



**Schola Europaea**

Office of the Secretary-General

General Secretariat

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**Original.**

## **Situation of the European Schools in Brussels – Temporary site in Evere**

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**Presented to the Board of Governors of the European Schools at its  
extraordinary meeting on 20 October 2020**

## I. BACKGROUND

In 2010, by written procedure, the Board of Governors approved the setting-up of a fifth European School in Brussels and requested the Belgian Government to make the necessary arrangements for a school with capacity for 2500 pupils to be made available in September 2015, requesting the European Commission to keep the Budgetary Authorities (Council and European Parliament) informed of this proposal.

On 18 December 2015, the Council of Ministers of Belgium's Federal Government agreed to make a fifth European School available by 2019-2020, with the temporary Berkendael site continuing to operate until the new school opens.

To date, a fifth European School has not been made available and the date of its delivery has not yet been communicated. In the meantime, the Belgian Authorities have left the temporary site in Berkendael available and are planning to deliver a new temporary site in Evere for 1500 pupils for the start of the school year 2021-2022 (see Annex 1).

It is yet to be decided how the new temporary site in Evere will be used by the European Schools, in the light of the definition of the Guidelines for the Enrolment Policy for the 2021-2022 school year, which will need to be prepared by the Central Enrolment Authority, with a view to their adoption by the Board of Governors during the regular meeting in December 2020.

Should a temporary site in Evere not be available by the start of the 2021-2022 school year, the European Schools might be obliged to limit new enrolments of pupils belonging to category 1.

## II. RATIONALE

In Annex 2, the situation of the infrastructure and the current pupil population of the Brussels Schools are presented.

At the level of each school the following can be highlighted:

- At the **Brussels I** School, on the Uccle site, the total number of pupils – 3 426 – has never previously been as high (it should be noted that the school's theoretical capacity is 3 100 pupils).
- On the **Berkendael** site, the capacity of which is 1 000, the number of pupils is up from 730 on 15 October 2019 to 883 pupils on 1 October 2020.
- The number of pupils on roll at the **Brussels II** School is 3 215 and has never previously been as high (it should be noted that the school's theoretical capacity is 2 850 pupils).
- The number of pupils on roll at the **Brussels III** School is 3 309 and has never previously been as high (it is to be noted that the school's theoretical capacity is 2 650 pupils).
- The number of pupils on roll at the **Brussels IV** School is 3 102 and has never previously been as high (it is to be noted that the school's theoretical capacity is 2 800 pupils). The secondary cycle and certain more recently created sections are continuing to develop.

It should be noted that on 15 October 2019, the overcrowding of the Brussels Schools already corresponded to more than 1000 pupils and is now close to 1500. Every year the situation is becoming worse and is especially critical now, when a great deal of attention is being paid to the safety of the Schools' sites.

In the course of the independent audits of capacity, which are due to be conducted by each school for this autumn/winter, more precise information will be received on the safety situation of the pupils and members of staff currently present in the schools.

There is still some capacity on the Berkendael site, but the overall development of the satellite classes might become a source of concern in the near future, should correctives not be applied.

Each year there is a need for some 400-450 additional places in the Brussels Schools. Some 100 pupils can still be enrolled at Berkendael for the enrolment session for September 2021; no further increase in pupils could be accommodated on the other sites, which are, without exception, already overcrowded. **As from September 2021, there is no space left for the remainder, unless additional capacity is provided. It must be emphasised that there is a real risk of having to refuse Category 1 pupils from September 2021, unless the temporary site is provided on time, before the start of the 2021-2022 school year.**

On 5 February 2020, Vice-Prime Minister Geens wrote to Commissioner Hahn announcing:

*“According to schedule, the temporary construction, with a capacity of 1500 students, will be ready in time for the School to start its activities in September 2021.*

*The temporary construction will be used until the construction of the new School is ready. In the meantime also the Berkendael school will be kept available.”*

(see attached letter, **Annex 1**)

The Parents' representatives, during one meeting of the Steering Committee Brussels (SCB), regretted that the Secretary-General had not considered the option of limiting new enrolments to be applied already for the enrolment session for September 2020.

**Refusal to enrol Category I pupils, due to a lack of available places, would, however, constitute a failure to fulfil the primary mission entrusted to the European Schools in Article 1 of the Convention defining the Statute of the European Schools. In this respect, the Secretary-General believes that it should be avoided by any reasonable means.**

It is highly regrettable that since 5 October 2018, the date of the decision of the Council of Ministers on ESB5's location, the date for ESB5's availability has not yet been decided and communicated. According to the latest information communicated by the Buildings Agency during the meeting of the Steering Committee Brussels (SCB) on 12 October, the dossier relating to the construction of ESB5 will only be prepared at the end of 2021, after the delivery of the temporary site.

Lacking a clear longer term perspective has hampered the possibility of starting planning in the longer term. Nevertheless, the SCB agreed that some discussions on how to manage the situation in Brussels in the longer term could not be delayed any further and would have to be started soon.

For this reason, the SCB's intention is to discuss and present to the Board of Governors at the regular meeting in December a proposal to renew its mandate and to clarify the composition of the SCB. The SCB works on the basis of a mandate, which was given by the BoG in 1998, more than 20 years ago.

#### **IV. Proposals for the Guidelines for the Enrolment Policy for the 2021-2022 school year**

The starting point for any proposal on use of the transitional site is that it will be able to accommodate 1500 pupils in the Nursery and Primary cycles. In addition, the Board of Governors will have to approve the Guidelines for the Enrolment Policy for 2021-2022 in **December 2020**.

The closest school to Evere is the European School Brussels 2 – Woluwe (ESB2). The proposal which has received the most support within the SCB is to consider the Evere temporary site as an integral part of ESB2 (see Annex 5 for the SCB's discussion).

So should Evere become part of ESB2, all new enrolments in the Nursery and Primary cycles for the sections existing at ESB2 and not requesting regrouping of siblings with, siblings already on roll at the other sites (ESB1-UCC, ESB1-BRK, ESB3, ESB4), could be accommodated in new classes to be created at Evere. From now on, these enrolments will be referred to as 'free' enrolments.

