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Multi-annual and annual plan 2019 of the Office of the Secretary-General of the European Schools

Approved by the Board of Governors of the European Schools at its meeting on 9-12 April 2019, in Athens

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I. Mission statement

The European Schools are educational institutions set up in the European Union's Member States.

The purpose of the Schools is to educate together children of the staff of the European communities.

Convention defining the statute of the European Schools

The mission of the European Schools is to provide all pupils with multilingual broad education of high quality from early education to secondary school, and to equip upper secondary students to adult life and form a basis for further learning.

Decision of the Board of Governors

II. Introduction

The objective of this report is to provide the Board of Governors with:

an overview on

- our multi-annual objectives for the years 2019-2021,
- the performance indicators that have been defined to measure the success of the implementation

and a more detailed description of what is expected to be achieved in the current financial year 2019. None of the seven objectives is new. All of them derive either from decisions taken by the Board of Governors or from mandates given to working groups or from recommendations issued as follow up of audits performed by external parties.

This is the first time that the multi-annual and the annual objectives are presented in a separate document. The process of defining objectives has not yet been formalized. The need for a formalization and for improvement in the future will be evaluated.

The harmonization of the planning and reporting cycles in the European Schools (ES) has started in 2017 when a template for a harmonized Annual Administrative and Financial School Plan (AAFSP)

and common objectives for all Schools have been introduced. A specific training has been given by the European Commission DG HR on this subject to all management of ES. The process has gradually evolved since then, with the implementation of harmonized Annual Pedagogical School Plans and Annual Activity reports and the attempt to define multi-annual objectives in the AAFSPs of the Schools at the beginning of this financial year.

In 2021, the Secretary General will have to present a global Annual Activity Report for the financial year 2020, as Authorizing Officer of the ES, according to article 33.4 FR2017. The global Annual Activity Report will summarize the Schools' and Office's Annual Activity Reports. The present multi-annual and annual plan constitute the basis for this reporting.

III. Multi-annual objectives 2019-2021 of the ES system

Seven objectives have been selected, in the areas human resources, pedagogy, administration, finance and Accredited European Schools. They will deserve the full attention at all levels of the European Schools in the coming three years.

Human resources
Objective 1: Define and implement a new cost sharing agreement
Objective 2: Increase the attractiveness of the European School System
Pedagogy
Objective 3: Successful implementation of the new marking system
Objective 4: Implementation of the educational support policy and provision of inclusive quality education
Administration and Finance
Objective 5: Effective and reliable Internal control system in all European Schools and the Office of the Secretary-General
Objective 6: Implemented new governance model
Accredited European Schools
Objective 7: Improve quality in the accreditation and audit processes

1. Define and implement new cost sharing agreement

The current cost sharing agreement has been adopted by the Board of Governors (2014). While a better repartition of costs in among the Member States should be globally achieved in September 2019, the number of seconded teachers has gradually decreased, while pupil's population has increased. The lack of a target level of seconded posts, as well as the effect of language correcting coefficients are the most important reasons for this unexpected development. Consequently, the Board of Governors gave a mandate to the working group "Enlarged Presidencies" to evaluate and propose a revision of the current agreement. The aim is to come to a new agreement and to see positive development in the overall number of secondments.

2. Increase the attractiveness of the European School System

Figures show that some member states find more and more difficult to second teachers, due to the limited difference between the national salary and the salary paid in the ES. Moreover, for certain Schools it becomes problematic to fill the vacant posts with duly qualified locally recruited teachers. Again this is mainly due to the lack of competitiveness among the salaries paid in the National System

and those paid by the ES and the lack of stability of the contract offered. The attractiveness of the ES system for teaching staff has been discussed, in among other important topics, at the European School Summit, organised by the Commissioner Mr. Oettinger on May 2018. Several measures to attract and retain qualified teachers were identified and the Enlarged Presidency group, according to the feedback received by the Budgetary Committee (BC) and the Board of Governors (BoG), has developed them further. The indicators defined here below, will help to measure the impact of the measures in the following years, if these will be decided.

With respect to the Administrative and Ancillary Staff (AAS), the Office of the Secretary-General in particular, but also Schools, face problems in recruiting and retaining specialised and qualified staff in certain areas. Again, the indicators defined here below, will help to measure the impact of the “single spine” in the following years, if its implementation will be decided.

3. Successful implementation of the new marking system

The introduction of the new marking system started in the school year 2018-19 and in the year groups S1 –S5.

