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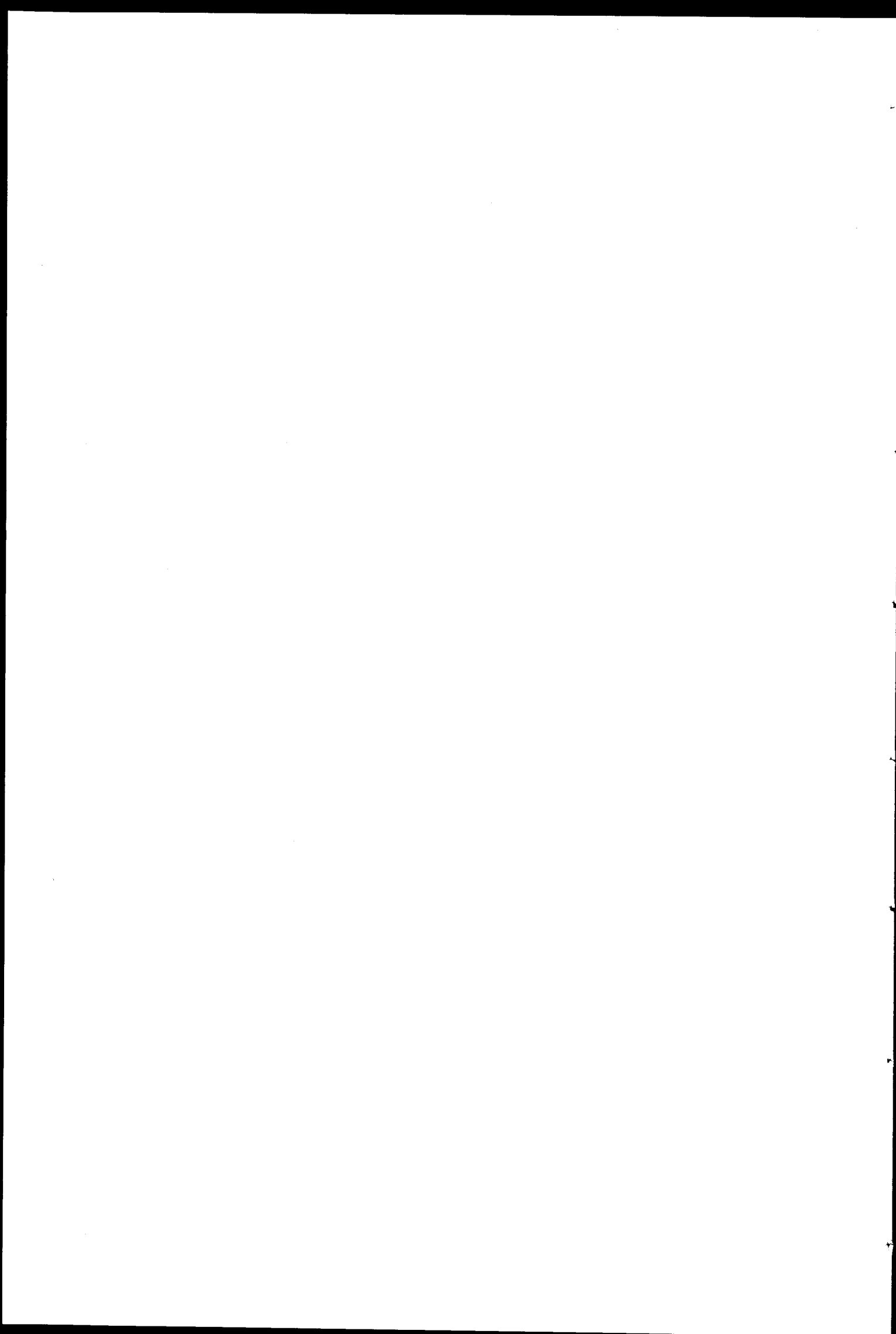
Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Cultural Affairs and Youth

on the European schools system

Rapporteur: Mr K.-H. WALKHOFF

PE 40.058/fin.



By letter of 16 October 1974 the Committee on Cultural Affairs and Youth requested authorization to draw up a report on the European schools system.