It is a fact that, every year, a considerable number of enrolments correspond to that profile. The tables in **Annex 4** show all new enrolments for September 2018 and 2019 (2018-2019 and 2019-2020 Campaigns) corresponding to the profile described above, but for all existing sections.

During the meeting of the SCB on September 17, a simulation in that respect was presented, which can be found in **Annex 6**.

The tables remodel the number of enrolments submitted during the last session for the 2019-2020 school year, excluding pupils with sibling(s) already on roll at a different site and other situations with constraints, such as Students Without A Language Section (SWALS), particular circumstances, return from assignment, return from a period of study abroad during Phase I and compulsory transfers. Table 1 shows those enrolments in N and P for the language sections that are operational at ESB2. Given that the sibling rule is applied to one site, and not to one school, pupils whose sibling(s) is/are on roll at ESB2 are not included in Table 1.

Table 2 is a filtered version of Table 1, meaning that only those pupils appear here who were in Table 1, cannot fit into an existing class at ESB2 Woluwe and could actually form a class<sup>1</sup>. Table 2 illustrates the simulated maximum occupation of the Evere site that could be achieved in the first year, without having an impact on pupils already on roll at ESB2, and the simulated maximum number of new classes that would result.

The figures seem to be encouraging. The total number (406) is very close to the annual population increase in Brussels. This means that, in principle, the vast majority of the surplus population could be sent to Evere.

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<sup>1</sup> The threshold of enrolment applications to create a class has been considered to be 10 pupils. The same method has been used for the creation of satellite classes at Berkendael.

In addition to 'free' new enrolments, the possibility of applying for a transfer to the Evere site will be offered to all pupils who are already on roll in any of the schools. Provided that the class has a sufficient amount of enrolments, and that is thus possible for it to be created, the transfer will be accepted, when requested on a voluntary basis.

Pupils on roll at Evere would be considered to have been enrolled at ESB2, meaning that all pupils on roll at Evere would continue their education in the secondary at ESB2-Woluwe.

A similar arrangement could be also applied to ESB1-Uccle and the Berkendael site, for all sections and satellite classes corresponding to the sections existing at ESB1-Uccle. This means that all new enrolments in those sections and satellite classes would continue their education in the secondary at ESB1-Uccle.

Following the legal analysis conducted by the OSG, and in order to minimise the risk of refusals of Category 1 enrolments, the enrolment guidelines for 2021-2022 should include the following elements:

1. The Evere temporary site will be dependent upon ESB2-Woluwe, but with greater integration into the main school.
2. This greater integration is manifested in three aspects:
  - a) All language sections open at ESB2-Woluwe will be open at Evere from the outset.
  - b) All the children attending Evere will be able to continue their secondary education at ESB2-Woluwe (within the limit of places available).
  - c) Pupils already on roll at ESB2-Woluwe at nursery and primary levels could request to be transferred to Evere on a voluntary basis.
3. All new enrolments, joint or a single pupil, in the nursery and primary cycles in the FR, DE, EN, NL, PT, SW, FI, LT, IT sections are automatically directed to Evere, unless a priority criterion is applied (regrouping of siblings, return from assignment or study trip and special circumstances).
4. All new joint enrolments with siblings dispersed across the nursery and primary levels on the one hand and the secondary level on the other hand in the FR, DE, EN, NL, PT, SW, FI, LT, IT sections will be given priority for the allocation of places on a single site. If their requests cannot be met at a single site, enrolment will be offered, with separated siblings, between ESB2-Woluwe and ESB2-Evere, unless a priority criterion is invoked (special circumstances).
5. There is a need to provide for different thresholds of places available places between the sites for the multiple sections that exist at ESB2, in order to direct the maximum of new enrolments to the Evere site.
6. Voluntary transfers to ESB2-Evere will be open to all pupils on roll in other schools, without special grounds having to be given.

7. The detailed arrangements for filling the Evere site will be the subject of guidelines approved by the Board of Governors.

A similar arrangement could also be applied to ESB1-Uccle and the Berkendael site, for all sections and satellite classes corresponding to the sections that exist at ESB1-Uccle. This means that all new enrolments in those sections and satellite classes would go on to ESB1-Uccle for their secondary education. According to the proposal, those who were enrolled when it was not known that Berkendael would become an extension of ESB1-UCC would retain the right to express their wish to enrol in S in a school other than ESB1-UCC. Provided that it was feasible, according to the rules indicated in the Enrolment Policy, their choice would be respected. On the other hand, all new enrolments at Berkendael would automatically continue in S at ESB1-UCC. The SK and LV sections and the EL satellite classes could remain at Berkendael until the end of P5, when they would have to be transferred to the only schools that offer S education for those languages.

These two proposals would have the advantage of clarifying the situation of most of the children on roll at the temporary sites. This would eliminate the need for compulsory transfers from Berkendael when pupils reach P5 level. Such a possibility would be left open only to pupils already on roll at Berkendael now, since it was not possible for their fate to be made clearer at the time of their enrolment.

## **V. Conclusions**

The situation in Brussels remains extremely complex.

The risk of refusing to enrol Category 1 pupils, due to a lack of available places, would continue to exist, and most probably would remain the only option, if the Evere temporary site is not delivered in time for the start of the 2021-2022 school year.

The aim remains to invert the tendency to increase the pressure on the other sites and at the same site, trying to avoid having an impact on pupils already on roll in the schools. Although, with the current proposal, the decrease in the pressure on the other sites cannot be the maximum possible, the proposals respect the rules for enrolling siblings.

## **VI. Proposal**

The Board of Governors is invited to take a position on the proposal related to filling the temporary site in Evere as from September 2021 and on the proposal to adapt accordingly the management of the temporary site at Berkendael. The opinion formulated by the Board of Governors will be used as basis for preparation of the proposal for the Enrolment Policy for the 2021-2022 school year. The Central Enrolment Authority needs to start discussing the

proposal for the Guidelines and present them for adoption to the Board of Governors at its December 2020 meeting.

