

This announcement has been prepared in order to provide everyone concerned with timely information about the situation of the European Schools in Brussels.

The Belgian Authorities have officially announced that the decision of the Council of Ministers to deliver a fifth school in Brussels for 2500 pupils in September 2019 cannot be honoured.

The new time horizon for the delivery of Brussels V is now September 2024 at the earliest.

The situation of the schools in Brussels is already quite difficult at the moment: Brussels I, Brussels II and Brussels III are overcrowded, Brussels IV is full to capacity and a third of the capacity of the temporary site at Berkendael is being used.

2017-2018	Bxl1 -Uccle	Bxl1 - Berkendael	Bxl2	Bxl3	Bxl4	TOTAL
Pupil population	3 421	323	3 101	3 068	2 778	12 691
Theoretical capacity	3 100	1 000	2 850	2 650	2 800	12 400

For more than ten years now, the pupil population has been increasing year on year at a rate of approximately 400 pupils. There is no reason to expect this long-lasting and well-established trend to change, and markedly, in the coming years.

This means that after the enrolment session for the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 school years (approximately 800 extra pupils), all available places at Berkendael will also have been filled and Brussels IV will be overcrowded too.

In order not to **jeopardise the enrolment of future category I pupils of the European Schools**, more capacity therefore needs to be made available as soon as possible.

With that in mind, the Belgian Authorities are working to make a **temporary** site for 1000-1200 pupils available by September 2020, pending Brussels V's availability.

We have been told that the only possibility that seems feasible, from amongst the properties already available to the Belgian Authorities, is a building currently occupied by the *Trésorerie* on Avenue des Arts. It should be noted that acquisition of any other building would require more time and would further delay the process.

The building, which was purpose-built for offices, has been deemed suitable for conversion into classrooms and laboratories, in time to be made available by September 2020.

The location of the building makes it impossible to use private buses to take pupils to school.

For these reasons, it is considered that only lessons for pupils who are old enough to use public transport to travel to and from school could be organised in the building in question.

It is important to make use of the temporary building as soon as it becomes available, so that:

- the pressure on the other sites could be temporarily alleviated, and
- new enrolments accepted,

pending the fifth school's availability.

It goes without saying that leaving a temporary site empty or almost empty would mean not making the best possible use of public money and might also undermine the credibility of the claim that there is a pressing need for Brussels V to be made available without further delay.

For these reasons also¹ it has been proposed that pupils in the final two years (Secondary Years 6 and 7), on roll at two of the four existing schools in Brussels, be accommodated on the temporary site.

The pros and cons of the different possibilities will be listed and evaluated by the 'Brussels Steering Group'² at a meeting to be convened in September.

Giancarlo Marcheggiano

Secretary General

¹ Other aspects have been considered, relating to the unclear legal status of the temporary site/school.

² *Groupe de Suivi Bruxelles*