



Schola Europaea

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Harmonised timetable - Primary

**APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE EUROPEAN SCHOOLS
ON 30 AND 31 JANUARY 2007 - BRUSSELS**

ENTRY INTO FORCE IN SEPTEMBER 2007.

1. INTRODUCTION

The timetable currently applicable (see Annex 1) came into force with the setting-up of the European Schools more than 50 years ago. The number of lessons allocated to the different subjects taught was related to pedagogical findings and other specialist knowledge regarded as important at the time.

This means that

- the time available is used predominantly for cognitive subjects
- timetabling is highly restrictive and all lessons have to be planned in accordance with set teaching times (30 minutes in years 1 and 2 and 45 minutes in years 3, 4 and 5)

In recent decades, however, the image of education has changed considerably. Nowadays the basic assumption is that education and training should be directed towards children's overall development.

In particular, new scientific findings from brain research and early learning have brought to light that early comprehensive support and encouragement have a positive effect overall on development in the cognitive area.

It therefore seems an imperative that greater weight be given in the education provided in the European Schools to fostering the development of motor, artistic-creative and social skills, alongside the cognitive development area.

With the development of the new harmonised syllabuses, approved by the Board of Governors in May 2003, for Discovery of the World, Physical Education, Music and Art, this approach was taken into account.

In implementing these syllabuses, the European Schools are encountering difficulty in meeting and doing justice to present-day pedagogical-didactic requirements in the different subjects within the time available, as currently allocated in years 3, 4 and 5, where only 45 minutes per week is allocated for each of PE, Music and Art.

2. Considerations for a revision of the harmonised timetable

Changes in terms of pedagogical-didactic requirements are normally taken into consideration by expanding the timetable. Since this would lead to considerable costs it is unrealistic. Therefore solutions need to be found in a more effective use of the existing teaching and learning time.

The following considerations were taken into account:

Division of time into strictly regulated teaching periods (years 1 and 2: 30 minutes per period; years 3, 4 and 5: 45 minutes per period) does not lead to efficient and justifiable use of time. Within a set time framework, flexible timetabling should be made possible.

More teaching time for the teaching of the subjects in question can be obtained by redistribution of the total of hours available.

Time loss caused by excessive fragmentation should be counteracted by judicious timetabling. For example, when changing classrooms for second language, music etc. loss of teaching time should be avoided by allowing flexibility regarding breaks between lessons. Furthermore, Physical Education lessons, could be organised in such a way that subsequent classes can be taught with the equipment already set up.

As the learning requirements and resources vary according to local circumstances and events, the Schools should be granted autonomy to distribute the time available in line with local requirements.

Greater consideration of cross-curricular approaches is recommended for the primary school. Thanks to more flexible time allocation, subjects might be combined in a specific time framework, thus allowing project work to be carried out more effectively.

In addition, effective use should be made of teachers with specialist knowledge and skills. The deployment of such teachers or class teachers both within a particular language section and across the different language sections with particular skills, specially in art, music and Physical Education, ought to raise teaching and learning standards.

3. Revised timetable for Primary classes

Bearing in mind the above mentioned considerations the new timetable will be as follows¹:

| | Years 1 and 2 | Years 3, 4, 5 |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Mother tongue | 8 hrs | 6 hrs 45 |
| Mathematics | 4 hrs | 5 hrs 15 |
| Language II | 2 hrs 30 | 3 hrs 45 |
| Irish/Maltese/Finnish/ Swedish | (2 hrs 30) | (3 hrs 45) |
| Music Art Physical Education | 5 hrs | 3 hrs |
| Discovery of the World | 1 hrs 30 | 3 hrs |
| European Hours | | 1 hrs 30 |
| Religion/Ethics | 1 hr | 1 hrs 30 |
| Recreation | 3 hrs 30 | 2 hrs 30 |
| | 25 hrs 30 | 27 hrs 15 |
| | | |

¹ Compared to the current time table: - In the years 1 and 2 an additional amount of time is allocated to Discovery of the World as a result of a reduction of the total amount of time for Music, Art and PE (30 minutes). - In the years 3, 4 and 5 Music, Art and PE receive an additional amount of time as a result of the reduction in European Hours (45 minutes).

- The amount of teaching time per week of each subject is shown in hours and no longer in periods.
- A total amount of time is allocated to Music, Art and Physical Education in order to create more flexibility. Schools can decide to focus on certain subjects in consecutive periods. Nevertheless, weekly sports lessons should be assured for each class.
- The teaching content of the different subjects is defined by each syllabus, however where possible a more cross curricular approach should be realised.
- Music, Art and PE could be taught in multilingual groups.
- The expertise of specialist class teachers or of subject teachers, especially in the field of Music, Art and Physical Education should be used within and across the sections.
- The schools have responsibility for organising the timetable in a way that a minimum time loss is guaranteed and a balanced teaching of all subjects can be assured.

