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|  | **Schola Europaea**  Office of the Secretary-General  General Secretariat |

**Ref.: 2014-03-D-24-en-1**

**Original.**

**The situation of the European School, Frankfurt.**

**BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE EUROPEAN SCHOOLS**

**Meeting in Sofia on 8, 9 and 10 April 2014**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

It is simulated that the ESF will receive about 390 new category 1 enrolments for school year 2014-2015. On top of the normal 130 annual European Central Bank (ESB) and European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority category 1 enrolments and 70 enrolment requests for the other two categories, there will be about 200 (between 130 to 260) additional category 1 enrolments related to the creation of the Single Supervisory Mechanism (SSM). The ECB has launched a massive recruitment procedure in order to fill 1250 open posts in the SSM before 4th of November 2014.

The ESF has had serious space problems for several years. The classroom size at the ESF varies from about 40,19 m² to 69,60 m². Thus the maximum accommodation capacity of the European School, Frankfurt is around 1300 pupils (depending on the allocation into the different language sections and the differently sized class rooms and subject to a security audit). For the 2013-2014 school year, 1251 pupils are on roll at the School. This means that only a very limited number of enrolments will be possible for the 2014-2015 school year.

For obvious safety and security reasons, it is impossible to accept more admissions than there are places available. The number of classrooms available on the site is a constraining factor. No additional class can be created within the current infrastructure situation. In addition the existing primary canteen and the sportshall have already reached their maximum capacity. As a consequence the pupils of the nursery cycle have to use the secondary canteen for their lunches. Only one sportshall was built for all thee cycles: nursery – primary – secondary. Due to overcrowding, sports lessons can only be organised for primary and secondary pupils, there are no free slots available for nursery children.

According to the information received in the extra-ordinary Admin Board meeting on the 25th of March, the European School Frankfurt (ESF) has received already now more enrolment requests for the next school year than places are available in the current school buildings.

Given the arrival of new ECB staff for the establishment of the Single Supervisory Mechanism over the next months, this situation will tighten further.

**TEMPORARY INFASTRUCTURE FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2014-2015**

In order to proceed with the enrolment confirmations ESF management would need certainty on the available infrastructure in the next school year. The German Ministry of Education and Research is responsible for providing adequate infrastructure to the ESF, but has so far not given any indication how to address the lack of ESF capacity as of September 2014.

The ECB offered the German authorities to rent the ECB’s temporary child-minding facility in order to address the ESF capacity issue temporarily and at short notice. Thanks to the cooperation between the ECB and the City of Frankfurt planning and building works for a prefab wooden building on adjacent land to the current ESF premises have been started and will extend the ECB’s after-school child-minding facilities later in 2014. The same building could be used for teaching purposes by the ESF under the condition that the ECB is financially compensated for providing the facility and Germany as a host country to the ESF caters for this compensation. Germany has received the drafted rental agreement and is currently reviewing it.

The temporary building has been planned together with the School management in order to be functional also for the schooling purposes.

Despite intense contacts among members of the ESF Administration Board since last year and the attempt to conclude an agreement at the extraordinary Administration Board Meeting last Tuesday, 25 March 2014, a decision of the German authorities is still pending.

**PERMAMENT SOLUTION**

The German authorities have been requested to provide ESF with the permanent infrastructure, too.

The ESF has provided the room requirements planning to the German authorities in December 2013 and they are willing to respond to any enquiries in this respect by the responsible Ministry. As the City of Frankfurt stated in a recent press release (see attachment) that adjacent land to the ESF premises will become available for permanent building solutions, there is a positive perspective on making progress with finding a permanent building solution.

**ENROLMENT POLICY FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR 2014-2015**

At present the School is still taking in the enrolments for the next school year. There are already over 200 enrolments for next September and the School receives about 10 to 20 new application weekly.

It would be very urgent to decide, what enrolment approach the School should put in place. It is also necessary for the school to launch the planning of the next school year in time. It will be challenging to recruit new teachers and purchase new furniture which is needed according to the Financial Regulation procurement rules, if the decision is not done without delay.

**OPTION A**

If the ESF would have a possibility to use the future child-minding facilities of the ECB, the school would be able to accept the enrolments of all the category 1 and 2 pupils. The School would be obliged to refuse all the category 3 enrolments, expect siblings in the classes with less than 24 pupils.

