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Renewal of the Mandate and the Composition of the Steering Committee of the European Schools in Brussels

Board of Governors of the European Schools

Meeting from 1 to 3 December 2020 – Online

I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Steering Committee Brussels (SCB) was set up on the basis of a decision of the Board of Governors in October 1997¹, under the point of the agenda “*Coordinated Management of the European Schools in Brussels*”². The Group was created to prepare the opening of the European School, Brussels 3, when ESB1 and ESB2 were reaching the limits of their capacity. The Group was mandated for:

- the distribution of the language sections,
- the establishment of a schedule for the appointment of the Director, the Deputies, principal administrators,
- the management of the transition period, in particular distribution of pupils, teachers, other staff members and resources.

From 2003, in the internal documents prepared for the group's meetings, i.e. minutes, it was referred to as 'Steering Committee Brussels IV'³. As from 2010, internal documents started to call the group 'Steering Committee of the European Schools in Brussels'⁴. No formal decision of the Board of Governors could be found endorsing these changes.

The only formal modification related to the mandate was made in December 2016 by the Board of Governors⁵, under item “*Review of the results of the 2016-2017 Enrolment Policy and proposed guidelines for the 2017-2018 Policy (CEA)*”.

In addition to the original mandate “*(...) the Board of Governors mandated the Brussels European Schools Monitoring Group*”⁶ to study to which extent the admission strategy has to be adapted to enable possible solutions for the future situation of the schools in Brussels and to report back to it at the April 2017 meeting. The investigation takes into account, amongst other things:

- *The completion of schooling in the same school.*
- *The regrouping of siblings in the same school.*
- *The gradual creation of new sections, year by year.*
- *The full educational offer in each of the schools.”*

Over the years, the SCB has been dealing with different developments in Brussels. A non-comprehensive list of those developments can be found in Annex 1.

Annex 2 comprises a list that includes, without being exhaustive, the major changes in the situation of the European Schools in Brussels compared to 1997.

¹ 97-D-4510-fr: *Décisions prises par le Conseil supérieur lors de sa réunion des 14 et 15 octobre 1997*

² Original in FR: *Gestion Coordonnée des Ecoles européenne de Bruxelles*

³ In FR: *Groupe de suivi Brussels IV*

⁴ In FR: *Groupe de suivi de EE de Bruxelles*

⁵ 2016-12-D-14-en-3: Decisions of the meeting of the Board of Governors of the European Schools, 7-9 December 2016

⁶ The correct English translation of the original text in French is ‘Steering Committee of the European Schools in Brussels’

II. COMPOSITION OF THE STEERING GROUP

According to the original mandate assigned in October 1997, the Group comprised the following 9 members:

- Representative of the Board of Governors
- 2 Directors (Brussels I and II)
- 1 Head of BE Delegation
- 1 Commission member
- 2 parents (Brussels I and II)
- 2 teachers (Brussels I and II)

With the system's expansion and in parallel with the growth of the Schools, the number of original members also increased:

- 4 Directors
- 2 EC members
- 5 parents
- 4 teachers

Over the years, the following members have, in addition, been invited at the request of different stakeholders:

- Members of the Central Enrolment Authority
- Members of the Belgian Buildings Agency (*Régie des Bâtiments*)
- Students' representative⁷
- Representatives of the Local Staff Committee of the European Commission
- 'Association of Parents' (*AdP - Crèches, Jardins d'enfant and Garderies* in Brussels)
- Representatives of the Office for Infrastructure and Logistics in Brussels (OIB)

With observer status:

- Representatives of the Delegation of the Presidency.

Whilst according to the original mandate the SCB had 9 members, at the last meeting there were 27 members and 8 invited observers present.

The size of the group is such that meetings are quite lengthy and it is a challenge to coordinate them and remain focused.

⁷ Students, who have been participating with only one representative, have recently requested to delegate a representative from each school.

