



European Central Bank's Trade Union

ECB Staff Union calls on ECB to use its influence to end overcrowding at European School Frankfurt

The European School Frankfurt (ESF) offers schooling in most of the European languages, and the right of admission for ECB staff children to the ESF is a very important element and contributing factor for families when deciding to move to Frankfurt. Based on the Headquarters Agreement with the German government locating the ECB in Frankfurt, the German government has to provide adequate schooling facilities for children of ECB staff, with the EU Commission paying the running costs.

The ESF was initially opened in 2002 for 800 children from the ECB, other EU institutions located in the Rhine-Main area, and other children from the area. Since 2008, plans for enlargement of the ESF have been refused. In 2011, the ESF reached its capacity and subsequently was in breach of this limit when it installed container classrooms on free space inside the ESF perimeter. In September 2013, the existing container classes were replaced by two-storey container classes to enlarge capacity. Common facilities such as the sports hall or canteen are still based on a capacity of 800 children.

The ECB has stated repeatedly in the past that the ESF has to comply with its duty to provide a place for any child of an ECB staff member. On 22 January 2014, in the ESF Administration Board meeting, the ECB stated that, based on the planned headcount increase due to the recruitment for the SSM, at least 350 additional children will need a place at the ESF in September 2014, with 650 - 1,000 additional children when the SSM is fully staffed.

The City Council of Frankfurt has offered an adjoining piece of land to enable the ESF to enlarge its facilities. At the extraordinary meeting of the ESF Administration Board on 25 March 2014, a potential solution could not be decided upon as invited representatives of the Federal Republic of Germany did not attend.

If no solution is agreed very soon, the ESF will have to declare a moratorium on admissions for the school year starting September 2014, for all registrations from February 2014 onwards. Such a moratorium has never been necessary in the over 60 year history of the European Schools, and would impact the children of all existing ECB staff, of any future employee, staff of other EU institutions in the Rhine-Main area and families from the area who have registered their child for the ESF.

We understand that this moratorium by the ESF might further impact the recruitment required to ensure adequate staffing of the new European Banking Supervision area at the ECB. Full operations are expected to start by November 2014, when the ECB will assume the responsibility of directly supervising 30 banking groups and 100 systemically important banks in Europe. We have indications that the existing overcrowding and situation at the ESF might have already impacted on the decisions of potential non-German candidates to opt for a position at the ECB.

IPSO is the only recognised trade union at the ECB. It represents 42% of permanent staff.

Frankfurt, 26 March 2014

In the interest of the service and the multicultural composition of ECB staff, **IPSO considers such a situation unacceptable and not in the interest of the citizens of the European Union.** Therefore, **IPSO** supports the Parents Association of the ESF and **calls upon the German government to comply with its contractual duties and provide adequate schooling facilities,** as laid down in the Headquarters Agreement. Furthermore, **IPSO calls upon the ECB to support the Parents Association and to use its influence with the German government and the European Commission.**

If you would like more information, or to schedule an interview, please call:

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