

News

European Schools - Staff Committee repeats its call for urgent action on overcrowding

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In our September Newsletter, we recalled the [dramatic situation of overcrowding in the four Brussels-based European Schools](#). To avoid a situation in which children of colleagues working at European institutions are refused enrolment, the temporary site in Evere needs to be ready by early September 2021, and quickly followed by the set-up of a new, permanent 5th Brussels school.

The Commission's Staff Committee in Brussels took note and intervened as early as mid-June sending a letter to the Secretary General of the European Schools, pointing out the short time left for the delivery of the facilities at the temporary site as well as the need to monitor the developments.

On 14 October 2020, a [special letter](#) was sent to the President of the Commission Ursula Von der Leyen, in which we have emphasised the responsibility resting on the Commission's shoulders. As a main funder of the European schools, the Commission has a crucial role to play in guaranteeing quality education for all of the children of all of its staff.

As time was running out, at the initiative of the Commission's Staff Committee in Brussels, staff representatives from the Commission, Council, Parliament, EEAS, EESC, CDR and Eurocontrol, along with the four parents' associations of the Brussels-based schools as well as all nine trade unions active in our institutions, signed a [joint letter](#) to all of the Presidents of European institutions and the Secretary General of the European Schools.

In this letter, we called for actions in favour of European Schools and European education, namely:

- Ensuring the finalisation by September 2021 of the construction of fully operational provisional facilities safely and adequately accommodating 1,500 nursery and primary-level pupils on the Evere site (ex-NATO);
- Ensuring the official establishment of the 5th European School in Brussels without further delay and launching the construction of permanent facilities to be available by September 2026;
- Ensuring adequate budgetary allocations for development and maintenance of the relevant infrastructures in line with the size of student populations and the requirements of quality of education.

As soon as the current budgetary negotiations are finished,

***“ we intend to gather all the signatories of this letter and organise a joint representation that will ask for meetings with the recipients of the aforementioned letter.*”**

This direct communication seems to be of utmost importance in the light of recent moves by the Office of the Secretary General of European Schools (OSGES) that seeks to remove representatives of the Commission's Staff Committee from its '*Steering Committee of the European Schools in Brussels*'. Learning about this proposal, we were able to obtain

assurances from DG HR that they disapprove of any such limitation of the staff's voice. However, the OSGES also proposed to decrease the representation of the Parents' associations in this Committee, a motion that we vehemently oppose.

As the near future of the European schools' ability to host and educate children of Commission personnel is at stake, we will not spare any effort to appeal for action and urge the involvement of our employer.

Please share your opinion with [us](#).