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**MANDATE OF THE PEDAGOGICAL REFORM WORKING GROUP – TASK FORCE**

**Board of Governors**

Meeting on 5-7 December 2017 in Brussels

1. Background

In the context of the organisation of courses and the structure of studies in the European Schools and following receipt of the final report of the Institute of Education (University College London) entitled ‘External evaluation of a proposal for reorganisation of secondary studies in the European School system’, at its December 2015 meeting, the Board of Governors decided to give a mandate to a ‘Pedagogical Reform’ Working Group, called “Task Force”, on the advice of the Joint Board of Inspectors, the Joint Teaching Committee and the Budgetary Committee and on the recommendation of the ‘Organisation of studies’ Working Group.

Following the IoE’s final report and its recommendations, the ‘Organisation of studies’ Working Group convened on 9 September 2015. It formulated two proposals for submission to the Board of Governors at its December 2015 meeting:

The first proposal involved the setting up of a ‘Pedagogical Reform’ Working Group, tasked with translating the IoE’s recommendations into actions: *“The Board of Governors endorsed the proposal to set up a ‘Pedagogical Reform’ Working Group, whose composition and mandate are described below:*

*A task force composed of:*

*- Chair of the Board of Inspectors (Secondary)*

*- Head of the Pedagogical Development Unit*

*- Head of the Baccalaureate Unit.*

*The task force will incorporate one or more external experts,*

*• a language learning expert;*

*• a curriculum revision expert;*

*• an expert from DG Education and Culture from the European Commission, familiar with definition of the eight key competences;*

*and one or more internal experts (in particular the Chair of the Board of Inspectors (Nursery and Primary)), as needs require and according to the questions discussed at the different meetings.*

*The task force will also meet at least twice per school year with the Representatives of the different stakeholders in the ES decision-making process and will report regularly to the Board of Inspectors and to the Joint Teaching Committee of the European Schools at their meetings. This is designed to guarantee good communication about the progress of the work and to assess regularly the different proposals arising. The task force has undertaken to ensure continuity with the following presidency”* (Document 2015-12-D-8-en-3 *‘Decisions of the meeting of the Board of Governors of the European Schools’*, meeting of 1-3 December 2015, pages 9 and 10).

The second proposal involved inclusion of the Host Country Language in the list of Languages 2. The Board of Governors decided that that question would be incorporated into the work of the ‘Pedagogical Reform’ Working Group.

The WG’s work would need to be organised taking account of two main limits/constraints:

1. Content of Article 4 of the Convention defining the Statute of the European Schools: this article clearly set the principles and elements which must be part of the European School Curriculum.
2. The eight key competences: the external evaluators applauded the fact that the European School system was the only one which clearly referred to the eight key competences, albeit incoherently and inconsistently. The eight key competences would be used as a basis for the development of curriculum standards, which would subsequently allow work to be started on revision of the subjects syllabuses. NB: the Curriculum determined all the subjects and associated competences which students were expected to acquire throughout their schooling in the European Schools.

The WG would take as its basis the recommendations made by the external evaluators, whilst also taking account of the organisational implications those recommendations involve. The WG would adopt a rationale that would not be completely separate from the current reality of the European Schools, even though the present structure of studies should not act as an obstacle for necessary changes.

The WG would also have to define a more coherent Language policy.

The reflection should not be limited to the secondary cycle, some adaptations might be needed also in the Early Education Cycle and Primary Cycle levels.

Separately, the involvement of a change management expert might also be envisaged. The aim would be to ease the communication inside and outside the system, as for the progress of the work of the WG.

1. Meetings of the Working Group’s Task Force and of the enlarged group with all the stakeholders’ representatives

The *Task Force* is composed of the Head of the Pedagogical Development Unit, the Head of the European Baccalaureate Unit[[1]](#footnote-1) and the President of the Board of Inspectors – Secondary. In addition, internal and external experts are incorporated into the work of the *Task Force* according to the needs and questions raised during the various meetings. In its meeting in October 2015, the Board of Inspectors has also expressed the wish that the Troika would be involved in order to guarantee continuity within the process, therefore the German presidency was invited to meetings during the school year 2015/16, the Danish and the Estonian presidency have been participating in the school year 2016-17. Since Estonia took over the Presidency, the meetings of the Task Force were conducted under the same format including Estonian, Danish, German and Greek Secondary Inspectors. This composition would guarantee the continuity of the work already started.

