a father. He was taken aback. "No," he said. "I don't think so. I haven't come across it. But I'll ask my daughter, if you like." A day later, he sent me an e-mail. Headed "We are rubbish parents", it said: "I've asked Emma. She says ALL her friends are being tutored for their GCSEs, except her. We are shocked. It seems like cheating."

In London and other big cities, private tutoring is booming. It has become one of the most important, yet also unacknowledged, factors in a child's school performance. It disadvantages working-class children and undermines any pretensions to a comprehensive school system. Not only that, but it distorts the league tables of test and examination performance, which are supposed to reflect the quality of teaching in schools, and thus makes a nonsense of the government's entire strategy for raising standards....

There is no official information on the extent of private tutoring, because it is in nobody's interest to collect it. Parents are often reluctant to admit to it, and schools would rather take the credit for their pupils' results themselves. But the anecdotal evidence is sobering.

Three years ago, a quarter of the 11-year-olds at one high-achieving north London primary school were being tutored. Last year, the proportion was one-third. This year, it's half. At another, lower-scoring school nearby, one-sixth of the top year were being tutored three years ago; this year it has doubled. A third school has just two middle-class children. Each has a tutor.

Ask parents in other areas of London and you find the same story. In some schools, more than half of 11-year-olds have had at least 18 months of private tuition in English and maths before they sit their tests at 11. At other primaries, none of the children is privately tutored.

Source: Russell (2002: 10).

It is now clear not only that the phenomenon in Eastern Europe is not temporary, but also that patterns in Western Europe have increasingly visible parallels. In Eastern Europe supplementary tutoring is more likely to be provided by mainstream teachers than is the case in Western Europe; but this has long been a feature in Greece, and is not unheard of in other countries. Moreover, the rise of commercial companies, some of them operating across national borders, is evident throughout the EU.

With this in mind, the first step for policy makers must be to gain clearer data on the scale, intensity and nature of shadow education in their jurisdictions. For reasons noted above, data collection from the tutors may not be easy. Moreover, even parents and students may not welcome scrutiny, especially if they feel that receipt of tutoring signals either handicap in learning or purchase of an unfair advantage in competition with peers. Nevertheless, the fact that this report has presented a great deal of information shows that there are ways round these information obstacles. Researchers can devise both quantitative and qualitative instruments to improve the data base and enhance understanding. Returning to the metaphor used at the beginning of this study, many

pieces of the jigsaw puzzle are missing; but many more pieces exist than in earlier decades, and there are ways to secure additional pieces for the picture. These pieces can be secured through large-scale international surveys (preferably with sharper questions) such as PISA and TIMSS. They can also be secured through national surveys of various kinds, such as the telephone surveys in England commissioned by the government's Department for Children, Schools and Families (Peters et al. 2009; Tanner et al. 2009). In addition much useful information can be achieved through smaller-scale investigations, including ones undertaken by university students for postgraduate degrees.

Of particular importance are data not only on the numbers of students who receive tutoring in particular subjects and grades, but also on how much this costs and on what the service is like in terms of orientation and quality. These questions would provide important insights into the hidden social inequalities that are exacerbated by tutoring. Other questions might focus on human capital formation: which types of tutoring and under what circumstances might provide beneficial forms of human capital, and which are simply wasteful of resources (see Dang & Rogers 2008). A further set of questions concerns the impact on child development of the balance between academic work and other activities. Thus, the number of questions on which further research is needed is considerable – and the questions could usefully be asked within separate regions of individual countries, and in communities serving different socio-economic groups, as well as nationally.

### ***Identifying the Driving Forces***

Statistical and qualitative data help to show the scale and nature of shadow education, and to demonstrate the need to give it more attention. As the next step towards devising appropriate policies, it is necessary to identify the factors which are driving the expansion of shadow education. Here again, enough is already known to construct a general picture.

Returning to the observation made above about Eastern Europe, during the 1990s a major force was the decline in the purchasing power of teachers' salaries. In most countries of the region, official salaries ceased to be adequate to sustain teachers' families at even basic levels, and teachers were therefore forced either to find alternative occupations or to find ways to supplement their incomes. For the latter, private tutoring was an obvious option. Patterns in Romania provide an example that was fairly typical. A 2000 UNESCO report (cited by Popa 2007: 136) stated that the salary of a Romanian teacher represented in real terms only about 40 per cent of the amount that a teacher of equivalent rank received in 1990. Three quarters of the teachers whom Popa interviewed identified low salaries as the main reason for undertaking tutoring. None of them mentioned "profit", and instead referred to "survival and "making ends meet". In 2006, following protests and strikes, the government did raise teachers' salaries. However, the baseline remained low, and in any case by that time tutoring had become part of the social culture that was accepted by families as well as teachers.