Evidence suggests that educational systems like the European Schools show some differences in assessment. The main objective of the introduction of the new marking system is to improve clarity in the assessment process. The more clearly defined assessment policy, based on competences and their level of achievement, should assist teachers coming from different national systems to perform their assessment in the European Schools in a more harmonised way.

We expect that results at the European Baccalareate and in the S5 harmonised exams will reflect our efforts in the medium term. Two aspects have been crucial for a correct implementation: The preparation of the new syllabuses for all subjects and the training of the teaching staff across the whole ES system. These aspects have guided in the definition of the performance indicators.

4. Implementation of the educational support policy and provision of inclusive quality education

As a follow up to the UN Recommendations concerning Inclusive Education in the European Schools, the ES have prepared a report on ‘Inclusive Education in the European Schools’. This report states that the ES are moving from an integrative to a more inclusive school system. At the same time, the report identifies areas for improvement with a view of providing an always more inclusive education. Efforts will need to be deployed at all levels, in order to always better implement the existing educational support policy and to ensure that the UN recommendations will be fully addressed.

5. Effective and reliable Internal Control System (ICS) in all European Schools and at the Office of the Secretary General (OSG)

Since the fraud that was detected in 2014, the European Schools have continuously taken measures to improve the Internal Control System of the Schools and of the OSG.

Nevertheless, the European Court of Auditors (ECA) repeated in its annual report 2017 that it revealed weaknesses in the ICS of the audited Schools and of the OSG. As a result ECA could not confirm that the European Schools' financial management is compliant with the Financial Regulation, its implementing rules and staff regulations.

Also with respect to the audits of the Internal Audit Service, a high number of recommendations remain open, that in some cases date back to audits performed in 2014.

In the area of finance and administration, it is thus of the highest importance to make further progress and to ensure the effectiveness and reliability of our financial system.

6. Implement new Governance Model

In 2017, the Board of Governors approved a new Financial Regulation (FR), which came into force on 1.1.2018. FR foresees an important change in the financial governance of the European Schools. In the past, each School and the OSG had their own Authorizing Officer and their own Accounting Officer. The responsibility was decentralized at the level of each School/OSG. An important aim of the revision of the FR was to strengthen the financial governance and to assign more responsibility to the Office of the Secretary General. To achieve this, it is foreseen that the functions of Authoring Officer and Accounting Officer will be centralized.

The implementation is in progress (see regular report about progression) and we are committed to assure its implementation within the foreseen timeline.

7. Accredited European Schools (AES) – Improve quality of audit processes

More than 10 years ago, the first two AES Schools have been accredited. The number of AES has increased constantly since then and will increase further in the future. It became obvious during those years that a stronger formalization of the accreditation process and a better harmonization of the audits are urgent. Audits are performed at the stage of the first accreditation, at the moment of the implementation of the ES BAC and then regularly every three years in order to renew the accreditation.

These audits need to guarantee that the education provided in the AES is equivalent to the one in the ES, otherwise their accreditation would bear an important reputational risk for the system.

The Board of Governors mandated a working group to study and provide proposals in order to improve the accreditation process. In particular, an update of the 'Regulations on Accredited European Schools' and a 'Futureproof Framework for Audits' have started to be developed and will soon be proposed for adoption, so to reduce the related risk.

IV. Attainment of objectives: Performance indicators per objective

For each of the above-mentioned objectives one or more performance indicators have been defined in order to measure the attainment and success of the implementation of the objective.

Objectives related to Human resources

Objective 1: Define and implement a new cost sharing agreement * ¹			
Performance indicators			
		Status quo school year 18-19	Target school year 2023-24
1	% of seconded teachers (FTE)	57,3 %	around 70 %
2	Number of seconded teachers	1220	1500
Objective 2: Increase the attractiveness of the European School System			
Performance indicators			
		Status quo	Target 2021
1	Seconded Teachers: Number of unfilled posts requiring the following languages at C1/C2 level: - English - French - German	School year 2019-20: EN: 74 FR: 33 DE: 3 Mixture: 41	Reduce number of unfilled posts requiring these languages
2	Seconded teachers: - Number of teachers leaving before end of secondment	School year 2017-2018: - Seconded teachers: 5 (source: 2018-10-D-24-en-2)	Reduce number of teachers leaving before end of contract
3	Seconded teachers: - Number of teachers declining the secondment after learning about the conditions	data not yet available	Reduce number of teachers declining secondment
4	Locally recruited teachers: Number of teachers leaving before end of contract	School year 2017-2018: - Locally recruited teachers: 14 (source: 2018-10-D-24-en-2)	Reduce number of teachers leaving before end of contract
5	AAS: Number of recruitment procedures where one call is not sufficient	2017 and 2018: 6 (basis is document 2018-10-D-69-en-3.docx)	Reduce number
6	AAS: Number of "best" (=ranked first after recruitment procedure) candidates declining the poste	2017 and 2018: 6 (basis is document 2018-10-D-69-en-3.docx)	Reduce number
* ¹ BoG mandated working group to make an adopted proposal and to ask for approval by written procedure. Indicators to review after written procedure.			

