



## **European Schools**

Office of the Secretary-General

General Secretariat

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### **Temporary use of the Berkendael site as an extension to the European School, Brussels I pending opening of the European School, Brussels V**

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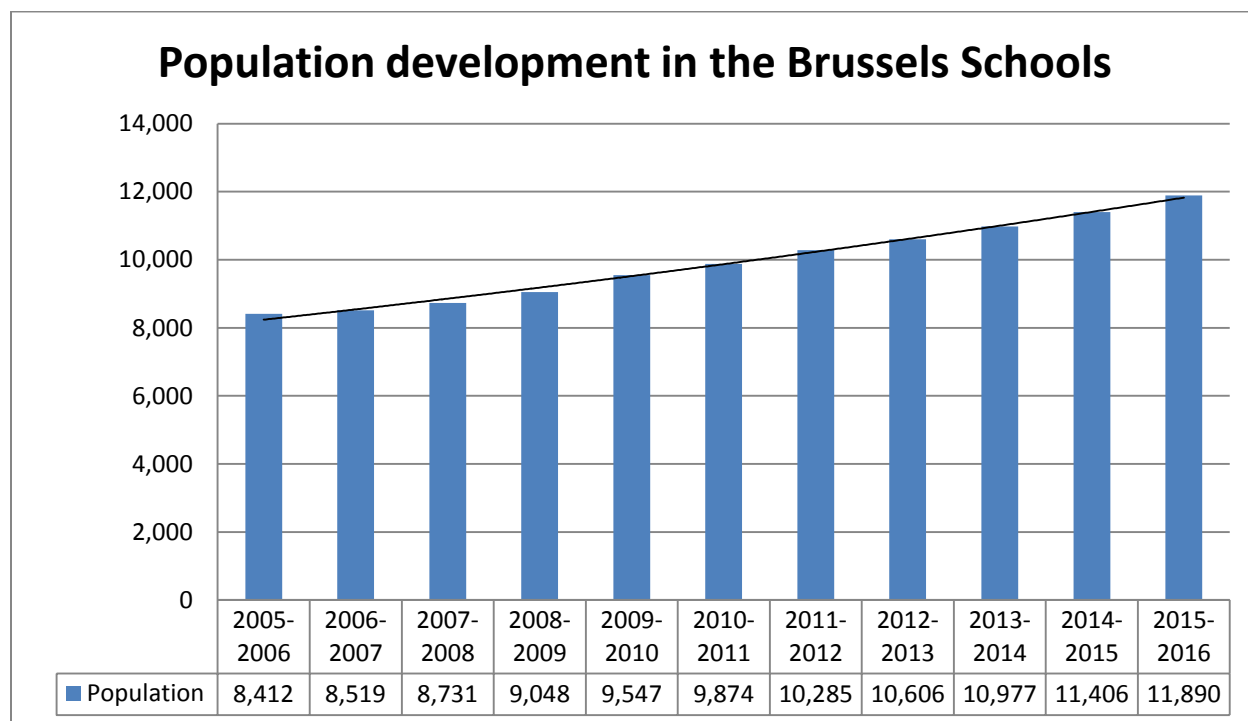
**Board of Governors of the European Schools**