In Western Europe, the forces have been rather different. Teachers may complain, but their salaries have certainly remained far above those of their counterparts in Eastern Europe. A stronger driving force is the general atmosphere of competition. The processes of Europeanisation and globalisation have brought much greater mobility of labour and associated competition for jobs (Dale & Robertson 2009). In addition, whole systems of education have been ranked through instruments such as PISA and TIMSS. Policy makers have insisted on forms of accountability which rank the performance of educational institutions, and these pressures have been transmitted to families and children. Bouillon (2010) was referring specifically to Belgium, but expressed sentiments that had wider validity (see e.g. Maszl 2004; Ball & Youdell 2008) when he wrote about the "performance society" that had developed, and the extent to which the tutoring agencies "played on parental anxiety".

At the same time, financial cuts have reduced the extent to which institutions have felt able to provide individual care. Schools have increasingly operated according to standardised frameworks, and either explicitly or implicitly have delegated some of the catering for individual differences to parents, community groups and other actors. With reference to Austria, Gruber (2008) has highlighted the risks associated with this trend, which could be seen as an abdication from responsibilities by an important and trusted social institution. In England, Russell (2002: 10) recorded the experience of a parent who sent his son to a primary school which was highly rated. He was attracted by the glowing official reports and its test results, but at the age of six and a half his son was bored and could scarcely read. The parent reported:

The school wouldn't give us straight answers, they weren't dealing with it, they were very lackadaisical. They just said he was doing really well, when he obviously wasn't. So we took him to a tutor, and after a year he's catching up. We'll keep it going. Because the frightening thing is, you're gambling with your child's future, and the school just wasn't interested in making things happen... The longer I've been there, the more convinced I've become that the good marks the school gets are mostly due to the prevalence of private tutoring.

Similar remarks might be made in other countries. One report in Belgium (Bouillon 2010) remarked not only that the tutoring enterprises were increasingly visible, but also that the schools were part of the mechanism: "at the beginning of the year, the schools provide pupils with a list that indicates, among other resources, the locations of the coaching enterprises".

This pattern, of course, is not uniform throughout Europe. Scandinavian schools seem to retain the responsibility to serve a full range of age and ability groups, and to tailor the provision when and where necessary. For this reason, relatively few parents in such countries as Denmark, Finland and Sweden seek private tutoring. Analysing Finland's success in PISA, Välijärvi et al. (2002) noted that pupils' achievements in the literacy test were partly underpinned by out-of-school factors such as cultural communication at home, and the socio-economic backgrounds of parents; but supplementary tutoring was strikingly absent from the list. Most of all, Välijärvi et al. noted the impact of engagement and interest in reading, and added (p. 16) that "the Finnish comprehensive

school has managed to arouse students interest in reading and, hence, to even out the impact of socio-economic background". In this achievement, the schools were supported by a comprehensive network of libraries which generally had separate departments for children and youth.

Similar remarks applied to the mathematics and science components of PISA. Again, the list of out-of-school factors underpinning Finland's achievement presented by Ahtee et al. (2007) was striking for the absence of private tutoring. Instead, the principal factors were deemed to be professional networks of various kinds and in-service training of teachers. More widely, as noted by Askew et al. (2010: 8), a recurrent theme in the research and commentaries "is the principle of equity and social justice being central to Finland's education policy". As Välijärvi et al. (2002: 40) explained:

The Finnish comprehensive school is for each child and, hence, has to adjust to the needs of each child. Instruction and pedagogy at Finnish schools have accordingly been structured so as to fit heterogeneous student groups.... In line with this principle, students' own interests and choices are likewise taken into account at schools when planning the curriculum and selecting contents, textbooks, learning strategies, methods and assessment devices. All this calls for a flexible, school-based and teacher-planned curriculum along with student-centred instruction, counselling, and remedial teaching.

Strikingly, several of the other education systems demonstrating strong performance in mathematics and science as measured by PISA were ones with strong traditions of shadow education, including Hong Kong, Japan and Korea (Kim et al. 2009; Lee et al. 2009; Southgate 2009; OECD 2010b). Finland, however, had found a way to provide adequate training and support within the school system without supplementation in the shadow (Pehkonen et al. 2007; Lavonen & Laaksonen 2009). The heterogeneous groups in Finnish schools required highly educated teachers who were genuine experts in pedagogy able to take care of every single student and allowing, in everyday school work, for a diverse student body. The OECD (2010a), noting that Finland had topped the PISA league tables not only in 2000, 2003 and 2006 but also again in 2009, underlined this point (p. 124):

Finnish teachers have earned the trust of parents and the wider society by their demonstrated ability to use professional discretion and judgement in the way they manage their classrooms and respond to the challenge of helping virtually all students to become successful learners.

Finnish teachers, the report added (p. 129):

are trained to identify children who are having difficulty and to intervene before these children get discouraged and fall too far behind their classmates. The fact that every school has a specially trained intervention specialist ... means that the regular classroom teacher has easy access to support and that struggling children are much less likely to go unnoticed or to fall through the cracks.