The President of the European Parliament informed the committee by letter of 12 November that the Bureau had given authorization on 20 October 1975.

On 23 October the Committee on Cultural Affairs and Youth appointed Mr Walkhoff rapporteur.

It considered the draft report at its meetings of 5 December 1974, 5 February 1975, 17 April 1975 and 22 May 1975 and unanimously adopted the motion for a resolution and the explanatory statement on 22 May 1975.

Present: Mrs Walz, vice-chairman and acting chairman; Mr Walkhoff, rapporteur; Mr De Sanctis, Mr Espersen (deputizing for Mr Thornley), Mr Früh (deputizing for Mr Pisoni), Mr Härzschel (deputizing for Mr Klepsch), Mr Laban, Mr Meintz, Mr Radoux (deputizing for Mr Calewaert) and Mr Suck.

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The Committee on Cultural Affairs and Youth hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution, together with explanatory statement:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

on the European schools system

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the statute of the European school of 12 April 1957, including the annexed agreement laying down regulations for the European baccalaureate;
- having regard to the protocol of 13 April 1962 on the setting up of European schools;
- having regard to the communication from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council of 11 March 1974 on education in the European Community;
- having regard to the statement of 13 January 1975 by the Commission of the European Communities on the implementation of the resolutions of the Council of Ministers of Education (Doc. 251/74)¹;
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Cultural Affairs and Youth (Doc. 113/75);

1. Refers to its resolution of 10 March 1966 on the European schools and their development², and to the resolution of 8 February 1972 on youth and educational policy in the context of the European Communities³;

2. Expresses its satisfaction at the existence of a European educational system which is able to teach children from the Member States from infancy to University entrance in their own mother tongues;

3. Expresses its appreciation of the joint tuition following harmonized curricula, which have to safeguard the possibility of integration or re-integration of children into their home countries' system;

¹ Debates of the European Parliament No. 185, January 1975, p.9

² Debates of the European Parliament No. 84, March 1966

³ OJ No. C 19, 28 February 1972, p.20

4. Is convinced that if the experience acquired is taken into account in future development, this school system could become an example for Community cooperation in the field of education and make a significant contribution to the promotion of European integration;
5. Considers it essential for admissions to the European schools to continue to be guaranteed to children of Community and European school staff;
6. Considers, nevertheless, that the European Schools should be more ready to admit the children of migrant workers from Community Member States than has been the case hitherto;
7. Therefore urges that the present criteria for admission should be amended accordingly;
8. Considers in this connection that there is also an urgent need to set up more European Schools in the areas where the Community institutions are based, and European schools already exist, as it is essential, for educational and functional reasons, that the generally accepted optimum pupil figures per language section or school should not be exceeded;
9. Takes the view that the increased admission of migrant workers' children will fail to achieve its purpose unless it is accompanied by the following measures:
 - (a) pre-school education must be given to these children with a view to breaking down educational and particularly linguistic barriers at the earliest possible stage,
 - (b) on completion of primary school, children must be assigned to classes on the basis of attainment rather than age,
 - (c) shorter school courses must be offered which do not lead directly to the baccalaureate but equip pupils for learning a skilled occupation,
 - (d) the language of the host country must be offered as a foreign language already in the primary school, since in socially under-privileged families, the children do not always acquire a satisfactory command of the local language;
10. Notes that no solution has yet been found for a common system of teacher secondment in the interests of the school;
11. Is of the opinion that the teacher recruitment procedures are in need of improvement and that fixed-period teaching contracts, in which the interests of the European Schools would have to be the primary consideration, will not be desirable or necessary until the need and occasion arise for

using experience acquired in the European school service in national education;

12. Continues to regard the setting up of an educational institute as of great importance with a view to researching curriculum development, suggesting solutions to educational problems, preparing the necessary reforms, providing introductory, advanced or refresher courses for teachers and generally organizing and scientifically testing the medical and psychological services, possibly with the aid of the Statistical Office of the European Communities;

13. Considers it necessary to accelerate educational reforms, taking into account national educational developments with particular reference to methodology and pedagogy, the organization of curricula, assessment of performance and the transitional and school-leaving examination systems;

14. Regrets that there is no instruction in community or social affairs in the European Schools and takes the view that the governments responsible for the European Schools should agree in the foreseeable future on the syllabus and nature of such a course;

