

JTC meeting / Brussels / 8-9th February

Summary

Start of the meeting; welcoming of newcomers – general words.

ES Teachers Forum – short description:

Complex; starts in Parma in April 8th, keynote speech (multi lingual, cultural education, inclusion, sustainability, European democratic values – active citizenship)

In the afternoon workshops with European school teachers and teachers from the Italian system share experiences. Based on the 5 keynote speeches.

9th April: workshop coordinators meet again; present their findings, discussion between 2 experts on AI in education. Round table in the afternoon with all participants: “teacher” is the main theme (one of the Italian priorities); all members of the BoG talk about the future of education in the European countries.

New syllabus on French/Greek/Portugues/**Science Technology**

Offered to students; starting September 24; who will teach it? Only written communication has been provided so far; not complete document prior to the meeting.

What resources, training, support for teachers

Intervention about postponing the new course (AvK)

Intervention about the teacher training for this course (Paul)

Interparents: introduction in 2025 for Science (appropriate training of teachers!). Will all member states accept the new subject as a BAC subject? Yes

Irish intervention: the syllabus was sent to parents and teachers in September

Literature list L1 French in primary will follow

According to Inspector Mr Wolff the BoG decision on the new syllabus was made in 2022 and agreed by all; it will replace the Bio 2 course.

6 teachers were involved in developing the syllabus; external evaluation was added and Interparents input was taken into consideration. .

Qualification of teachers: reference in decision of BoG concerning Bio 2/4 and Chemistry 2/4 teachers. Any science teacher can do it (“with an open mind”); training sessions have to be offered once the syllabus is agreed. No written exam planned for this subject

Equivalence is given on the subject as it is part of the overall curriculum.

Syllabus should benefit the pupils which is why the inspectors want to implement it as soon as possible! It is flexible and gives more information than Bio 2; “easy” to teach

A Beckmann: echoes M Wolff and deputy SG. Stakeholders question the governance model; Does not see the need of a systematic consultation of ISDC (representing the teaching staff of European schools) for a syllabus. Otherwise too many people have to be involved and the process takes too long...

Students rep: appreciate the effort to create the diverse program. Implementation is as important than content. Timing too fast; as information sessions should be organized to allow students to make educated choices.

Will students that have chosen Bio 2 will take automatically the new syllabus? Yes; needs to be explained to students

Parallel choice Bio 2 and Science at the same time does not work!

CAPEEA supports the general idea of introducing a new subject that will replace Bio 2 periods. However we strongly advise against implementing this subject in September 2024. S5 pupils have already made their choices for the BAC cycle and might have to change again; it seems unlikely that enough teachers will be found/trained to teach the new syllabus in several languages. Information about the new subject was given too late so that stakeholders could not properly form an opinion

Transition measures will be put in place so that there will be a smooth transfer possible that “protects” student’s grade.

Point has been accepted! Implementation in 2024

Whole School Inspections in Alicante / Follow Up of WSI in Frankfurt / WSI in Karlsruhe

Frankfurt: follow up report is unclear? Actions have not been put in place

In Service Training should be performed, peer visits etc

Evaluation is negative as to implementation of follow up items/recommendations.

FFM director feedback: a new management team arrived at school; new members took positions in 2023; report could have been embellished but was not. Pisa showed excellent grades; BAC is among the best. Actions have been taken to maintain the high quality.

7 inspectors will come in March 23 to screen new teachers; they should take another look; the report was badly written; the directors wishes for a more motivating rather than demotivating language in reports in the future.

Karlsruhe has fulfilled the recommendations and implemented the follow up actions

Statistical report of Inclusive Education in ES in 22/23:

Main findings – decreasing number of pupils for learning/educational support (S1 compared to P5)

Number of students with special arrangements getting in the BAC cycle is increasing dramatically. (275 students in 2023 for the BAC). Trouble for schools to technically implement it.

Number of professionals for educational support dropped; but teachers stepped in.

Summary how to better manage inclusion:

Transition between cycles

Distribution of support

Mathematics and Learning to Learn in Secondary requires the most support

Special arrangements

Increase of Staff allocated to Educational Support / Assistants

Joint board of inspectors should express their opinions!