III. CURRENT AND FUTURE CHALLENGES

1. Overcrowded Schools and pupil population growth

The Board of Governors has received details of the situation of the different Schools on a regular basis: in December 2018 (2018-11-D-31) and in April 2019 (2019-04-D-5-en-1), in December 2019 (2019-11-D-17-en-1) and, most recently, in October 2020 (2020-10-D-17-en-2).

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 – 3426 – has never previously been as high (it should be noted that the School’s theoretical capacity is 3100 pupils).
- On the Berkendael site, the capacity of which is 1000, the number of pupils is up from 730 on 15 October 2019 to 883 pupils on 1 October 2020. There is still some capacity on the Berkendael site, but the natural development of the satellite classes might become a source of concern in the near future, should correctives not be applied.
- The number of pupils on roll at the Brussels II School is 3215 and has never previously been as high (it should be noted that the School’s theoretical capacity is 2850 pupils).
- The number of pupils on roll at the Brussels III School is 3309 and has never previously been as high (it should be noted that the School’s theoretical capacity is 2650 pupils).
- The number of pupils on roll at the Brussels IV School is 3102 and has never previously been as high (it should be noted that the School’s theoretical capacity is 2800 pupils). The secondary cycle and certain more recently created sections are continuing to develop.

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

The Brussels Schools are now close to 1500 over capacity—and this includes the use of the Berkendael campus, until now considered a temporary site; each year there is a need for some 400-450 additional places in the schools. 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.

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

Some 100 pupils can still be enrolled at Berkendael for the September 2021 enrolment session; 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.

1. Fifth School

It is highly regrettable that since 5 October 2018, the date of the decision of the Council of Ministers (*Conseil des Ministres*) of the Belgian Federal Government on the ESB5's location, the date of its availability has still not been decided and communicated. At the meeting in March 2020, the Buildings Agency informed the SCB that construction of the permanent fifth School had not yet been decided by the Council of Ministers. According to the latest information communicated by the Buildings Agency during the meeting of the Steering Committee Brussels (SCB) on 12 October, the preparation of the dossier relating to the construction of the ESB5 will only start when delivery of the temporary site in Evere has been completed.

In summary, 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 2021-2022 school year.

The lack of 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.**

2. Temporary sites in Berkendael and Evere

To date, a fifth European School has not been made available and the date of its delivery, promised for 2019, has not yet been communicated.

In the meantime, the Belgian Authorities have left the temporary site in Berkendael available until the delivery of a fifth school and are planning to deliver a new temporary site in Evere for 1500 pupils for the start of the school year 2021-2022.

Some 100 pupils can still be enrolled at Berkendael as from the September 2021 enrolment session.

Even if a temporary site in Evere is available by the start of the 2021-2022 school year, in three years' time, its full capacity, namely 1500 pupils, will have been reached.

This means that if the fifth European School has not been delivered by the start of the 2024-2025 school year and if the growth in the Schools' population continues to follow the trend of the past 10-15 years, the European Schools will need additional space, possibly, again, in the form of a third temporary site.

Moreover, as the total capacity of the two temporary sites, namely Berkendael and Evere, is 2500 pupils, on the very day when it is delivered, the fifth European School will be full to capacity should the temporary sites be taken back by the Belgian Authorities.

3. Efficient use of space

Already in the past, ideas about different ways of organising distribution of the pupil population across the different Schools in Brussels were mooted. Without claiming to be exhaustive, a reminder of some of the ideas shared is given below:

- 1) In order to avoid having half-full classes, multiple sections could be grouped at only one site – and possibly only for the secondary cycle. Sections corresponding to the DE, EN, FR languages were often said to be needed on all sites, because of the link with second language (L2) tuition.
- 2) Dedicate (some) sites only or primarily to one cycle: Nursery-Primary or Secondary.

IV. RATIONALE

In the context of the above, and since the constant growth in the pupil population is expected to continue over the coming years, managing enrolments within limited infrastructure is likely to remain a challenge in the course of the years to come.