For the Evere site:

1. The Evere temporary site will be dependent upon ESB2-Woluwe, but with greater integration into the main school.
2. This greater integration is manifested in three aspects:
  - a) All language sections open at ESB2-Woluwe will be open at Evere from the outset.
  - b) All the children attending Evere will be able to continue their secondary education at ESB2-Woluwe (within the limit of places available).
  - c) Pupils already on roll at ESB2-Woluwe at nursery and primary levels could request to be transferred to Evere on a voluntary basis.
3. All new enrolments, joint or a single pupil, in the nursery and primary cycles in the FR, DE, EN, NL, PT, SW, FI, LT, IT sections are automatically directed to Evere, unless a priority criterion is applied (regrouping of siblings, return from assignment or study trip and special circumstances).
4. All new joint enrolments with siblings dispersed across the nursery and primary levels on the one hand and the secondary level on the other hand in the FR, DE, EN, NL, PT, SW, FI, LT, IT sections will be given priority for the allocation of places on a single site. If their requests cannot be met at a single site, enrolment will be offered, with separated siblings, between ESB2-Woluwe and ESB2-Evere, unless a priority criterion is invoked (special circumstances).
5. There is a need to provide for different thresholds of places available places between the sites for the multiple sections that exist at ESB2, in order to direct the maximum of new enrolments to the Evere site.
6. Voluntary transfers to ESB2-Evere will be open to all pupils on roll in other schools, without special grounds having to be given.
7. The detailed arrangements for filling the Evere site will be the subject of guidelines approved by the Board of Governors.

For the Berkendael site:

As from the 2021-2022 school year, the Berkendael temporary site will also be dependent on ESB1, to a greater extent, for the sections and satellite classes that exist at ESB1.

As from the 2021-2022 school year, all new enrolments in those sections and satellite classes that exist at ESB1 would continue their education in secondary at ESB1-Uccle. Pupils who were enrolled when it was not known that Berkendael would become an extension of ESB1-UCC would retain the right to express their wish to enrol in secondary in a school other than ESB1-UCC. Provided that it was feasible according to the rules included in the Enrolment Policy, their choice would be respected (compulsory transfers).

The SK and LV sections and the EL satellite classes would remain at Berkendael. When pupils reach P5, they will have to be transferred to the only schools that offer S education for those languages (compulsory transfers).



**Annex 1 - Vice-Prime Minister Geens' letter to Commissioner Hahn of 5 February 2020**

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Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice,  
in charge of the Belgian Buildings Agency, and  
Minister of European Affairs

EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
Mister Johannes HAHN  
Commissioner for Budget and Administration  
Rue de la Loi, 200  
B - 1049 BRUSSELS

CONTACT Rémi Lepoint, Advisor  
TELEPHONE 02 233 51 14  
FAX  
EMAIL remi.lepoint@just.gov.be  
ADDRESS Rue Duculae 81, B-1000 Brussels  
DATE 5/02/2020  
COPY  
ATTACHMENT

OUR REF. CAD/RL269636  
YOUR REF.

SUBJECT BRUSSELS - temporary European School

Dear Commissioner,

I have given most careful consideration to the letter of your predecessor.

I am aware of the urgency of the situation and I would like to inform you that, on January 31<sup>st</sup>, the Federal Council of Ministers has given its agreement for the construction of a temporary European School on the site of the former NATO Headquarter.

According to schedule, the temporary construction, with a capacity of 1500 students, will be ready in time for the School to start its activities in September 2021.

The temporary construction will be used till the construction of the new School is ready. In the meantime also the Berkendael school will be kept available.

Please accept the assurance of my highest consideration.

  
Koen GEENS

Rue Duculae 81 - 1000 Brussels - info.kabinets@just.gov.be  
www.justice.belgium.be

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## **Annex 2. The infrastructure and current pupil population of the Brussels Schools**

There are currently four European Schools (ES) in Brussels: the ES, Brussels I, the ES, Brussels II, the ES, Brussels III and the ES, Brussels IV, in addition to which there is the Berkendael temporary site as an extension to the ES, Brussels I.

For some years now, the total pupil population in Brussels has been regularly increasing, at a rate of around 400 pupils per year; this year, for the second time, the increase is closer to 500 pupils. It should be noted that two years ago the figure was abnormally low.

It can thus be seen that on 1 October 2020, the pupil population of the Brussels European Schools is continuing to grow:

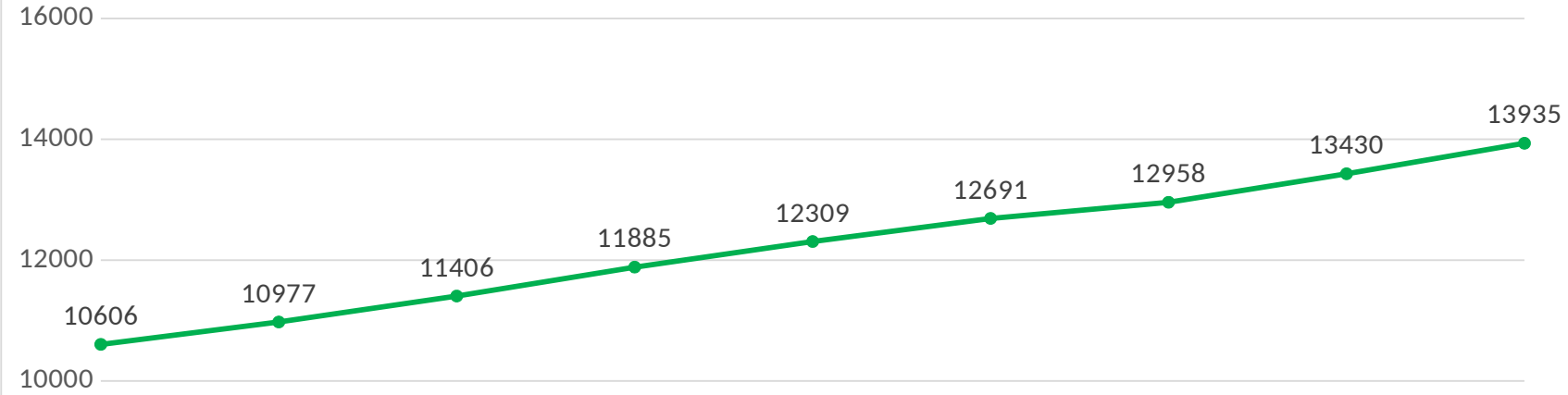
School year	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
<b>Pupils Pop.</b>	10606	10977	11406	11885	12309	12691	12958	13430	13935
<b>Difference</b>		371	429	479	424	382	267	472	505
<b>%</b>		3.5	3.9	4.2	3.6	3.1	2.1	3.6	3.8

This overall situation also needs to be taken into consideration in relation to the theoretical capacity of each school and their respective pupil numbers on 15 October 2019, appearing below:

Pupils	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
<b>EEB1-UCC</b>	3040	3086	3277	3394	3344	3421	3390	3349	3426
<b>EEB1-BK</b>					165	323	559	730	883
<b>EEB2</b>	3144	3088	2961	2998	3056	3101	3075	3175	3215
<b>EEB3</b>	2892	2875	2908	2995	3041	3068	3099	3202	3309
<b>EEB4</b>	1530	1928	2260	2498	2703	2778	2835	2974	3102
<b>Total</b>	10606	10977	11406	11885	12309	12691	12958	13430	13935

Details of the situation of the different Schools were already given in December 2018 (2018-11-D-31), in April 2019 (2019-04-D-5), in December 2019 (2019-11-D-17) and in April 2020 (2020-03-D-47).

### Brussels Schools Pupils Population

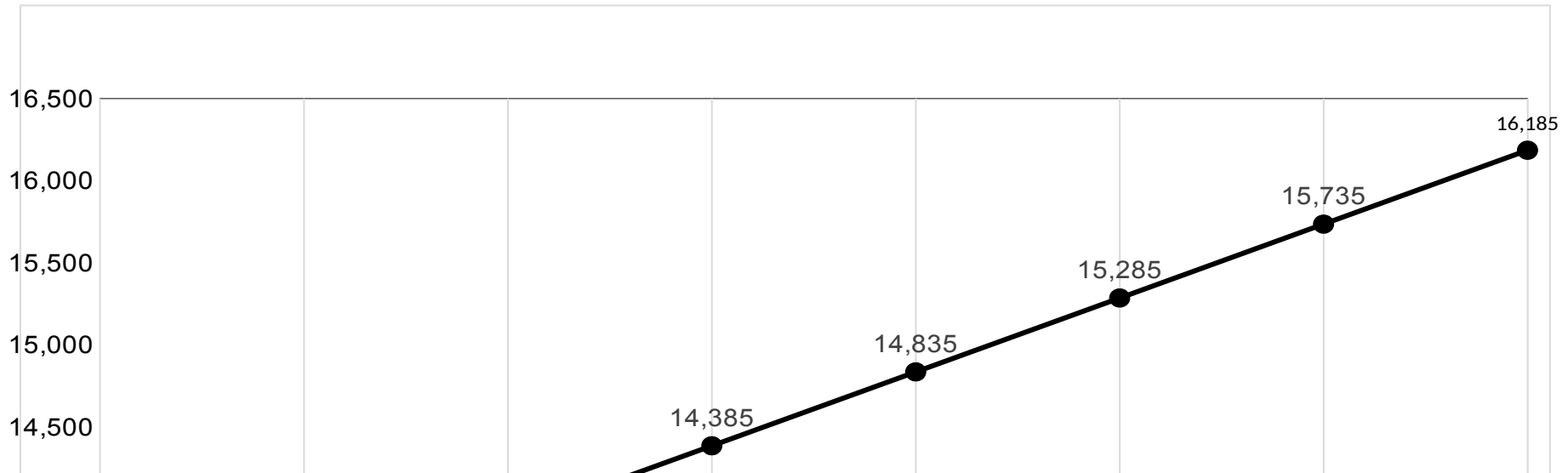
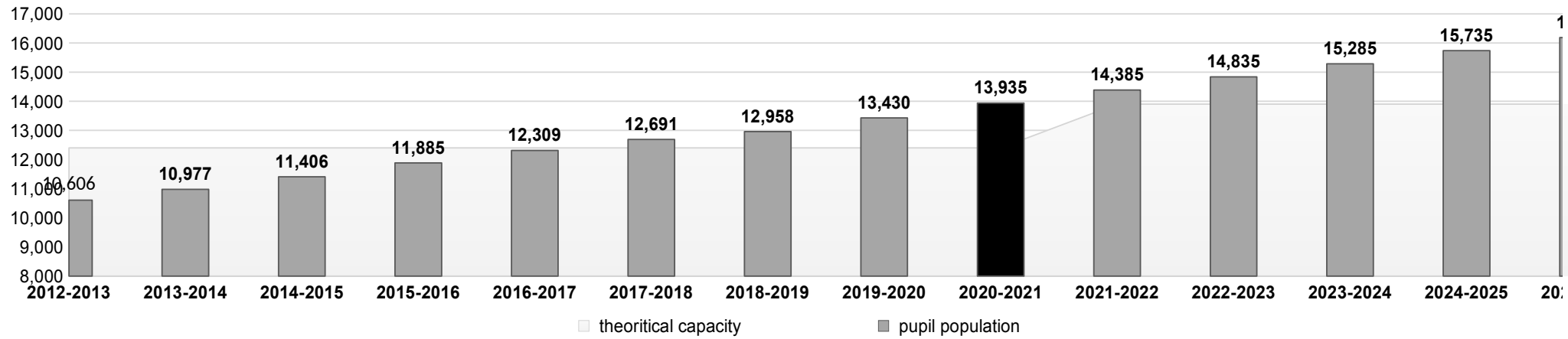


Brussels Schools Pupils Population

### Brussels Schools Projected Pupils Population

2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
10,606	10,977	11,406	11,885	12,309	12,691	12,958	13,430	13,935	14,385	14,835	15,285	15,735	16,185
12,400	12,400	12,400	12,400	12,400	12,400	12,400	12,400	12,400	13,900	13,900	13,900	13,900	13,900
	371	429	479	424	382	267	472	505	450	450	450	450	450
	3.5	3.9	4.2	3.6	3.1	2.1	3.6	3.8	3.2	3.1	3.0	2.9	2.9

### Pattern of development of the pupil population in relation to capacity



### **Annex 3. Communications from the Belgian Authorities on the making available of a fifth European School in Brussels and of a temporary site for 1500 Nursery and Primary pupils in Evere, as from September 2021**

As a reminder, at its meeting in December 2018, the Board of Governors was informed that the making available of a fifth European School, according to the technical level of the Belgian Public Buildings Agency (BA – *Régie des Bâtiments*) would be a minimum of five years behind schedule in relation to the undertaking given by the Council of Ministers of the Belgian Federal Government, which was to make such a school available to the system by September 2019 (2018-11-D-31).

As regards the location of the fifth School, it was confirmed that, on a proposal from the Ministry of Defence, the Council of Ministers of the Belgian Federal Government, at its meeting on 5 October, had approved a note providing for assignment of a four-hectare plot of land on the site of NATO's former headquarters for the construction of a fifth European School.

As early as February 2019, the Secretary-General (SG) had been told that, on a proposal from the Minister charged with the BA (Belgian Public Buildings Agency), the Council of Ministers of the 'caretaker' Government should have approved:

- the planned construction of a fifth European School on the aforementioned site;
- the making available to the European Schools on a definitive basis of the Berkendael site;
- the Memorandum of Understanding between Commissioner Oettinger and the Belgian Minister, Mr Geens;
- the implementation of a temporary solution pending construction of the fifth European School.

The BA, without a clear political mandate, had inquired into the possibility of having a temporary site on a piece of land on the former NATO site. It was confirmed by the Defence Ministry, the owner of the land, that it would be feasible to use a well-located piece of land. The BA Management has been exploring this avenue and has received from the SG a set of requirements for the facilities needed for a Primary and Nursery site for 1500 pupils.

The proposal is to build a temporary school using prefabricated units, on part of the old NATO premises. This is also to be the site (on a different plot) of the fifth European School (ESB5), meaning that this is an ideal location as pupils could eventually transfer easily from the prefabricated units to ESB5, once construction is complete. The BA has informed us that although there are existing prefabricated units on that land, they are not suitable for conversion into a school, so they will be completely removed and replaced by a structure purpose-built for schooling.

The Steering Committee welcomed this proposal and agreed to accept it. It was felt, particularly by the Parents' Representatives, to be a better solution than the Rue du Commerce<sup>2</sup> site, because it can be built to meet all the requirements of a school and could act as the kernel from which the fifth school can grow and develop. It is also easily accessible by school bus transport, since according to the BA, the piece of land is large enough to accommodate a bus park. According to the BA, NATO sports facilities could be

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<sup>2</sup> As far as the temporary solution is concerned, in December 2018, only one possibility had been proposed, namely the '*La Trésorerie*' ('Finances') building (Rue du Commerce), currently being rented by the BA until 2027 and conveniently located in relation to the European Institutions. Given that this building currently houses offices, the possibility of converting it into a school had been studied and a change of intended use would be necessary. The project was then abandoned.

made available to pupils, so that there would be no need to build sport facilities. The Steering Committee agreed that the NATO temporary site would be suitable to accommodate Nursery and Primary level pupils.

The BA did, however, issue a caveat; the site would not be ready before September 2021.

Since then, the BA has officially communicated that the Council of Ministers has decided on the construction of a temporary site for 1500 pupils in the Nursery and Primary levels, delivery of which is scheduled for 2 August 2021, on a piece of land on the site of NATO's former headquarters.

The BA also announced that the date for the making available of ESB5 had now become September 2026, at the earliest, whilst no further communication has been received by the Belgian political level on this subject.

## Annex 4

New pupils (Category I, Eurocontrol, Category II, NATO/UN) who have accepted a place during Phases I and II and who do not qualify for a special priority criterion (regrouping of siblings, return from assignment, return from a period of study abroad during Phase I, particular circumstances), from having SWALS status, compulsory transfers not included

### 2018-2019

		BG	CS	DA	DE	EL	EN	ES	ET	FI	FR	HU	IT	LT	LV	NL	PL	PT	RO	SK	SV	Total
<b>N</b>	<b>N1</b>	1	7	10	35	14	14	20	3	8	73		24	2	3	11	3	10	8	1	10	<b>257</b>
	<b>N2</b>	2	5	2	14	7	9	6	1	2	29	1	5	5	3	9	2	2	1		1	<b>106</b>
<b>M</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>363</b>
<b>P</b>	<b>P1</b>		7	6	17	9	11	9	3	3	60	4	15	2	3	10	5	4	8	2	3	<b>181</b>
	<b>P2</b>	1	4	4	3	5	11	6	1	6	23	1	5	5		1		4	3		1	<b>84</b>
	<b>P3</b>		6	1	4	6	5	3		1	32	2	7	4	1	4	4		2		4	<b>86</b>
	<b>P4</b>	2	2	2	3	7	17	1		1	34	2	3	1	1	4	3	1	2		1	<b>87</b>
	<b>P5</b>		1	4	7	4	8	4		3	29	3	6	2		3	5		2		1	<b>82</b>
<b>P</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>520</b>
<b>S</b>	<b>S1</b>		1		2	3	12	3		5	56	1	9	1		8	4	2	1		3	<b>111</b>
	<b>S2</b>	1	3	1		1	7	3		1	45	3	5	1		9	3	1			2	<b>86</b>
	<b>S3</b>		5	1	2	2	5				17		7	3		3	3	1				<b>49</b>
	<b>S4</b>			1	3	3	8	4		4	13		4	2		5	3				2	<b>52</b>
	<b>S5</b>		1	1	2	6	10			1	10	1	4				2					<b>38</b>
	<b>S6</b>		2			5	7	2		2	7		14			1	3	1				<b>44</b>
	<b>S7</b>																					<b>0</b>
<b>S</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>12</b>		<b>13</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>7</b>		<b>26</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>380</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>1263</b>