Commission rep: some questions need better analysis! But the ES is on a good path. However, finances to support the additional resources needs to be discussed

Implementing the regulations of the European Baccalaureate

Pool of questions is Danish and polish language will be implemented as a pilot project (rather than coming up with new BAC questions every year). Questions prepared are by single teacher for a larger or smaller group; covering the entire syllabus; more questions to choose from. No hand-picking of questions.

Arrangements for implementing the regulations: most changes are related from the COVID lifting and getting back to “normal”

“Suggested answers”: difficult for some subjects such as Humanities, Philosophy; “Suggested answers or marking guidelines” should be used

Late SWALS arrivals in S6: pupils can use a dictionary but won’t have two examination papers in different languages.

Communication of results in internal meetings: other people might be invited at the discretion of the directors.

Leads to clarity of adapting existing practices; no fundamental changes

What is an absence without valid reason? Pupils should be given the opportunity to assist the BAC even if they have missed the Pre-BAC. -> the director should decide if the reason is valid or not.

Follow Up of recent reports of the European BAC:

New recommendations of the Irish presidency; conclusion of the current status. No changes

Commission sees the list of recommendations. Is this just an information point? Are there next steps?? Action plan?

Interparents: why are some recommendations implemented and some not? Last presidencies have suggested harmonized assessments, improve translation, equal assessment in the oral exams etc... Will the BAC unit implement those recommendations over time? Yes, partly and as much as possible

Teaching Standards (ES only):

Should be made more friendly and more “*effective*”/“*highly effective*” and visible. WG final comments was discussed with JB of Inspectors on Feb 7th; suggestions for improvements were made. Changes should be approved and then be implemented in September 25. Including incorporation of inspector’s feedback during this week.

Updated version is more user-friendly for parents. Professional responsibilities are welcome. Suggestions have been taken on board.

Clear timeline when highly effective practice in place?

Inclusion of special needs?

Lesson planning should be a written document to facilitate quality replacement assessment: outcome of assessment should be documented!

Not clear how standards will be used for teachers? Consequences for Teachers who are “only” effective; good evaluation will not make it “safe” for teachers

Group cannot approve the document which is not the final version.

Difference between “effective” and “highly effective”? No one can be highly effective all the time (Alex) – teaching is difficult and effective should be enough. Needs to be added to the document. Parents should send their comments to Alex and vote in October. WG is working into the right direction in general. Feedback will be taken into account.

S4-S6 Summative assessment:

Competence-based assessment in the higher classes vs exam based control of knowledge should be reinforced. Has been discussed for 2 years in the working group; Changes for S4 in the general rules have been discussed previously and adopted.

S5: new -B-tests are not examinations; should be harmonized (1st semester)

End of year examination, unchanged

S6: harmonization for B-test recommended for first semester; Exams at year end must be harmonized; not over emphasize on assessment and focus on teaching. Or apply alternative assessments.

Junior achievement certificate should be introduced after S5

Interparents: competence-based education is good; exam dates in S5 should be extended; exam days should be standardized (not to overburden students)

First Semester B-test should be done at the end of semester.

A-tests should be looked at now to harmonize the approach

ES Pupils:

Gradual transition to BAC style exams is important! Joint setting of exams is good

B-tests: clarification on language (2p, 2consecutive periods, time??) clarification on length

No more than 1 B-test a day, 3 per week; a 3 week period is important

Exams should not be the same than B-test

According to an internal survey, 67% of the students DO NOT want to REMOVE examination period in S5 / S6!

Alternative assessments are appreciated and should be implemented;

CoSa does not want to accept the document as it is as they don't feel prepared enough for BAC exams

ISCT Teachers:

Don't feel well represented in the WG of assessment! Some concerns:

Organization of B-test of S5/S6; Extra time for students needed; Number of exams

Structure of B-tests?? Not clear

ES Directors:

Practicality is not clear; consent of head of secondary should be collected first

AES Director:

The students are not enough equipped for their written exams if the document will be accepted as it is.

Deputy directors are all against it. Harmonization within the system is important.