15. Feels that a greater effort should be made than hitherto to acquaint the pupils of the European Schools with European Community affairs and the question of European integration in the context of the subjects covered by their school curriculum;

16. Considers it important for the pupils to be given systematic careers guidance which is not restricted to local arrangements and opportunities;

17. Proposes that the areas in which co-decision by the various groups involved with the European Schools is possible should be established without delay and their limits defined, care being taken to ensure a broader transfer of decision-making from central level to the schools, as such a system would be functionally more efficient than giving the groups involved the theoretical opportunity of exerting pressure at top level;

18. Calls on the Council of Ministers of Education, in consultation with the Board of Governors, to convert the European school structure within a reasonable period into a Community institution within the competence of the existing Communities and asks for appropriate measures to be taken in the short term to ensure more flexible administration in the European Schools and a more speedy implementation of the necessary reforms, e.g. by delegating responsibility at local levels and strengthening the Secretariat of the Board of Governors;

19. Shares the view of the Commission of the European Communities that it should regularly be informed of the reports by the Board of Auditors on the implementation of the European schools' budget, and of the annual report of the Board of Governors;

20. Asks its committee responsible to keep a watching brief on the development of the European schools and to report to Parliament on this matter as necessary;

21. Instructs its President to forward this resolution and the report of its committee to the Council and Commission of the European Communities, and to the Board of Governors of the European schools.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENTA. Introduction

1. As long ago as 1965, the European Parliament, at the suggestion of its then Research and Cultural Affairs Committee, carried out a thorough investigation of the European Schools and their development¹. This led to the adoption at its sitting of 10 March 1966 of a resolution stating among other things that its relevant committee should give further consideration to how the European schools could be accorded their rightful place within the context of the cultural cooperation it was desired to institute at European level, and how institutional links between the schools and the Community could be established when the Communities were merged.

So far, the European schools have been run by a Board of Governors, an inter-governmental body made up of ten members, only one of whom represents the Commission.

2. In 1972, the European Parliament turned its attention again to the European school in connection with a proposal from the German government to increase the number of European schools, in particular to encourage free movement and the mobility of migrant workers who were often hindered by schooling difficulties².

3. Since little was done to implement the specific recommendations made in the resolution cited and its explanatory statement, and in order to emphasize the necessity of renewed study of certain important problems the European schools were still having to deal with, the Committee on Cultural Affairs and Youth tabled, during the discussion of the draft budget in 1974, a proposed modification, reducing the budget for the European schools by 1 u.a.

4. In the discussion of the proposed modification, which was unanimously adopted by the plenary sitting of 13 November 1974, Mr Ortoli, on behalf of the European Commission, expressed his satisfaction that the European Parliament had again brought up the recommendations made in 1966.

5. As a result, during last year, various contacts were made with the representative of the Board of Governors, and a working party from the Committee on Cultural Affairs and Youth made a visit to the European schools in Brussels, Luxembourg and Bergen.

¹Doc. 8/66

²Doc. 232/71

6. In discussions with representatives of groups involved in the system, the same main themes repeatedly arose.

7. This report therefore confines itself to certain specific questions requiring urgent solution in view of the steady growth in the school population and the effects of changing circumstances.

8. In particular, the abolition of discriminatory restrictions in the admission criteria, the legal position of the teachers, and the possibilities of educational, administrative and institutional reforms are discussed, and specific proposals made.

9. For matters not dealt with in this report, see the abovementioned resolutions in the reports by Mr Merten (Doc. 8/66) and Mr Hougardy (Doc. 232/71). Further, a brief survey of the operation and structure of the European schools is contained in Notice to Members PE 35.452.

B. Objectives, limits and extension of the European schools system

10. The general aim of the European schools is clearly described in paragraph 1 of the parchment, and in Article 2 of the statute, which states that 'The School shall be open to children of nationals of the Contracting Parties. Children of other nationalities may be admitted in accordance with rules laid down by the Board of Governors provided for in Article 8'.

