

1.cDear members of the Board of Governors,

We have been forwarded the note Mr Kivinen has sent to you on 26 March 2012 (n/réf. .2012-03-LD-11 KK/JG).

We write to you again in order to dispel the impression that what we propose would cost any additional money.

First of all, this is **not about a two-site solution Laeken and Berkendael for Brussels IV any more like last year** when the issue was discussed in your December meeting.

The solution proposed by the Commission representative in his note is about filling up existing classes in the Brussels I school at no additional costs – for further details see below options 1.a) to 1.c). The solution originally proposed in our letter of 21 March 2012 (see below option 2) is also cost-neutral provided that the Brussels I school transferred those nursery and primary classes from Uccle to Berkendael which would allow to accommodate a maximum of "petition children", i.e. not all language sections in some nursery and primary grades including language sections that do not exist in Brussels IV (ES, DK, HU and PL) but only classes from the language sections currently already in Berkendael (EN, FR, DE, IT).

The number of children currently enrolled in the European School Brussels IV in the four language sections EN, FR, DE, IT (without NL pupils) whose parents have signed the petition with clear indication of the grade and linguistic section is 221 pupils, 51 in secondary and 170 in nursery and primary.

This is by no means a verified number, there are several dozen parents who have not indicated the grade and linguistic section, there might be other children whose parents have not signed the petition who would if offered opt to stay in Berkendael. On the other hand some parents might already have decided to put their child into a Belgian or International School in order to avoid the move to Laeken, some parents might in the meantime (the petition dates from October last year) have left Brussels.

But pending an official survey from the Secretariat-General among parents in Brussels IV as requested by the Commission representative in its note to you last week these are the only reference numbers there are and the options outlined below are based on them.

In this note we concentrate on the 170 nursery and primary children from Brussels IV ("petition children" in the following) who would be the most affected by the long commute:

Option 1: Filling up classes from Brussels I that move to Berkendael with up to 30 pupils.

Hardly any of the current nursery and primary classes in Brussels I have the maximum of 30 pupils. Depending on the Brussels I classes that will move from Uccle to Berkendael **between 43 and 139 out of 170 nursery and primary pupils from Brussels IV could be integrated into Brussels I.**

This scenario is explicitly supported by the European Commission. **There cannot be any additional costs as no additional classes would be created.** This solution would simply use the existing space in the classes currently already existing in Brussels I. The supplementary budget (around €550,000 in 2013) needed for the running of the Berkendael site with 450 pupils as submitted by the Brussels I school already foresees an additional Deputy Director and other staff. This is amply sufficient to cater for administrative arrangements concerning the additional pupils. The equation therefore is simple: no additional teachers, no additional administrative staff, no additional class rooms = no additional costs. .

We will present below 3 different scenarios depending on which Brussels I classes will move. Any one of these scenarios would allow a sizable number of Brussels IV pupils to stay in Berkendael so **any one of these options is preferable to the current status quo with which young children would be submitted to a long commute of more than two hours per day. .**

The first two scenarios (1.a and 1.b) are currently discussed within Brussels I, the last (1.c) would be our preferred option as it would allow a by far higher number of Brussels IV pupils (139 out of 170) to stay in Berkendael. A final decision by the Brussels I school is expected to be taken in a meeting towards the end of April. It would be most helpful if you recommended in your meeting next week that option 1.c) should be favourably taken into consideration by the Brussels I school.

1.a) Moving P4/P5 from Brussels I to Berkendael (21 classes)

This would allow **49 out of 68 Brussels IV pupils** in these grades to be incorporated into the Brussels I classes in Berkendael (cf. attached pdf "Simulation Filling up").

Overall costs could in fact be reduced as with the departure of children both P4 and P5 EN in Brussels IV would have less than 31 pupils (the size in these grades will drop from 32 currently in each of the two to 27 and 21 respectively) and the currently two classes in both of these grades would consequently have to be merged into one per grade. This would **save 2 teachers' salaries** at approximately € 60,000 per teacher = **€ 120,000**.

This is not the best solution in terms of child well-being – the younger children in nursery and the first years of primary will suffer more from the extremely long commutes to Laeken than 10-11 year old pupils. Moreover, it seems that hosting nursery and P1 pupils currently occupying the Fabiola building in other buildings in Uccle for the time of the renovation would require additional investments to adapt existing infrastructure to younger and smaller children. This solution is therefore not ideal, neither from a pedagogical nor from a financial point of view.