The February 2016 JBI, as well as the March 2016 Budgetary Committee and the April 2016 Board of Governors were orally informed of the avenues explored, the JBI and JTC of October 2016 and February 2017 as well as the BoG of December 2016 were also informed orally of the state of art of the work of the WG. An intermediate report (2017-03-D-en-1) was presented to the Board of Governors of April 2017. This document is an update of this report and present the evolution of the work of the Task Force since then. It aims also to request a prolongation of the initial mandate.

1. **State of work**

The first topic on which the Task Force focused its work was indeed the definition of a coherent Language policy in the European Schools. Under the Danish Presidency, the Task Force met five times from January to May 2016. In this process, there was a strong involvement of two external experts for language learning, Prof. Alexis HOUSEN and Prof. Hugo BAETENS BEARDSMORE. Both have been contributing to the process extensively and confirmed that the outlined direction to which a coherent language policy would be developed can be strongly supported from the research point of view.

A report was made to the Working Group, widened to include all the stakeholders, in May 2016.

The remarks and questions of all stakeholders have been taken into account for further consideration. A solid concept for a coherent language policy for the European Schools had then still to be finalized, it was first foreseen to include this in a final proposal of the WG, to be discussed and adopted in the consultation process with the enlarged WG/Stakeholders´ meeting. Therefore, the Task Force dealt with the language policy in the school year 2016-2017 only during one meeting, on 12 January 2017. During that meeting, the opportunity to teach L3 already in Primary (P3 or P4) had been explored. A sub-working group of the Task Force focused on this aspect in a separate meeting in February 2017. The outcome of this meeting and other aspects would have been then incorporated into a draft proposal which would be presented to the next stakeholders´ meeting, scheduled for the end of May 2017.

Under the auspices of the German Presidency, the Task Force went on to address the question of the definition of a curriculum integrating the Eight Key Competences for Lifelong Learning. Following the previous model of organisation, external experts were also invited and got involved in the process: Ms. Janet Looney and Ms. Majella O’Shea, who were both proposed by the Directorate General for Education and Culture. In respect to the continuity of the work of the WG, the involvement of the inspectors of the Troika explains the increase of the number of participants, as shown in the tables below.

The WG chose an approach, which follows the mandate, to “adopt a rationale that would not be completely separate from the current reality of the European Schools, even though the present structure of studies should not act as an obstacle for necessary changes”. Therefore, the WG took the implementation of the eight key competences for lifelong learning as a starting point as well as the general goal for its further process.

It became clear, that in some regards the eight key competences are already present in the curriculum, e.g. “Communication in the mother tongue” and “Communication in foreign languages” are strong pillars of the European Schools. On the other hand, “basic competences in science and technology” (big ideas), “Digital competence”, “Learning to learn”, “Cultural awareness and expression”, but especially “Social and civic competences” and “Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship” are clearly areas with room and a need for improvement.

It is likely that some key competences are better to be encountered through particular subjects, for example “*Communication in the mother tongue”* and “*Communication in foreign languages”*. Others are best encountered across all subject areas, for example, “*Learning to learn”* and “*Digital competence”*. And others may benefit from being achieved through cross-curricular projects or a new subject area. These include “*Social and civic competences”* and “*Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship”*.

Taking into consideration the results and recommendations of the final report of the IoE, the work of the Pedagogical Reform WG was developing in the following two directions, which are obviously closely connected:

1. Implementation of cross-curricular elements (e.g. projects), changes in the structure of studies and development of syllabuses, especially for Mathematics and Sciences, where soon new syllabuses will start to be developed;
2. Involvement of the subject inspectors in order to enhance embedding of the eight key competences within the existing subject structure, but also considering necessary changes, e.g. in the area of Social and Civic competences.

The Estonian Presidency took then the lead of this WG. The work went on both on the language policy and on the embedding of the Eight Key Competences in our curriculum. Taking into account of all input from all stakeholders and external experts, the new Presidency considered it a priority to produce a final proposal of the Language policy and at the same time to achieve a milestone in the strengthening of the presence of the Key Competences in the curriculum.

1. **Future perspectives**

In the document “Set up of a “Pedagogical Reform” Working Group” there was no clear timeframe suggested by the Boards involved. However, in Annex I (Financial Statement and Planning) “the successful drawing up of a finalized proposal” was foreseen “for the February 2017 round of pedagogical meetings”. This timeframe turned out to be unrealistic. The number of issues connected to the Pedagogical Reform, especially embedding the eight key competences and possible changes in the structure of studies does require more, especially more intensive time being spent.