Meeting on 1-3 December 2015 – Brussels

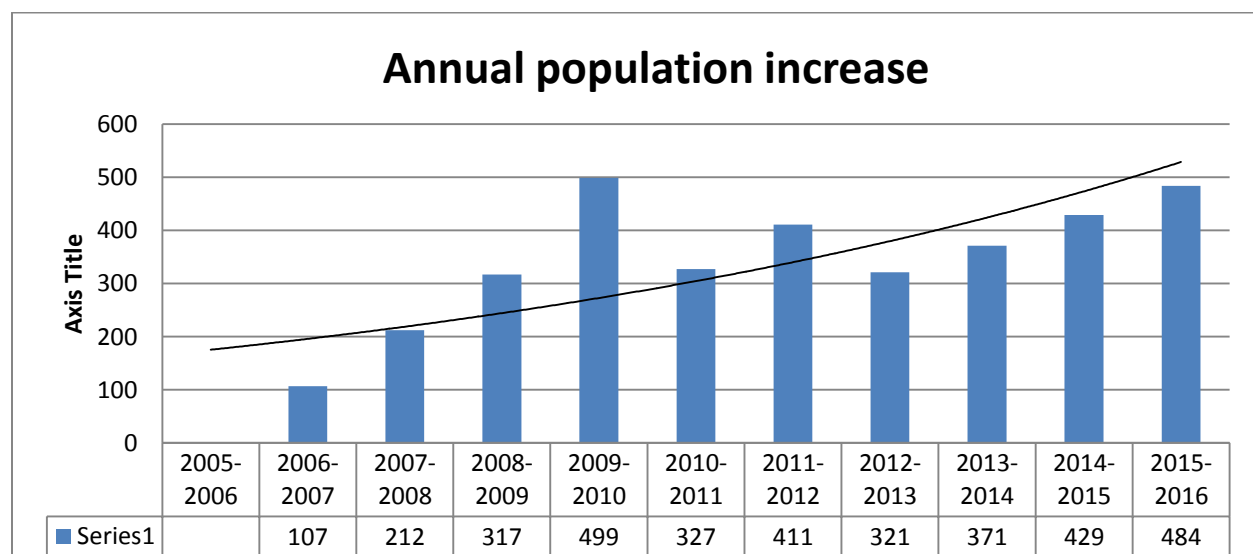
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## 1. Introduction

There are four European Schools in Brussels: Brussels I, Brussels II, Brussels III and Brussels IV.



In the past few years the total pupil population in Brussels has steadily increased at a rate of 350-480 pupils per year. The increase between the years 2014 and 2015 was 484 pupils. There are currently 11 890 pupils in total on roll in these four schools.



Since 2012 there has been an 11% overall increase in the pupil population. Growth has been highest in the Nursery cycle.

	<b>2012-2013</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>Increase 2012-2015</b>
N	1 048	1 100	1 203	1 230	15%
P	3 933	4 116	4 261	4 460	12%
S	5 625	5 761	5 942	6 200	9%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10 606</b>	<b>10 977</b>	<b>11 406</b>	<b>11 890</b>	<b>11%</b>

According to the optimal capacity agreed by the Brussels Steering Committee and approved by the Board of Governors by written procedure completed on 14 June 2010, three of the four schools are already overcrowded at present.

<b>School</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>First Bac</b>	<b>Capacity</b>	<b>Population 2015-2016</b>
Brussels I	1958	1964	3100	3397
Brussels II	1974	1982	2850	3003
Brussels III	1999	2001	2650	2998
Brussels IV	2007	2017	2800	2492

There is still some room in the Brussels IV School's secondary school, but it is needed to cater for that cycle's growth. Year S7 will be opened in September 2016.

On the other hand, all the Nursery and Primary classrooms in all four Brussels Schools are full to capacity. The Central Enrolment Authority has been obliged to use the space available on the Berkendael site in order to create some new classes. As a consequence, the Nursery and the first years of the Primary at Brussels I currently have 586 pupils, who for the 2015-2016 school year are based at the Berkendael annexe.

<b>Cycle</b>	<b>Brussels I</b>	<b>Brussels II</b>	<b>Brussels III</b>	<b>Brussels IV</b>	<b>Total</b>
N	343	290	319	278	1 230
P	1 229	1 092	1 080	1 059	4 460
S	1 825	1 621	1 599	1 155	6 200
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 397</b>	<b>3 003</b>	<b>2 998</b>	<b>2 492</b>	<b>11 890</b>

On the basis of these challenging facts, it has been necessary to reflect on how to resolve the overcrowding situation and how to use the infrastructure available in terms of accommodation

as effectively as possible, in order to ease the demographic pressure on the Brussels I, II and III Schools.

A careful analysis of the growth of the existing language sections has been made, focusing on the development of those language sections which have doubled nursery and primary classes at Brussels I, II, III and IV, in order to be able to make proposals for balanced redistribution of the language section structure across the Brussels Schools.

Moreover, the growth in the SWALS population has been explored in the light of the Gaignage criteria, in order to guarantee equal treatment for the creation of new language sections.

Consequently, it has proved to be absolutely essential to have the Berkendael site as an extension to the European School, Brussels I, in order to have the necessary additional Nursery and Primary infrastructure to be used starting from 1 September 2016.