All teachers in Finland – primary through upper secondary – are required to obtain a masters degree as a condition of employment. Moreover, competition to get into the teacher education programmes is very strong. In 2010, over 6,600 applicants competed for 660 places in the programmes of the eight universities that educate teachers for primary schools (OECD 2010a: 125), and this demand had remained consistent for a decade (Välijärvi et al. 2002: 42). Many school administrators in other parts of Europe wish that they could say the same about their own programmes. Some feel that many of the qualities retained in the Finnish system used to exist in their own systems but have been eroded by budget cuts and social changes. The rise of shadow education in these countries is to some extent a response to this changing picture. Reversal of trends is of course not straightforward since policy makers face many competing priorities in economically-challenging climates. Nevertheless, the lessons are important and deserve to be underlined.

### ***Regulations and Incentives***

If left to market forces, it appears likely that tutoring will gain further intensity and coverage throughout Europe. As marketised shadow education spreads, it will maintain and exacerbate social inequalities since it is self-evident that families with higher incomes can afford both greater quantities and better qualities of tutoring than can families with lower incomes. Some of the latter will find themselves forced to purchase tutoring in order to remain in the race, and will sacrifice other items of expenditure. Other families will simply be left behind in the competition, with risks of social dissonance and associated problems. This is a major threat to the social fabric.

The question then is what steps should be considered by policy makers to ameliorate some of the potential problems from completely unregulated markets. Informal arrangements through which families contract university students, self-employed tutors and other individuals to work on a one-to-one basis are perhaps the most difficult to regulate, but authorities can at least regulate the work of teachers who are on government payrolls. A strong case can be made for prohibiting teachers from providing additional fee-generating tutoring for pupils for whom they already have responsibility in education systems; and in systems where teachers are paid adequately, a case can be made for prohibiting all teachers in the public education system from undertaking additional private tutoring.

One starting point could be to require tutoring agencies, and perhaps even individual tutors, to operate as registered enterprises. This requirement would assist in monitoring the scale and modes of operation of the actors. It would also provide a mechanism to tax earnings, thereby transforming the "black" (or grey) market into a white one. The revenue from taxation could offset the costs of registration and related overview.

Going further on the matter of taxation, governments may consider more active measures to require tutors to declare their earnings. The authorities in Romania ask teachers to declare their incomes from tutoring. In 2008 only 1,500 teachers did so, which was clearly a very small proportion of the total. In 2011, the National Agency for Fiscal Administration sent forms to all teachers requiring information on their tutoring earnings<sup>13</sup>. In other countries, taxation authorities monitor advertisements for tutoring in shop windows and on websites, and sometimes follow up with individuals to secure declarations of income.

For registered enterprises, governments may also set regulations on the modes of operation. The minimum could focus on basic standards of safety. This would include insistence that the premises used for tutoring comply with fire regulations, and it could include requirement for tutors to demonstrate that they have no criminal records for child abuse<sup>14</sup>. Governments are likely also to insist on proper accounting for the purposes of taxation. However, they are less likely to set ceilings on the fees that can be charged, the hours during which the agencies may operate, or the maximum class size. They are also unlikely to require particular content in the curriculum, forms of pedagogy or tutors' qualifications.

On a somewhat different tack, some governments may decide to encourage forms of tutoring. One scheme in England has already been mentioned, namely the Making Good Progress initiative launched in 2007. The architects of this scheme envisaged that resources would be provided to support one-to-one tutoring for 10 per cent of pupils in the targeted schools. In the event, the take-up during the two-year pilot phase was only about one quarter of that (PricewaterhouseCoopers 2010: 61); but the scheme was nevertheless substantial in scale.

The majority of tutors were teachers in the pupils' schools, but about 30 per cent were employed through private tutorial agencies. In this respect, the scheme was a government initiative which provided a stimulus to the private sector. It did so, moreover, within an ostensibly benign framework that could in the long run be highly problematic. A standard marketing technique in the commercial sector is to provide 'free samples' to encourage targets to embark on certain consumption habits. If and when government funds for such services prove inadequate to maintain or extend the scheme, families would have been conditioned to think of finding their own resources to secure ongoing support; and society would have been conditioned to consider it entirely acceptable for such help to be provided beyond the school system rather than within it.

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<sup>13</sup> 'Fiscul a luat la control profesorii care dau meditatii' ['Taxation authorities monitor private tutoring by teachers'], [http://www.zaire.com/scoala/profesori/fiscul-a-luat-la-control-profesorii-care-dau-meditatii-1068650](http://www.ziare.com/scoala/profesori/fiscul-a-luat-la-control-profesorii-care-dau-meditatii-1068650), accessed 15 January 2011.

<sup>14</sup> In the United Kingdom, for example, tutors who work for an agency are required to present a certificate from the Criminal Records Bureau indicating that they have not been convicted of a crime. However, this is not required for self-employed tutors. See: *Tutoring: The Complete Guide* (2010), available on <http://www.thetutorpages.com>.

Rather different in focus, but with worrying potential parallels, is provision in France for taxation relief for payments to tutors by families who pay income tax. Eligible parents can claim a 50 per cent refund of their payments – a fact to which the tutoring companies naturally call attention on their websites<sup>15</sup>. Advocates of this arrangement describe it as a productive form of public-private partnership. Critics point out that only families with incomes above the threshold are eligible for the taxation relief, and that low-income families therefore must either do without the tutoring or pay the full price. Critics add that the arrangement gives official sanction to the marketisation of education which, many people feel, is eroding the nature of the public service provided by schools. As in England, the system seems to permit schools to send families to the marketplace rather than take themselves full responsibility for the learning needs of their pupils.

#### **Box 7: Legal Provision in Lithuania**

Lithuania's 2003 Law on Education introduced the concept of a freelance teacher, defined as a person licensed to engage in educational activity on an individual basis. A freelance teacher can provide non-formal education or implement programme modules that supplement pre-school curricula and/or formal education programmes.

Freelance teachers have the right to work according to their individual programmes, choose methods and forms of pedagogical activity, and provide consulting and in-service assistance. The Law sets obligations for freelance teachers, including observing ethics, securing learners' safety, having a workplace for teaching that meets hygiene requirements, and implementing the teaching process agreed upon with the students. The Law prohibits freelance teachers from tutoring their own students in mainstream schools.

Source: Büdienė & Zabulionis (2006: 216)

### **Finding Partners**

Of course when regulations are issued, it is important to ensure that they are enforced. For this, central authorities will need first to publicise the existence of the regulations and second to secure the compliance of sub-national bodies and schools. Partnerships may help in this. Public awareness is a key ingredient, and consumers, community groups and other components of civil society can work as watchdogs to facilitate the processes of enforcement.

Governments may also work with trade unions. The unions tend to be cautious about the matter because they may fear alienation of teachers who secure extra incomes from supplementary tutoring. For this reason, even Education International (EI), the umbrella body of teachers' unions which is vocal on many issues, has been quiet on this theme. EI, in the words of one of its officers (Catlaks 2006: 7), "strongly defends education as a public good and not as a commodity". In line with this perspective, EI commissioned a report on *Hidden Privatisation in Public Education* (Ball & Youdell 2008), in which the

<sup>15</sup> For example <http://www.acadomia.fr/divers/tarifs.html>; <http://www.domicours.fr/nos-prestations/tarifs-soutien-scolaire-domicours.html>, accessed 4 December 2010.

Foreword by the General Secretary (van Leeuwen 2008: 4) noted that a central issue concerned the very ethos of education:

Hidden privatization and/or commercialization of public education has enormous implications for the way we think about education, for the values that underpin education. To put it in the starkest possible way: is education about giving each child, each young man or woman, the opportunity to develop his or her full potential as a person and as a member of society? Or is education to be a service sold to clients, who are considered from a young age to be consumers and targets for marketing?

The report focused mainly on privatisation in schools themselves in what it called endogenous and exogenous forms. By endogenous forms it meant the importing of ideas, techniques and practices from the private sector to make the public sector more business-like; and by exogenous forms it meant the opening up of public education services to private sector participation on a for-profit basis and using the private sector to design, manage or deliver aspects of public education. Perhaps surprisingly, the report made only two passing references to private tutoring (pp. 25 and 98). Nevertheless, bodies such as Education International and its member trade unions could well become valuable partners with governments in monitoring the spread of shadow education and in limiting some of its excesses.

Other partners could include churches, community groups and other bodies which are willing to provide fee-free tutoring, especially for disadvantaged groups. In Malta, for example, both the Catholic Church and the Labour Party provide fee-free tutoring in economically depressed areas (Sultana 2011). This reduces part of the social gap created by market forces even if it does not address the fundamental reasons why such tutoring is needed in the first place and how the commercial sector serves the middle- and upper-classes to maintain and consolidate forms of social stratification.

A different sort of partnership may be with the industry itself, and particularly with business associations which stress self-regulation. In various economic sectors, ranging from financial advice to manufacturing, associations formed by business operators enhance consumer confidence by declaring standards to which members adhere. In the tutoring industry, several bodies are already in operation. Greece has had such a body since 1981. It is called the Hellenic Federation of Frontistiria Teachers, and in 2010 had 3,000 members who were owners of tutoring schools and 37,000 members who were tutors<sup>16</sup>. Sister bodies included the Cyprus Association of Private Tutorial Schools, which was headquartered in the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry and which in 2010 listed 147 institutions among its members<sup>17</sup>. In Germany, the Association of Tuition and Afternoon Schools stated in 2010 that it had 2,400 members representing over half the number of such organisations in the country<sup>18</sup>. And in the United Kingdom, the

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.oefe.org>, accessed 3 December 2010.

<sup>17</sup> [http://www.sifk.org.cy/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=6&Itemid=13](http://www.sifk.org.cy/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=6&Itemid=13), accessed 3 December 2010.

<sup>18</sup> <http://bildungsklick.de/s/vnn-nachhilfeschulen>, accessed 3 December 2010.

Association of Tutors states on its website that it was formed in 1958 and that it is "the only professional body [in the country] for Independent Private Tutors"<sup>19</sup>.

Some of these bodies set codes of conduct for their members and have announced principles for their modes of operation (Box 8). The Cyprus Association, for example, stated that:

- every member must be registered with the Ministry of Education
- the owners of the member tutorial centres must hold university degrees
- member tutorial centres must not employ non-qualified teachers or professors; and
- members must not directly or indirectly employ teachers in public schools.

#### **Box 8: Operating Principles of an Association of Tutoring Providers**

The German Association of Tuition and Afternoon Schools (*Bundesverband der Nachhilfe- und Nachmittagsschulen e.V.*) displays on its website a set of social relationships which act as guiding principles:

<p><i>Help for Students</i> Members provide ideal conditions for utilisation of potential and thus optimal starting conditions for life through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• goal-oriented and work-based diagnostics</li> <li>• pace and methods that fit individual learning</li> <li>• helping to ease fears</li> <li>• building interest and motivation</li> <li>• positive impact on overall well-being</li> <li>• improved opportunities in the education and labour market.</li> </ul> <p><i>Help for Teachers</i> Members help teachers by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mediating between parents and teachers</li> <li>• targeting support as advised by teachers</li> <li>• raising the level of performance</li> <li>• systemic education to compensate for deficits.</li> </ul> <p><i>Help for Policy Makers</i> Members contribute to restructuring of the education system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• through many years of experience in individual development</li> <li>• through sound pedagogical concepts</li> <li>• by their example to public schools.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Help for Families</i> Members help families through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• parental orientation on the market for tutoring</li> <li>• quality and safety guarantee</li> <li>• defusing potential family conflict</li> <li>• improving relationships between parents and children</li> <li>• mediating between parents and teachers.</li> </ul> <p><i>Help for Schools</i> Members help schools by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compensating for structural flaws in the system</li> <li>• completing the school offer</li> <li>• providing individual learning opportunities</li> <li>• raising the level of performance</li> <li>• providing resources and experience.</li> </ul> <p><i>Help for Society</i> Members develop opportunities for education and business by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improving the qualifications of school leavers</li> <li>• reducing attrition</li> <li>• reducing school failure and its associated costs</li> <li>• greater transparency in the tutoring market</li> <li>• changing the black market into a white market.</li> </ul>
<p>Source: <a href="http://www.nachhilfeschulen.org/ueber-uns.html">http://www.nachhilfeschulen.org/ueber-uns.html</a></p>	

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.tutor.co.uk/aot.htm>, accessed 3 December 2010.

Such guidelines would seem to be in the public interest as well as in the interest of the enterprises operating the tutorial centres, and as such might be encouraged by governments.

Some of the associations, moreover, work together across national boundaries. In 2008, representatives of the Greek, Cypriot and German bodies met in Athens to form the European Confederation of Educational Institutes of School Support,<sup>20</sup> and at their next meeting in Cyprus in 2010 they were joined by an association of tutoring providers from Austria<sup>21</sup>. The Founding Declaration of the Confederation presented an explicitly pan-European vision linked to the EU's Lisbon Strategy. As might be expected, the Founding Declaration also stressed the free-market values of innovation and entrepreneurship.

### ***Looking in the Mirror***

When looking carefully at the nature and scale of private supplementary tutoring, policy makers can also learn much about their mainstream education systems. In this respect, tutoring can function as a mirror.

At a broad level, the fact that shadow education is relatively small in scale in Scandinavia seems to imply that families are happier with the nature of the provision by the schools than are their counterparts elsewhere in the EU. With reference to Finland, for example, the OECD (2010a: 124) has highlighted the social trust in the government and the public education system, which operates effectively and serves all sectors of the population. By contrast, the fact that elsewhere shadow education has grown considerably shows that families have less confidence than before in the extent to which schools can meet all their needs. Schools may be perceived as good places for children to learn to work together, to cover the basic curriculum, and to nurture values of citizenship and identity. However, at least some parents feel that only the basic curriculum is being covered and that their children need more inputs either to allow them to keep up with their peers or to stretch to more demanding topics. Further, many schools are perceived as providing inadequate preparation for the mechanics of passing high-stakes examinations. Much tutoring is exclusively focused on past examination papers, tips on likely questions, and strategies for answering questions within the time constraints.

An obvious question is whether tutoring is necessary and whether schools should not undertake these roles themselves. Many parents believe that they should. With regard to England, Askew et al. (2010: 31) observed that:

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<sup>20</sup> [http://www.sifk.org.cy/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=24: 2009-01-29-15-24-03&catid=1: 2009-01-15-15-41-08&Itemid=14](http://www.sifk.org.cy/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=24: 2009-01-29-15-24-03&catid=1: 2009-01-15-15-41-08&Itemid=14), accessed 14 March 2011.

<sup>21</sup> [http://www.sifk.org.cy/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=51: 2010-03-12-15-00-43&catid=1: 2009-01-15-15-41-08&Itemid=14](http://www.sifk.org.cy/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=51: 2010-03-12-15-00-43&catid=1: 2009-01-15-15-41-08&Itemid=14), accessed 14 March 2011.

Cultural values ... would deem the need to tutor a pupil who was falling behind as an indictment on the quality of a mainstream educational setting. There is a belief in England that the state education package should provide all that is needed during the school day.