1.b) Moving nursery + P1 from Brussels I to Berkendael (20 classes)

This option would allow **43 out of 43 "petition children" in nursery and P1** to be integrated into the Brussels I classes in Berkendael (cf. attached pdf "Simulation Filling up").

This solution would be **cost-neutral** (no new classes to be created in Brussels I, no classes suppressed in Brussels IV following the departure of children)

In terms of **well-being** of the younger children this would be a better solution than 1.a) as it would spare the children of 4-6 years from the very long commute rather than 10-11 year old children. Neither would there be a need for further investments in buildings in Uccle or Berkendael. The Berkendael site has hosted Brussels IV nursery children for five years and could therefore cater very well to the Brussels I nursery and P1 children.

1.c) Moving language sections: IT and DE nursery and primary entirely and 1 class each from FR and EN sections in grades nursery, P1-P5 (24 classes)

This would allow a **far higher number of 139 out of 170 Brussels IV children** in nursery and primary to be incorporated into the Brussels I classes in Berkendael (cf. attached pdf "Simulation Filling up").

It would also **save costs overall** as with the departure of children P3 FR as well as P4 and P5 EN in Brussels IV would have less than 61 or 31 pupils respectively and one class each of these grades would consequently have to disappear (**overall savings of 3x €60,000 = €180,000**).

This solution would also have **evident benefits for the Brussels I children moving from Uccle:**

Some language sections (ES, DK, HU and PL) would not have to move at all.

Siblings in the same language section in nursery and primary (and there are many in Brussels I due to the enrolment policy in recent years giving priority to such enrolments) could remain **together on one site** (either Uccle or Berkendael) which would be a great advantage for parents concerned.

The higher number of pupils on the Berkendael site (rather 650 compared to 450 currently planned) would create the **critical mass** necessary to set up a **separate bus transport system** directly to Berkendael (no shuttle from Uccle with negative repercussions on all pupils).

The higher number of pupils would also provide for the critical mass to put in place a more comprehensive "periscolaire" offer and a "garderie post-scolaire" on the Berkendael site.

Option 2: Option 1.c) + creating additional classes in Brussels I up to the number of classes that would be saved in Brussels IV (cf. attached pdf "Simulation Option 1.c) + additional classes")

This is the solution we suggested to you in our letter of 21 March. It would allow all 170 nursery and primary children to remain in Berkendael. This solution would be **cost-neutral**, as expenses for **additional classes in Brussels I (Berkendael) would be compensated by classes to be suppressed (or not opened) in Brussels IV (Laeken)**. For more details please see our letter of 21 March. This would have the additional advantage of better using the existing class rooms in Berkendael half of which would be empty in September under the current plans.

You can see from the above that **none of the proposed solutions would cost any money** and filling up existing classes (options 1.a and 1.c) would indeed even **save money overall** and would hence be a very cost-efficient way of satisfying the wishes of many parents in Brussels IV. This is a real **win-win situation**.

We would therefore be most grateful if you as members of the Board of Governors would use your decision-making powers to allow as many of our children as possible to stay in Berkendael by allowing in principle the filling up of Brussels I classes with Brussels IV pupils after the end of the current enrolment procedure.

Moreover, a recommendation from your side to move those Brussels I classes to Berkendael that would allow a maximum of Brussels IV pupils to be integrated (option 1.c) or 2) will strongly influence the decision to be taken by the Brussels I school.

This is not about the introduction of geographical criteria, but about using a possibility which is unique, since no other Brussels school will be located on two sites with additional capacity. As we have mentioned in our previous letter of 21 March "petition children" should receive a place in Brussels I under the clear understanding that they can only remain in Brussels I at the end of the renovation if the over-occupation of the school site in Uccle has diminished until then. The enrolment figures cited by the Secretary-General with very low figures for Brussels I are an indication that the pressure on the school population is effectively decreasing.

Pedagogical concerns that adding some children only temporarily would jeopardise class unity seem rather far-fetched. The fluctuation in the Brussels European Schools is much higher than in normal schools anyway with many parents based in Brussels only temporarily (national diplomats, seconded national experts, temporary and contract agents with limited duration contracts).

