

## **Luceat and Photonics Explorer**

### **Bringing photonics into Europe's secondary schools**

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Luceat S.p.A. is supporting the development of the Photonics Explorer, an educational kit – with a difference. While most outreach projects are designed as extra-curricular activities, the Photonics Explorer will be designed to integrate smoothly into the regular secondary-level science teaching. It will thus help teachers to reach the educational targets set in their curricula while at the same time offering students exciting hands-on experiments with up-to-date photonics technologies. This approach is expected to have a larger, long lasting impact on the way photonics is presented at Europe's secondary schools – especially since the kits will be handed out completely free of cost.

More than 30 teachers and science education professors from 10 countries have teamed up with experts in photonics to create the didactic framework of the kit. The EU has granted more than 0.5 million Euro funding as part of the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Program. Several companies have sponsored material for hands-on experiments, and many individuals support the program with their personal skills, most of them as volunteers. Luceat has contributed polymer optical fibre from its own production which will be used to let students experiment with optical telecommunication. Due to its easy handling, a large core size and especially for safety reasons, polymer fibres are much better suited for educational purposes than glass fibres.

From September to December 2011, the Photonics Explorer will undergo a thorough testing at schools in 7 European countries. A scientific evaluation will then analyse the educational value of the kit and study how far the program could raise the interest of students in photonics. After the feedback from the field tests is incorporated, the Photonics Explorer will be available for teachers in Bulgarian, English, Dutch, French, German, Polish and Spanish.

More information on the program can be found on the website [www.PhotonicsExplorer.eu](http://www.PhotonicsExplorer.eu) or be directly obtained from the developer team.