

**Vice-President**

D 202332 23.10.2018

Mr Günther Oettinger  
European Commissioner in charge of Budget and Human Resources  
European Commission  
Rue de la Loi, 200

1049 - BRUSSELS

Dear Mr Oettinger,

I write to you in my capacity as chair of the EP Bureau's High Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity, further to a meeting we organised on 25 September 2018 with representatives from the European Schools and their stakeholders on the subject of inclusive education for pupils with special needs and disabilities.

The High-Level Group considers the inclusivity of the working environment to be a fundamental prerequisite for the creation of a safe, positive, and productive workplace. Furthermore, this inclusivity is only fully developed to the extent that it is applied to all facets of staff members' working lives, including the education of their children.

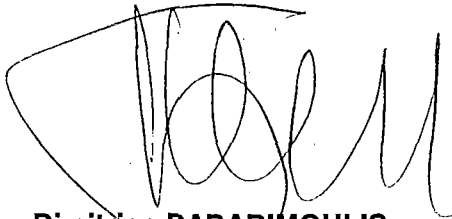
The European Schools have established a working group to implement the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: "The Committee recommends that the European Union take the necessary measures to ensure that all students with disabilities receive the reasonable accommodation needed to enjoy their right to inclusive quality education in European schools. It also recommends that European schools implement a non-rejection policy on the grounds of disability and ensure inclusive, quality education for all students with disabilities"

In this connection, several systemic issues came up in the course of the aforementioned meeting, such as, *inter alia*:

- There is a shortage of suitably qualified staff to support pupils with special educational needs;
- While all pupils should have equal access to learning opportunities, it is also crucial that they enjoy equal achievement opportunities. For this reason, the European Schools should be encouraged to expand the curricula they offer beyond the European Baccalaureate, in order to enable as many students as possible to obtain qualifications, which will set them up for appropriate further education or employment.

Parliament is committed to ensuring that children with disabilities of EU staff can benefit from an inclusive education, in accordance with the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabilities. I should therefore be very grateful to hear from you what steps the Commission is considering taking or recommending in this regard so that our Institutions can work together to ensure that the European Schools become fully inclusive. The High Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity and I personally, are committed to follow up and closely monitor the situation on such a sensitive and important issue.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dimitrios Papadimoulis', written in a cursive style.

**Dimitrios PAPANIMOU**

Vice-President of the European Parliament

Chair of the High-Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity