

Background document on the future Evere site in light of the PAD Défense zoning plan (19/12/2023)

State of play:

- There has been oral commitments made by Belgium, in the past and recently in December 2023 for the Evere site to be permanently allocated to EEB2, as expressed by BE within the Board of Governors.
- Based on this, decisions were made by the Board of Governors regarding the allocation of pupils and of the different linguistic section, in the overcrowding context and in the context of the decision to build a 5th European School in Neder-Over-Heembeek (decision in December 2022).
- Documents related to the zoning plan of the entire PAD Defense area do not reflect this commitment (for example EEB2 Evere site mentioned “temporary school”).
- The finally obtained wording of the Belgian Council of Ministers meeting of 13 May 2022 on our Evere site does not clearly allocate in a permanent way the Evere site to EEB2 as it refers to the prolongation of the temporary school of Evere through a new urbanism permit by the Brussels Capital Region.
- The Secretary General recently replied to the APEEE that the matter is being followed up with the Belgian authorities. The Secretary general also underlined that there was no change at this stage to the 2024-2025 enrolment policy.

Problems:

- **A new permit for after 2027:** a new permit would be needed for the EEB2 to keep using the Evere site after 2027. This is a strong conditionality, in a short timeframe.
- **Urban development possibly impacting the school in the future (mid-term):** As a result of the zoning plan, the surroundings of the school building would be impacted, even if the main school building would be secured. For example, the current bus parking space might become unusable/ Possibly other parts of the Evere site would be less usable or more difficult to access. The proper functioning of the school site needs to be secured.
- **Questions remains for use of the Evere site in the long term:** based on some information received at the public information session on the zoning plan, it remains unclear if the current modular structure fits the zoning plan in the long term.

Our position

The European school system needs to secure a permanent status of the EEB2 Evere site, not only for EEB2 but all European schools in Brussels. We need to reassurance at political and administrative level that we can have a functioning school in the short and long term. From our viewpoint it needs a prolongation of a permit of the current EEB2 school site beyond 2027, and funding for a permanent EEB2 school site in the same area in the long-term.

Actions taken:

- APEEE has been very reactive in contacting all stakeholders through all possible channels: request to access document to Belgian authorities, attendance the public information session organised regarding the zoning plan, emails/contacts with the Commission (a letter from APEEE to Commissioner Hahn to ask for his support is being prepared), with Board of Governors members and the Secretary General, with the other APEEEs, with the Belgian building authority (“Régie des Bâtiments”).
- Information sharing and coordination with the school.

- The APEEE, with the support of parents not part of the APEEE board has prepared a position to be submitted to the public consultation related to the PAD Defense zoning plan (deadline 22/12)

Next steps:

- Follow up on the clarification to be received from the Belgian government, at political level (Board of Governors and European Commission) and at administrative level (Régie des Bâtiments) on the short term (situation of the school after 2027) and on the longer term.
- Follow up on the overall situation on overcrowding and of the timeframe of the 5th school.