**OPTION B**

If there is no agreement for the use of the future child-mining facilities, the Board of Governors would be obliged to take a very drastic move, because the School would have to reject about 200 category 1 enrolments. This has not happened ever before in the 60-year history of the European Schools.

In this worst case scenario, it would be necessary to have a very specific decision by the Board of Governors to manage the delicate situation.

In order to make sure the available places in the school would be allocated in a safe, fair, transparent and non-discriminatory manner, the Board of Governors should adopt a specific enrolment policy laying down clear and undisputable rules, derogating from the legal framework governing admissions in the European schools, on how the available places will be allocated.

In this worst case scenario, the Board of Governors is requested to agree on the following rules of enrolment:

- No admission of pupils of Category II or III shall be accepted as of September 2014.

- Category I pupils shall be admitted based on availability, up to the maximum threshold of 30 pupils per class in large classrooms and 16 to 18 pupils in the smaller classrooms. In no case may the admission of a pupil lead to the division of a class.

- Siblings of a pupil attending the School of Frankfurt during the 2013-2014 school year shall be admitted by preference, provided there are places available in the requested level and language section. In no case may the admission of a sibling lead to the division of a class.

- The remaining Category I children shall be admitted based on the result of a random computerized ranking to be effected for each class individually, produced under the supervision of a Bailiff. All new applications for enrolment or transfer of Category I pupils with no siblings at the European School Frankfurt during the 2013-2014 school year shall be submitted to this random computerized ranking and shall receive a ranking number. The available places will be allocated based on that number and parents will be informed by 5th May 2014.

- The children for whom no places will be available shall not be admitted at all and parents will be informed by 13th of May 2014. From this date on only in classes where the maximum number of pupils has not been reached, further pupils may be enrolled.

**OPINION OF THE ADMIN BOARD**

The Admin Board of the 25th March discussed the difficult situation of the European School of Frankfurt.

The Admin Board urged the German authorities to find an appropriate solution for the crises situation.

According to the unanimous opinion of the Admin Board, the option B should be avoided by all means.

ANNEX 1

 **Uwe Becker**

City Treasurer

**Sarah Sorge**

City Councillor

Deputy Mayor for Education and Women

**Press Release**

Frankfurt, 20 March 2014

**More room for the European School**

**Coalition ensures extension on the current site**

There is no longer any obstacle on the City’s part to the urgently needed extension of the European School. *The Römer* (City Hall) coalition has agreed that the private school on *Praunheimer Weg* should obtain a plot of land for a new building. The plans foresee an extension for 350 pupils initially. According to the City’s specialist office, a temporary extension can be produced by the autumn. This planned wooden modular construction facility might be converted into a permanent extension for the school. The extension has become necessary on account of the European Parliament’s decision that European banking supervision should be based in Frankfurt. Children of staff of that authority are entitled to a place in the European School.

“I’m very happy with this solution, which gives the school the necessary planning security,” said Deputy Mayor for Education Sarah Sorge. ‘The City of Frankfurt has thus fulfilled its obligations.” Sorge and Treasurer Uwe Becker thanked the European Central Bank, which is initially putting up the €12 million required to build the extension. The ECB has already said that it is willing to make the building available to the European School if the Federal Government refunds the costs in due course.

“In order to enhance Frankfurt’s status as Europe’s financial centre it is important for the staff of the ECB in the City of Frankfurt to find reliable schooling for their children,” said City Treasurer Uwe Becker. “For parents this is a decisive factor in choice of location.”

In the agreement between the Board of Governors of the European Schools and the Federal Republic of Germany of 31 July 2002, the Federal Government undertook to make suitable premises available to the European Schools.

So far, however, the Federal Government has not made any funding pledge to the City of Frankfurt. With the plans in place, the way is now open for the Federal Government also to be able to meet its obligations, as Sorge and Becker emphasised.

Sorge also stressed that the European School’s extension will not be at the expense of the neighbouring Ernst-Reuter Schools I and II. The green area to the east of the present air-inflated structure plot of land is to be allocated to the two schools as a replacement for the piece of land to be transferred to the European School. “In the next few weeks we will discuss with the two Ernst-Reuter Schools remediation and redevelopment planning for the entire school campus.”

signed: Anne Rückschloß

signed: Martin Müller-Bialon