A few words on the possibility for transfer requests mentioned by the Secretary-General in his note to you. We quote the conditions on transfers in the current enrolment policy:

"5.4. Particular circumstances

Where a pupil's interest so requires, duly established particular circumstances which are beyond the control of the applicants and/or the child may be taken into consideration to grant a priority criterion with a view to the pupil's enrolment at or transfer to the school of his/her choice.

These provisions are not applicable to applications for category III pupils.

5.4.1. The priority criterion will be accepted only where having regard to the precise circumstances characterising a case and differentiating it from other cases, a given situation requires appropriate treatment to mitigate the unacceptable consequences which the rules of this policy would otherwise have had.

5.4.2. The following circumstances will not be relevant for this purpose:

- a) location of the place of residence (home) of the child and/or his/her legal representatives,*
- b) the fact of being a single-parent family,*

- c) moving of the site of one of the European Schools,*
- d) location of the place of employment of the legal representative or the legal representatives (this includes all categories of members of staff of the European Schools), even it is imposed by the employer,*
- e) the location of the place to which the child regularly goes, whatever the purpose of his/her visit there, even if it is to receive therapy,*
- f) occupational or practical constraints on organisation of travel,*
- g) location of the place where other members of the group of siblings attend school or choice of school for the latter,*
- h) the interest value for a child of receiving a given philosophical education (religion or non-confessional ethics) or of receiving tuition in a language, where these are choices additional to those of the language section or philosophical education indicated in the enrolment application,*
- i) attendance or acceptance of enrolment for the pupil concerned or a member of his/her group of siblings at one of the European Schools for a previous school year.”*

We cannot know whether any children qualify for a transfer at all given the exclusion of the many circumstances listed in point 5.4.2 but it is clear that by far not all parents had a realistic chance to ask for a transfer under these conditions.

Lastly, we cannot tell you why the Secretary-General is so adamantly opposed to these solutions which are evidently in the best interest of our children as nobody will deny that a shorter commute to school is beneficial in particular for very young children. Your meeting next week will therefore be a good opportunity to question why our cost-free or even cost-saving proposals cannot be implemented.

As you are aware a **2/3 majority** is needed to change the current decision that all current Brussels IV pupils move to Laeken in September. So if our reasoning has convinced you it might be helpful in order to obtain the required majority if you informed your Board of Governors colleagues in writing of your position prior to the meeting next week.

Should you have any questions, please contact us via the petition email address or via telephone: +32 495 348243. Many thanks for your kind attention.

Eva Schriever & Claudia Hahn
Brussels, 12 April 2012

Simulation Integration BXL IV pupils into BXL I - Filling up to 30 max.

(1) Petition Results (where clear indication of section and grade)

October 2011; school year 2011/2012

	DE	EN	FR	IT	Total
M1	3	7	13	1	24
M2	3	3	8	5	19
P1	10	4	17	5	36
P2	4	6	13	0	23
P3	9	5	15	8	37
P4	5	11	8	7	31
Total	34	36	74	26	170
P5	4	8	9	1	22
S1	1	5	8	4	18
S2	1	2	6	2	11
Total	6	15	23	7	51
					221

(2a) Class size in BXL I, school year 2011/2012 (05/09/2011)

<http://gudee.eu/CS/2011-09-D-4-fr-2.doc>

	DE	EN	FR	IT	Total
M1	13	11	38	11	73
M2	13	16	44	13	86
P1	24	21	61	19	125
P2	17	28	51	18	114
P3	26	34	50	16	126
P4	26	43	59	24	152
Total	119	153	303	101	676
P5	27	48	81	21	177
S1	27	51	79	44	201
S2	28	48	84	26	186
Total	82	147	244	91	564
					1240

(2b) Class size in BXL IV, school year 2011/2012 (05/09/2011)

<http://gudee.eu/CS/2011-09-D-4-fr-2.doc>

	DE	EN	FR	IT	Total
M1	7	13	58	5	83
M2	22	30	46	10	108
P1	25	17	65	12	119
P2	20	34	55	15	124
P3	18	32	73	15	138
P4	25	32	50	20	127
Total	117	158	347	77	699
P5	15	39	66	11	131
S1	11	29	44	10	94
S2	8	28	48	8	92
Total	34	96	158	29	317
					1016

(3a) Class size BXL I upon filling up to max. (30) with "petition children"