## 2019-2020

		BG	CS	DA	DE	EL	EN	ES	ET	FI	FR	HU	IT	LT	LV	NL	PL	PT	RO	SK	SV	Total
<b>N</b>	<b>N1</b>	6	2	5	26	19	23	16	2	4	94	2	26	5	2	9	3	11	4	2	6	<b>267</b>
	<b>N2</b>		6	2	7	8	13	11	5	2	39	1	6	2	3	3	4	3		1	2	<b>118</b>
<b>M</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>385</b>
<b>P</b>	<b>P1</b>	2	4	4	18	7	18	6	1	4	77	3	12	5	2	9	6	8	5	2	4	<b>197</b>
	<b>P2</b>	1	4	2	6	4	11	8	2	1	23		3	1	2	6	3	2	2		4	<b>85</b>
	<b>P3</b>	1	2	1	8	2	9	4	2	2	50	2	6	1	1	4	3	3	2		1	<b>104</b>
	<b>P4</b>	2	2	1	3	3	12	6			25	1	5	1	1	9	5	2				<b>78</b>
	<b>P5</b>		5	1	6	5	9	2		2	39	3	7	1	1	7	3	2	1			<b>94</b>
<b>P</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>558</b>
<b>S</b>	<b>S1</b>	3	3		8	3	17	7		1	56	2	11	3		14	3	1	2		1	<b>135</b>
	<b>S2</b>	1	1	1	2	5	9	1		2	40	2	5	3		17	3	3	3		2	<b>100</b>
	<b>S3</b>	2		1	2	4	7	3			20	1	5	4		3	3	3			2	<b>60</b>
	<b>S4</b>		2	1	2	1	7	5			11		6	1		3	2	1			1	<b>43</b>
	<b>S5</b>				1	5	9	6		3	14	1	2	2		5	1	2				<b>51</b>
	<b>S6</b>		2		6	2	10	7			8		4			4	1	4				<b>48</b>
	<b>S7</b>															1						<b>1</b>
<b>S</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>29</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>13</b>		<b>47</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>5</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>438</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>1381</b>



## **Annex 5 – Discussions conducted by the Steering Committee Brussels on the possible uses of the temporary site for 1500 Nursery and Primary pupils in Evere, as from September 2021**

To date, the Steering Committee Brussels (SCB) has met six times in 2020: on 3 March, on 25 March, on 1 April, on 25 June, on 17 September and on 12 October 2020.

During those meetings, it was clearly stated by the Buildings Agency (BA – *Régie des Bâtiments*) that the construction of **the permanent fifth school** had not yet been decided by the Council of Ministers.

At the meeting on 3 March, the BA informed the SCB that a dossier will need to be prepared and presented to the new government in place, which will deliver the final decision on the school's construction, including the timeline and the budget. The BA assured the SCB that its intention was to compile and submit the dossier by the end of 2020. During the meeting on 12 October, the date of the preparation and submission of the dossier on the construction of the fifth school was delayed until the end of 2021.

As regards **Berkendael**, the site will remain available at least until construction of the fifth school has been completed. The future of the site after that date has not yet been decided. Whether or not it will belong to the ES system on a definitive basis has not yet been decided, despite the reiterated requests made by the Secretary-General (SG).

As a reminder, on 31 January 2020, the Council of Ministers of the Belgian Federal Government (*Conseil des Ministres*) approved the setting up of the **provisional school for transitional use**, pending construction of the fifth school, on a plot of land on the former NATO site, with capacity to accommodate 1500 pupils. The decision was to build a temporary school (Evere) using prefabricated units on part of NATO's old premises, which is also expected to be the site of the permanent fifth ES (in principle, on a different plot of land). Both the financial aspects and the planning for the construction work had been approved. The planning had been further fine-tuned and tightened following a dialogue between the Brussels urban planning authorities and the BA, in such a way that the temporary school would be ready by September 2021, according to the proposal. The construction work was scheduled to start in January 2021 and completed by 2 August 2021. The schedule seemed very tight.

The BA had completed the preparatory work on the planning, based on the information given by the SG, regarding the specifications and needs, e.g. the number and sizes of the classrooms, the special rooms, the canteen, etc. These specifications were based on the ones that had been applied when Brussels III had been built (the last school built on an empty plot of land), recalculated for a capacity of 1500 pupils in nursery and primary.

The BA informed the SCB that there would be no sport facilities on the site. However, there was an ongoing dialogue, in order to find an arrangement and ensure that sport facilities would be available for the pupils.

The plots of land had been identified for both the temporary site and the future fifth European School in Brussels, but for the permanent school it had not yet been validated. The two plots of lands were not adjacent, but not far from each other either.

The BA undertook to send an official email, with the Council of Ministers' note, detailing the decision for the members of the SCB. The planning of the site and the timeline were to be

attached to this official document, confirming the decision made regarding construction of the temporary site.

To date, the time planning, general planning for the site and the specifications derived from the requests formulated by the European Schools have been received and shared with other stakeholders.

The starting point for any proposal on use of the transitional site is that it will be able to accommodate 1500 pupils in the Nursery and Primary cycles. The Board of Governors will have to approve the Enrolment Policy for 2021-2022 in **December 2020**. The proposal therefore needs to be made accordingly.

The situation of the pupil population in the Brussels ES on 1 October 2020 is illustrated in Annex 2.

Based on the BA's earlier communication, the future of Berkendael site is still undecided and risk remaining so until the fifth school has been made available.

During the meeting on **25 March**, 'Guidelines for the use of the temporary site in Evere as of September 2021' (2020-03-D-32-en-1) were proposed by the SG and received general support from the members of the SCB, with the exception of the Parents' Representatives, who declared that they did not have a mandate from their constituency.

The following options were considered at an early stage of the SCB's discussion.

#### Option 1

Consideration has been given as to whether Evere should be looked at as a transitional site for the newly created fifth school (ESB5). This case (creation of the fifth school on the temporary site) would entail, amongst other things, creation of sections that will be accommodated by the fifth school. So a pupil who is enrolled at the temporary site in Evere will be able to continue in the fifth school. Nevertheless, this approach requires more time and in-depth analysis and long-term study in order to identify in the most rational way possible which language sections to create and move. The need to have a decision on the Guidelines for the Enrolment Policy for the 2021-2022 school year in December 2020 already, amongst other things, would make this possibility not really practicable.

#### Option 2

The System has the experience of having Berkendael as a temporary site. So making use of Evere as an annexe administered by another school, as is the case for Berkendael, would definitely be an alternative option.