Objectives in Pedagogy

Objective 3: Successful implementation of the new marking system			
Performance indicators			
		Status quo	Target 2021
1	New marking scheme used in all Schools	S1-S5 in all Schools	including BAC in all Schools
2	New marking system understood by Higher Education Institutions: Number of pupils not correctly accepted by universities	n/a	observe and ensure number is 0 or very low
Objective 4: Implementation of the educational support policy and provision of inclusive quality education			
Performance indicators			
		Status quo	Target 2021
1	% of action plan implemented	0%	all actions classified in short and midterm as highly important or important
2	Number of refused enrolments	School year 2017-18: - 1 in Primary - 2 in Secondary	observe and reduce
3	Number of pupils directed to other systems after enrolling them in one of the ES	School year 2017-18: -1	observe and reduce
4	Proper consultation with Inspector for each rejection and/or redirection	clear guidelines needed	100% of cases

Objectives in Administration and Finance

Objective 5: Effective and reliable Internal control system in all European Schools and the Office of the Secretary-General			
Performance indicators			
		Status quo	Target 2021
1	Opinion of the Court of Auditors about the internal Control system in Annual report on the accounts	limited weaknesses in one School audited and significant weaknesses in the OSGES and the other School audited	Conclusion that the Control Framework is respected in the Schools and the OSGES
2	Reductions of recommendations of the IAS	N° of outstanding recommendations: 19	- N° of outstanding recommendations* ² : < 5 - no critical and very important outstanding recommendations
3	Number of Schools having implemented an anti-fraud strategy	no harmonized anti-fraud strategy in place	Anti-fraud strategy implemented in all Schools

Objective 6: Implemented new governance model			
Performance indicators			
		Status quo	Target 2021
1	Approval of the ES accounts of the Accounting Officer of the European Schools	Accounts signed off locally by Accounting Officers	Signed accounts by the Accounting Officer without a reservation related to centralization of governance
2	Sign-off of the Annual Activity report of the Authorizing Officer of the European Schools	Schools' Annual Activity reports signed off by the Authorizing Officer (per school)	Sign-off of the Annual Activity report by the Authorizing Officer of the ES =Secretary-General without a reservation related to centralization of governance
* ² compared to current status / not including any audits that will be conducted in 2019 -2021			

Objective related to the Accredited European Schools

Objective 7: Improve quality in the accreditation and audit processes			
Performance indicators			
		Status quo	Target 2021
1	Number of audit reports not requiring changes after the presentation to the Board of Inspectors	2018: 4 out of 5 files needed additional information after presentation	reduce %
2	Number of audits performed according to framework	n/a	100%

V. Annual plan 2019 - Main steps and expected results for the year

Objectives related to Human resources and to the AES

For the objectives related to human resources and the objective related to the AES the steps foreseen in 2019 depend on the approval of proposals from the Board of Governors.

Objectives related to Pedagogy

The Schools have taken the two pedagogical objectives as common objectives in their Annual Pedagogical School Plan. These were presented to and agreed by the Administrative Boards in autumn 2018. The schools' measures are complemented and supported by measures taken at central level.

Priority 1	Implementation of new Marking Scheme	
Cycle	Secondary Cycle	
Who?	OSG	Schools
Main steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analysis of first application of new marking scheme and prepare comparison with previous years; - A QA action launched for teachers to set up a FAQ and send communication to schools - Training/information sessions for deputy directors of the secondary cycle - Prepare the implementation of S6 and S7; - Communication with member states, observe translation into national marking system; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that all teachers concerned have the necessary understanding of the new marking system; - Ensure detailed information is provided to pupils and parents; - Continuously observe and evaluate the implementation; - Organize an evaluation workshop at the beginning of the second half-year and at the end of the school year.

