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## **BACK TO SCHOOL AT ISL**

There was a buzz of excitement in the late summer air as the International School of Luxembourg opened its doors to a record 910 students ages 3-18 and 178 staff members last Wednesday, 27 August. ISL enrolment continues to climb, building on a trend that began several years ago which shows no signs of abating. These figures represent an increase of 10% over the start of school in 2007. Students entering ISL for the first time this year account for 20% of total enrolment. In addition to its new students, the school also welcomed 36 new staff members.

Growth in ISL's student numbers has been accompanied by growth in the school's cultural diversity, creating a marvellously rich multi-cultural learning environment. At the time of its founding in 1963 as the *DuPont de Nemours Private School*, the school's student population was 100% American and the faculty was entirely Luxembourgish.

Today Americans make up only 13% of a student body that counts 45 different nationalities. Students come not only from most of the countries of Europe, but also from North and South America, Australia, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. In addition, ISL staff members represent 23 nations from five continents. While English is the *lingua franca* of the school, the majority of ISL students also come from non-English speaking backgrounds; 75% of ISL families speak a language other than English at home, a 10% increase over 2007. For this reason, the school provides a comprehensive English as an Additional Language programme, enabling English language learners to integrate both academically and socially.

Increasing enrolment can be explained by several confluent factors. The school itself is unique in Luxembourg, with an outstanding reputation built upon the academic, artistic and athletic successes of its students, a stimulating learning environment and an international perspective that includes genuine engagement in global issues and social responsibilities. In addition, new expatriate families are relocating to Luxembourg in growing numbers while others seem to be remaining longer, sometimes indefinitely. As well as meeting the needs of an ever-expanding number of expatriate families, ISL welcomes students who come from the Luxembourg community and values their contribution to the distinctive character of the school.

Owing to the high demand for an ISL education, most classes are completely full and waiting lists have been established for nearly every grade level. In order to respond to this demand, the school has embarked upon an ambitious expansion project. The first phase, an extension of the present main building, should be completed in about 18 months. The final phase will be the construction of a brand new Lower School building which is expected to open its doors in four to five years time.

ISL Contact Info:

Tel: 26 04 40, Email: [info@islux.lu](mailto:info@islux.lu), Web: [www.islux.lu](http://www.islux.lu)

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*Please direct any queries to:*

Marian Aldred  
Communications Coordinator  
Tel: 26 04 46 11  
Fax: 26 04 47 04  
Email: [marian\\_aldred@islux.lu](mailto:marian_aldred@islux.lu)

International School of Luxembourg  
36 boulevard Pierre Dupong  
L-1430  
Luxembourg