The Berkendael school site has been used by the European Schools as a temporary site since September 2007. It will be recalled that between the 2007-2008 and 2011-2012 school years, the building temporarily accommodated the European School, Brussels IV, prior to its transfer to the Laeken site. As from September 2012, it accommodated the nursery and primary year 1 classes of the European School, Brussels I, pending completion of the work carried out on the Fabiola building. In view of the current unavailability of a fifth school and of the negative vote by the Board of Governors in December 2014 on the setting up of a fifth European School on that site, the Belgian authorities are nevertheless continuing to make it available to the European Schools (subject to what will be explained below) pending the actual opening of the fifth school.

There are two main buildings on the site:

1. A purpose-built and well renovated old school building which can offer places for 750 Nursery or Primary pupils.
2. The recently renovated 'Berkendael' 66 building, which was converted from offices to school premises five years ago to offer places for 250 Primary or Lower Secondary pupils.

In total the Berkendael site offers a pleasant school environment for 1000 pupils with 12 Nursery classrooms and 35 Primary classrooms.

## **2. Working Group (WG) on the making available of a fifth European School by the Belgian Government: Consensus and follow-up**

Following the decision by the Council of Ministers of the Belgian Federal Government on 30 January 2015 extending the availability of the site at Berkendael for the European Schools for the 2015-2016 school year, the Minister's Office of the *Régie des Bâtiments* (Belgian Public Building Authority) undertook to set up a Working Group to:

- Re-evaluate and update the future needs of the schools in an objective manner based on the real number of pupils
- Determine the standards on which the needs of the schools will be determined (those of the Francophone Community, the Flemish Community, rules related to the different categories of pupils, etc.)

The Minister's Office of the *Régie des Bâtiments* proceeded to chair a WG consisting of representatives of the *Régie des Bâtiments*, the Board of Governors of the European Schools, the European Commission and Belgian co-delegates to the Board of Governors, i.e. from the Francophone Community and the Flemish Community. The working group convened on 2 April 2015, 26 May 2015 and 7 July 2015 at meetings chaired by Mr Antoine Defrenne.

The WG examined all the criteria related to the future needs of the European Schools (ES), based on the growth of the pupil population over the past few years, expected growth for the next few years, restrictions on enrolment for entitled pupils, management of space in the schools, demographics of the schoolchildren, etc.

The WG also looked at the building regulations for schools in the Francophone and Flemish Communities. These are almost identical for Nursery and Primary and vary slightly more for Secondary.

According to the working group's conclusions (see full text in Annex I):

"The forecast growth in the pupil population among pupils in categories I and II means that it is necessary to build another school to become operational in the 2019-2020 school year. The requirement for the period after 2019-2020 is estimated at 2 500 places. Moreover, it is essential for the Belgian Government to assign the site of the school at Berkendael until provision of a fifth European School has been completed.

There are three possible scenarios:

- The definitive confirmation of the Berkendael site and extension of the buildings. However, this option depends on the successful outcome of another project by the *Régie des Bâtiments* to free up the prospective site
- The definitive provision of the Berkendael site and the construction of extra buildings on another site (still to be determined).
- The construction of a new school on a site to be determined, and the closure of Berkendael."

In the meantime, the stop-gap solutions to the structural lack of places available lie in:

- completion of the work on the Fabiola building on the Uccle site of the European School Brussels I, announced by the *Régie des Bâtiments*, on 30 April 2016, enabling 350 places to be offered at the nursery level and in P1;
- continuation of the temporary availability of the Berkendael site (subject to confirmation to be obtained from the Council of Ministers of the Belgian Federal Government) until **the fifth school opens**.

### **3. Opinion of the Steering Committee: meeting of 28 September 2015**

The conclusions of the WG and the infrastructure situation in the Brussels Schools were discussed at the Brussels Steering Committee's latest meeting on 28 September 2015. The main conclusions were as follows:

- The population in the European Schools in Brussels has increased by 484 pupils since last year.
- The infrastructure of all four Nursery and Primary Schools is used, but there is still some space in the Secondary School of the Brussels IV School. However, this space will be needed in order to complete the secondary cycle for Brussels IV, i.e. all year groups.
- The SWALS situation, especially at Brussels II and Brussels III, is becoming intolerable, and there is an urgent need to create Latvian and Slovakian sections.
- The *Régie des Bâtiments* informed the meeting that renovation of the Fabiola Building at the Brussels I School will be finalised in April 2016 and the Brussels I School pupils who are currently being accommodated on the Berkendael site will return to the Uccle site in September 2016.
- As a result of the annual increase in the Brussels pupil population by over 400 pupils, there is a need to accommodate approximately 300-400 nursery and primary pupils on the Berkendael site starting from 1 September 2016.
- Four language sections which have two or more parallel classes at the Nursery and Primary 1 levels in the same school were identified: Anglophone, Francophone, Greek (Brussels III), and Polish (Brussels I).

The Steering Committee took also note of the fact that the consensus proposals should be confirmed by the Council of Ministers of the Belgian Federal Government.

### **4. Central Enrolment Authority: meetings of 12 and 21 October 2015**

The Central Enrolment Authority discussed and prepared the enrolment guidelines proposal for the 2016-2017 school year to be approved by the Board of Governors at its December meeting.

According to the simulation made on the basis of the 2015 enrolments, it would be possible to open classes for the Nursery and Primary 1-2 levels on the Berkendael site starting from 1 September 2016 with the future new enrolments for Anglophone, Francophone, Greek and Polish sections. In addition, a process for the creation of Latvian and Slovakian sections is under way.

In view of the development of the pupil population, of the language sections and of the logistical constraints, the following should be allowed:

- pupils based at the Berkendael site should be allowed, if they so wish, to continue their schooling either on that site, in the sections and year groups which will be open there, or on the Uccle site;
- the schooling on the Berkendael site of pupils in the EL, EN, FR, LV, PL and SK language sections up to P2.

In view of:

- the expected increase in the number of pupils on roll at the European School, Brussels I – Uccle site following reopening of the Fabiola building;
- the continuing temporary availability, in all probability for several school years, of the Berkendael site, pending opening of the fifth school by the Belgian Government;
- the need to organise the Berkendael site, in particular to accommodate there the newly created language sections (LV and SK);
- the geographical distance between the Uccle site and the Berkendael one,

the Berkendael site should be equipped with management organs allowing there to be optimum provision for the pupils accommodated there.

A proposal is thus to be submitted to the Board of Governors at its December 2015 meeting to the effect that a third Deputy Director of the European School, Brussels (in addition to the Deputy Directors currently in charge of the nursery and primary cycles and of the secondary cycle) be appointed, with the mission of supervising management of the Berkendael site under the control of the Director of the European School, Brussels I.

The Administrative Board of the European School, Brussels I remains responsible for management of the two sites. The organisation chart of the European School, Brussels I must be adapted to incorporate the posts of the staff of the Berkendael site.

These proposals are:

- subject to the decision of the Belgian authorities concerning use of the Berkendael site;
- subject to the decision of the Board of Governors to create LV and SK language sections starting from 1 September 2016.

Section/ Class	EL	EN	FR	LV	PL	SK	Total
<b>Nursery (N1+N2)</b>	1	1	3	1	1	1	<b>8</b>
<b>P1</b>	1	1	2	1	1	1	<b>7</b>
<b>P2</b>	1	1	2	1	1	1	<b>7</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>22</b>

## **5. HUMAN RESOURCES OF THE EUROPEAN SCHOOL, BRUSSELS I – BERKENDAEL SITE**

The recruitment of staff for the Berkendael site will take place in several phases.

Firstly, the Board of Governors is requested to create a post of Deputy Director in December 2015.

Secondly, seconded teachers' posts will be decided at the same meeting, based on the schools' proposals. The seconded staff requirements of the Berkendael site have been incorporated into the Brussels I School's application.

Thirdly, the Board of Governors will be requested to approve the Administrative and Ancillary staff posts in April 2016.

Fourthly, a recruitment process for locally recruited staff members and locally recruited teachers will need to be started after the decisions taken by the Board of Governors.

### **5.1. Creation of the post of Deputy Director**

In a separate document, it is proposed that a second post of Nursery and Primary Deputy Director for Brussels I be created, to manage the Berkendael site under the control of the Director of Brussels I.



## 5.2. Creation of seconded teaching posts

The Berkendael site will need both seconded and locally recruited teachers.