For the reasons outlined above, **a renew of the mandate for the Steering Committee Brussels is strongly advisable**. The Board of Governors is invited to update the mandate and the composition of the Steering Committee Brussels.

1. As regards the mandate

The SCB was set up more than 20 years ago. The situation has evolved quite considerably over the years. (See Annex 2)

At the outset, the SCB was set up in order to implement coordinated management of the pupil population across the different Schools in Brussels.

This objective remains current, even though the situation and the corresponding challenges have evolved considerably.

The SCB has the vital role to perform a preparation work, when the Board of Governors has to address key decisions around Brussels schools

In this connection, it would be reasonable for the SCB to continue fulfilling a preparatory function for the proposals put forward to the Board of Governors for consideration and decision. These proposals should focus, amongst other issues, on effective use of the limited space available for a constantly growing pupil population, namely:

- Long-term planning;
- Working to find solutions that can ensure that there are adequate and suitable provisions in place to guarantee the various rights of enrolment are upheld and complied with;
- Preparing contingency plans;
- Populating new sites, managing transition periods, phasing out temporary;
- Distribution of language sections and cycles across the sites in Brussels,

while at the same time adhering to well-established principles.

4. As regards the composition

The original group comprised 9 members. At the last meeting there were 27 members and 8 invited observers present.

The size of the group is such that meetings are quite lengthy and it is a challenge to coordinate them and remain focused.

It is highly advisable for the composition of the group, in terms of the number of members participating, to be reduced to a size conducive to the discussions.

The SCB is proposed to be composed of two separate Groups with a subordinate function between them.

In line with previous positive experiences in other areas, a 'Core' group might be formed and then meetings widened to include a larger number of participants might be organised when necessary.

The 'Core' group might be composed of:

- The Secretary-General as President
- The Executive Coordinator (who will put forward and illustrate proposals)
- 2 Representatives of the Directors of the Schools in Brussels
- 2 Representatives of the European Commission (DG.HR)
- 2 Representatives of the Parents
- 2 Representatives of the Teachers
- 2 Representatives of the Students
- 2 Representatives of the Belgian Delegation on the Board of Governors
- 2 Representative of the Belgian Buildings Agency

Regular enlarged meetings will also be organised, to which, depending on the items on the agenda, some or all of the members of the “enlarged” group will be invited.

- The Secretary-General as President
 - The Executive Coordinator (who will put forward and illustrate proposals)
 - 2 Representatives of the European Commission (DG.HR)
 - 1 Representative for each of the Directors of the Schools in Brussels
 - 1 Representative for each Parents’ Association of the Schools in Brussels
 - 1 Representative of the Teachers for each School in Brussels
 - 1 Representative of the Students for each School in Brussels
 - 2 Representatives of the Belgian Delegation to the Board of Governors
 - 2 Representative of the Belgian Buildings Agency
 - 1 Representative of the Local Staff Committee Brussels⁸
 - 1 Representative of the ‘Association of Parents’ (*AdP - Crèches, Jardins d’enfant and Garderies* in Brussels)⁹
 - 2 Representatives of the OIB (responsible for the organisation of after-school activities)
 - 2 Representatives of the Central Enrolment Authority Staff
- + 1 Representative of the Presidency of the Board of Governors may also be invited as observer

Given the complexity of the historical data on the pupil population recorded over the years on the different sites and the potential future scenarios, the SCB may need the support of external experts to work on properly executed long-term planning.

V. PROPOSAL

The Board of Governors is invited to scrutinise the proposed renewal of the mandate of the Steering Committee Brussels, whilst acknowledging the long-term challenges for the European Schools in Brussels and the developments that have occurred since the creation of the Group.

The Board of Governors is invited to update the mandate, structure and composition of the Steering Committee Brussels.