There are undoubtedly also downsides.

The development of new sections created at Berkendael has not evolved really positively (except for the FR section). There was no decision from the BoG on where those sections should ultimately end up. The Gaignages criteria for the creation of the LV and SK sections have still not been met, after five years.

Today, after five years, the LV section has 30 pupils across all the N and P levels (7 year groups), whilst the SK section has 25 pupils (7 year groups).

In order to fill the site better, satellite classes had to be created on the temporary site. After five years, the site is not being fully used (888 pupils, with a total capacity of 1000), whilst the other sites are constantly becoming more overcrowded.

Moreover, it can be observed that the pupil population in some satellite classes at Berkendael could easily be distributed across the existing classes in other schools. Its creation did indeed help to reduce the pressure on the other sites, but lacks efficiency. In addition, the result of non-systematic creation of satellite classes could be that the site would not be able to manage to accommodate all nursery and primary classes corresponding to all those 'satellite' languages, giving rise to a serious problem in the medium term.

Whenever possible, it would be better to avoid repeating these negative experiences, when making use of the new transitional site in Evere.

### Option 3

One of the main constraints making more efficient use of the space available difficult is the regrouping of siblings. When a child belonging to a group of siblings is already on roll in a European School, the Board of Governors decided (and the Complaints Board has since ruled accordingly) that the sibling would have the right to be enrolled in the same school.

This has an impact on the positive development of newly created language sections, when these are not created in the same school where SWALS corresponding to the same language were enrolled. Despite the existence of a language section, newly enrolled siblings continue to be enrolled as SWALS in the same school where their sibling(s) is/are already on roll.

At the same time, regrouping siblings limits the room for manoeuvre in the use of space available.

This problem has led to an alternative proposal for use of the temporary site of Evere: rather than considering the site as an annexe, independent of the school/site that will have to administer it, it could be regarded as an integral part of it.

The guiding principle of the SCB was to make maximum use of the temporary site in Evere, so as to reduce the pressure on the other sites resulting from over-crowding. Thus, the SCB started to pursue the idea of linking the site in Evere as an extension of an existing school. It appears logical to link ESB2 – Woluwe to Evere because of its geographical proximity. The solution would offer both pedagogical and administrative advantages. The sections to be set up would be the ones operational at ESB2.

So if Evere became part of ESB2, all new enrolments in the Nursery and Primary year groups and sections existing at ESB2, which would not require regrouping of siblings, could be accommodated in new classes created at Evere.

It is a fact that, every year, a considerable number of enrolments correspond to that profile. The table in **Annex 4** shows all new enrolments for September 2019 (2019-2020 session) that corresponded to that profile.

During the meetings of the SCB on 1 April, on 25 June, and on 17 September a simulation of that situation was presented, which can be found in **Annex 6**.

The attached **Annex 6** on 'Simulation Evere' shows:

- Table 1: Enrolments accepted during the enrolment session for September 2019 (2019-2020 Session) without 'constraints' (single section, SWALS, siblings already on roll, etc.), **corresponding to the sections operational at ESB2 and only the Nursery and Primary levels**
- Table 2: What **potentially** could be done, meaning accepting at ESB2 all 'free' enrolments corresponding to the sections existing at ESB2 and the number of new classes that it would entail.

We are in fact, yet again, faced with limitations stemming from the provisions laid down in the Enrolment Policy and from the rulings of the Complaints Board:

- **enrolment of siblings on a different site for whom grouped or regrouped enrolment has been requested**

and

- **moving pupils from one site to another**

would **not be possible**.

In terms of the best possible use of the newly available site, this is not ideal and will risk resulting in further overcrowding.

- Table 2 illustrates the maximum that could be achieved in the first year, without having an impact on pupils already on roll at ESB2, and the maximum number of new classes that would result. New classes would be created only if there were not enough places in the classes already in existence at Woluwe. The figures seem to be encouraging. The total number is very close to the population increase in Brussels that has been recorded over the years. This means that, in principle, the vast majority of the increased population could be sent to Evere.

It was also proposed to change the approach towards ESB1-BK. Even though ESB1-BK is administered by ESB1-UCC, the pupils at the site are not officially on roll at ESB1-UCC at present, meaning that at the end of P, they apply for a transfer for S to a school of their choice, whilst the Central Enrolment Authority (CEA) endeavours to respect their request as far as possible. So far, the CEA has managed to do so; nonetheless, it is not guaranteed that this practice can be maintained.

The same exercise was carried out in the case of Berkendael, to demonstrate the possibility of linking the site as an annexe to ESB1-UCC.

It was clear that this proposal would require a number of delicate decisions. Nonetheless, it would have the advantage of clarifying the situation of all the children enrolled at the temporary sites. This would also remove the need to have compulsory transfers from Berkendael, when pupils reach the P5 level. This possibility would be left to the pupils actually enrolled at Berkendael, since their fate could not be clearer at the time of their enrolment.

Those who were enrolled when it was not known that Berkendael would become an extension of ESB1-UCC would retain the right to request to continue their studies in S in one of the Brussels Schools of their choice. Provided that it is feasible (compulsory transfers), their choice will be respected. On the other hand, all new enrolments at Berkendael would be automatically transferred to ESB1-UCC for the S in the corresponding language section. The language sections at Berkendael, whose corresponding language section is not operational at ESB1-UCC, i.e. LV and SK, can remain at Berkendael, although they will not be moved against their will. However, it is worth noting that ESB2 is the only school in Brussels that offers LV L1 to Secondary pupils. The same applies to the EL satellite classes.

Various concerns were raised regarding the increased number of Primary pupils going up into Secondary and, as a result of the proposed plan, ESB1-UCC and ESB2-Woluwe would be faced with infrastructure issues. It was questioned whether they would have the capacity to accommodate more Secondary pupils. It is, however, important to note that the increase in the S population in those aforementioned sites would be gradual and adaptation needs would not be immediate.