<b>Classes ‘collected’ from the class structure of other Brussels Schools and incorporated into the Berkendael site class structure</b>			
Section	Level	Number of classes	From which school structure
EL	Nursery	1	Brussels III
EL	Primary	1	Brussels III
EN	Nursery	1	Brussels II
EN	Primary	1	Brussels IV
FR	Nursery	1	Brussels IV
FR	Nursery	2	Brussels I
PL	Nursery	1	Brussels I
PL	Primary	1	Brussels I

The Berkendael site will ‘collect’ 9 out of 22 classes from the class structures of the other Brussels Schools (see table above). In practice this means that for 2016, the other Brussels Schools have allowed for these classes in their budget. Therefore a supplementary budget will be needed in April 2016 in order to allow the transfer of the appropriate financial resources to the Brussels I School to fund the cost of the Berkendael site. It is proposed that the Head Accountant of the Office of the Secretary-General should produce a detailed supplementary budget proposal to allow the transfers of funds between schools for the March Budgetary Committee meeting.

In addition, it is proposed to create 5 seconded Nursery teachers’ posts and 5 seconded Primary teachers’ posts starting from 1 September 2016:

<b>Proposal to create seconded posts – Berkendael site</b>		
1	Nursery Teacher	LV*
1	Nursery Teacher	SK*
2	Nursery Teacher	Francophone
1	Nursery Teacher	Anglophone
1	Primary Teacher	LV*
1	Primary Teacher	SK*
2	Primary Teacher	Francophone
1	Primary Teacher	Anglophone

\*Subject to the language section’s creation.

It is proposed that these posts be added to the document dealing with the creation and discontinuance of seconded posts.

### **5.3. Creation of AAS posts starting from 1 September 2016**

On account of renovation of the Fabiola building on the Brussels I site, the school has been using the Berkendael school as a temporary annexe. Brussels I has therefore taken on, on fixed-term contracts, 1 secretary, 1 technician, 1 caretaker and 1 nurse for the Berkendael annexe. As a result, these AAS posts are allowed for in the Budget of the European School, Brussels I for the financial year 2016. The Berkendael site will require a secretary, technician, caretaker and nurse, so there is a need to continue those posts.

Additional AAS posts should be created for the Berkendael site, e.g. a post of pedagogical secretary and 4 Nursery assistants' posts starting from 1 September 2016, in order to organise the schooling of 300-400 children on the Berkendael site in accordance with European School rules and safety and security standards.

The overall pupil population of the Brussels I School will increase significantly from 3 400 pupils to 3 800 pupils, and this will have an effect on their accounts department and on the School's safety and security arrangements.

The Brussels I School is to be requested to prepare a detailed document on the AAS staff requirements for the March Budgetary Committee meeting.

The creation of the Berkendael site will also increase the workload of the Central Enrolment Authority. The Berkendael site will need to be able to manage its own enrolments as the fifth enrolment point in Brussels. This will also affect the support services provided by the Central Enrolment Authority's assistants at the Office of the Secretary-General by increasing their workload. According to the analyses made, it will not be possible to guarantee the proper functioning of the CEA without additional human resources. The Office of the Secretary-General will therefore produce a proposal for an additional AAS post for the March Budgetary Committee meeting. In the meantime, the Office of the Secretary-General will be obliged to have an interim solution in place in order to be able to manage the increased workload.

### **5.4. Financial implications**

At the present time, it is impossible to give detailed information about the financial implications of opening of the Berkendael site for the financial year 2016, for the reasons explained in sections 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 and subject to the decisions to be made by the Board of Governors concerning the creation of Latvian and Slovakian sections.

The Office of the Secretary-General will produce for the March Budgetary Committee a detailed document, which will cover all the financial aspects of the Berkendael site costs for 2016.

The Brussels I School is requested to produce a properly substantiated and justified draft budget application for the Berkendael site for the financial year 2017, to be presented for the Budgetary Committee meeting in March and the Board of Governors' meeting in April, 2016.

## **6. Opinion of the Budgetary Committee**

-The Budgetary Committee acknowledged the urgency and the need to use the Berkendael site as an annexe, as a solution to the problem of the sharp increase in the pupil population in Brussels.

-The Committee recommended the creation of Latvian and Slovakian sections under the Gaignage criteria.