Mandate

⁸ Representing parents of future pupils in the European Schools

⁹ Representing parents of future pupils in the European Schools

It is proposed that the SCB be mandated to handle the following:

- Long-term planning;
- Working to find solutions that can ensure that there are adequate and suitable provisions in place to guarantee the various rights of enrolment are upheld and complied with;
- Preparing contingency plans;
- Populating new sites, managing transition periods, phasing out temporary sites
- Distribution of language sections and cycles across the sites in Brussels

while at the same time adhering to well-established principles.

Composition

The SCB is proposed to be composed of two Groups with a subordinate function between them as set out below:

‘Core group’: The ‘Core Group’ will first elaborate and discuss proposals in a collegial way and will open consultation within the ‘Enlarged Group’, to which the ‘Core Group’ will report regularly.

It is proposed that the 'core' group of the Steering Committee Brussels be composed of:

- The Secretary-General as President
- The Executive Coordinator (who will put forward and illustrate proposals)
- 2 Representatives of the Directors of the Schools in Brussels
- 2 Representatives of the European Commission (DG.HR)
- 2 Representatives of the Parents
- 2 Representatives of the Teachers
- 2 Representatives of the Students
- 2 Representatives of the Belgian Delegation to the Board of Governors
- 2 Representative of the Belgian Public Building Agency

Enlarged group: It is proposed that a ‘Enlarged Group’ act as a sounding board to the ‘Core Group’ to provide stakeholder feedback from the wider community before proposals are put forward to the official Organs of the European Schools for consideration and/or decision.

The proposed composition of the ‘Enlarged Group’ is as follows:

- The Secretary-General as President
- The Executive Coordinator (who will put forward and illustrate proposals)

- 2 Representatives of the European Commission (DG.HR)
- 1 Representative for each of the Directors of the Schools in Brussels
- 1 Representative for each Parents' Association of the Schools in Brussels
- 1 Representative of the Teachers for each School in Brussels
- 1 Representative of the Students for each School in Brussels
- 2 Representatives of the Belgian Delegation to the Board of Governors
- 2 Representatives of the Belgian Buildings Agency
- 1 Representative of the Local Staff Committee Brussels¹⁰
- 1 Representative of the 'Association of Parents' (*AdP - Crèches, Jardins d'enfant and Garderies* in Brussels)¹¹
- 2 Representatives of the OIB (responsible for the organisation of after-school activities)
- 2 Representatives of the Central Enrolment Authority Staff

+ 1 Representative of the Presidency of the Board of Governors may also be invited as observer

The 'Enlarged Group' will always be consulted for the feedback on any recommendations or proposals for presentation at the Board of Governors' meetings. The transparency of proceedings and reporting of the 'Core Group' to the 'Enlarged Group' will be considered at all times.

¹⁰ Representing parents of future pupils in the European Schools

¹¹ Representing parents of future pupils in the European Schools

MAIN TOPICS OF DISCUSSION CONDUCTED BY THE SCB OVER THE YEARS

ESB3

At the time of the Steering Committee's setting up, only the ESB1 and ESB2 had been created and creation of the ESB3 was being planned. The aim of the Steering Committee was to assist the Board of Governors with the creation of the ESB3, after which it continued to exist as an advisory group (in the process of creating the ESB4).

ESB4

In January 2003, the Board of Governors decided to create a fourth European School in Brussels. At its October 2005 meeting, the Board of Governors adopted a list of criteria for the allocation of language sections across the four European Schools in Brussels.¹²

In February 2005, the Board of Governors accepted the Laeken site offered by the Belgian Government for the setting up of ESB4. Initially, it was announced that the School would be able to accommodate 1000 N and P pupils in 2009 and 2500 pupils in total in 2010. The first postponement was announced in 2007.¹³ Work on the Laeken site started in 2009 and the School was ready for occupancy in September 2012.