Expected result(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Detailed analyses of S5 results (semester grades, end-year B-mark, harmonized exams); analysis of fail-success ratio; analysis of the distribution of marks within the cohort in question. - Plan for the implementation in BAC cycle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation of the new marking scheme after one year of usage, if necessary list of improvements/adoptions; - Marks of one school year for further evaluation and comparison.
Performance indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comparison of S5 exam results of school year 2017-18 and 2018-19 - Comparison of pass rates in year S1-5 in school year 2017-18 and 2018-19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers concerned are 100% informed; - Pupils and parents are 100% informed; - Comparison of S5 exam results of school year 2017-18 and 2018-19 - Comparison of pass rates in year S1-5 in school year 2017-18 and 2018-19
Reference documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report on School Failures and Repeat Rates in the European Schools (2018-09-D-26-en-1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marking scheme of the European Schools: Guidelines for use (2017-05-D-29-en-3).

Priority 2	Implementation of the recommendations of the educational support evaluation report	
Cycle	Nursery, Primary and Secondary Cycle	
Who?	OSG	Schools
Main steps	<p>All short term highly important and important actions proposed in the action plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create the function of a ‘central coordinator for educational support and inclusive education’; - Provide all new teaching staff with relevant information; - Ensure that all schools have comprehensive and easy accessible school specific guidelines; - Establish clear procedures, criteria and responsibilities for assessing the requests for enrolment of children with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Define priorities based on the educational support evaluation report (implementation plan); - Prepare draft budget for 2020 that reflect the implementation of the recommendations; - Start with the implementation of the recommendations - Prepare a self-evaluation report about progress made.

	special educational needs; - Conduct an independent, external monitoring/evaluation concerning the inclusiveness of the policy of the European Schools; - Review the list of professions, which are included in the list of therapists; - Update classification of diagnosis used in order to fully correspond to the current understanding of difficulties and disabilities affecting to learning; - Improve statistical reports	
Expected result(s)	- Actions foreseen in the short-term (2019-20 school year) and classified as highly important and important implemented.	- Implementation plan for the recommendations - First measures taken to implement recommendations (to be further specified after reception of the report)
Performance indicators	- Number of implemented actions in comparison to foreseen actions.	- Number of implemented recommendations in comparison to total number of recommendations
Reference documents	2018-12-D-34-en-3: Draft Action Plan Educational Support and Inclusive Education	Educational support evaluation reports to be final after the meetings of the Joint Board of Inspectors and Joint Teaching Committee

Objectives related to administration and finance

As for the objectives related to pedagogy also the specific objectives (1-4) related to administration and finance have been agreed with the schools and have been presented and agreed by the Administrative Board meetings at the beginning of 2019.

Specific objective 1	Lead the implementation of the new Financial Governance structure	Respond at School level to the implementation of the new Financial Governance structure.
Who?	OSG	Schools
Main steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Centralisation of payments; the Central Accounting Officer and his team will gradually take over the signature in the online banking system; - Implementation of mirror accounts for schools outside of Belgium; - Sign off and transmission of the accounts 2018 by the Central Accounting Officer; - Compliance with new reporting obligations (Light Annual Activity Report to the BoG in April 2019, mid-year report about budget implementation and implementation of internal control system in July 2019). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Centralisation of second signature for payments. The Central Accounting Officer will gradually take over the signature in the online banking system of the Schools (replacing the Authorizing Officer). Close cooperation between the Schools and the team of the Central Accounting Officer is needed (Authorizing Officer, Central Accounting Officer, Accounting Officer Correspondents), target date: in the course of 2019, depending on recruitments for Central Accounting Officer's team; - Centralised sign off of the accounts 2018. The Financial Regulation 2017 foresees that the Central Accounting Officer signs of the accounts 2018. Close cooperation between the Central Accounting Officer and the Accounting Officer Correspondents is needed (Central Accounting Officer, Accounting Officer Correspondents, target date: 31.3.2019, final consolidated accounts: 15th July 2019) ; - New reporting obligations of the Secretary General (SG). Support from School side the preparation of a 'Light Global Annual Activity Report' to be presented at the Board of Governors in April 2019 (art. 103.6 FR 2017). Support from School side the preparation of a mid-year report (mid-July), including a budgetary statement and a summary report of the internal control system (art. 33.5 FR 2017) (Director, Deputy Director for Finance and Administration, Accounting Officer Correspondents), target date: July 2019.
Expected	Accounting Officer function fully centralized	

result(s)	Accounts 2018 signed off by Central Accounting Officer Reporting obligations met
Performance indicator(s)	n/a