However, this belief is changing. The commodification and marketisation of education is becoming increasingly accepted (Farook 2009). Concepts which would have shocked a generation ago, including aggressive advertising of tutorial services, are now accepted as part of the contemporary order. The Making Good Progress scheme was among the instruments through which the marketisation of tutorial services became more acceptable.

Other countries have different political dynamics but parallel forces. Families in Eastern Europe have faced more dramatic economic transitions than their counterparts in Western Europe, and have become used to the idea that education has become to some extent a marketable commodity like many other components of daily life. Thus in Lithuania, for example, the respondents surveyed by Büdienė and Zabulionis (2006: 231) felt that ideally the education system should be such that nobody would need private supplementary tutoring; but they also recognised that realities had changed since the Communist era and that the market-driven economy included education as well as other sectors (see also Lepisto & Kazimzade 2010).

Among the ironies is that at an official level all governments claim to adhere to principles enunciated in international declarations about fee-free education (Box 9). This results in contradictions. The official banner on the school system may proclaim that it is free of charge, but the back door charges fees. For some families these fees are a burden, but the families choose to pay the charges so that their children are not penalised. Other families cannot afford to pay, and indeed are penalised.

#### **Box 9: Recalling the International Declarations**

Several international declarations have stressed the importance of fee-free education. In particular:

- Article 26 of the 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* states that: "Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory."
- Principle 7 of the 1959 *Declaration of the Rights of the Child* states that the child "is entitled to receive education, which shall be free and compulsory, at least in the early stages".

Is the existence of shadow education systems compatible with these Declarations? If not, which should be changed – the shadow education systems or the Declarations?

Another image that tutoring shatters relates to the qualifications of teachers. Throughout Europe, official ideology stresses the need for teachers to be trained through pre-service and in-service courses. The teachers' unions hold a similar view. Yet the market is willing to employ tutors who are untrained. Indeed in some cases the tutors are not old enough to have completed training: they are just university students or even secondary students. Rightly or wrongly, the consumers are willing to pay for a service which does not have the underpinning of the types of training which governments and unions insist are essential.

Policy makers can also learn from the motivations of tutors. Generating income is the most obvious motive for providing tutoring, but it is not the only one. In contexts as different as Romania and England, at least some tutors are attracted to the work by the promise of flexibility in pedagogic approaches, unconstrained by the bureaucracy of formal education systems (Popa 2007; Woodhead 2010). As tutors, they feel that they have more control over what they teach, to whom, when, and where. Indeed, some of the most creative teachers would be frustrated if confined to the school system, and instead take their energies to the more flexible profession of tutoring where they contribute to society through a different channel.

Allied to the above point are the possibilities for innovation in the tutorial sector. Partly because private tutors are in a market place where they need to attract and retain clients, they are much more likely to experiment with new technologies and with alternative approaches to learning and teaching. They will use facebook, twitter, websites and anything else that helps to achieve the objectives. Policy makers might usefully reflect on the question why it is so much easier for tutors to use these tools compared with teachers in mainstream school systems.

Finally, the nature of the shadow education system can tell policy makers a great deal about social stratification and the forces that reproduce it (Dutercq 2008; Lee et al. 2009). All governments claim that they wish to reduce social inequalities and assist the disadvantaged sectors of society. If left to market forces, however, the shadow education system maintains and exacerbates inequalities. The extent to which governments do or do not pay attention to these matters is a telling indicator of the extent to which they are really concerned about inequalities. And the governments that are really concerned would be wise to commence with the mainstream school systems rather than just treating the symptoms in the shadow. This means providing adequate financial and human resources to allow school systems to cater fully for all students and thus avoiding the need for some of them to go to the private sector for supplementation.

## A Role for the European Commission

The European Commission (EC) requested and financed this report because it had observed the expansion of shadow education in different parts of Europe and recognised that while the phenomenon brings support to many families and employment for tutors, it also raises major challenges. The European Commission is not itself a policy-making body in the field of education and training. However, it provides a forum in which policy makers can learn both from each other and from researchers and other professionals. As such, the European Commission can play a facilitative role to improve policies – raising questions, highlighting issues and the relevant evidence, and sharing experiences and fostering debate (Box 10, next page). The European Commission has mechanisms for mutual learning and exchange of knowledge between national-level policy makers in the context of the Open Method of Coordination in the field of education and training; and it can also enable and support research through the European Programme for Research in the Social Sciences and Humanities.

### **Box 10: Raising Public Awareness and Fostering Debate**

Murawska and Putkiewicz (2006: 274-275) made several recommendations for policy makers in Poland which also have relevance to other countries. One recommendation deserves particular emphasis:

- *Initiate a national debate on the subject.* The debate should primarily focus on education system weaknesses that have given rise to private tutoring. Allowing private tutoring to continue is to approve of the school system's ineffectiveness. Many educational stakeholders should take part in the debate, including teachers, parents (particularly parents' councils and associations), university staff (particularly those from teacher training colleges), non-governmental organizations, and educational authorities at the local and national levels. As part of this debate, the position of the Ministry of Education on private tutoring should be made public.

