

European elections 2019

ECNAIS proposals for a Europe of the people, united in diversity

On the 26th of May 2019, the European elections will take place. Under the treaties, Education is a competence of the Member States. However, the European Parliament, as a political institution, has a fundamental role in promoting the construction of a European Union of States that act according to the European Charter of Fundamental Rights (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX%3A12012P/TXT>).

Article 14 of the ECFR enshrined the freedom of education in the following terms: “The freedom to found educational establishments with due respect for democratic principles and the right of parents to ensure the education and teaching of their children in conformity with their religious, philosophical and pedagogical convictions shall be respected, in accordance with the national laws governing the exercise of such freedom and right”.

This fundamental right within the EU was considered in the June 2019 resolution of the Parliament with respect to the Modernization of Education in Europe (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P8-TA-2018-0247+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>). This resolution was approved by a large majority and should be followed up by the new Parliament.

For ECNAIS, with respect for national sovereignty in Education, there is space for the European Institutions to build on what is accepted in respect to freedom of Education. We therefore present concerns and proposals that should be addressed during the next mandate of the European Parliament.

Freedom and diversity in Education – notwithstanding the diverse regulations regarding independent schools at the national level, all Member States must respect the right of civil society to found educational establishments according to parents` religious, philosophical and pedagogical convictions. In accordance to this, members of the European Parliament, when acting in the sphere of education, should be committed to the non-imposition of uniform educational models and to the removal of undue barriers to diversity in education, including financial ones.

Diversity and participation – independent education should be heard by the Parliament and its right to participate in ongoing processes of decision should be respected and fostered by the members of the Parliament.

Recognition and support – considering that 18,7% of students in Europe study at an independent school, the European Parliament, should constitute an intergroup on the freedom of education and independent schools.

We appeal to the candidates from all parties and countries to adopt freedom of education as one of the leading issues of their program for the European elections.

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