11. It has proved in practice that the demand for admission to the European school from children whose admission is not obligatory, i.e. those belonging to the second (children whose admission has priority), third (children who may be admitted) and fourth (children whose admission may be considered provided they have the necessary linguistic knowledge to follow the education) categories in the general criteria of admission, greatly exceeds the number of places available.

12. In these criteria of admission¹, the following restrictions are made for children whose parents are not staff members of the European schools or the European Communities, or Euratom contractors, or do not belong to an organization or institution which has concluded an agreement with the Board of Governors:

- (a) such children may only be admitted up to the limit fixed by criteria intended to avoid the division or creation of a class, following the priorities set while striving to ensure the presence in the school of children belonging to all social classes;

¹ See PE 39.056/Annex

- (b) as far as possible, the equilibrium of the linguistic sections should be maintained (third and fourth category);
- (c) the intellectual qualities of the candidates should be taken into consideration (third and fourth categories);
- (d) in admitting such pupils, the headmaster is to take care to maintain, in each of the classes, a number of places which is sufficient to be able to admit, during the year, and without involving the division of classes, a reasonable number of children in the first and second categories.

13. The priority for admitting Community and European school staff children must be retained. Only when the number of pupils from this category for any class exceeds a certain limit can the class be split, and the Member States be obliged to second a new teacher to the European school.

14. Bearing in mind the fact that each class has to keep a number of places available at the beginning of each school year for the children of any Community staff who may change their place of employment, and that many of the places available are occupied by children whose parents belong to the national administration of one of the Member States (except for nationals of the country where the school is located) or are based in the area of the office of a Community institution because of functions with which they are entrusted by the Community, and are also not nationals of the country in which the school is located, it is clear that children who may be admitted (third category) cannot in fact be taken into the European school for lack of places.

15. An example is the large number of children whose written application for admission to the European schools in Brussels and Luxembourg could not be accepted in 1974¹.

It may be assumed that this number of rejected applications mainly come from migrant workers' children, and to those must be added those who after being rejected orally or by telephone could no longer face submitting a written application.

16. When the European schools were set up, entry to the system had to be based on more flexible criteria in order to allow the very functioning of the schools. Local circumstances did and still do mean that the limiting character of some admission criteria is not so sharply felt.

¹ OJ No. C 86, 1975, p. 16

17. However, at the present time, in which the national frontiers of the Community countries present no insuperable problems to the citizens of Community countries when accepting employment and hundreds of thousands of such citizens have settled temporarily or permanently in a Community country of which they are not nationals, the system of European Schools, which has disregarded this development, automatically takes on the character of a 'closed system'.

18. The responsibility for fulfilling the justified claims of migrant workers to good school education for their children without any discrimination with respect to sex, ideology or religion, social or economic origin is doubtless mainly that of the host countries, which enjoy the economic benefits accruing from the activity of citizens from other Community countries.

19. But the European Schools cannot be divested of responsibility in this question, if they are to live up to their origins as progressive institutions founded in a European pioneering spirit, and not become an anachronism in a changing world. They can and must contribute towards making the European ideal not only a matter for politicians and officials, but also credible for the citizens of Europe.

20. The majority of existing European Schools cannot fulfil this new task as things are, as the capacity of any school is limited for educational and organizational reasons. This limit applies particularly to schools with nine different nationalities and six language systems, already on the verge of collapse in certain cases because the proper capacity has been considerably exceeded.

21. For this reason further European Schools should be created where necessary where such schools already exist.

22. European Schools should also be founded in places which, although not the seat of Community institutions, are economic centres or industrial regions where the population includes a large number of citizens from other Community countries.

23. Once the extension of the European School system has been launched, the admission requirements for nursery sections, primary and secondary schools must be changed on the basis of the following principles:

- (a) The European Schools should be made accessible to children whose parents are Member State nationals, the distinctions made to avoid splitting classes being abolished, but with the retention of the provisions for children of nationals of the Member State where the European School is located;

- (b) Retention of the provisions in Point 4 of the present admission criteria applying to children whose parents are not Member State nationals, with particular regard to the fact that the mother tongue and not the nationality should be the decisive criterion.

24. In addition the age for admission to the nursery section should in general be reduced by one year, the above conditions being applied. Hitherto three-year-olds have only been admitted at the beginning of the school year if the expected number of four and five-year-olds was less than 30 per section.