CAPEEA points out that they were not part of the working group. Furthermore, they do not support the change of assessments in S6 (keep it to two sets of exams) in order to mentally better prepare the students for the BAC exams. They welcome the harmonization process for exams across all schools, but strongly advise to keep the system in place as it is. Aware of the fact that CAPEEA does NOT have a vote.

M Wolff:

S6: stakeholders were against keeping 2 exams in S6 to lower the burden; the best preparation for BAC is not to “push the students to exams”.

S5 Exam will be replaced by B-tests across the semester

S6 Exams will remain in place, but harmonized; first half year exams should be replaced by B-tests

Flexibility should be given to perform alternative assessments

Finland inspector: have given full support to the proposal. Moving towards competence-based learning is important and the syllabus has already moved into that direction. Competence based assessment should be the next move. (Manuel)

CONCLUSION (Max Wolff):

S4 remains the same; S5 unchanged in terms of exams; exams must be harmonized among ES/AES schools

S6: harmonization of exams in 2nd semester. Reduce number of exams in terms of subjects; as of 2025, only B-tests at the end of first semester should be implemented (harmonized)

The accreditation of Madrid went through and was well received. An existing school will be changed into an AES. One secondary, one primary school were reunited into a European School; the queen visited the school and was impressed

Framework for Work Experience (WEX) and the citizenship action for all programme (CAAP):

Is applied in S5 but also S4/S6; should not take time during school time: strongly recommended all students do at least one; students could do more; sample schedule to put in place.

Curriculum should reflex it. Legal points have been discussed; personal reflection on it has a high weighting in the decision making. Must be completed before getting the junior certificate.

Report of the AES Working Group

Large working group that meet frequently.

Challenges of increase of AES over past years. Based on EP report that voted for further increase of the system (meaning any new ES has to be an AES)

7 topics that summarize the situation; some of them (such as cost neutrality) have been discussed in the past.

With the current structure (audit, office etc) the current number of schools and even further growth in next 5 years can be dealt with; structures are “fine”

Challenges from governance:

- National law is observed; also, for financing
- But also following ES laws for pedagogical matters
- Areas of conflict?
 - o Some but can always been solved with the help of national delegations
 - o AES are officially represented by the heads of delegation within for BoG proposal: add a director as an observer within the BoG meetings could improve the communication?
- Cost neutrality was discussed in length; for the time being: “freeze the estimated contribution do an equivalent of 7,4 FTE “
- No proposal was accepted by the BoG
- The AES are “visible” and visibility has improved; observer status should be implemented for the BoG
- Quality Assurance:
 - o Compliance audit and WSI should be combined for AES in order to maintain quality assurance;
 - o “fourth option” will be developed further (earlier BAC audit, implementation of a follow up cycle, mandatory use of national QA mechanisms, more involvement of the national inspectors, more in-depth lesson observations)
- Participation in continuous professional development (CPD): AES teachers are participating already; good progress has been mad

Kristin:

Cost neutrality is a problem for the directors; the OSG workload concerns more the BAC students and not the number of pupils overall. Therefore, only the number of S5-S7 students should be taken into account for calculating the AES fees. New schools should not be at the expense of existing schools. New schools should pay an entrance fee to get into the system (costs of accreditation etc). -> clear refusal from A Beckmann

Quality assurance: concern about the number of inspectors needed; system already set up in 2024 and included in the 7,4 FTE. Cost effect must be calculated for the quality assurance.

Majority of AES are established due to a political decision; budget is under scrutiny. If AES are growing, existing school cannot bear the costs

AES Teacher:

Communication after the audit findings/recommendation should be made with one teacher rep present in the room. Visibility: 2nd teacher rep should be present in the JTC

Possible costs are still very vague in the documents. Clear sheet should confirm that there are no additional costs for the Commission

Finnish delegations: has already commented in the past; supports quality assurance measures; but financial estimations for the member states are needed before committed.

CAPEEA suggest to add a section in the dossier of conformity (new ones as well as revisions) that describes the role and responsibilities of parent associations. As of today

within the 23 existing AES parent association do not have a harmonized structure/responsibility and in many cases do not have stakeholder governance nor are they part in administrative boards. That makes coordination between CAPEEA difficult as much as with Interparents and lowers motivation for new parents in the PA.