The OSG's legal experts analysed the legal context of the project to link Evere to the existing ESB2, thus creating one school with two sites. The outcome of their analysis is that, in order to minimise the risk of refusals of Cat.1 enrolments and to maximise use of the temporary site, the following provisions were proposed to be included in the enrolment guidelines:

1. The Evere temporary site will be dependent upon ESB2-Woluwe, but with greater integration into the main school.
2. This greater integration is manifested in three aspects:
  - a) All language sections open at ESB2-Woluwe will be open at Evere from the outset.
  - b) All the children attending Evere will be able to continue their secondary education at ESB2-Woluwe (within the limit of places available).
  - c) Pupils already on roll at ESB2-Woluwe at nursery and primary levels could request to be transferred to Evere on a voluntary basis.
3. All new enrolments, joint or a single pupil, in the nursery and primary cycles in the FR, DE, EN, NL, PT, SW, FI, LT, IT sections are automatically directed to Evere, unless a priority criterion is applied (regrouping of siblings, return from assignment or study trip and special circumstances).
4. All new joint enrolments with siblings dispersed across the nursery and primary levels on the one hand and the secondary level on the other hand in the FR, DE, EN, NL, PT, SW, FI, LT, IT sections will be given priority for the allocation of places on a single site. If their requests cannot be met at a single site, enrolment will be offered, with separated siblings, between ESB2-Woluwe and ESB2-Evere, unless a priority criterion is invoked (special circumstances).
5. There is a need to provide for different thresholds of places available places between the sites for the multiple sections that exist at ESB2, in order to direct the maximum of new enrolments to the Evere site.
6. Voluntary transfers to ESB2-Evere will be open to all pupils on roll in other schools, without special grounds having to be given.
7. The detailed arrangements for filling the Evere site will be the subject of guidelines approved by the Board of Governors.

It goes without saying that the serious level of overcrowding in the Brussels Schools was taken into account by the OSG's legal experts when carrying out their legal analysis. They consider, however, that maintaining the principle of siblings will substantially reduce the risk of decisions being reversed by the Complaints Board. It is also worth remembering that the principle of siblings was proposed to counterbalance the lack of a geographical criterion for enrolments of pupils in Brussels. Unless it would represent the last resort, the Complaints Board might be unlikely to accept abandonment of that principle.

At the meeting on 17 September, the BA assured the members that the tender was proceeding according to plan and would be launched in mid-October.

Furthermore, the project was discussed in the light of the preliminary figures for the population of the schools in Brussels in 2020-2021. This year, the surplus turned out to be more than had been expected and as from this school year, all of the schools are overcrowded, with even BK approaching its limits. The average annual increase has been around 400-450 and this year the increase amounted to more than 500 new enrolments.

It is worth mentioning that two additional possible solutions were put on the table at the meeting on 17 September.

With the aim of alleviating the pressure on the other sites to a greater extent, it was proposed to examine whether a solution, which had been applied in the case of the ES, Munich, could also be applied for Evere. The ES, Munich used to have a single site and at the beginning of the last school year, a new site provided by the German authorities was opened. According to the decision taken by the school, all N and P sections moved to the new site, whilst S sections remained on the old site.

Further to the proposal outlined above, a third possibility was mentioned during the meeting on 17 September. The idea would be a sort of mixed solution, meaning not transferring all year groups in the N and P cycles, but only the lower year groups (i.e. from N1 to P3 ) to Evere, whilst the higher ones (i.e. P4 and P5) could remain on the Woluwe site, which could ensure smooth transition from P to S.

Undoubtedly, these two alternative solutions would enable ESB2-Woluwe to become a site adapted to accommodate substantially more S pupils and would relieve pressure to a greater extent on the other overcrowded sites.

At the meeting on 12 October, the *APEEE* (Parents' Association) representative of the parents at ESB2-Woluwe presented the outcome of a survey, which had been conducted among the parents to collect their feedback on the alternative proposals discussed. The vast majority of the respondents were in favour of the proposal including only new 'free' enrolments and voluntary transfers to be sent to Evere.

Out of the 1303 respondents, 67% of the parents supported the first option, whilst 19% said that they would choose a separate site for N and P, and only 8% would opt for the mixed solution.

Whilst the parents fully understood the need to reduce the pressure on the other sites, they rejected the possibility of separating siblings, mentioning the detrimental implications that separation would entail for children's wellbeing and the major disruptions to families' planning resulting from unexpected logistical problems.

In the light of the comments expressed by the parents, the SCB decided no longer to pursue the alternative options and to support the proposal to enrol only new enrolments without constraints and voluntary transfers.

## Annex 6 – Simulation on filling the temporary site in Evere without having an impact on pupils already on roll at ESB2 and the possible total of new classes

Table 1

free" enrolments that can be oriented to Evere

		DE	EN	FI	FR	IT	LT	NL	PT	SV	Total
<b>N</b>	<b>N1</b>	26	23	4	94	26	5	9	11	6	<b>204</b>
	<b>N2</b>	7	13	2	39	6	2	3	3	2	<b>77</b>
<b>N</b>	<i>total</i>	<b>33</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>281</b>
<b>P</b>	<b>P1</b>	18	18	4	77	12	5	9	8	4	<b>155</b>
	<b>P2</b>	6	11	1	23	3	1	6	2	4	<b>57</b>
	<b>P3</b>	8	9	2	50	6	1	4	3	1	<b>84</b>
	<b>P4</b>	3	12		25	5	1	9	2		<b>57</b>
	<b>P5</b>	6	9	2	39	7	1	7	2		<b>73</b>
<b>P</b>	<i>total</i>	<b>41</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>426</b>
<b>N+P</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>707</b>

Table 2

### 2019-2020

New enrolments possible to orient to Evere and can form a class

		DE	EN	FR	IT	NL	Total
<b>M</b>	<b>M1-M2</b>	23	22	130	25	11	<b>211</b>
<b>M</b>	<i>Total</i>	<b>23</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>211</b>

<b>P</b>	<b>P1</b>		12	75			<b>87</b>
	<b>P2</b>			19			<b>19</b>
	<b>P3</b>			41			<b>41</b>
	<b>P4</b>			14			<b>14</b>
	<b>P5</b>			34			<b>34</b>
<b>P</b>	<i>Total</i>		<b>12</b>	<b>183</b>			<b>195</b>

	<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>406</b>
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