-The Committee recommended the creation of a post of Deputy Director for the Nursery and Primary cycle at Brussels I.

-The Greek delegation did not support the creation of Greek classes at Berkendael.

-The Slovakian delegation was unable to support the creation of a Slovakian section in a school other than Brussels III.

-The UK delegation expressed strong reservations about the creation of Anglophone classes at Berkendael.

- The Irish delegation shared the UK delegation's opinion.

-The Committee requested that the document which would be presented to the Board of Governors should reflect the various comments made by the delegations.

## **7. Opinion of the Steering Committee: meeting of 17 November 2015**

At the meeting, the Steering Committee was informed of the Budgetary Committee's opinion on use of the Berkendael site.

Considering that the conditions in which the site will be used are not sufficiently well defined, the representatives of the four Parents' Associations expressed reservations about the proposal. In particular, they emphasised the need to inform future applicants for enrolment, whose children will be admitted to the European School, Brussels I – Berkendael Site, that the School does not to date offer all-through schooling.

In accordance with the conclusions of the Working Group on the making available of a fifth European School in Brussels by the Belgian Government, the continuing availability of the Berkendael site is an interim measure pending opening of the fifth school. Subject to the decision of the Council of Ministers of the Belgian Federal Government to be taken on 11 December 2015, the Berkendael site has been made temporarily available to the European Schools, but it can be used only if it attached to an existing legal entity. It is with continuity in mind that the European School, Brussels I has been given temporary responsibility for administration of the Berkendael site. The objective is to accommodate on that site new

enrolment applications in the sections and year groups which will be opened, in order to relieve the existing Schools, which have been faced with growing demographic pressure for several years now.

The proposed guidelines for the Policy on Enrolment in the Brussels European Schools for the 2016-2017 school year, which the Central Enrolment Authority is submitting to the Board of Governors for approval (document 2015-12-D-3-en-1), state the following:

“Since the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year in September 2015, the European Schools intergovernmental organisation has no longer been able to guarantee the offer of a place for all category I pupils, even though everything possible is done to accommodate as many enrolment applications as possible. Accordingly, the Central Enrolment Authority takes all measures possible to make optimum use of the sites’ capacities. In any event, pupils enrolled in the European School system are guaranteed the possibility of continuing their schooling there in the schools/sites where the language sections and year groups are open up to the Baccalaureate. In that respect, they have priority access compared with new applicants for enrolment.”

Under this guarantee of schooling for pupils up to the Baccalaureate, when pupils enrolled at the European School, Brussels I – Berkendael Site have completed primary year 5, they will necessarily (and with priority compared with new pupils to be enrolled) have to be transferred to other schools/sites, and not necessarily to the one of their choice.

In addition, the Management of the European School, Brussels I emphasised the fact that this use of the Berkendael site cannot be at the expense of the human resources allotted and of the budget allocated for operation of the European School, Brussels I – Uccle Site.

The Parents’ Association of the Brussels I School said that it does not endorse the Steering Committee’s conclusions. It is opposed in particular to the Berkendael site’s being regarded as an extension to the European School, Brussels I. Furthermore, it takes the view that pupils who are enrolled at the Berkendael site should be informed, at the time of their enrolment, as to the Brussels European School to which they will go on for their secondary education.

## 8. Proposal

The Board of Governors is requested to approve temporary use of the Berkendael site as an extension to the Brussels I School, pending opening of the European School, Brussels V, from 1 September 2016 for Nursery and Primary 1-2 pupils.

The Board of Governors is requested to approve the distribution of the language sections across the Brussels Schools as proposed in the table below, subject to the creation of Latvian and Slovakian sections.