The European Commission could play a useful role in advocating and supporting such initiatives. It could contribute additional perspectives from cross-national comparisons.

Special opportunities arise for the European Commission because it serves a region with both strong commonality and considerable diversity. The commonality includes the view of education as an instrument for social and economic development in a changing world. Throughout Europe, policy makers are very mindful of the forces of globalisation and regionalisation. They note the strengths and the challenges of knowledge flows, and the need for constant upgrading of skills through education in order to keep abreast of technological and other changes. The diversity arises from the cultures, economies and natural resources of the countries concerned, as well as from their historical and contemporary differences in political regimes.

This commonality and diversity creates a natural laboratory in which variables can be compared to identify causes and effects of structures and processes. As noted above in connection with Table 1, in the domain of shadow education distinctive characteristics may be identified in Southern, Eastern, Western and Northern Europe. Within each of these geographic areas are subgroups of various kinds. For example, Greece and Cyprus might be seen as a pair with some common cultural characteristics and similar proportions of the school-aged population receiving tutoring. Another pair would be Slovakia and Poland, with parallel Communist and then post-Communist political and economic histories, and again with similar proportions of school-aged population receiving tutoring. Belgium and France could form another pair; and Sweden and Finland a fourth pair. Then, across individual countries, pairs or subgroups, one could identify various spectra. Thus, if the differences between Finland and Greece seem too wide for lessons to be grasped easily, the gaps between Finland and the United Kingdom, or Belgium and France, or Portugal and Italy, might be smaller and easier to bridge. Policy makers might see that, if left unattended, market forces could pull education systems along the spectrum with unpredictable consequences.

The European Commission can also call attention to the range of policy levers. In one category are *controls*, such as the requirement for registration of tutoring businesses and regulations over the extent to which teachers in public schools are permitted to provide private tutoring to either their own or other pupils. In another category are *incentives*, such as the schemes in England and France which inject government resources into the private sector. For both controls and incentives, investigation is needed to identify the extent to which intentions translate into reality during the processes of implementation. Policies which seem sensible at the outset often have unintended consequences, and it is important for policy makers to be informed about experiences and lessons.

In such analysis, moreover, the European Union and its subcomponents may be placed in a wider international context. In particular, European policy makers could usefully look at East Asia, where governments have been grappling with the issues of shadow education for rather longer than in Europe (see e.g. Bray & Kwok 2003; Kim et al. 2009; Lee et al. 2009). They may also look at North America, where economic and cultural circumstances perhaps have similarities with Europe, and where shadow education is also emerging visibly with its own dynamics (see e.g. Davies & Aurini 2006; Burch 2009; Koyama 2010). In turn, policy makers in these and other parts of the world can learn from European initiatives and experiences.

## Conclusions

This study has shown that shadow education has grown considerably in most parts of Europe. In so doing, it is challenging the mainstream system and exposing various limitations. For a long time, many policy makers were able – and preferred – to ignore the shadow education system. That is no longer possible. Shadow education has reached such a scale, and has such strong implications for social equity, the knowledge economy, the work of schools, and the lives of children and families, that it must be addressed. In some countries private tutoring is considered:

- to have "grown to become an absolute necessity" (Stylianou et al. 2003: 1, referring to Cyprus),
- to be expanding at an "explosive" rate (Melot 2007: 104, referring to France),
- to be in "boom" (Adoc, 2010, referring to Italy), and
- to have "grown so much that it is now akin to an epidemic" (Popa 2007: 2, referring to Romania).

In other countries the sector is more muted, but clearly growing. Even in Scandinavia, policy makers would be wise to heed patterns elsewhere in order to avoid future difficulties and to steer developments towards desirable goals.

The phrase about steering developments underlines that shadow education has positive as well as problematic dimensions. Putting a positive spin on tutoring, the UK government has recognised the limitations of its schools, stating (Department for Children, Schools and Families 2009: 3) that:

While our current catch-up arrangements are effective for many, we know that they are not working for all pupils. Some need a level of support which is beyond our control to deliver in the context of whole class or small groups. Without an individualised approach it will be very hard for this group to make the progress needed to achieve their full potential.

Even in the personalised classroom, we know that some pupils would benefit, at key moments, from an intensive burst of individual tuition, which the class teacher can guide and reinforce, but simply does not have the time to deliver.

This statement was made in the context of a government-supported programme for one-to-one tutoring of needy pupils, but could equally apply to private-sector provision. Even in the relatively well resourced classrooms of the UK, the teacher "simply does not have the time to deliver" individualised teaching for all pupils. Parents increasingly recognise this and, with or without government support through its Making Good Progress scheme, have turned to the private sector for supplementary help. However, the fact that they are losing confidence in the public system sends major warning signals.