School year 2012/2013

	DE	EN	FR	IT	Total
M2	16	18	51	12	97
P1	16	19	52	18	105
P2	30	25	78	24	157
P3	21	30	60	18	129
P4	30	39	60	24	153
P5	30	54	60	30	174
Total	143	185	361	126	815

Option A.1 (only P4/P5) = 49 out of 68

Option A.2 (only nursery and P1) = 43 out of 43

Option A.3 (1 class of nursery + P1-P5 in DE, EN, FR, IT sections):

139 out of 170 nursery / primary "petition children" could be satisfied (82%)

	S1	S2	S3	Total
S1	30	56	90	198
S2	28	56	87	219
S3	29	50	90	197
Total	87	162	267	614
				1429

If integration into Uccle were allowed 50 out of 51 secondary

"petition children" could be satisfied (98%)

(4a) BXL I class numbers projection school year 2012/2013

<http://gudee.eu/CS/2011-09-D-4-fr-2.doc>

Section / Classe	DE	EN	FR	IT	Total
Maternelle	1	1	4	1	7
P1	1	1	2	1	5
P2	1	1	3	1	6
P3	1	1	2	1	5
P4	1	2	2	1	6
P5	1	2	3	1	7
Total	6	8	16	6	36

Total number of classes in school year 2012/2013 after filling up BXL I + IV; MAT, P1-P5; DE, EN, FR, IT sections 83 -3

	S1	S2	S3	Total
S1	1	2	3	7
S2	1	2	3	8
S3	1	2	3	7
Total	3	6	9	22

Total number of classes in school year 2012/2013 BXL I + IV; S1-S3; DE, EN, FR, IT sections 42 -1

(3b) Class size BXL IV upon departure of "petition children"

School year 2012/2013

<http://gudee.eu/CS/2011-09-D-4-fr-2.doc>

	DE	EN	FR	IT	Total
M2	4	6	45	4	59
P1	19	27	38	5	89
P2	19	13	48	7	87
P3	16	32	46	15	109
P4	14	27	63	7	111
P5	21	21	49	14	105
Total	93	126	289	52	560

Number of pupils in 3 classes would drop below 31 in BXL IV

30/60 Class size goes below max. threshold

	S1	S2	S3	Total
S1	12	31	57	110
S2	10	24	36	76
S3	7	26	42	81
Total	29	81	135	267
				827

Number of pupils in 1 class would drop below 61

60 Class size goes below max. threshold

(4b) BXL IV class numbers projection school year 2012/2013

<http://gudee.eu/CS/2011-09-D-4-fr-2.doc>

Section / Classe	DE	EN	FR	IT	Total
Maternelle	2	3	6	2	13
P1	1	2	4	1	8
P2	2	1	2	1	6
P3	1	2	3	1	7
P4	1	1	4	1	7
P5	1	1	3	1	6
Total	8	10	22	7	47

At least 3 nursery/primary classes could be saved in BXL IV (€ 180,000)

	S1	S2	S3	Total
S1	1	2	2	6
S2	1	2	3	7
S3	1	2	3	7
Total	3	6	8	20

At least 1 secondary class could be saved in BXL IV (€ 60,000)

Simulation Integration BXL IV pupils into BXL I - Additional classes

(1) Petition Results (where clear indication of section and grade)
October 2011; school year 2011/2012

	DE	EN	FR	IT	Total
M1	3	7	13	1	24
M2	3	3	8	5	19
P1	10	4	17	5	36
P2	4	6	13	0	23
P3	9	5	15	8	37
P4	5	11	8	7	31
Total	34	36	74	26	170

P5	4	8	9	1	
S1	1	5	8	4	
S2	1	2	6	2	
Total	6	15	23	7	51

221

(2a) Class size in BXL I, school year 2011/2012 (05/09/2011)

	DE	EN	FR	IT	Total
M1	13	11	38	11	73
M2	13	16	44	13	86
P1	24	21	61	19	125
P2	17	28	51	18	114
P3	26	34	50	16	126
P4	26	43	59	24	152
Total	119	153	303	101	676

P5	27	48	81	21	177
S1	27	51	79	44	201
S2	28	48	84	26	186
Total	82	147	244	91	564

1240

(2b) Class size in BXL IV, school year 2011/2012 (05/09/2011)

	DE	EN	FR	IT	Total
M1	7	13	58	5	83
M2	22	30	46	10	108
P1	25	17	65	12	119
P2	20	34	55	15	124
P3	18	32	73	15	138
P4	25	32	50	20	127
Total	117	158	347	77	699