Berkendael

In view of the dates announced for the availability of Laeken and of the overcrowding in the three existing Schools, a temporary site proved to be essential. Although the Board of Governors reiterated its request for an appropriate temporary site near Laeken to be made available, the Board of Governors, at its extraordinary meeting in November 2006, finally agreed to Berkendael as a temporary site from 1 September 2007 and decided that Berkendael would be the nucleus of ESB4 until the latter finally opened.¹⁴

At the same meeting, the creation of classes was established on the basis of the dates announced at the time for the availability of Laeken, namely 2009 and 2010. The Board of Governors decided which year groups (N and P1-2-3) to transfer to Berkendael, with the idea in mind that they would start their Secondary cycle directly at Laeken in 2010.

In September 2007, the Berkendael site opened with 160 pupils in five language sections created by the Board of Governors (DE-EN-FR-IT-NL). The site served as a temporary site for ESB4 pending opening the new site in Laeken

In 2010, by means of a Written Procedure¹⁵, the Board of Governors approved the setting up of a fifth European School in Brussels and requested the Belgian Government to make the

¹² 2612-D-2005: The creation of Brussels IV

¹³ 2008-D-98-en-1: Brussels IV: Laeken

2007-D-379-en-2: Postponement by at least one year of the availability of the Laeken site for the Brussels IV School.

¹⁴ 1311-D-2006: Decisions of the Extraordinary meeting of the Board of Governors of 14 November 2006

¹⁵ WP 2010/17

necessary arrangements for a School with a capacity of 2500 pupils to be made available in 2015.¹⁶

From September 2012 to the end of the 2015-2016 school year, the Fabiola building in Uccle site of ESB1 was unavailable due to renovation works. For the duration of the renovation work, Nursery and P1 classes were transferred to the Berkendael site.

At its December 2015 meeting, the Board of Governors examined the document entitled *Temporary use of the Berkendael site as an extension to the European School, Brussels I pending opening of the European School, Brussels V*.¹⁷ The Board of Governors approved use of the Berkendael site as an extension to ESB1 pending opening of ESB5. In view of the constant growth in the pupil population and the logistical constraints, the Board of Governors also agreed to allow schooling on the Berkendael site of pupils in the newly-opened SK (N cycle) and LV (up to P2) language sections, as well as in the FR (from N up to P2) language section.¹⁸

The site was operated under the management of ESB1, whilst having its own sections and satellite classes.

In December 2016, the SCB submitted a document¹⁹ to the Board of Governors acknowledging the need to set up a new separate legal entity on the site of the Berkendael School. The argument of the SCB was that clarification of BK's legal status was essential for subsequent clarification of the creation and development of the sections in that School. A political decision on the fifth School was yet to be made in 2017, but it seemed reasonable not to assume that the School would be available before 2019-2020. The EC, however, did not endorse the change to BK's legal status, given that no clear decision on ESB5's definitive site had been taken by the Belgian authorities, and requested a more global strategic view of this issue.

In the absence of a unanimous vote, the Board of Governors did not approve the setting up of a fifth European School on the temporary site at Berkendael²⁰. Nonetheless, it invited the Secretary-General to present a concept, guaranteeing the availability of sufficient places for category I pupils in the future also. The concept was meant to be part of a strategic vision/plan for the Brussels Schools, taking account of the broader issues now facing the Schools, including staffing, by both seconded and locally recruited teachers, linguistic structures, provision for SWALS, etc. In that context it was necessary to reassess the current admission strategy.

Consequently, a sub-group of the Steering Committee, called 'Brussels' Future' was formed. The members of the sub-group exchanged ideas about short/medium/long-term solutions to the very complex situation of the three overcrowded Schools and one almost empty annexe.