Specific objective 2	Implementation of outstanding IAS recommendations: - Outgoing payments - Functionality for pupils' invoices	Support from School level the implementation of IAS recommendations: - Outgoing payments - Functionality for pupils' invoices
Who?	OSG	Schools
Main steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure and help the Schools and the OSG to implement a quarterly reconciliation of SAP and the online banking (Central Accounting Officer); target date: End 2019; - Ensure the automatic clearing of payments (OSG Head of Accounting, SAP team OSG), target date: End 2019; - Implementation of payment terms in SAP, re-activation of the payment term field (OSG Head of Accounting, SAP team, Internal Control Coordinator, Accountants), target date: End 2019; - Implementation of the possibility of direct debits in SAP (OSG Head of Accounting, SAP Team), target date: End of 2019. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation of a quarterly reconciliation of SAP and online banking (Accounting Officer Correspondent); target date: End 2019; - Implementation of the automatic clearing of payments in all Schools. It is important that the Schools support the OSG efforts with regular contacts with the local banks (SAP team OSG, Accountants, Deputy Director for Finance and Administration), target date: End 2019; - Implementation of payment terms in SAP, re-activation of the payment term field (SAP team, Internal Control Coordinator, Accountants), target date: End 2019; - Review open items on vendors and clear them (SAP team, Internal Control Coordinator, Accountants), target date: End 2019; - Implementation of the possibility of direct debits in SAP. It is important that the Schools support the OSG efforts with regular contacts with the local banks (SAP team OSG, Deputy Director for Finance and Administration, Accountants), target date: End 2019.
Expected result(s)	Related IAS recommendations ready for review	

Specific objective 3	Implementation of mandatory checklists for most important transactions	
Who?	OSG	Schools
Main steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop mandatory check-lists for most important transactions (Deputy Financial Controller, Internal Control Coordinator), target date: End June 2019; - Implementation of checklists in the OSG (Head of Unit Accounting, Accountants); target date: End 2019. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop mandatory check-lists for most important transactions (Deputy Financial Controller, Internal Control Coordinator), target date: End June 2019; - Implementation of check –lists in the Schools (Deputy Director for Finance and Administration, Accountants); target date: End 2019; - Define employee responsible for Internal Control in the School; train and involve gradually in activities related to the set-up and implementation of the internal control framework.
Expected result(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Related IAS recommendation ready for review. 	

Specific objective 4	Implement data protection regulations (General Data Protection Regulation 2018, GDPR)	
Who?	OSG	Schools
Main steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support the Schools in the implementation of the Data Protection Regulation (Data Protection Officer, Working Group) target date: End 2019; - Define and implement a procedure for the handling of pupil's medical data - Revise third party contracts and include necessary data protection clauses. Implement in newly created contracts and update existing contracts - Decide and develop a procedure for the sharing of pupil's data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Register data processing activities in the online Register of Processing Activities, available on the Data Protection SharePoint - Renew the data protection training for new staff members and refresh the training for all staff members in general

	with the Parents' Association.	
Expected result(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An harmonised policy in terms of data sharing for medical data in the Schools - Identification of the contracts that need data protection clauses, and creation of such clauses - Creation of a procedure for the sharing of pupil's data with the Parents' Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A completed Register of Processing Activities for each School - Key staff members applying GDPR standards in their data processing work - All staff trained in GDPR

Specific objective 5	Develop a training policy for AAS of the OSG	
Who?	OSG	
Main steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gather information from the AAS assessments and needs from the AAS - Develop a partnership with the EC and sign the extended SLA - Check national labor laws in terms of trainings - Prepare draft budget for 2020-2023 that reflects the implementation of the training policy - Define criteria for the access to trainings 	
Expected result(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An harmonised policy in terms of training for AAS - Creation of a procedures for the training requests - Creation of rules in case of AAS' departure 	

Specific objective 6	Security: Implement outstanding IAS recommendations related to security	
Who?	OSG Safety and Security Officer, Schools	
Main steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support and guide the Schools in the development of a generic risk register for security risks - Get legal advice needed in order to define role and responsibilities at central and at local level as well as the responsibilities of the safety and security committees 	
Expected result(s)	IAS recommendations ready for review	

Specific objective 7	Security: Implement a common access policy for ES
Who?	OSG Safety and Security Officer, Schools
Main steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finalization of the procedure 2. Acceptance of the procedure by all European Schools 3. Implementation of the procedure (2- 3 years, depends also on local authorities)
Expected result(s)	<p>Steps 1 and 2 done for all European Schools</p> <p>Implementation of step 3 in selected schools in Belgium</p>

The plan does not cover the ICT objectives. These are defined in full detail in the 'IT plan 2018-2022 of the European Schools' (2018-01-D-79-fr-3).