# The aim is to present the Language Policy for approval during the round of meetings in Spring 2018. On the Eight Key Competences, the aim is to set up an overarching framework document that can be used for reference when pedagogical decisions are taken or whenever assessment of teachers or a whole school inspection is taking place. Besides giving an overview, the document would give directions and recommendations for the future. This document would define the role of the Key Competences in the system, in view of the already existing good practices and initiatives that could be spread and widely applied in the future.

# The Task Force set up a timeframe for finalising the Language policy. The outlines of the document were published for the Boards of Inspectors and the Joint Teaching Committee in October 2017 for information. During these meetings, stakeholders pointed out that there were elements that still needed further elaboration and clarification. The proposed language policy document would be shared with the stakeholders, who were going to meet in January 2018 before the final proposal would be submitted to the pedagogical meetings in February 2018.

1. Proposal to the Board of Governors

The Board of Governors is invited to take a decision on the prolongation of the mandate of the Pedagogical Reform WG for another school year. As described above, the Task Force would present the language policy to the Board of Governors in April 2018, coming into force in September 2018. An intermediate report on the state of the embedding of the Key Competences would be presented to the Pedagogical Boards in February 2018 and to the Board of Governors in April 2018. A finalized proposal regarding the Key Competences shall be presented to the Boards in autumn/winter 2018 in order to implement further changes in school year 2019-2020.

# According to this action plan, the language policy would come into force in September 2018.

In the Annex I to this document, an overview of all the meetings of this WG is presented together with a planning for the prolonged mandate requested here. It is highlighted that the prolongation of the mandate of this WG is vital to achieve the objectives set out in the IoE report and to implement the essential changes our system need to face our pupils’ needs in a fast changing environment.

It is also stressed that the costs of the additional meetings will not need a supplementary budget and will be supported within the frame of the budget already allocated for the pedagogical meetings, as it had been the case of all the meetings organised up to now.

**ANNEX I**

1. **Meetings held**

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| **Date** | **Kind\*** | **Participants** | **Costs** |
| 13.01.2016 | TF | 1 Inspector, SG and Head of Bac. Unit | € 416,73 |
| 27.01.2016 | TF | 1 Inspector, SG and Head of Bac. Unit and 1 external expert | € 384,60 |
| 8.03.2016 | TF | 1 Inspector, SG and Head of Bac. Unit and 2 external experts | € 835,29 |
| 18.03.2016 | TF | 3 Inspectors, SG and Head of Bac. Unit and 2 external experts | € 2.141,07 |
| 20.04.2016 | TF | 1 Inspector, SG and Head of Bac. Unit | € 1.078,35 |
| 19.05.2016 | WWG | 10 Inspectors, 2 Directors, 2 Deputy-Directors, CDP, COSUP, European Commission, Representative of AES’ Directors, Interparents and 2 external experts | € 4.263,51 |
| 31.05.2016 | TF | 1 Inspector, SG and Head of Bac. Unit | € 477,57 |
| 5.10.2016 | TF | 3 Inspectors, SG and Head of Bac. Unit | € 1.142,98 |
| 28.11.2016 | TF | 3 Inspectors, SG, Head of Bac. Unit and 2 external experts | € 2.777,08 |
| 14.12.2016 | TF | 3 Inspectors, SG and Head of Bac. Unit | € 1.112,92 |
| 12.01.2017 | TF | 5 Inspectors, SG and Head of Bac. Unit | € 1.246,38 |
| 23.01.2017 | TF | 5 Inspectors, SG, Head of Bac. Unit and 1 external expert | € 3.267,50 |
| 26.01.2017 | TF/L3 | 1 Inspector 1 Director and 1 Deputy-Director | No direct costs |
| 13.03.2017 | TF | 4 Inspectors, SG, Head of Bac. Unit and 1 external expert | € 2.436,35 |
| 4.05.2017 | TF | 1 Inspector, SG, Head of Bac. Unit and Head of Ped. Development Unit | € 328,64 |
| 18.05.2017 | TF | 5 Inspectors, SG, Head of Bac. Unit and Head of Ped. Development Unit | € 3.291,21 |

\* TF = Task Force meetings, WWG = Widened Working Group meetings

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| 23.05.2017 | TF | 1 Inspector, SG, Head of Bac. Unit and Head of Ped. Development Unit | € 517,82 |
| 31.05.2017 | WWG | 12 Inspectors, 2 Directors, 2 Deputy-Directors, CDP (absent), COSUP (absent), European Commission, Representative of AES’ Directors, Interparents and 1 external experts | € 7.211,28 |
| 14.09.2017 | TF | 5 Inspectors, Head of Ped. Development Unit and 1 external expert | € 1.614,26 |
| 10.11.2017 | TF | 4 Inspectors, Head of Ped. Development Unit and 1 external expert | Costs not yet known – Reimbursement in progress |
| 30.11.2017 | TF | 2 Inspectors, SG, Head of Ped. Development Unit, 8 Deputy-Directors and 1 external expert | Meeting not held at the time of writing |
| **TOTAL** | | | **€ 34.543,54** |

\* TF = Task Force meetings, WWG = Widened Working Group meetings

The initial budget had been estimated to € 42 310.