25. This lowering of the entry age is necessary to break down the language and ability barriers created by environmental influences in early childhood.

The importance of pre-school education is recognized and particularly the fundamental necessity of contact, guided play, and the expansion of the experience available to infants, especially expatriate ones.

26. When these children are appropriately stimulated to spontaneous, independent action, and if their curiosity is awakened and expertly guided, they acquire a basic readiness for effort and consequently for learning. Interests may thus be formed which will repeatedly stimulate the learning effort.

27. For this reason your committee is of the opinion that pre-school education should be extended in each language section, integrated into the system of European Schools, and be open to all children subject to the changes in criteria for admission to the European Schools proposed above.

C. Recruitment, secondment and legal position of teachers

28. As is generally known, the legal position of teachers in the European Schools is still subject to national law. Since 1961 every new teacher has been informed that the provisions of national legislation have precedence over the provisions of the Staff Statute. The appointment and secondment of teachers is exclusively in the hands of Member State governments.

29. Appointments frequently fail to meet the requirements of the European Schools. Your committee therefore proposes an improvement in the recruitment procedure: the first step should be publication of a list of vacant posts in all the countries concerned. Governments could make a first choice among the applications, taking account of the European

School's specific requirements. A short-list should be drawn up mainly of teachers with the requisite language knowledge and the insight mentioned in the Staff Statute into the problems arising with an international school. After consultation with the inspector responsible and the school administration, the national authorities, working in cooperation with the European School, should give the teacher selected the opportunity for intensive theoretical and practical preparation for his new job in as far as this function is not carried out by a European Educational Institute.

30. At present, all teachers are seconded in the first place for one year, which is regarded as a trial period. Secondment then lasts four years. This can be extended by four-year periods at the instance of the Board of Inspectors, after consulting the headmaster concerned.

31. In practice, only Germany and Italy have so far placed restrictions on the period of secondment of teachers. In the case of Germany this generally varies between nine and thirteen years. For Italian teachers, the theoretical secondment period is fourteen years, including periods of service in Italian schools abroad. The reason given by the German authorities for recalling teachers is that the experience and knowledge they have gained at European Schools is needed at home. Your committee is unable to accept this explanation.

32. The recall of teachers which disregards the requirements of European Schools - for example the simultaneous recall of a large number of teachers of the same nationality or the same subject from one European School - jeopardizes the continuity of teaching. Recently, pupils in certain secondary classes had to organise their own teaching for several months since no teacher was seconded. This even threatened their baccalaureate examination.

33. A need for limited secondment to the European School might arise where national education authorities urgently need the experience and knowledge gained by teachers at European Schools. Here your committee has in mind the teaching of migrant workers' children in schools coming under national authorities. Teachers might also be justifiably recalled to train younger colleagues applying for European School posts.

34. As soon as these needs and possibilities exist in the Member States, a fixed secondment period could be laid down for all nationalities. The period devoted to this specific engagement at the European School should be so calculated as to allow the teacher to settle in thoroughly over a year or two and then teach at full stretch for a sufficiently long period to make a contribution to the educational development of the European School system.

35. Your committee considers that these conditions can be met by nine-year contracts with a possible three-year extension. Extension would be granted where personal or school interests so required.

36. In the interests of the school a special effort should be made to guard against simultaneous recall of several teachers and the appointment of new ones to the extent that the educational continuity of the school organization is seriously disturbed.

37. Claims to social benefits accumulated during service in European Schools should be fully respected on recall. There is a need for the introduction of a European pension fund.

D. Desired educational reforms

38. The European Schools have been and still are pioneers in the field of language teaching, modern mathematics, joint classes with harmonized curricula for pupils from different countries and different mother tongues and cooperation between teachers with different training and educational views.

39. Your committee considers that the European Schools' role in giving a European dimension to education should be highlighted more and that more use should be made of the experience gained in the European Schools without explicitly making it an example.

40. All the educational reforms to be carried out in the European Schools must take account of the following requirement: pupils leaving the schools must be able to fit back into their national education and, vice versa, pupils entering the school from a school under one of the national authorities must be in a position to follow the European School syllabus. This can only be guaranteed if the educational development of the schools is neither far ahead nor behind the schools of the Member States.

