



Schola Europaea

Office of the Secretary-General

General Secretariat

Ref. : 2017-10-D-27-en-3

Orig.: DE

Report of the chair of the Budgetary Committee / 2016-2017

Approved by the Board of Governors from 5,6 and 7 December 2017

I was delighted to assume the chair of the budget committee of the European Schools during the German presidency. We have received great support from the secretariat, which allowed us to hold successful meetings despite of a plethora of very complex issues. I would like to express particular thanks to Mr Marcheggiano and Mr Beckmann, as well as to staff members on all levels, namely Ms Matundo, Ms Balogh and many others.

The 2016-2017 budget committee dealt with a large number of issues. Many of them were very difficult, such as the revision of the Financial Regulations. Member states, the Commission, representatives from schools, parents and the secretariat took all issues very seriously and were highly committed to solving the difficulties. It was important to acknowledge that the European Schools are particularly important to member states.

From the great number of issues that were addressed by the 2016-2017 budget committee in its meetings, I would like to emphasize the following:

- The Revision of the Financial Regulations was a key issue and caused a tremendous workload for all parties involved; finally, all parties involved agreed on a solution.
- It was extraordinarily difficult to draw up the Preliminary Draft 2018 Budget of the European Schools and agree on new posts that might be established on its basis.
- The Revision of the Recruitment Procedures and Profiles for Directors and Deputy Directors addresses an important issue concerning the quality of European schools and a working group on this issue has been established.
- Budget amendments took account of security measures taken in response to recent terror attacks.
- Other activities that were of great relevance include restructuring the schools in Culham and Mol and, of course, coping with the capacity problems at the schools in Brussels.
- The Annual ICT Report for the year 2016 sets out the problematic situation in the field of information technology.
- The Proposal for additional training measures and possible revision of the planning for implementation of the new marking scale in the secondary cycle of the European Schools drew particular attention to the pedagogical challenges.
- Unfortunately, the vacant post of head of the human resources division could not be filled yet.
- The budget committee also addressed the review of the rules and procedures in place at the accredited schools, also with regard to costs.
- The repercussions of Brexit on the European schools were discussed with great concern.

The European Schools have addressed all these issues with great professionalism. A high-priority concern for both parents and pupils was increasing security at schools, especially after the terrorist attacks in recent years. The revision of the Financial Regulations is bound to have primarily internal effects and will lead to considerable changes in the structures of and processes in place at the European

schools. All parties involved shouldered a tremendous workload to contribute to the revision. It was particularly important for the budget committee to strike a balance between necessary additional spending for human and material resources on the one hand and cost-conscious policy on the other.

In my opinion as a “professional non-expert” I see potential for improvement also with regard to the European Schools, as in other EU organizations. It is important to avoid red tape, speed up procedures and streamline processes. I am hesitant to give concrete recommendations, since procedures are already being evaluated by various actors. It is important to ensure, however, that bureaucracy does not prevail over pedagogy.

In conclusion I would like to add that it is extremely unfortunate that the post of head of the HR division had to be advertised several times because not enough member states were willing to second a person to fill the post. Other international organizations can choose from a large number of applicants, also because their budgets make provision for proper posts.

Despite all difficulties, I wish the European Schools all success and good luck for the future.

OPINION OF THE BUDGETARY COMMITTEE

The Budgetary Committee duly noted the Report and thanked the German Presidency for the good work done.

OPINION OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The Board of Governors took note of and approved the report of the German Chair of the Budgetary Committee for the 2016-2017 school year.

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