Interparents: wants closer alignment in quality assurance; agree on compromise under the existing financial model. Stakeholder governance should be integrated in the dossier of conformity

Dossier of conformity de Copenhagen / update :

In 2023 : 900 students, 3 sections

2015 opening (2 sections) English and Danish; in 2018 French as a new L1 section

In 2023 first BAC with the new languages

Interparents: min number of sections in AES should be 2 as in ES it has to be 3

SWALS should be added everywhere; AES WG should talk about adding SWALS teaching

Update of dossier of conformity – Strassburg:

2008 opening

1000 students

New director in 2023

There are 3 language sections (EN, DE, FR) + L3, L4

SWALS can be accepted as long as there are more than 5 students present

Presentation of the External Review of the Whole School Inspection methodology (Irish Inspector – J Ui Choitealbha) – currently relevant for ES

General desk based and on-site research about the relevance of WSI / self-assessment and its impact for schools.

Intended purpose of the WSI; are parental and pupil voices heard enough?

External evaluation and composition of WSI works very well; focuses on the overall effectiveness of the school and quality of education; lessons observed etc

Also school self-evaluation helps

Improvement: quality of education should be defined; how is it measures and communicated?

Feedback is given; should be more specific as it tends to be generic; give clear action items and timeline for follow up is necessary.

What does analysis and comparison mean exactly?

The model is helpful; but there is a misalignment between inputs and outputs of WSI; lots of preparation and work, but who is the report for and what happens after?

More online CPD (career professional development) should be offered; evaluative language should be used to make it easier to understand; give more specific recommendations to make it easier for schools to follow up

The format of school self-evaluation should be used; increase teacher agency in the process such as involvement of teachers across schools in creating lesson observation and feedback templates. As of now: lessons are observed and “we move on”.

IP: WSI has overlooked rule of administrative boards (in addition to directors) as they are accountable for the development of the school. They should be included.

The review has missed the link between the WSI and the annual planning documents/activity reports as those guides the schools for their targets and timelines.

Creates a weakness in the analysis

Link between WSI and teacher evaluation is missing

External review remains at the high level; the system will not capitalize on its findings.

Therefore: what are the next steps/action plan following the report

Irish delegation: How to foster more teacher engagement? Teacher reps requested a meeting after the inspection with the WSI team which finally clarified the findings.

ISTC: happy that teachers were included in the meeting; suggestion of reduction of class visits is good. Does that mean: longer duration of each visit? Oral feedback session with inspectors should be mandatory for the teachers

Sec General: follow up process should be improved/monitored. There is a clear link between the WSI/follow up and annual plans. WSI should be seen separately from quality assurance and teachers evaluation.

Feedback should be constructive and motivating as some schools don't feel motivated after the WSI report; needs to change;

Action Plan: reflecting on the future of the ES system / Follow up:

- Separate document + presentation slides in appendix

CoSea asks for a stronger integration between AES and ES as AES will drive the growth over time.

Interparents asks for more focus on quality assurance; more CPD, clearer time-line for follow up steps (deadlines are too long)

ISTC: teachers reps welcome the CULT report; recommendations should be treated with urgency! Several points of actions have no deadline!

The parliament is not a stakeholder but represented by the Commission.

ISTC would like to move faster with the implementation of the action plan.

Admin cluster: only applied to traditional schools. Working groups only for commission and 5 delegations + office; no parent reps (no Interparents); follow up working groups can include CAPEEA and AES bodies.

Long conversation about the election procedures for pupil representatives (COSUP). On this matter: what is the election procedure for pupils Reps in your relevant schools? (min age, class, number of reps etc).

CoSea: wants to be included in the document and the election process! Same would be true for parent representation and election process. According to A Beckmann, nothing can be done currently for "legal reasons" (different admin framework);

During the AES conference in October this matter should be discussed again and with the help of delegations solved.

Presentation of the Training for Educational Advisors:

Mainly valid for ES;

Ambitious tasks are given to educational advisors. (well-being of pupils, behavioral, disciplinary roles)

Annual pedagogical priorities 2024/25 – proposal

Presentation from A Beckmann attached; for the time being only valid for ES not AES.

Closure of the meeting!