41. Efforts to carry out educational reforms while respecting this basic consideration could be helped by a European Educational Institute, the creation of which has been repeatedly called for from various quarters. Its work, in cooperation with European Schools, could take the following form:

- (a) The collection and assessment of statistical material needed for planned reforms (unfortunately there is still insufficient statistical information about the work of the approximately 700 teachers and 10,000 pupils at the six European Schools);

- (b) Observation and assessment of educational developments in Member States;
- (c) The furthering and scientific guidance of the various educational reforms;
- (d) The preparation of teachers applying for posts at European Schools for the demands which will be made on them there;
- (e) Further education of teachers at European Schools by means of systematic publications and compulsory courses and the organization of meetings with national educationalists at which, for instance, questions of the harmonization of teaching and text-books could be raised;
- (f) Organization and specialized guidance of psychological and medical services for pupils.

42. Some educational reforms will become very urgent when the admission requirements are relaxed and an increasing number of children of migrant workers are taken into the European Schools. This would mean an increased diversity of attainment levels in the different classes. Most of the children of migrant worker families have less advanced educational opportunities than the majority of children of officials of the European institutions. Failure to take this fact into account for teaching purposes will have unfortunate consequences. If teaching is directed towards the more capable students in order to maintain the previous level, the less capable students will hardly have an opportunity to fully develop their talents by the time they leave school. On the other hand if teaching is concentrated on the latter group, this will be to the disadvantage of those pupils who, usually thanks to social environment, are quicker to learn. The third possibility, tending towards the average level, is also unacceptable.

43. In order to give all pupils the best opportunity of personal development, the principle of classes based on age should, where possible and necessary, be replaced in the secondary school by the principle of classes based on performance, comprising pupils of approximately the same attainment level. It should be possible for pupils to be transferred to the next class above or below according to their performance. However, this will only work properly if the number of pupils in the individual groups does not exceed the maximum for efficient teaching and the learning and attainment potential of each pupil is kept under observation. The number of pupils at European Schools who have to repeat classes suggests that there is already an ability gap in classes based on age, and streaming according to ability should not be left until the situation has been aggravated after increased admission of migrant workers' children.

44. The European Schools are open to children of all social classes and, apart from the course leading to the school-leaving examination, must also offer shorter courses which provide the basis for training in skilled occupations which do not require university education.

45. According to the education statistics of the Statistical Office of the European Communities¹ the percentages of secondary pupils taking technical and vocational courses as opposed to academic courses developed as follows in the Member States in the period 1961 to 1971: in Germany it dropped from 17.1 to 14.3%, in France it rose from 18.3 to 22.6%, in Italy from 20.9 to 25.7%, in Holland from 41 to 52%, in Belgium from 41 to 52.3% and in Luxembourg from 27.8 to 45.3%. Apart from the development in Germany the number of pupils taking general academic courses has therefore dropped in comparison with those taking technical and vocational courses.

46. In view of these European figures, the fact that the shorter courses which were first offered 14 years ago, were not accepted by the pupils - or rather by the parents - at European Schools, and had to be stopped for lack of pupils, indicates that the European Schools occupy an unusual position as far as this problem is concerned. The reasons for this could be put down to a dubious conception of the European School and to the fact that there has so far been a lack of information about the possibilities open to pupils completing such courses.

47. Once such courses become a permanent part of the European School, and your committee considers this to be necessary if a change in the admission requirements produces a greater social spread of pupils, the careers information work, so far neglected, must be carried out on a large scale. One main aim must be to dispel prejudice. It is also possible that the term customarily used to describe these courses discourages pupils and it would possibly be a good thing to call the short school course a professional training course. It should also be possible for pupils completing such a course with particularly good marks to take a further course leading to the advanced school-leaving certificate.

48. As the vocational opportunities of pupils taking the shorter courses in the host country will depend to a great extent on linguistic achievements, the language of the host country should at all events be included as a foreign language in the curriculum of the primary school. In this connection your committee points to the fact that as a rule the socially disadvantaged migrant worker families cannot be expected to have a satisfactory command of the language of the host country and to be able to teach it to their children.

