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The Accredited European Schools: proposal for a real cost neutrality

**BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE EUROPEAN SCHOOLS**

Meeting from 4 to 7 December 2018 in Brussels

**BACKGROUND**

At the Board of Governors meeting in April 2018, a report (2018-03-D-en-1) was presented which contained a proposal aiming to achieve an effective cost neutrality in relation to the Accredited European Schools (AES). This proposal was put forward on behalf of everyone in the AES working group, with the exception of the AES Directors’ representatives.

Proposals put forward can be found in the Annex 1 of this document.

The proposal could not find the support of the Board of Governors. Given the political relevance of the decision, the Board of Governors has decided to give the mandate on the “cost neutrality of Accredited European Schools” to the newly created Working Group “Extended Presidencies”, which gathers the former and the present Presidencies and the three future ones, together with the European Commission, the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General.

**REPARTITION OF COSTS GENERATED BY THE ACCREDITED EUROPEAN SCHOOLS**

As a result of feedback on the proposals presented in April 2018, a new proposal has been developed, presented and debated in the “Extended Presidencies” Working Group.

A survey has been carried out in among the staff working in the Office of the Secretary General (OSG). The results of this survey showed that, across the 65 people working in the Office in June 2018, 4.5 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) of the staff are working for the AES. A summary of the results of this survey can be found in Annex 2.

So, this new proposal works on the basis that 4.5 FTE of the staff at the OSG currently work for the AES.

Working with a principle, in use in the European Commission, of ‘total employment cost’ (i.e. not just the salary but including all the other costs apportioned to each employee), the AES would be requested to pay for 4.5 times the total employment cost of one employee in the OSG. The table below simulates and illustrates the calculations, based on the Budget and the figures in 2018:

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|  | Budget 2018 | % AES |
| Seconded staff | 1,012,000 |  |
| AAS | 4,656,000 |  |
| Total staff | 5,668,000 | 392,400 |
| Buildings | 1,210,000 | 83,769 |
| ICT | 1,748,500 | 121,050 |
| BSGEE | 3,603,000 | 249,438 |
| MIsc. | 489,000 | 33,854 |
| TOTAL | 12,718,500 | **880,512** |
|  |  |  |
| Tot staff: | 65 |  |
| AES staff: | 4.5 |  |

The portion of the total costs for the OSG to be affixed to AES, has been calculated in proportion to the total number of staff working in the OSG and the FTE staff working for the AES.

It has been then suggested to split this **€880512** between the AES as follows:

Of the 4.5 employees, 1.5 perform activities solely related to the Baccalaureate, so the total cost could be split with 1/3 in proportion to the number of pupils in the Baccalaureate years and 2/3 in proportion to the total number of pupils in the school.

The simulation run using the figures of the school year 2017-18 would give the following result:



The 4.5 FTE have been serving a total of ~7000 pupils, including ~700 pupils in the Baccalaureate years. These figures, therefore, provide a key that could be used to calculate, year by year, the number of FTE posts dedicated to the AES working in the OSG, in proportion to the growing population of the AES and the total staff working in the Office of the Secretary General.

This new proposal had a neutral reception at the Presidencies Working Group: there were no objections.

Its presentation to the Budgetary Committee did not really trigger major discussions: some of the formulated remarks can find now clarification in the updated version of this document.

It should be noted that during the Budgetary Committee meeting it has been recalled that accreditation of schools is requested by Delegations, which are primarily responsible for the AES in their territory, since they are first of part of their National Network of schools. In this respect, it is of paramount importance that each Delegation keeps close communication with the AES in its territory.

The decision taken by the Board of Governors to open up the System, was subject to the following condition:

“all the costs entailed by the accreditation procedure and all the costs entailed by pedagogical involvement in associate schools will be defrayed by the country in which the school is situated or by the school itself and that no financial burden in the form of additional expenditure should weigh on the budget of the European Schools”

Again, since AES are first of all National schools and their accreditation can only be requested by the corresponding Delegation representing the Member State in the Board of Governors, should the payment of a contribution be one day decided, such a payment would be requested to the Delegation.

The Delegation will have then to decide if costs will be paid directly or if the AES in its territory will be requested to pay.

These eventual future revenues should be used to provide the Office of the Secretary-General with the necessary work-force reinforcement, so to be able to effectively manage the constantly growing reality of AES.

One of the questions raised was related to the effect that the growing number of AES and of pupils in the AES would have had on the costs and on their share.

**OPINION OF THE BUDGETARY COMMITTEE**

The Budgetary Committee responded positively to the proposal for real cost neutrality for management of the Accredited European Schools, with Italy entering a reservation and the Netherlands abstaining. This proposal would go forward to the Board of Governors for discussion at its forthcoming meeting but would also be presented on 26 November to the Commissioner Mr. Oettinger.

**The Board of Governors is invited to:**

**- approve the proposed method to be used to apportion costs of the Office of the Secretary-General generated by the Accredited European Schools to the corresponding Member States**

**- give mandate to the Working Group “Extended Presidencies” to study an implementation plan and present it for approval at the Board of Governors meeting in April 2019.**

**Annex 1**

Proposals presented at the Board of Governors meeting in Tallinn, April 2018.

It was assessed that roughly 50% of the staff at the Office of the Secretary-General (OSG) are impacted by the existence of the AES. This meant that only 50% of the costs of the staff working at the OSG were considered and, for the administrative costs, only 50% of the costs associated with the buildings were considered. No costs for ICT were considered (as the services offered by the OSG are limited). All costs for ‘OSG’ and ‘Miscellaneous’ were included.

All operational costs were also included.

Thus, on the basis of the overall budget of €13,903,955 the figures would be as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Staff |  | AES quota | Total |
| 6703455 | Cost salaries |  |
| 267750 | Contribution MS |  |  |
| 6971205 | Total | 0.5 | 3485603 |
| Admin |  |  |  |
| 6850500 |  |  |  |
| Buildings: rent, cleaning, heat, water, elec, install. | 1210000 | 0.5 | 605000 |
| ICT: hardware, software, training | 1748500 | 0 | 0 |
| OSG: transl., interpr., consult, meetings | 3603000 | 1 | 3603000 |
| Misc: equip., comm., miss., maint., etc. | 289000 | 1 | 289000 |
| Pedag.: training courses | 350000 | 1 | 350000 |
| Total |  |  | 8332603 |

The costs to be shared are €8,332,603. Thus, not all the costs of the OSG would be considered. In order to share these costs, it was suggested to split the costs partially in proportion to the total number of schools and partially to the number of pupils. This formula was inspired by the formula in place in ES Munich.

Using the total pupil numbers in the 13 AES, in the year 2017-2018, of 7162 and the total population, of 26,887, in the 13 ES, the costs to be shared amongst all AES would amount to:

8332603\*1/4\*13/26+8332603\*3/4\*7162/(26877+7162) = 2,356,496

This total of **€2,356,496,** which would correspond to 17% of the total budget of the OSG, could then be split amongst the AES.

This proposal suggested that the €2,356,496 be split thus: 1/5 proportional to the total number of schools (considering that some work has to be done irrespective of the number of pupils), 2/5 proportional to the total number of pupils and 2/5 proportional to the pupils enrolled in the last two years.



(The calculations were produced to provide a sample illustration of the proposed method for apportioning the costs.)

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The report also included, in the annex, a second proposal, which was the result of a partial follow-up from Budgetary Committee discussions. This proposal took the same overall amount (€2,356,496) to be paid by the AES but provided 2 other possible options to divide the costs between the AES.

Option 1:

* 1/2 in proportion to the overall population
* 1/2 in proportion to the number of pupils in years S6-7

This would produce the following result:



This scenario decreases the differences in the cost per pupil across the different AES.

Option 2:

* in proportion to the overall population

This would result in the same cost per pupil in all schools:



Option 2 equalises the differences in the cost per pupil across the different AES. However, it is the organisation of the European Baccalaureate that has the heaviest impact on the OSG’s staff and this should be taken into account. An equal cost would therefore not fairly reflect the different load that the different schools place on the work at the OSG.

**Annex 2: AES workload in the OSG – a summary**

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| Unit /employee | Work activity |
| **Pedagogical Development Unit.** 8 people have jobs which involve the AES. Estimated % of workload is:1. 5%
2. 5%
3. 10%
4. 20%
5. 15%
6. 5%
7. 30%
8. 10%
 | The tasks carried out, for the AESs, in the pedagogical development unit are: * Directors’ training sessions and meetings
* Answering enquiries related to syllabi, WG, INSET
* Following up enquiries with HoU, DSG and SG
* Managing the Audits report procedure
* Translation of AES syllabi into host country language
* Managing the Dossier of Conformity reports for the JTC
* Contacting schools re WG and INSET training sessions & issuing invitations
* Follow-up and organisation of Written Procedures for the AES
* Follow up of AES pedagogical matters from BoI, JTC, BC and BoG
* Organisation of WG e.g. NMS, Educational Advisor
* Managing enquiries related to WG and training session e.g. participation
* Dealing with all questions related to the pedagogical procedures, rules, general rules e.g. s5 exam harmonisation, the Latinum exam
* Communication/information/follow up to AES related to all decisions from BOI, JTC, BC, BOG linked with pedagogical matters.
* Authorising access to Docee and Learning Gateway
* Updating documents linked with decisions concerning AES
* Helping ES inspectors in relation with Audit, WG participation, Inset, visits, linked to AES.
 |
| **TOTAL: 100%** |  |
| **ICT Unit**6 people have jobs which involve the AES. Estimated % of workload is:1. 6%
2. 1%
3. 3%
4. 2%
5. 2%
6. 2%
 | The tasks carried out, for the AESs, in the ICT unit are: * Responding to emails about DOCEE, Sharepoint & LG support
* Maintenance and technical support for Business Objects (requested by the Bac intermediary), DOCEE & LG.
* Guiding the encoding of the AES into their respective SMS
* Contacting ‘myschool’ in case of problems
* Initiating new IT projects with AES included in the architecture
* Management of the service desk for AES support.
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| **TOTAL: 16%** |  |

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| **Human Resources Unit** 4 people have jobs which involve the AES. Estimated % of workload is:1. 0.8%
2. 0.3%
3. 0.2%
4. 0.2%
 | The tasks carried out, for the AESs, in the HR unit are: * Appointing AES staff for the OSG
* Standard HR activities related to AES office staff.
 |
| **TOTAL: 1.5%** |  |
| **Baccalaureate Unit**5 people have jobs which involve the AES. Estimated % of workload is:1. 40%
2. 20%
3. 30%
4. 30%
5. 30%
 | The tasks carried out, for the AESs, in the Baccalaureate unit are: * Assistance to schools in dealing with Viatique
* Dealing with Special Arrangement (SEN) requests
* Answering Bac-related requests
* Preparing exam papers and oral questions
* Printing and shipping boxes with exam papers
* Revising and implementing different Bac regulations
* Assisting inspectors
* Setting up and putting documents on SharePoint
* Responding to complaints and appeals
* Explaining Bac procedures and rules to the schools & providing special assistance to the schools offering the Bac for the first time
* Participating in meetings dealing with issues relating to AES
 |
| **TOTAL: 150%** |  |
| **Unit of the Secretary General**5 people have jobs which involve the AES. Estimated % of workload is:1. 5%
2. 16%
3. 10%
4. 5%
5. 90%
 | The tasks carried out, for the AESs, in the unit of the Secretary-General are: * Monitoring the meetings and activities of the AES Working Group and preparing documents for the BoG
* Answering emails and phone calls and updating the SG
* Reading and documenting post
* Putting the necessary documents on Docee
* Preparing folders for interpreters and members of the OSG staff
* Recording meetings
* Making and printing AES related documents
* Organising the SGs missions for visits to the AESs
* Assisting with meeting preparations / reservations
* All management of the AESs from the side of the OSG e.g. audits, accreditation etc.
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| **TOTAL: 126%** |  |

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| There are **4 other people** who encounter AES related activities.Estimated % of workload is:1. 5%
2. 10%
3. 30%
4. 0.5%
 | The tasks carried out, for the AESs, by these people are: * Responding to legal requests from:
	+ Parents with students in the AES system
	+ AES management and staff
	+ Accreditation Agreements (new and continuing)
	+ AES regulations (modification and follow up)
* Answering general enquiries in relation to Brussels registrations
* Creating and updating web pages e.g. adding fact sheets, pedagogical procedures etc.
* Adjudicating appeals
 |
| **TOTAL: 45.5%** |  |
| In addition, the jobs of the following are impacted by the AESs:1. Secretary General (10%)
2. Deputy Secretary General (Unit) (7%)
3. Accounts 2%
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Summary:

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| Unit | Total % |
| Pedagogical Development | 100 |
| ICT | 16 |
| Human Resources | 1.5 |
| Baccalaureate | 150 |
| Unit of the Secretary-General | 126 |
| Other | 45.5 |
| Mr Secretary General | 10 |
| Unit of the Deputy Secretary-General | 7 |
| Accounts | 2 |
| **TOTAL** | **458** |

458 % = 4.5 equivalent posts (made up of 1.5 for the Bac unit and 3 others.)