Schools	BG	DE	EN	FR	CS	DA	ET	EL	ES	FI	HU	IT	LT	LV*	NL	PL	PT	RO	SK*	SV	Total
Brussels I Uccle site		✓	✓	✓		✓			✓		✓	✓				✓					8
Brussels I Berkendael site			✓	✓				✓						✓		✓			✓		6
Brussels II		✓	✓	✓						✓		✓	✓		✓		✓			✓	9
Brussels III		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓						✓						7
Brussels IV	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓					✓			✓			✓			8
Total	1	4	5	5	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	3	1	1	3	2	1	1	1	1	38
* Subject to the section's creation																					

## **Consensus of the Working Group (WG) on the making available of a fifth European School by the Belgian Government**

*Brussels, July 2015*

### Participants:

- *On behalf of the Minister in charge of the Régie des Bâtiments*
- Antoine DEFRENNE – Strategic Adviser, *Régie des Bâtiments* – Chair of the WG
- Kristoff HEMELINCKX – Senior strategic adviser, *Régie des Bâtiments*
- Thierry VAN NIEUWENHOVE – Collaborator, strategic unit, *Régie des Bâtiments*
  
- *On behalf of the European Union:*
  - Kari KIVINEN – Secretary-General of the European Schools
  - Marie PANOU – European Commission
  - Mariana SAUDE – European Commission
  - Malgorzata ROSZAK – European Commission
  
- *On behalf of the Prime Minister's Office:*
  - Alexandre ROMBAUT
  - Marie NEYRINCK
  
- *On behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs:*
  - Mr Arnaud DUSAUCY
  - Ms Theodora GENTZIS
  
- *On behalf of the Régie des Bâtiments:*
  - Laurent VRIJDAGHS – General Administration, *Régie des Bâtiments*
  - Mr Antony STEEGMANS – Adviser, DG Customer Administration
  
- *On behalf of the Flemish Community:*
  - Mr Johan GEENTJENS – Teaching and Training Department – Crevits Cabinet

- *On behalf of the Francophone Community:*
  - Marie-Hélène VERCLEVEN –Milquet Cabinet
- *On behalf of the CIPS:*
  - Mr Geert DE BUCK
  - Mr Charles GHISLAIN

## 1. Introduction

Following the decision by the Council of Ministers on 30 January 2015 extending the availability of the site at Berkendaal for the European Schools to the 2015-2016 school year, the Minister's Office of the *Régie des Bâtiments* undertook to set up a Working Group to:

- Re-evaluate and update the future needs of the schools in an objective manner based on the real number of pupils
- Determine the standards on which the needs of the schools will be determined (those of the Francophone Community, the Flemish Community, rules related to the different categories of pupils, etc.)

The Minister's Office of the *Régie des Bâtiments* proceeded to chair a WG consisting of representatives of the *Régie des Bâtiments*, the Board of Governors of the European Schools, the European Commission and Belgian co-delegates to the Board of Governors, i.e. from the Francophone Community and the Flemish Community. convened on 2 April 2015, 26 May 2015 and 7 July 2015 at meetings chaired by Mr Antoine Defrenne.

The WG examined all the criteria related to the future needs of the European Schools (ES), based on the growth of the pupil population over the past few years, expected growth for the next few years, restrictions on enrolment for entitled pupils, management of space in the schools, demographics of the schoolchildren, etc.

The WG also looked at the building regulations for schools in the Francophone and Flemish Communities. These are almost identical for Nursery and Primary and vary slightly more for Secondary.

## 2. Growth of the pupil population in the European Schools

1. By category, the pupil population for the 2014-2015 school year was 10 903 in category I, 174 in category II and 328 in category III.  
96% of pupils are therefore in category I.

2. The pupil population for the 2014-2015 school year was therefore 11 405 children out of a total capacity of 12 400 places (the 4 European Schools + Berkendael). The current figures are very close to the forecasts made in 2013 by the previous WG. These forecasts have therefore been verified over time.
3. The enrolment policy of the Board of Governors of the European Schools (BoG) is very restrictive and only pupils in category I (children of staff of European institutions) and category II (parents working in an international organisation with which the Board of Governors has an agreement) are automatically enrolled
4. Children in category III (i.e. those not in categories I and II) can no longer be enrolled unless there are exceptional circumstances (siblings in the same school), the aim being to give priority to children in categories I and II. Despite this enrolment policy, the number of children enrolled continues to increase every year.
5. In fact, the number of pupils in the European School system is growing by 392 per annum, and forecasts for 2016-2023 made on the basis of the number of children of staff of EU institutions who are currently aged between 0 and 18, and on the basis of the number of births per annum it is forecast that this figure of 392 extra pupils every will continue until 2023.
6. While it is true that the European public administration has been hit by cost-cutting measures, the staff structure, and in particular the number of children of staff of the institutions following the most recent enlargement waves, highlight growing demand and potentially higher demand for children in category I in the next few years.

