



Right to Education: Freedom of Choice

The exercise of such freedom and such right, materialized accordingly to national laws, is plural and diverse.

Freedom of choice: a pre-condition to the right to education

International organizations such as the World Bank and the OECD regularly release evidence concerning the ability to produce and use knowledge as a major factor in development, wellbeing and economic growth thus through education. Quality of education is generally taken as one of the keys to solve complex social inequality. Ultimately the EU set targets for education in the 2020 strategy.

The right to education includes the freedom to found educational establishments with due respect for democratic principles

The public arena is no longer occupied by single players with dualistic and fragmented roles. Nowadays networks of collaboration and partnership strongly embedded in the civil society attract more and more citizens who share with each other a growing social responsibility based on diverse cultural, religious, philosophical or pedagogical convictions. Beyond the obsolete 'public' versus 'private' dichotomy more promising solutions and more convenient educational provisions are made available.

The right to education includes the right of parents to ensure the education and teaching of their children

The educational systems of EU countries seek to promote the highest quality. From the moment children are considered as individuals and as the most important target group of the education system. Parents' expectations and wishes are to be taken into account (besides the strong correlation between parental commitment and children achievement). Therefore parents should be offered access to instruments (legal, financial or others) to overcome specific constraints, enabling the right to choose school for their children.

Diversity of responses as a foundational pillar of democracy

The original and unique local, regional and national combination of policies, institutions and programs (initiatives and investments) together with schools and teachers initiatives generate a variety in



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education enhancing quality. There are no children alike as there are no schools alike. The possibility to innovate and the diversity of ethos connected to autonomy, responsibility and accountability have shown that the independent education sector has been fuelling change and innovation, with its own knowledge and practical experience, throughout the whole educational system.

Time it is to inform the recently elected European Parliament specially the Culture and Education Committee and the newly invested Commission of the multiple dimensions of freedom of choice and the multiple roles of different players: learners (either children or adults), parents, teachers, communities and ultimately schools as crucial organizations for social cohesion.