P5	15	39	66	11	131
S1	11	29	44	10	94
S2	8	28	48	8	92
Total	34	96	158	29	317

1016

(3a) Class size BXL I upon integration of "petition children"

School year 2012/2013 - addition (a) + (b)

	DE	EN	FR	IT	Total
M2	16	16	51	12	97
P1	16	19	52	18	105
P2	34	25	78	24	161
P3	21	34	64	18	137
P4	35	30	65	24	163
P5	31	54	67	31	183
Total	153	189	377	127	846

S1	31	56	90	23	199
S2	29	56	87	40	219
S3	28	50	80	28	197
Total	88	162	267	98	615

1461

 No problem
 Class size goes beyond max. threshold

(3b) Class size BXL IV upon departure of "petition children"

School year 2012/2013

	DE	EN	FR	IT	Total
M2	4	6	45	4	59
P1	19	27	38	5	89
P2	15	13	48	7	83
P3	16	28	42	15	101
P4	9	27	58	7	101
P5	20	21	42	13	96
Total	83	122	273	51	529

S1	11	31	57	10	109
S2	10	24	36	6	76
S3	7	26	42	6	81
Total	28	81	135	22	266

795

 Class size goes below max. threshold

(4a) BXL I class numbers projection school year 2012/2013

<http://gudee.eu/CS/2011-09-D-4-fr-2.doc>

Section / Classe	DE	EN	FR	IT	Total
Maternelle	1	1	4	1	7
P1	1	1	2	1	5
P2	1	1	3	1	6
P3	1	1	2	1	5
P4	1	2	2	1	6
P5	1	2	3	1	7
Total	6	8	16	6	36

Projected total number of classes in school year 2012/2013
BXL I + IV; MAT, P1-P5; DE, EN, FR, IT sections 86

S1	1	2	3	1	7
S2	1	2	3	2	8
S3	1	2	3	1	7
Total	3	6	9	4	22

Projected total number of classes in school year 2012/2013
BXL I + IV; S1-S3; DE, EN, FR, IT sections 43

(4b) BXL IV class numbers projection school year 2012/2013

<http://gudee.eu/CS/2011-09-D-4-fr-2.doc>

Section / Classe	DE	EN	FR	IT	Total
Maternelle	2	3	6	2	13
P1	1	2	4	1	8
P2	2	1	3	1	7
P3	1	2	3	1	7
P4	1	2	4	1	8
P5	1	2	3	1	7
Total	8	12	23	7	50

S1	1	2	3	1	7
S2	1	2	3	1	7
S3	1	2	3	1	7
Total	3	6	9	3	21

(5a) BXL I class numbers projection school year 2012/2013 after transfer in

Section / Classe	DE	EN	FR	IT	Total
Maternelle	1	1	4	1	7
P1	1	1	2	1	5
P2	2	1	3	1	7
P3	1	2	3	1	7
P4	2	2	3	1	8
P5	2	2	3	2	9
Total	9	9	18	7	43

 +1 Additional class necessary in BXL I +7

Total number of classes in school year 2012/2013
BXL I + BXL IV; MAT, P1-P5; DE, EN, FR, IT sections after transfer 85

S1	2	2	3	1	8
S2	1	2	3	2	8
S3	1	2	3	1	7
Total	4	6	9	4	23

Total number of classes in school year 2012/2013
BXL I + BXL IV; S1-S3; DE, EN, FR, IT sections after transfer 43

 +1 Additional class necessary in BXL I +1

(5b) BXL IV class numbers projection school year 2012/2013 after transfer out

Section / Classe	DE	EN	FR	IT	Total
Maternelle	2	3	6	2	13
P1	1	2	4	1	8
P2	1	1	2	1	5
P3	1	1	2	1	5
P4	1	1	3	1	6
P5	1	1	2	1	5
Total	7	9	19	7	42

 -1 Class that can be suppressed in BXL IV -6
 -1 Additional classes budgeted but probably not necessary in BXL IV (margin of 19 in P3+P5 FR, such high numbers of new pupils unlikely in these grades) (-2)

S1	1	2	2	1	6
S2	1	2	3	1	7
S3	1	2	3	1	7
Total	3	6	8	3	20

 -1 Class that can be suppressed in BXL IV -1

Probable savings of 1 class or €60,000