Thus, the measures applied to the European public administration are not having a direct impact on the number of children of staff of EU institutions entering the European School system every year.

7. The main problem lies at the level of Nursery and Primary places, and also at the start of Secondary (first years of Secondary – 1 to 3 in the Belgian system).
8. In the light of these factors, there will be a lack of capacity in the European Schools' infrastructure from the 2017-2018 school year (approximately 12 600 pupils expected).
9. It will therefore be necessary to provide a fifth European School starting in the 2019-2020 school year. The needs for the period after 2019-2020 are estimated at 2 500 places.

In the meantime, the possibility of installing prefabricated buildings on the different sites of the European Schools to temporarily offset the lack of places could be considered.



### 3. Application of Belgian standards in the construction and fitting-out of European Schools.

1. The *Régie des Bâtiments*, which has built all the European Schools, has applied Belgian standards in the construction and fitting-out of the schools for decades. Furthermore, the funds for construction have all been approved by the Finance Inspectorate, mainly applying Belgian standards.
2. The WG undertook an in-depth examination of the standards applied in the European Schools and later confirmed, in a comparative table drawn up by the General Secretariat of the Board of Governors, that the Belgian standards have been observed in the ES, making any necessary changes.
3. The 'Belgian' standards are those of the Francophone Community (C.Fr.) and the Flemish Community (C.Fl.): they are similar although not identical, which makes the comparison with a newly-built European School complex.
4. The C.Fr. and C.Fl. standards are, nevertheless, practically the same in Nursery and Primary.
5. The *Régie des Bâtiments* and representatives of the two communities met on 24 June 2015, outside the auspices of the WG, in the head offices of the *Régie des Bâtiments* to analyse needs in terms of surface area of a possible fifth European School in Brussels, and to compare these needs in relation to the standards in force in the two communities. The overall aim was to identify similarities and differences.

It emerged that the standards of the two communities are almost identical in Nursery, Primary and the first years of Secondary (1-2-3). On the other hand, in the Upper Secondary (years 4-5-6), the standards vary rather more, with respect mainly to outside areas and technical facilities (e.g. science laboratories).

Currently, however, the problem of a lack of places in the European School system only arises at the Nursery, Primary and Lower Secondary levels. A more detailed study of the standards for Upper Secondary is therefore not considered necessary.

6. However, with the aim of definitively resolving the problem by making a fifth European School available, the Education Ministers of the two communities have decided to grant the *Régie des Bâtiments* a general waiver on building and fitting-out standards for the construction of a fifth European School.
7. The *Régie* may therefore decide, at its discretion, the standards to be applied to the construction of this fifth school, provided that they observe the standards of one or other Community.

## CONCLUSIONS OF THE WORKING GROUP

The forecast growth in the pupil population among pupils in categories I and II means that it is necessary to build another school to become operational in the 2019-2020 school year. The requirement for the period after 2019-2020 is estimated at 2 500 places. Moreover, it is essential for the Belgian Government to assign the site of the school at Berkendael until provision of a fifth European School has been completed.

There are three possible scenarios:

- The definitive confirmation of the Berkendael site and extension of the buildings. However, this option depends on the successful outcome of another project by the *Régie des Bâtiments* to free up the prospective site
- The definitive provision of the Berkendael site and the construction of extra buildings on another site (still to be determined).
- The construction of a new school on a site to be determined, and the closure of Berkendael.

The *Régie des Bâtiments* should receive a mandate to study the foreseeable options and present a project that takes the different constraints and needs into account.

While awaiting the provision of a fifth school, the possibility of installing prefabricated buildings on the sites of European Schools to temporarily compensate for the lack of places could be examined.

The EU representatives have no preferences as to a particular site, provided that it is easily accessible and close to the places where EU staff mainly work and live, for environmental and mobility reasons and for easy access.

The Francophone and Flemish communities have granted a general waiver on the standards for the construction and fitting-out of a fifth European School, enabling the Federal Government to determine the standards to be applied in the construction of this fifth school at their discretion, provided that these observe the standards of one Community or other.

This waiver is an integral part of this consensus.

This consensus must be approved by the Council of Ministers and does not prejudice its final decision in any way.

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