1. **Planning for the prolonged mandate**

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| **Period** | **Task Force\*** | **Composition** | **Widened WG** | **Composition** |
| January 2018 | 1 | * 1 external experts * Maximum 5 Inspectors | 1 | See below |
| March to June 2018 | 2 | * Maximum 5 Inspectors * In one meeting: 1 external expert | 1 | See below |
| September 2018 | 1 | * Maximum 5 Inspectors * 1 external expert | - |  |

\* If more meetings of the Task Force are necessary, they would be organised using ICT tools including on-line communication platforms.

1. **Meeting of the Task Force and the widened Working Group and estimation of costs**

As it had been approved by the Board of Governors in the frame of the previous mandate, the Task Force will be composed of the Head of the Pedagogical Development Unit, the Head of the European Baccalaureate Unit and the Chair of the Board of Inspectors (Secondary). In addition, internal and external experts will be involved in the Task Force’s work as needs require and according to the questions discussed at the different meetings.

The average cost associated with the Chair’s participation in a meeting of the Task Force is equivalent to the average Inspector-day cost (€530). The same is applicable to the other inspectors involved.

The participation of the Heads of Units of the Office of the Secretary-General of the European School will not give rise to any costs.

Using the services of external experts to provide input for this Task Force is estimated to mean the involvement of a maximum of 3 external experts as shown in the table above who would participate to 3 out of 4 meetings of the Task Force.

The cost associated with the involvement of external experts has been estimated on the basis of the rates used by the EACEA[[2]](#footnote-2) for the recruitment of external experts under programmes such as Erasmus+, Europe for Citizens, etc. Those rates are **€450.00** per day worked, in addition to which there is reimbursement of travel and accommodation expenses (average cost €530.00 per day), i.e. a total cost per external expert per day of **€980.00**.

In addition, the Task Force may also call upon internal experts (belonging to the European School system, such as Teachers, Inspectors, etc.) to provide input. The average cost of an internal expert’s participation in a meeting of the Task Force is €530.00. Their number is estimated at the involvement of one internal expert at each of the Task Force’s meetings.

The participants to the widened working group meetings will be all the stakeholders of the European School system:

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| **Composition** | **Associated average cost per meeting day** |
| Chair of the Board of Inspectors | €530 |
| Head of the Pedagogical Development Unit | 0 |
| Head of the Baccalaureate Unit | 0 |
| 6 Inspectors (according to their speciality) | 6 x €530 = €3 180 |
| One representative of INTERPARENTS | €530 |
| One representative of the CDP | €530 |
| One representative of the Locally Recruited Teachers | €530 |
| One representative of COSUP | €530 |
| One representative of the Directors | €530 |
| One representative of the Deputy Directors for the nursery and primary cycle | €530 |
| One representative of the Deputy Directors for the secondary cycle | €530 |
| One representative of the European Commission | - |
| **TOTAL** | **€ 7 420** |

Based on the above, the total estimated cost will be as follows:

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| **Periods** | **Kind\*** | **Composition** | **Calculation** | **Cost (€)** |
| January 2018 | TF | 5 inspectors  1 external expert | 5 x €530  €530 + €450 | 2.650  980 |
| WWG | See table on page 8 | | 7.420 |
| March to June 2018 | TF | 5 inspectors | 5 x €530 | 2.650 |
| TF | 5 Inspectors  1 external expert | 5 x €530  €530 + €450 | 2.650  980 |
| WWG | See table on page 8 | | 7.420 |
| September 2018 | TF | 5 inspectors | 5 x €530 | 2.650 |
| TF | 5 Inspectors  1 external expert | 5 x €530  €530 + €450 | 2.650  980 |
| **TOTAL** | | | | **31.030** |

\* TF = Task Force meetings, WWG = Widened Working Group meetings

\* If more meetings of the Task Force are necessary, they would be organised using ICT tools including on-line communication platforms.

The cost of this working group will be covered by the approved 2018 budget, without requiring additional budgets.

1. For the moment, the post of Head of European Baccalaureate Unit is vacant. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/about-eacea/working-expert-eacea/call-for-expressions-interest-n%C2%B0-eacea201301_en> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)