¹⁶ 312-D-2010-en-3: Decision of the enlarged meeting of the Board of Governors of the European Schools, 1-3 December 2010

¹⁷ 2015-10-D-23: Temporary use of the Berkendael site as an extension to the European School, Brussel I pending opening of the European School, Brussels V

¹⁸ 2015-12-D-8-en-3: Decisions of the meeting of the Board of Governors of the European Schools, 1-3 December 2015

¹⁹ 2016-10-D-25-en-1: Setting up of the European School, Brussels V – Berkendael site + Annex

²⁰ 2016-12-D-14-en-3: Decisions of the meeting of the Board of Governors of the European Schools – 7-9 December 2016

The SCB submitted the document *Impact Assessment Study on the Future of the Brussels European Schools* to the Board of Governors for the meeting in December 2017²¹. The Board of Governors agreed to the carrying out of an impact assessment study aiming at assessing the possible scenarios for the future of the Brussels European Schools, with a view to the opening of the ESB5 in September 2019. The study's main objective would have been to recommend possible scenarios for the best use of the infrastructure made available in Brussels by the Belgian Authorities, notably with the fifth European School's availability in prospect.²²

Following the Board of Governors' decision, an 'Impact Assessment Study' sub-working group started working on the tender specifications. The aim of the study would have been to assess possible scenarios for the future of the Brussels European Schools. Neither the call for tender, nor the study, was ever concluded, since the previously communicated date, September 2019, for the delivery of ESB5 had been announced not to be respected.

Fabiola renovation

In 2012, the Administrative Board of the ESB1 discussed the condition of the Fabiola building on its site, which accommodated Nursery and Primary pupils. They concluded that the building required renovation and contacted the BA to start planning to renovate or replace the building.²³ For the duration of the renovation work, Nursery and P1 classes were transferred to the Berkendael site.

In view of the constant growth in the pupil population and the logistical constraints, at its meeting in December 2015, the Board of Governors decided to allow pupils who had attended school on the Berkendael site during the 2015-2016 school year to continue their schooling on either the Uccle Site or the Berkendael Site, if they so wished, in the sections and year groups which were opened on the Berkendael site.²⁴

ESB5

In 2010, the Board of Governors unanimously adopted the decision to request a fifth School in Brussels in 2015. In 2015, the Council of Ministers of the Belgian Federal Government undertook to make a fifth School available to the European Schools, with a nominal capacity of 2500 pupils, as from September 2019.

As regards the location of the fifth School, it was confirmed that at its meeting of 5 October 2018 and on a proposal from the Ministry of Defence, the Council of Ministers of the Belgian Federal Government had approved a note providing for assignment of a plot of land on the site of NATO's former headquarters for the construction of a fifth European School.

In February 2019, the Secretary-General was already told that on a proposal from the Minister charged with the *Régie des Bâtiments* (Buildings Agency), the Council of Ministers of the 'caretaker' Government would be able to approve:

– the planned construction of a fifth European School on the aforementioned plot of land;

²¹ 2017-10-D-54-en-3: Impact Assessment Study on the Future of the Brussels European Schools

²² 2017-12-D-17-en-3: Decisions of the enlarged meeting of the Board of Governors of the European Schools – 5-7 December 2017

²³ 2012-03-D-25-en-1: Additional costs entailed by renovation of the Fabiola site at Brussels I and occupancy of the Berkendael building

²⁴ 2015-12-D-8-en-3: Decisions of the meeting of the Board of Governors of the European Schools, 1-3 December 2015

- the making available to the European Schools on a definitive basis of the Berkendael site;
- the implementation of a temporary solution pending construction of the fifth European School because the political decision had already been taken.

Unfortunately, since then, no progress has been made, despite repeated requests. Since that date, despite the repeated requests made by the Secretary-General and supported by the European Commission, and also at the highest political level, Belgium's political authorities have issued no further information on the subject.

The Buildings Agency informed the SCB at the meeting in March 2020 that construction of the permanent fifth School had not yet been decided by the Council of Ministers. As for Berkendael, the site remains available pending construction of the fifth School.

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 construction of ESB5 will only be prepared at the end of 2021, after delivery of the temporary site.