¹'Sozialstatistik' No. 6/1972, p. 141

49. The present European School curricula should be further developed. They should take more account than hitherto of the interests, experience, development and diversity of pupils.

50. Curricula and guidelines for a subject covering the possible forms of social and economic organization are an immediate requirement. Teaching in this subject, which could be called social studies or community studies, for example, is urgently necessary to prepare pupils to take their part as critical citizens in a free democratic constitutional state. Here it should also be borne in mind that European School-leavers, especially those who have specialised in subjects connected with sociology or social studies, have been at a disadvantage in terms of knowledge in comparison with pupils who had followed similar courses at secondary schools in the Member States.

51. According to information made available to your committee the introduction of the subject mentioned above has been made impossible so far by the failure of the governments responsible for the European Schools to come to agreement on the curriculum and content of the subject for teaching purposes.

52. The school curricula should also cover questions of European integration and the institutional character of the European Community. For organizational reasons these problems cannot constitute a subject in themselves and must be considered in the framework of other subjects when there is an obvious connection.

53. Your committee has been appalled to learn at first hand that young people who have successfully completed their studies at a European School are hardly able to say anything about the aims, function and organization of the European Community. It should be in the interests of our common policy to see that the European Schools also contribute to providing the information required for greater public understanding for the Community and that the public should realize that their own interests will be served by the European Community.

54. The present pupil assessment system should be reviewed as it is probably too rigid. If pupils are to be streamed according to ability new principles and forms of assessment are necessary.

55. Both parents and teachers have expressed misgivings about whether the decision on end-of-year promotion takes enough account of the pupil's ability to keep up with the next year's syllabus: if these misgivings are founded, action must be taken. Of course those responsible such decisions cannot fully overlook the results of the preceding school year. But improved performance or even a decline in performance due to psychological and environmental factors must be given special attention. The introduction of classes based on ability will present new problems here too.

56. Greater attention must be given to careers advisory services for pupils - such advice can only be efficient if it is systematic and worked out in cooperation with teachers. The distribution of written material to pupils is not considered to be adequate.

57. Until now, efforts to create careers advisory services in the individual schools have unfortunately been very disparate. They have been too dependent on local conditions and personal initiative. It must be considered a step in the right direction that the Board of Governors instructed the Inspectors to investigate the question of careers advice and submit recommendations in December 1974.

E. Cooperation between the groups connected with the European Schools

58. At present parents can participate by expressing their views in the enlarged meetings of the European Schools' Education Committee. Furthermore, they are full members of the administrative Boards and thereby participate in decisions. They may attend enlarged meetings of the Board of Governors. According to information from the Commission the parents' claim to put their views in the Education Committee was favourably received by the Board of Inspectors in February 1975. The Commission is even prepared to go one step further and consider 'increasing the role of parents in the Administrative Boards'. It states, however, that 'reasonable limits should be set in some areas - especially in the financial fields', and that there should also be the possibility of adapting this role to the special position of each school¹.

59. Your committee would welcome a discussion and decision by the authority responsible at the earliest opportunity on the areas in which teachers, parents and pupils could participate in the decision-making process with respect to the European Schools, a definition of the scope and limits of co-participation. The present situation in which co-participation varies from

¹ The Commission's comments on the replies by the Representatives of the Board of Governors to the questions by the European Parliament Committee on Cultural Affairs and Youth (PE 40.199, p.7)

school to school and depends on the good sense or goodwill of the headmaster, on the size of the school or local conditions and various other conditions, is unsatisfactory.

60. There could be a statute covering all the European Schools and laying down standard binding provisions for participation and co-determination. A possible model would be a Board of Governors in each school, in which each of the groups would be represented, whose responsibilities would embrace both teaching and administration.

61. The extension of co-determination to each individual school and the partial transfer of the formal power of co-determination hitherto exercised at the central level to the schools could mean that co-determination claims will be translated more effectively into reality. A reform of this kind would also benefit the operation of the European Schools.

62. It is noted with satisfaction that the Commission shares this view¹.

63. The special significance of co-determination rights for pupils in a genuine pupil administration should be noted. This could support education in practical democracy. Practising responsible democratic behaviour in elected bodies supplements theoretical knowledge and helps pupils to meet the responsibilities of a democratic society in later life.

