

## **More than 20 organizations from all over Europe sound the alarm: "School segregation threatens democracy"**

A total of 24 organizations from all over Europe coordinated ahead of the upcoming European elections on June 6-9 to present a joint manifesto warning of the risks that school segregation poses for European society as a whole in terms of social cohesion. "School segregation is a threat to the very fabric of our societies and democracies. Boys and girls from different socio-economic backgrounds are growing up apart from each other across the EU because they go to segregated schools. This is the biggest fuel for social rift. and extremism", they explain. At the same time, it proposes to future MEPs a series of measures to implement throughout the next mandate, as well as recommendations for all member states.

The initiative is supported by various entities linked to education, childhood and equal opportunities from Austria, Belgium, Catalonia, Denmark, Spain, France, Italy, the Basque Country and the Netherlands. A fact that confirms that school segregation is a shared problem throughout the continent. "Children are born without prejudice. It is the adults who choose to be intolerant. For this reason, schools are the best place to build a shared future", consider the organizations. From his point of view, the European Union is "at a turning point" due to "demographic changes and increased social diversity". And they present the following dichotomy: "Do we really embrace democratic values and promote respect for human rights or do we fall back on discriminatory ideas in the face of these social transformations?"

The entities urge the European administrations to exercise their responsibilities in favor of social cohesion. Specifically, they call on the future MEPs and the rest of the community institutions to prioritize desegregation measures as part of the policies for school success within the framework of the European Education Area agenda.

In November 2022, the Council of the EU adopted the Council Recommendation on pathways to school success, they explain, a document encouraging Member States to promote policy activities against segregation. In fact, the established recommendations that by 2025 States must have developed "integrated and global strategies towards school success" to minimize the effects of socio-economic status on educational outcomes and formation.

"Social diversity in schools is positive and possible, through the implementation of legal actions and the involvement of all of society", organizations conclude. "Let's make it happen," they claim.

**School segregation, a problem of European scope**

The organisations are:

1. Appel pour une école démocratique/Oproep voor een democratische school - Belgium
2. Associacions Federades de Famílies d'Alumnes de Catalunya (aFFaC) - Catalonia
3. Brug Folkeskolen - Denmark
4. Centres d'Entraînement aux Méthodes d'Éducation Active - Belgium
5. Chance für jedes Kind - Austria
6. Changements pour l'égalité (CGé) - Belgium
7. Collectif Apprendre Ensemble - France
8. Col·lectiu d'Escoles contra la Segregació - Catalonia
9. Comissions Obreres-Educació (CCOO) - Catalonia
10. Controvento Società Cooperativa Sociale Onlus - Italy
11. Escoltes Catalans - Catalonia
12. European Cities Against School Segregation (ECASS) - Trans-national
13. Euskal Eskola Publikoaz Harro topagunea - Basque Country
14. Federació d'Associacions de Veïns de Barcelona (FAVB) - Catalonia
15. Fédération des Conseils de Parents d'Élèves (FCPE) - France
16. Fundació Bofill - Catalonia
17. Fundación Empieza por Educar (ExE) - Spain
18. Fundación Secretariado Gitano - Spain
19. Kenniscentrum Gemengde Scholen - Netherlands
20. La Fabrique du Nous - France
21. No Ghetto - France
22. Plataforma d'Infància de Catalunya (PINCat) - Catalonia
23. School in zicht - Belgium
24. Welkom in mijn Wijk - Netherlands