Evere

Pending the opening of ESB5, the Board of Governors requested additional capacity to manage the steady and continuous increase in the pupil population as from 2020-2021.²⁵

The members of the SCB were informed by the Buildings Agency at the meeting in March 2020 that the Council of Ministers of the Belgian Federal Government had approved the setting up of the provisional School for temporary use, pending construction of the fifth School, on the former NATO site with capacity to accommodate 1500 pupils. The construction work will last between January 2021 and August 2021, on an extremely tight schedule.

²⁵ 2019-12-D-5-en-3: Decisions of the enlarged meeting of the Board of Governors of the European Schools, 3-5 December 2019

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS SINCE 1997**1. Number of Schools**

There are currently four European Schools (ES) in Brussels: ESB1 in Uccle, ESB2 in Woluwe, ESB3 in Ixelles and ESB4 in Laeken, in addition to which there is the Berkendael temporary site administered by the ESB1.

At its meeting of 1-3 December 2015, the Board of Governors approved temporary use of the Berkendael site as an extension to the ESB1, pending opening of ESB5.

It has been announced that a temporary site in Evere will be made available as from September 2021.

5. Population increase and proliferation of language sections

In 1997, the EU consisted of 14 Member States, which rose to 24 after the Fifth Enlargement and to 26 with the 2007 enlargement, and to 27 when Croatia joined the EU in 2013. Since 1997, the number of EU official languages has increased from 11 to 24. The waves of enlargement were events of capital importance with major repercussions on the structure and educational provision for the European Schools.

In 1997, the two European Schools operating in Brussels accommodated 6261²⁶ students.

For some years now, the total pupil population in Brussels has been regularly increasing, at a rate of around 400-450 pupils per year; this year the increase is closer to 500 pupils. 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.

6. Creation of the Central Enrolment Authority

At its April 2006 meeting, the Board of Governors decided to set up the Central Enrolment Authority (CEA), and charged it with deciding on enrolments in the Brussels European Schools²⁷. The details of the procedures governing its operation and its tasks were adopted at the October 2006 meeting of the Board of Governors²⁸. As regards its composition, it was updated and approved by the Board of Governors at its October 2007 meeting²⁹.

In December 2016, the CEA's role and its modus operandi were restated and clarified by the Board of Governors³⁰. Article 29 of the Rules of Procedure for the Central Enrolment Authority for the Brussels European Schools³¹ on the roles, duties and powers of the CEA reads as follows:

²⁶ 2001-D-7310: EU enlargement and the repercussions on the European Schools

²⁷ 2006-D-145-en-2: Definitive Decisions of the Board of Governors of the European Schools, 25-26 April 2006

²⁸ 2006-D-6310-en-1: Decisions of the Board of Governors of the European Schools, 23-25 October 2006

²⁹ 2007-D-6110-en-1: Decisions taken at the meeting of the Board of Governors, 23-24 October 2007

³⁰ 2016-12-D-14-en-3: Decisions of the meeting of the Board of Governors of the European Schools, 7-9 December 2016

³¹ 2016-11-D-25-en-1: Rules of Procedure for the Central Enrolment Authority for the Brussels European Schools

Article 29

The tasks of the Central Enrolment Authority shall be as follows:

- A) To devise and publish each year a policy on enrolment of pupils in the Brussels European Schools, guaranteeing the objectives defined in the guidelines for the enrolment policy.
- B) To guarantee optimisation of the possibilities for admission of pupils, at the same time ensuring their harmonious distribution across the Schools and the language sections.
- C) To consider enrolment applications and award places, in accordance with the enrolment policy.
- D) To guarantee the schooling of siblings in the same School.
- E) To produce a review of the results of each enrolment session to be used as a basis for the guidelines to be determined by the Board of Governors with a view to adoption of subsequent enrolment policies.
- F) To monitor and follow up on the routine administration involved in the procedure for enrolments in the Brussels European Schools, on the basis of developments in the forecasts of groups for the following school year.
- G) To adopt all necessary measures to allow admission of the largest possible number of pupils within the existing logistical structure, such as, in particular, the creation or discontinuance of classes in schools/sites.