Moreover, the families which seek private sector support may be looking for sustained support rather than just an intensive burst; and these children are not necessarily the ones who are performing below national averages. Many children with tutoring are already performing well compared with national averages, but perhaps not in relation to their peers in specific schools (see Box 6). Others are performing well in relation to their peers, but their parents wish the children to be stretched further to reach new heights. As such, at least some forms of tutoring can be a way to develop talent. This, however, is a complex domain needing further investigation (OECD 2001; Dang & Rogers 2008).

Like so many phenomena, moreover, activities which are highly desirable in some settings and from some perspectives may be very problematic from others. The challenge of social inequalities has been underlined several times in this study since it is obvious that families with greater incomes can afford more and better quality tutoring than families with lower incomes. Much has been said and written about the need for parental involvement and the benefits of individualised learning and choice. However, as noted by Russell (2002: 12), "choice is only a reality for those who can afford to choose". As indicated above, shadow education is much less about pupils who are in real need gaining support that they cannot find at school, and much more about maintaining the competitive advantages within schools of the already successful and privileged. Moreover, when school teachers are permitted also to provide tutoring (for their own or for other people's students), the shadow education system gives perverse incentives to divert effort from classrooms to private tutoring.

At the same time, education is such a complex domain that families have very little way to know whether their children need tutoring, and, if so, how much and of what type. If there is reason to doubt the effectiveness of some forms of instruction in mainstream schools, there is perhaps even more reason to doubt the effectiveness of many forms of supplementary tutoring, especially when delivered by unqualified individuals and/or when replicating the forms of instruction already received at school. At the worst end, tutoring may not only be ineffective but also counterproductive. It could waste the students' time in pressurised academic environments which give little opportunity for necessary leisure and which leave young people tired and inattentive to their mainstream lessons. It can also create difficulties for mainstream teachers who find that some pupils already know the material because of tutoring when others do not; and it can cause conflicts in pedagogical approaches when tutors teach mathematics or other subjects in one way but the teachers teach it in another way.

From a national perspective, moreover, policy makers need to consider whether shadow education always supplements mainstream schooling or whether it sometimes duplicates or even substitutes for it. Duplication would occur when the shadow repeats what has been covered in the mainstream with little or no extra learning. Substitution would occur when classroom teachers deliberately reduce the content of their mainstream lessons either to increase the demand for after-school tutoring or simply because they relegate roles to the tutoring sector. The former pattern is reported widely in such countries as Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia (Būdienė & Zabulionis 2006; Popa 2007; Kubanová et al. 2008). The latter might also be widespread and again may

be illustrated by a situation in the United Kingdom. At one school reported on by Russell (2002: 10), the mother of a 10-year-old asked one teacher why the class rarely had any mathematics homework. "Oh," the teacher replied cheerfully, "I don't tend to give homework any more because most of the children are being tutored".

Broader questions, of course, concern the fact that the tutoring industry is an expanding source of employment. In Greece, Verdis (2002: 323) described shadow education as a parasite – a term which might be echoed in other countries. However, if the Greek government were to kill the parasite by instantly closing all the tutorial centres, it would face a major social upheaval. The *frontistiria* in Greece generate substantial incomes and employment, and thus have become a significant component of the social fabric. Policy makers in countries where tutoring has not (yet) developed to the scale of Greece may have more room for manoeuvre; but policy makers in countries where tutoring has become entrenched on a large scale must grapple with the phenomenon in all its magnitude.

In turn, this leads to questions about what should be done by policy makers in countries where the shadow education is only beginning to emerge. The first step, this report has argued, is to recognise and evaluate the shadow education system, and to promote public debate. The authorities in England took an important step when they commissioned a pair of studies on the scale and nature of tutoring (Peters et al. 2009; Tanner et al. 2009). Similar studies would be highly desirable both in other parts of the United Kingdom (i.e. Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales) and in other parts of Europe. To these studies should be added comparative analysis of regulations. It is striking that England has almost no regulations on tutoring, particularly when provided by individuals. Several other European countries, including ones in Eastern Europe, are in this respect more advanced.

These points underline the value of cross-national comparative analysis. In undertaking such comparisons, policy makers must be mindful of the contexts (Crossley & Watson 2003: 62-66; Bray 2007: 17-23). Many of the features of shadow education, like mainstream education, reflect the specific historical and cultural features of individual countries and localities. Recalling the evocative phrase of Sir Michael Sadler (1900: 310) in England at the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century:

We cannot wander at pleasure among the educational systems of the world, like a child strolling through a garden, and pick off a flower from one bush and some leaves from another, and then expect that if we stick what we have gathered into the soil at home, we shall have a living plant.

What flourishes in one system, because of the soil in which it is planted, and the climate in which it thrives, may not flourish equally in another. Nevertheless, through comparative analysis policy makers can certainly learn from each other and from other stakeholders about the questions to be asked and the tools that can be considered for use in their own settings. As such, they can all assist each other to address the challenge of shadow education in their respective jurisdictions.

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EC	European Commission
EI	Education International
EU	European Union
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
IRES	Institutul Român pentru Evaluare și Strategie (Romanian Institute for Evaluation and Strategy)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSI	Open Society Institute
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
TIMSS	Third International Mathematics and Science Study/Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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