With this new time table more flexibility and autonomy are realized for the schools and the possibility for a cross curricular approach is given. In combination with a cross curricular approach, this leads to a more effective use of available time thus generating higher standards in teaching and learning.

Annex 1

Chapter XIV PRIMARY CLASS TIMETABLES

RELEVANT PROVISIONS OF THE STATUTE

See Article 11.1 of the Convention defining the Statute of the European School.

1. Nursery cycle²

The Board of Governors approved the document submitted by the Teaching Committee (Primary) setting out the Nursery children's timetable (96-D-241):

The teaching timetable for nursery school children is 25.30 hours, breaking down into 20 hours for learning activities and 5.30 hours for recreational activities of an educational nature and snack time. Activities should be evenly distributed throughout the day and the five-day school week to produce a balanced timetable. The School as an education system is therefore responsible for the children for these 25.30 hours, plus reception time.

At the Head's proposal, the Administrative Board decides on the application of the timetable and management of the consequences which may be entailed locally.

2. Primary cycle³

| 2.1 | <u>1st and 2nd years</u> | <u>Periods</u> |
|-----|--------------------------|---|
| | Mother tongue | 8 hrs 16 x 30' |
| | Mathematics | 4 hrs 8 x 30' |
| | Language II | 2.30 hrs 5 x 30' or 6 x 25' for the 6-day week |
| | Irish ⁴ | (2.30 hrs) (5 x 30')* |
| | Maltese ⁵ | (2.30 hrs) (5 x 30')* |
| | Music | 1.30 hrs 3 x 30' |
| | Art | 2 hrs 4 x 30' |
| | Physical education | 2 hrs 4 x 30' |
| | Environmental studies | 1 hr 2 x 30' |
| | Religion/ethics | 1 hr 2 x 30' |
| | Recreation | 3.30 hrs 7 x 30' |
| | 25.30 hrs | 51 x 30' |

*The number of periods should be reduced in case of small groups

² Decisions of the Board of Governors, 30 & 31 January 1996, page 5

³ ARBG, 1 & 2 December 1970, pages 28 and 29 and ARBG, 21 & 22 May 1980, page 11

⁴ For Irish pupils. ARBG, 7 & 8 December 1972, page 44 and ARBG, 25 & 26 May 1976, page 52

⁵ For Maltese pupils. Decisions of the Board of Governors, 31 January & 1 February 2006, page 5

| 2.2 <u>3rd, 4th and 5th years</u> | | <u>Periods</u> |
|--|------------------|-----------------|
| Mother tongue | 6.45 hrs | 9 x 45' |
| Mathematics | 5.15 hrs | 7 x 45' |
| Language II | 3.45 hrs | 5 x 45' |
| Irish ⁶ | (3.45 hrs) | (5 x 45')* |
| Finnish/Swedish ⁷ | (3.45 hrs) | (5 x 45')* |
| Maltese ⁸ | (3.45 hrs) | (5 x 45')* |
| Environmental studies | 3 hrs | 4 x 45' |
| Art | 0.45 hrs | 1 x 45' |
| Music | 0.45 hrs | 1 x 45' |
| Physical education | 0.45 hrs | 1 x 45' |
| Sociocultural activities and sports: European Hours | 2.15 hrs | 3 x 45' |
| Religion/ethics | 1.30 hrs | 2 x 45' |
| Recreation | 2.30 hrs | |
| | 27.15 hrs | 33 x 45' |

*The number of periods should be reduced in case of small groups

In addition to these hours (27.15 in all), each School is free to arrange for up to three periods of recreational activities (self-expression) in line with needs and local facilities. This elasticity, which is a corollary of varying local situations, does not introduce any real differences between the Schools: in practice these activities (art, music and physical education) do not affect the advancement of pupils.

Decisions of this nature are taken by the Heads following consultation with the General Assemblies. If such activities are organized the pupils are required to participate.

⁶ For Irish pupils. ARBG, 7 & 8 December 1972, page 44 and ARBG, 25 & 26 May 1976, page 52

⁷ For Finnish pupils. Decisions of the Board of Governors, 22-23 April 1997, page 16

⁸ For Maltese pupils. Decisions of the Board of Governors, 31 January & 1 February 2006, page 5