F. Changes to the system

64. A central theme of the discussion on school reform is the system of European Schools, since while opening the way to certain developments, it also harbours potential obstacles. Despite a small number of reform plans which have been taken up or even realised, it must be concluded from the lack of progress so far in the sphere of educational reform and the adjustment of the intrinsic European School structures that the system is not conducive to development.

65. The fact that the Board of Governors meets only twice a year, is made up of the Ministers of Education or their representatives and has no uniform political will, has not allowed reforms to be carried out to the extent and within the period of time that occur in national education systems. The fact that reform plans worked out at the base have always to be passed through the Board of Inspectors and the Education Committee before being submitted

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The Commission's comments on the replies by the Representative of the Board of Governors to questions by the European Parliament's Committee on Cultural Affairs and Youth (PE 40.199, p.6)

to the Board of Governors for their final decision, and are not infrequently referred back for revision or correction, leads to unnecessary friction and delays. Examples of this are provided by the exceptionally long delays in the new version of the rules for the European Baccalaureate the lack of agreement on a common concept for social or community studies and the unfortunate course adopted in the attempt to establish a shorter professional training course.

66. In view of these circumstances your committee proposes that the demand already raised in the report by Mr Hougardy¹, for the European Schools to be brought under the Communities within a reasonable period of time, should be reaffirmed.

67. It is also proposed to call on the Ministers of Education to adopt measures, in consultation with the Board of Governors, to meet this demand in the short term and to take the necessary initiative.

68. Your committee regrets the fact that the Commission is not in favour of the proposal to attach the European Schools to a Community institution².

69. Your committee shares the opinion of the Commission that national inspectors should be given more time for this European School work and the Commission's view that matters would be considerably improved by extensive delegation of powers to a permanent body attached to the Board of Governors and to the preparatory committees, and by strengthening the Secretariat of the Board of Governors³. In contrast to the Commission, however, your committee considers such measures to represent no more than a provisional solution.

70. Finally with regard to the budgetary procedure, the following facts should be borne in mind;

(a) The European Schools' budget is financed from national resources and Community resources; the buildings are made available free of charge by the Member State in which they are located and each teacher continues to receive his or her national salary, the difference between the national salary and the salary at the European School being paid, like the running expenses,

¹ Doc. 232/71, para. 83.

² The Commission's comments on the replies by the representative of the Board of Governors to questions by the European Parliament's Committee on Cultural Affairs and Youth (PE 40.199, p. 8).

³ The Commission's comments on the replies by the representative of the Board of Governors to questions by the European Parliament's Committee on Cultural Affairs and Youth (PE 40.199, p.8)

out of funds from the budget of the Commission of the European Communities (See Chapter 43 of the budget).

(b) The general budget, although submitted separately by the six European Schools, is adopted each year in May by the Board of Governors;

(c) The Board of Auditors issues regular reports on the budgetary policy of the European Schools;

(d) The representative of the Board of Governors and the headmasters can make observations on this report;

(e) On the basis of the Board of Auditors' report and any observations by the Board of Governors' representative and the headmasters, the Administrative and Financial Committee draws up a final report for the Board of Governors, in the light of which the latter authorises the implementation of the budget.

71. Parliament as the budgetary authority for the Community share in the European School's budget has only a theoretical consultative voice, since the budget is already adopted in May by the Board of Governors, as the highest decisionmaking body, and simply recorded in the budget of the European Communities.

72. Studies must therefore be made of ways to straighten out this anomaly in the budgetary procedure and if possible give parliament authority over the allocation of the Community funds.

73. Your committee considers it very desirable for the Board of Auditor's report and the observations on it and the annual report of the Board of Governors' representative, to be sent to the European Parliament, so that the latter will be accurately informed about the budget and the functioning of the various schools, and in order to promote a dialogue with the educational authorities responsible.

G. Conclusion

74. Your committee is of the opinion that the European Schools still represent too much of a closed world in Europe. They are very isolated and developing too slowly. Despite this negative view, the European Schools have fully proved their right to continue to exist. It is strongly recommended that the structure of the system be improved and the numbers of pupils increased to give a genuine European dimension to the European schools.