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Parents Association of the European School Brussels IV Aisbl  
Elternvereinigung der Europäischen Schule Brüssel IV Aisbl  
Associazione dei genitori della Scuola Europea di Bruxelles IV Aisbl  
Oudervereniging van de Europese School Brussel IV Aisbl  
Асоциация на родителите на учениците от Европейско училище Брюксел IV Aisbl  
Asociația de părinți a elevilor de la Școala Europeană din Bruxelles IV Aisbl  
Euroopa Kool Brüssel IV Vanematekogu Aisbl



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# **Transport Service Annual Activity Report 2022-2023**



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# 1 Transport

## 1.1 Overview

1. The Transport service is run by a team of four APEEE employees. There is a Board member who follows the service. The transport working group comprising members of the Board has been reactivated in October 2023<sup>7</sup>. Parents are reminded that they are welcome to join ad hoc working groups such as the transport working group.
2. The transport service continues to grow. During 2022 – 2023, there were a total of 166 routes and 2529 children enrolled.
3. During 2022 – 2023, the service confronted a number of challenges which we acknowledge caused unacceptable disruptions for a number of users. This is reflected in our statistics on punctuality (many afternoon buses were late) and in a high number of cancellations which affected both morning and afternoon routes. These issues were, in large part, caused by factors outside of the control of the service or indeed, the APEEE. For instance, there remained a shortage of bus drivers in Belgium. This meant that when drivers were ill, often they could not be replaced leading to cancellations. Finding bus monitors has also proven problematic. The balance of negotiating power between the APEEE and bus companies has radically shifted and many companies no longer wish to service routes that go outside the perimeter of the ‘ring’. Inflation has added pressure to the negotiations. Demand is higher than the offer for some routes leaving the APEEE with very limited choices as to whom services can be contracted with.
4. To respond to these difficulties, as announced at the previous AGM, the service underwent a significant process of rationalising the routes. This involved extensive changes to the network. The decision was taken to downsize the network to better balance the number of lines each bus companies would have to service (reducing supplier dependency), and avoiding contracts with companies which serviced one trip a day, which wouldn’t cover the cost of the driver’s salaries.
5. During 2023, the APEEE also purchased new software, Together School, which will facilitate the monitoring of the service and communication with parents. This software is being rolled out across the routes progressively. This is part of an overall strategy to digitalise and modernise certain aspects of the organisation of the routes and management of the service.
6. Finally, to increase the number of monitors, it is now possible for students in upper secondary to apply to be a bus monitor.
7. Regrettably during the year 2022-2023, the service continued to confront issues caused by users. These included parents placing their children on buses in which they were not enrolled (especially during the back-to-school period), repeated poor discipline by certain students in some instances leading to exclusions from the service, and aggression towards monitors and staff by parents dissatisfied with the service. We take this opportunity to remind parents that we have a zero-tolerance policy of abusive behaviour towards our staff, including drivers and monitors.

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<sup>7</sup> This is technically outside the reporting period for this activity report.

8. Finally, whilst the service was managed during 2022 – 2023 by long-serving APEEE board member Victoria Petrova, in October 2023 she stepped down. We take this opportunity to thank her on behalf of all parents for her years spent running the service.

## 1.2 Statistics for 2022 – 2023

### 1.2.1 *Enrolments*

Situation and evolution (comparison with previous year - indicated in brackets)

There has been a steady increase in enrolment, but less than last year for the morning.

#### **A. Mornings**

2567 pupils registered (+29, compared to +34 the previous year) for 330 stops (-46, compared to -2 the previous year), 53 buses (-3). The average occupancy rate is 92% (+4%, compared to -1% the previous year)

#### **B. Return trips**

First departure at 3.20 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday:

➤ 310 stops (-10, compared to +5 the previous year), 32 buses (-1, compared to -3 the previous year) including 4 daycare centres (-1) for 1465 pupils registered (-38, compared to -60 the previous year). The average occupancy rate of the buses for the 3.20 pm departure (excluding childcare centres) is 87% (-5%, compared to -3% the previous year).

Second departure at 16.10 on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday:

➤ 352 stops (-3, compared to +15 the previous year), 35 buses (+1, compared to +1 the previous year), including 2 buses serving most "Garderie" destinations, for 2138 pupils registered (+137, compared to +196 the previous year). The theoretical average occupancy rate of the buses for the 4.10 pm departure is 115% (+4%). This value reflects the number of registrations, not the number of pupils actually present on the bus and is due to student registered to take the 2<sup>nd</sup> departure after their extracurricular activities.

Wednesday noon:

➤ 372 stops (-2, compared to +12 the previous year), 52 buses (-1, compared to -2 the previous year), including 4 to childcare centres, for 2615 registered pupils (+50). The average occupancy rate, excluding daycare buses, is 98%. • Friday lunchtime at 1pm: 4 buses (going to 4 central OIB nurseries + the Drop OFF Merode) for 104 (+4, compared to -9 the previous year) registered pupils.

### 1.2.2 Punctuality and cancellations

The punctuality figures have been particularly bad for the return trips. There were 852 recorded instances of late buses on the afternoon routes, almost double recorded instances for the previous year. Whilst the figures on the am routes are less striking, there were a higher percentage of buses that were cancelled.

## Punctuality

➤ Percentage of buses on time to school in the morning (before 8.10 am): 90% (compared to 87% in 2021-2022).

## Cancellations

➤ In the morning: the number of cancellation was twice the previous year's (167 against 88 in 2021-2022).

➤ On the return trips: 82 against 65 in 2021-2022 (and note that for the past 10 years, the average had been of 3 a year, with the most being 6 in 2018-2019).

### 1.2.3 Childcare centres served

The lines maintained are: Barnepark, Cole, Geneve, Van Maerlant, Wilson.

### 1.2.4 Bus monitors

➤ Number of regular bus monitors (minimum 20 hours worked during the year):

ALE	37
Bnvl/volunteer	10
contrat APEEE	21
GCS	3
Students	20

*Josephine Norris*